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Updates for February 3rd

17 Jan - Deaths in Detention Warn of Horrors Behind ICE's Prison Walls

At least 32 people died in ICE jails in 2025, and four more have already died in ICE custody this year.

MORE:

by Mike Ludwig (*Truthout*)

All eyes are on the Trump administration's brutal "immigration enforcement" operation in Minnesota, where roving squads of federal agents in Minneapolis are demanding proof of citizenship from people of color on the street and lashing out against residents enraged by the deadly shooting of Renee Nicole Good by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officer last week.

Far less visible is the rapidly expanding, nationwide network of jails and prisons where ICE and Border Patrol lock people up after they are arrested, and that is almost certainly by design. Four people died in federal immigration jails so far in 2026, and at least 32 people died in ICE jails over the course of 2025 as President Donald Trump ramped up his mass deportation campaign. The death count for 2025 constituted the most deaths in ICE jails ever recorded outside the COVID-19 pandemic.

"If we are seeing that sort of outward extreme violence in broad daylight in the streets of Minneapolis and streets across the country, imagine what people must be facing behind closed doors and behind bars in ICE detention centers," said Setareh Ghandehari, advocacy director at the Detention Watch Network, in an interview with *Truthout*.

The number of people imprisoned by ICE increased by 75 percent to nearly 66,000 in 2025, and despite repeated claims by administration officials about targeting "the worst of the worst," nearly 74 percent have no criminal convictions, according to the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse immigration database. ICE's "roving patrols" and "indiscriminate raids" have contributed to a 2,450 percent increase in the number of people with no criminal record held in ICE detention on any given day, according to the American Immigration Council.

Ghandehari told *Truthout* that ICE has long faced allegations of allowing abuse, medical neglect, inhumane conditions, and solitary confinement in its network of jails and prisons, which are used to incarcerate people facing deportation orders.

ICE's carceral facilities are often run by for-profit prison companies or local sheriffs acting as contractors. While many detainees are held at remote facilities in Louisiana and Texas, far from families and legal support, Ghandehari said ICE is now operating nearly 200 jails nationwide after opening or reopening more than 130 facilities in 2025.

"What we have seen and are seeing in Minneapolis is enraging; it's unacceptable, it's out of control, but unfortunately it is unsurprising given that ICE is inherently a violent agency, and what we are now seeing in Minneapolis is really the manifestation of years of ICE being allowed to act with impunity," Ghandehari told *Truthout*.

On January 15, the county medical examiner in El Paso, Texas, announced that the death of Geraldo Lunas Campos, a 55-year-old man held at a massive immigration detention center at El Paso's Fort Bliss military base, was likely a homicide. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said Campos was attempting to kill himself and violently resisted when officers intervened but provided no evidence to back up that claim.

The most recent deaths among those imprisoned by ICE also include 46-year-old Parady La from Cambodia, who was arrested and jailed by ICE on January 6 and died three days later after receiving “treatment for severe drug withdrawal at the Federal Detention Center” in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, according to DHS. La was found unresponsive in his cell the next day and was later pronounced dead of brain and organ failure at a nearby hospital.

Withdrawal from certain drugs and alcohol can be fatal but is easily treatable with medical supervision and proper medications. In an attempt to revive La, DHS claims federal officers administered CPR and naloxone, a drug used to treat opioid overdoses, not withdrawal symptoms. The Bureau of Prisons maintains a protocol for safely supervising drug withdrawal in federal detention facilities.

Jonathan Feinberg, an attorney for La’s family, said nobody should die in custody from opiate withdrawal.

“We do not at this point know exactly what happened to Parady La, but the circumstances that have been reported are highly suspicious and concerning,” Feinberg wrote in an email to *Truthout* on Friday. “We intend to conduct a full investigation and pursue every legal remedy available to his family.”

A 2024 report by Physicians for Human Rights examined 52 deaths in ICE custody from 2017 to 2021 and found that 95 percent were preventable or possibly preventable if appropriate medical care had been provided. Civil liberties and international human rights groups have sounded alarm bells about medical neglect and preventable deaths in ICE custody for over a decade.

ICE did not respond to a request for comment by the time this story was published. However, the official statement on La’s death includes a list of mostly minor drug and alcohol violations and accuses the man of being a “career criminal,” reflecting a larger pattern of ICE smearing people who are harmed at the hands of its agents. After Renee Good was fatally shot by an ICE agent in Minneapolis while attempting to pull away from the scene in her vehicle on January 7, Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem baselessly accused the mother and poet of being a “domestic terrorist.”

Other recent deaths in ICE custody include Luis Beltran Yanez-Cruz, 68, who was detained at the Imperial Regional Detention Facility in California and died on January 6, and Luis Gustavo Nunez Caceres, 42, who was detained at the Joe Corley Processing Center in Texas and died on January 5, according to Detention Watch Network.

“You can imagine how bad the conditions have been getting,” Ghandehari said. “It’s not even a full two weeks into this new year, and we already have four deaths in ICE custody.”

ICE cannot place U.S. citizens in detention for extended periods of time, but multiple citizens have reportedly been arrested by ICE under Trump’s crackdown, including George Retes, a U.S. veteran who was wrongly detained by ICE in California for three days after a chaotic raid on a cannabis farm in August.

The Oglala Sioux Tribe, one of the largest tribal nations in the U.S., has accused ICE of illegally holding four members arrested during raids in Minneapolis, according to *Axios*.

From New Jersey to California to Minnesota, immigration officials have barred Democratic lawmakers from entering ICE jails to conduct unannounced inspections and check on incarcerated constituents. A federal judge recently struck down a policy requiring advance notice from lawmakers, but Noem instituted a new policy that blocked Minnesota Rep. Ilhan Omar and other Democrats from visiting the central ICE holding facility in the Twin Cities shortly after Good was killed.

“When we appropriate funds as members of Congress, we are expected by the public to do oversight because the public requires their money be used with transparency and accountability,” Omar told reporters on January 10. “And what happened today is ICE agents decided that we were no longer allowed to fulfill our constitutional duties.”

Rep. Ro Khanna (D-California) says he may be the only member of Congress to conduct an oversight visit to an ICE jail under the Trump administration. Khanna and a staff member visited ICE California City Detention Center on January 6, the largest ICE prison in California. Khanna made the visit after one of his constituents “was beaten, unlawfully detained, and held at this very facility before being deported,” according to a social media post.

Khanna said he was “deeply disturbed” by his visit to the ICE prison, which currently holds nearly 1,500 people. When he spoke to families in the parking lot, they described their loved ones being subjected to “inadequate food, visible mold, and water that tastes like metal.” A lack of medical care was the most alarming failure, Khanna said, with one detainee telling the congressman that he was urinating blood but still had not received medical care.

“For illnesses like the flu, medicine is rarely provided; at best, [an] ibuprofen is given, but more often detainees are told to buy basic medicine from the commissary at exaggerated, unaffordable prices,” Khanna said. “With reportedly only one doctor for hundreds of people, the neglect is structural.”

Congress faces a self-imposed January 30 deadline to pass legislation funding the government, which gives lawmakers a chance to rein in ICE by defunding the infrastructure that makes Trump’s brutal “immigration” crackdown possible, including the expanding network of ICE jails and prisons, according to Ghandehari. ICE’s budget is set to balloon by \$170 billion under the megabill championed by Trump and passed by Republicans in July 2025, but some progressive Democrats are now pushing to defund the agency.

“They can’t do what they are doing without infrastructure that has been built up over decades,” Ghandehari told *Truthout*, explaining that the only way to stop the Trump administration’s violence is by starting to dismantle ICE’s infrastructure. “That’s why it’s so important that Congress do the right things this week and start the process of cutting ICE off.”

19 Jan - In Contempt #3 Is Out

In Contempt, a monthly roundup of political prisoner, prison rebel, and repression news, happenings, announcements, action and analysis, is out, covering RICO Charges Dismissed, Palestine Action UK Prisoners Hunger Strike Ends With a Win, New Prairieland Arrest, & More.

MORE:

You can read In Contempt online or download it reformatted as a zine at incontempt.noblogs.org

19 Jan - Appeals court overturns ruling that released Mahmoud Khalil

Last week, in a split 2-1 decision, the Third Circuit Court of Appeals overturned a district court ruling that found Mahmoud Khalil's detention and removal likely unconstitutional.

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via *Center For Constitutional Rights (CCR)*

The order does not weigh in on the core First Amendment arguments in his case but holds that the district court did not have subject matter jurisdiction over Mr. Khalil's immigration proceedings.

The opinion does not go into effect immediately, and the Trump administration cannot lawfully re-detain Mr. Khalil until the order takes formal effect, which will not happen while he has the opportunity to seek immediate review.

"Today's ruling is deeply disappointing, but it does not break our resolve," said Mahmoud Khalil on Friday, January 15. "The door may have been opened for potential re-detainment down the line, but it has not closed our commitment to Palestine and to justice and accountability. I will continue to fight, through every

legal avenue and with every ounce of determination, until my rights, and the rights of others like me, are fully protected."

20 Jan - Prairieland Case(s) Update

As the Prairieland defendants' federal trial approaches, a pattern of concerning activity by the presiding judge, Mark Pittman, has emerged. That, and more, below.

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The fate of the defendants—and the result of this trial—will have enormous impacts on the legal terrain for those resisting ICE terror and the course of the rising authoritarianism in the U.S. As such, the fairness of this trial should be of great concern to us all.

Judge Pittman, a Trump appointee, has a worrying history. He was a founding member of the Fort Worth chapter of the conservative legal organization the Federalist Society, an affiliation he shares with the U.S. Attorney who was formerly overseeing the Prairieland case. In addition, during Judge Pittman's six years on the bench, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled at least three times that his sanctions against attorneys have gone too far.

The first recent action to note is the severely truncated timeline for the federal case. Often, other jurisdictions are more methodical, giving the defense ample time to prepare their case. In contrast, the federal Northern District of Texas in Fort Worth is known to schedule trials close to the legal minimums set in speedy trial regulations and plea deals are usually offered and taken pre-indictment. The original federal trial for the nine defendants was scheduled for early January. After a majority of defense attorneys filed for continuances, Judge Pittman moved the date back only a matter of weeks and at the same time signaled that no more continuances would be granted.

In the national context of horrendous pre-trial detention conditions, speedy trial rights are important. But when defense attorneys are not given adequate time to mount a robust legal strategy, high pressure tactics for plea deals are the norm and, in this case, where the prosecution has had nearly twice the amount of time to build its case as the defense, grave concerns emerge about the fairness of this trial.

The second action by Judge Pittman that has raised alarm was the successful pressure to remove a star defense attorney from the federal case. George Lobb was hired to represent Maricela Rueda and has an impressive record winning in federal court. Lobb represents clients all over Texas and has handled federal cases in the Northern District of Texas. Lobb was born in and grew up in Tarrant County, and has family in the area. Lobb took up residence in Fort Worth last year, but despite this, the judge refused to accept that he was "local counsel" and threatened to fine him \$1000 per day until he hired additional local counsel to serve as attorney of record. Even after Lobb complied with this request, Judge Pittman called him into a hearing specifically on the issue. In this hearing, the Judge had federal agents behind Lobb while explaining the broad powers of contempt and implied Lobb would be "investigated" but not reported to the State Bar. Shortly after the hearing, Lobb removed himself as Maricela's federal attorney to avoid retribution against his client for doing nothing more than his ethical obligation to zealously represent her.

The third and most recent concerning example of Judge Pittman's actions came from the bench on Wednesday, January 14. Judge Pittman ordered defense attorneys for Zachary Evetts to appear in court that morning to discuss a motion to compel discovery that they filed in November. During this appearance he admonished the attorneys for a failure to include an email from the prosecution in their motion. Later in the day, Judge Pittman decided this omission warranted a \$500 fine imposed against each of the three defense attorneys. This action was seen by many other legal workers as irregular and egregious. The motion in question was routine and a standard filing to preserve legal rights to raise issues in the future. The sanctioning of these attorneys for this motion will almost certainly create a chilling effect for other attorneys who have reason to write important motions in the future.

Later in the day, Judge Pittman made clear he would have no tolerance for what he construes as disruption by members of the public in the courtroom. He stated that a first offense would lead to ejection, and a second would result in being sent to Johnson County Jail. The Judge used the number of defendants to justify tight restrictions on the actions of defense attorneys in court, specifically stating that during key aspects of trial only a single defense attorney would be able to address the court and be permitted to make objections. Objections coming from other attorneys would have to be passed to this attorney in some unspecified manner. He also made clear he considered the security risks of the trial extreme, even while there have been no disruptions in prior court appearances and defendants have not exhibited any dangerous behavior while incarcerated. A U.S. Marshall is to stand directly behind each defendant during trial, and strict limitations will be kept on how the public can access the courtroom. In a further demonstration of the Judge's perspective on the trial and the defendants, he compared the case to those related to accusations of providing weapons to the Irish Republican Army. The implication by the presiding Judge that allegations made in this case bear any factual similarity to a multi-decade armed insurgency that left hundreds dead is alarming and deeply worrying.

All of our fates will soon be tied to what happens in a hundred-person courtroom in Fort Worth, Texas. But while we are living through a time of broken norms and terrifying indications for the future—as the Prairieland case makes starkly clear—we are in this together. The only path through the fear and uncertainty will be to continue and widen the solidarity and support we have already seen from so many of you. For that we are grateful, and with that we are hopeful.

January 21st - Defendant in Prairieland Case Moves to Dismiss State Indictment in Pretrial Hearing

A pretrial hearing will take place on January 22 for one of the defendants in the Prairieland case, which involves 19 people criminally charged in connection with a July 4, 2025 solidarity demonstration outside the Prairieland immigration detention center in Alvarado, Texas. The 413th District Court of Johnson County will hear a motion to quash the state indictment against Dario Sanchez.

Sanchez, the sole defendant currently released on bond, is facing state charges of hindering the prosecution of terrorism and tampering with/fabricating physical evidence. Sanchez's state trial is scheduled to begin on April 20. "From the beginning, the prosecution has failed to show how I committed an actual crime in a county I'd never been to," said Prairieland defendant Dario Sanchez, whose motions will be heard Thursday. "At some point, the prosecution will be unable to escape its fundamental misuse of the law."

What: Pretrial motions hearing for Prairieland defendant Dario Sanchez

When: Thursday, January 22, 2026 at 1:30pm

Where: 413th District Court of Johnson County, 204 South Buffalo Avenue, Cleburne, Texas

"The indictment fails to allege facts which constitute a criminal offense," said defense lawyers for Sanchez, who is seeking to throw out the indictment. According to the defense, the indictment is "vague, indefinite, contradictory, and uncertain," and "states conclusions, rather than facts." The motion argues that Count One is "incomprehensible and fails to put Defendant on notice of the offense or offenses against which he must defend."

The motion to quash goes on to underscore specific flaws in the State's case. "Count two fails to charge tampering with physical evidence," reads the motion. "The State alleges 'digital evidence' (Signal/Discord chat logs and group identifiers), but digital data has no material, corporeal existence and therefore cannot be 'physical' evidence."

The defense was also prepared to make an argument tomorrow that the court should compel the state to comply with its discovery obligations. But, yesterday, more than four months after Sanchez was indicted, and after at least five discovery requests, the prosecution dumped nine terabytes of "evidence" on the defense. After a cursory review, it appears that most of the evidence handed over yesterday is about or from Sanchez's codefendants and unrelated to his case. The refusal by the state to comply with evidence disclosures has hindered Sanchez's ability to investigate and prepare his defense.

Remarkably, the charges against Sanchez are from him removing someone from private group text chats.

“The accusation that someone tampered with evidence for removing someone from a group chat is absurd,” said Irina Popova, member of the DFW Support Committee. “The case against Dario shows how desperate the state is to criminalize these defendants.”

Sanchez’s State motions hearing comes as nine Prairieland defendants pleaded not guilty to federal charges at their arraignments in December. These defendants are demanding jury trials, which are scheduled to start on February 17.

The Prairieland cases, involving both state and federal charges, stem from a noise demonstration in solidarity with detainees at the Prairieland ICE Detention Center in Alvarado, Texas, on July 4, 2025. Toward the end of the demonstration, an officer with the Alvarado Police Department allegedly became involved in an exchange of gunfire soon after arrival. The officer sustained minor injuries, and was released from the hospital shortly afterwards. Ten people were arrested at the scene or shortly after, and a manhunt ensued in the subsequent days for another defendant. Eight more defendants were arrested in the days and weeks following the protest.

Prejudicial and sweeping statements related to these cases have been made repeatedly by officials at the highest levels of government, polluting the perceptions of the public from which the jury will be drawn and undermining the defendants’ ability to get a fair trial. The Trump administration has publicly claimed that the Prairieland case is the first legal case against “Antifa,” widely considered to be an informal set of anti-authoritarian beliefs. Just days after Trump designated Antifa as a domestic terrorist organization, the White House released National Security Presidential Memorandum-7 (NSPM-7) on September 25, 2025, which ordered all federal law enforcement agencies to prioritize combating Antifa as a domestic terrorism threat. FBI director Kash Patel has called the defendants “Antifa-aligned anarchist violent extremists,” sharing Fox News coverage of the case on X.

January 30th - Letters from Johnson County **“Aug 4th, 2025”**

This Tom Clancy book by Rovin is self-flagellating trash... Ironic that the evil, authoritarian, (Chinese!) gulag scenes are so close to my experience in Johnson County. All I could think was “thank God we aren’t sticking people in cramped, filthy cells with dirty water to drink, and the sounds of other prisoners screaming in the distance. I’m so glad this sort of thing never happens in America...” The capricious nature of the authorities, the stark, wretched cells, and the physical rot which then rots the spirit, these are my entire reality at this point. I don’t know what’s worse, people who believe these evils are the exclusive to foreign adversaries, or those who cynically acknowledge the evils of this country as necessary or good.

“July 29th, 2025”

Maybe the story of the prisoner has more in common with the shipwreck & the castaway. After reading *The Life of Pi*, it all sort of lines up for me; a tragedy leading to a violent kind of monotony which slowly tears at your physical & mental wellbeing. My boat is a room of chemically enhanced stone, afloat in a sea of razor wire and steel fencing. Every day I must be alert, to keep the tiger at bay, to keep myself intact and alive. Otherwise, I’ll slowly start to fall apart from the inside out. Perhaps the monotony of the prison can lead to the same kind of madness that strikes at sea.

January 31st - Poems by Champagne **“The Stone”**

The stone shows a crack.
where rough play and banging about
caused scratches and chips and polished smooth.
A crack, thin and jagged, all the way thru
from one side to the other, moves
many fissures and fractures, hidden from view

“Transposed”
A fast walk across concrete
My greedy strides consume
like eager travel, with places to go
Winter air fills my nose
dry savory smokiness
sweet wood and stone

“Tapping”

A child is tapping on my glass
Angrily, Insistently
Inside my cage I roar and I rage
Stand up! Do what I say!
The animals bellow

“Tako”

Octopus escaping on the cooking street
Walking by our eyes happen to meet
Tentacles freeze climbing over the side
Gazing at each other we both stop and think

“Prairie”

Warm beer on the prairie
Waving sea of grass
Great ocean of blue sky
A Mongol horselord riding
'Cross the endless world

“The new world”

Rivers roll towards the great middle sea
Engineered valleys and AI dreams
Boom town ports of the new Humanity

I hurl myself forward
Back to my first time in Tokyo
flying across unknown streets
with all the wonder and excitement
And pleasure of the world

“Prison Art”

There's a Charizard in Segregation Cell 210
It's big, 10 feet off the ground
I don't understand
How it was drawn up there
Flame breath and iconic tail
Claws, wings, and fangs
It's the best Charizard I've ever seen
It fills me with wonder
I'm lucky to see
Like my first Artist Alley
or time on Akiba's streets
here, surrounded by filth and prisoners' screams
It's a peaceful somehow Holy scene

20 Jan - Monk in a Belarusian Prison, Charged with Nuclear-related Espionage

Belarus: A 27-year-old Polish Carmelite monk now sits in a Belarusian prison, facing a possible death sentence on suspicion of espionage after reportedly being found with a photocopy of a classified document related to the “Zapad-2025” war games involving the Russian nuclear weapons now stationed in Belarus.

MORE:

via Nuclear Resister

On September 4, 2025, when Grzegorz Gawel was visiting the town of Lepel, north of Minsk, officers of the Belarusian State Security Committee (KGB) followed the monk into a town park and took video as he met an unidentified Belarusian man who handed him a sheaf of papers. Video of Gawel’s arrest minutes later was soon broadcast on state television to support the charge that he sought the sensitive papers on behalf of Polish state intelligence agencies. It was alleged he had “contacted a Belarusian citizen via social media and offered to cooperate with the Polish special services.”

Belarus authorities claimed Gawel enticed the man with coffee and chocolates, and said they had seized cash in multiple different currencies, bank cards, SIM cards, a rosary and “other religious items” from him. The unidentified Belarusian man was also arrested, but his fate is unknown.

Polish authorities denied they use clergy as spies, and called the arrest yet another provocation of a NATO member by Belarus, Russia’s dependent ally and recent host of Russian tactical nuclear weapons. Polish Catholic priests have been arrested in recent years and jailed in Belarus on various political charges.

Belarusian human rights campaigners now in exile in Lithuania and Poland have documented more than 1,000 political prisoners of the Lukashenko government, in addition to Gawel. He is the only one known to be facing charges related to nuclear weapons. Our House Centre for Human Rights and Relief, run by Belarusian exiles in Lithuania, says of Gawel that, “It is unclear whether he indeed tried to obtain and

publish documents related to nuclear weapons, but if so, his actions can be seen as an important and heroic step in the fight for peace and security in the region.”

Our House continues that, “In the context of Belarus’s authoritarian regime, where truth is rarely achieved and where information is strictly controlled and manipulated by the state, exposing any sensitive information about the placement of Russian tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus is critical and necessary.”

Grzegorz Gawel is being held pending trial at the KGB detention centre in Minsk, known as “Amerikanka.”

He had taken his perpetual vows in the Carmelite Order in March, 2025, and served at the Basilica of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Krakow.

Belarusian human rights organizations, including Our House, have recognized Gawel as a political prisoner. Along with religious communities in Poland and the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, these organizations are calling for consular access and his immediate release.

Support Action

Letters of support should be sent to Grzegorz Gawel, KGB Pre-Trial Detention Center, 220040, Independence Avenue, 17, Minsk, Belarus. Olga Karatch of Our House shares this important reminder: “Letters to prisoners, even when they are censored or not delivered, still matter a great deal. They are read by prison staff and security services. They signal that this person is seen and has international attention. That can mean fewer beatings, fewer humiliations, and a genuine increase in the chances that he stays alive. So, writing letters is not just moral support; it is also a way of influencing his treatment in prison and sometimes even the decisions made about his case.”

On 18 January 2026, within the framework of its weekly actions in support of Belarusian political prisoners, Our House held a solidarity action in Vilnius demanding the immediate release of Catholic monk Grzegorz Gawel, who is currently being illegally detained in the KGB detention centre in Minsk, known as “Amerikanka.”

Grzegorz Gawel was arrested in September 2025 and officially charged with “nuclear espionage” — allegedly for attempting to obtain documents concerning the deployment and characteristics of Russian nuclear weapons in Belarus. The state version of the обвинения appears unconvincing and politically motivated. At the same time, under such charges the monk may face the death penalty. We consider the Carmelite monk innocent and view his case as yet another example of the repressive use of “espionage” legislation against inconvenient individuals.

At the same time, Our House emphasizes its fundamental position: nuclear weapons are not a state “secret,” but a global threat to all of us. They are capable of destroying humanity and causing irreversible damage to the planet and to our region. Therefore, there can and must be no “classified” information about nuclear weapons. Any data related to nuclear risks must be accessible to society, because it directly concerns the life, health, and safety of every person.

The right to information is a basic human right. Secrecy surrounding nuclear weapons serves not to protect people, but to preserve a system of irresponsibility.

Even if one assumes that Grzegorz Gawel was interested in such documents, the very attempt to obtain such critically important information cannot be considered a crime. It concerns the fate of millions of people — and first and foremost, us as Belarusians. In this sense, the persecution of a monk for seeking the truth about nuclear threats is an absurd and dangerous precedent.

We demand:

- the immediate release of monk Grzegorz Gawel;
- the termination of politically motivated criminal prosecution against him for alleged “nuclear espionage”;
- access for consular representatives;
- an end to the use of “espionage” charges as a tool of repression.

Nuclear weapons do not belong to states. Their consequences belong to all of humanity. Therefore, the truth about them must belong to everyone

21 Jan – “A Clean Hell:” A Review

Indigenous political prisoner Oso Blanco has reviewed the latest book by former political prisoner Eric King.

MORE:

This book Eric King has published will tell you many truths of what US colonialism has come to in the form of US federal prisons, especially the abuses of humans in the SHU and at the ADX Supermax in Florence, Colorado. The haves who seek to destroy and imprison the have-nots have advanced in their evil quest to protect themselves from those not uber-rich using their prison system, the Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBOP).

The rich have hired the most ruthless thinkers to create the FBOP, so as to mentally, spiritually, and physically harm or murder prisoners. Eric King went to the ADX, the “Alcatraz of the Rockies,” while I lived through 9 years at a Special Management Unit (SMU). These prisons and staff had and have a green light to commit any crime against prisoners, with the go-ahead from Central Office in Washington, DC. The SMU was shut down after staff murdered too many human beings, but the ADX Supermax continues endlessly, so far.

In “A Clean Hell”, Eric King goes into the deep inner thoughts of a person tormented by these hypocritical, criminal staff at the Bureau of Prisons. I’ve been in all these places except the ADX. I know these truths of racist hillbilly staff at USP Lee. I went through the same assaults as Eric at Lee and Hazelton USPs. Eric is telling the world 100 percent true facts of the abuses BOP staff commit every single day on the taxpayer’s dime. The creator and the universe will not let these hateful BOP monsters go unpunished for the evils Eric is precisely describing first hand in “A Clean Hell,” exposing the real true hell of the BOP reality.

I pray from 4am to 6am in Cherokee and I strongly agree with Eric King about how we need to find something positive to keep our mind strong while in prison, constantly surrounded by negativity. As Eric writes, we have to do 5 positive things a day for other people, not just to help people in need, but to maintain our own sanity and strength.

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Obviously, US society is at a low point in its history right now. Let’s all stand against federal prisons and work to put an end to abuses by staff in these prisons. The Bureau of Prisons is a government corporation that facilitates the abuse and murder of the people who they actively profit off of in this industrial prison complex. “A Clean Hell” describes how the elite created this as a form of slavery for the have-nots who cannot defend themselves against the rich and their exploitations of all life.

In this new nonfiction gospel, Eric King pinpoints just what the BOP really does to humans and highlights the horrors people face behind these prison walls. It boils down to what America is really, really all about in its colonial quest. This book is a must-read.

22 Jan - Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr Appeals Dismissal of Racketeering Charges Against 61 #StopCopCity Defendants

Latest Move by AG is an Attempt to Further Drag Out Charges that Defendants and Civil Liberties Advocates Call a Dramatic Overreach, Untethered from Georgia Law

MORE:

Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr filed an appeal Tuesday challenging the dismissal of racketeering charges against 61 #StopCopCity defendants, extending a case that has already dragged on for more than two years without a trial. The appeal filed with the Georgia Court of Appeals is in response to the December 30, 2025 dismissal of RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) charges by Fulton County Superior Court Judge Kevin Farmer.

The racketeering charges were part of a sweeping indictment filed by Carr in August 2023 and centers around political opposition to the Atlanta Police Training Facility known as Cop City. Judge Farmer ruled in December that Carr failed to obtain the constitutionally required authority from Governor Brian Kemp to file the indictment.

The trial court's dismissal of RICO charges confirms what defendants and civil liberties advocates have said from the beginning, that this prosecution represents a dramatic overreach by Carr's office, untethered from the limits of Georgia law. That the State is now attempting to malign the trial judge as an "activist" for merely following the Georgia Constitution is yet another public display of their lack of credibility.

"This case was always about the State's desire to crush a legitimate movement against the construction of Cop City," said Chris Caraway at the Animal Activist Legal Defense Project at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law, and one of the defense lawyers in the RICO case. "The process was always meant to be the punishment, with the threat of years behind bars as a means of intimidating protest and resistance to a so-called training center that promises further oppression and the militarized policing of Atlanta residents."

On December 30, Judge Farmer also denied a defense demurrer, attempting to dismiss domestic terrorism charges against a group of five defendants, charges which are also part of the same August 2023 indictment. A week later, on January 6, defense lawyers for Francis Carroll, one of the five defendants charged with domestic terrorism, appealed Judge Farmer's denial of their motion to the Supreme Court of Georgia for immediate interlocutory review on constitutional grounds. In response, Carr also filed his own interlocutory appeal to the Supreme Court of Georgia.

While the Georgia Court of Appeals is obligated to rule on Carr's appeal, the defense and prosecutorial constitutional appeals to the Supreme Court of Georgia are discretionary, and the high court has no obligation to rule on them.

The RICO case has been plagued with problems from the start, including a number of evidentiary issues. In addition to violating several discovery deadlines, the AG's Office violated multiple defendants' constitutional rights in July 2024 by sharing attorney-client privileged communications with prosecutors, police, and each RICO defense team. In September 2024, the prosecution was forced to drop money laundering charges against the three ASF defendants. In another blow to the prosecution, Domestic Terrorism charges were dismissed last summer in DeKalb County against RICO trial defendant Jamie Marsicano.

"Judge Farmer's ruling simply confirmed what we all knew from the start, that the State's prosecution against these 61 individuals was illegitimate," said Josh Lingsch, an attorney for one of the defendants. "Appealing this decision is emblematic of the same flawed decision making and missteps by the State that have plagued this case since it was indicted in 2023," continued Lingsch. "While there is confidence that

Judge Farmer's decision was correct and will be upheld on appeal, the State's decision to appeal it continues to unfairly leave the lives of the 61 defendants in this case in limbo."

The 61 defendants, who were arrested on different dates from late 2022 to early 2023 at various locations across Georgia, have had their lives upended as a result of the felony charges. Defendants have experienced job losses, housing issues, career disruptions, and travel restrictions, in addition to the stress and anxiety that comes from the threat of years in prison hanging over their heads.

Over 170 people have been arrested so far during protests against Cop City. The facility was completed this year despite mass opposition from Atlanta residents, including a multi-year campaign with a wide range of tactics from environmentalists, abolitionists, students, teachers, anarchists, Indigenous activists, faith leaders and others. A 2023 ballot initiative petition effort to put Cop City to a direct vote by Atlanta residents collected over 116,000 signatures, more than double the votes that Mayor Andre Dickens received in 2021, but local officials refused to verify the signatures.

24 Jan - Casey Brezik Released

After 15 years in prison, anarchist political prisoner Casey Brezik has come home!

MORE:

via *Abolition Media*

He is adjusting well, and psyched about life, but needs help to get started.

Living expenses and basic needs can be difficult to meet without a job, connections and experience moving through this technology-driven, end-stage-capitalist reality.

Anything you give will help ease the labor and anxiety that anyone would be dealing with after nearly two decades in a highly-controlled, hyperviolent carceral system.

Donate at **\$caseybrezik** on cashapp or **@Casey-Brezik** on Venmo

Casey is an anarchist from the Kansas City area who was charged with slashing the throat of the Dean of Metropolitan Community College-Penn Valley. This occurred when the Governor of Missouri, Jay Nixon, was scheduled to give a talk at the college. In February 2011, the state declared him to be incapable of standing trial, which means he was forced to stay locked up in a mental institution pre-trial until June of 2013. He was sentenced to 12 years on each of three counts – assault, and two armed criminal action charges – and seven years on a second count of assault.

24 Jan - Comrade Eat released under house arrest

Indonesia: Accused anarchist comrade Eat, in the Chaos Star case, has been released from the West Java paramilitary police compound to house/city arrest.

MORE:

via *Dark Nights*

Eat is expected to be watched closely by the Densus88 antiterrorist unit. Comrades and lawyers went to meet him and take him to get nutrition, medicine and rest. Eat remains under investigation and the case is still open. Here's what Eat's lawyer had to say about his status:

'Eat was release by operation of law because the detention period during the investigation stage had expired and could not be extended. However, this release is temporary, as the legal process is still ongoing. The case is currently awaiting transfer from the prosecutor's office. If it proceeds to the prosecution stage, Eat may be detained again and transferred to Kebon Waru Detention Center for trial.

From a substantive standpoint, Eat actually has a legal advantage in this case. The charges and the investigation report do not meet the required legal elements, particularly those related to incitement. There is no clear evidence of any direct call or instruction to organize or carry out last year's protest, as alleged. because of this, the prosecutors themselves are hesitant to move the case forward to court.'

This hesitation has also influenced the investigator's decision not to pursue a second case involving Eat and another named comrade. We thank everyone for their solidarity and support. Without international pressure, we do not believe that Eat would have been released.

Nothing is over. Eat could be re-arrested. There are another 73 accused anarchists and hundreds of prisoners of the uprising still detained. Yet this is a major success, since the Densus88 wanted to scapegoat Eat as the organizational figurehead and leader of the fake Chaos Star network and of the insurrection itself.

Please remain attentive to the health condition and legal process of Eat and that of the other prisoners. Anarchist comrade Dena remains in the West Java compound, and is also ill from lack of HIV medication. Take action and donate to Palang Hitam/ABC Indonesia. We don't have enough support to adequately provide infrastructure to such a large number of prisoners at a time when the anarchist movement is under attack in Indonesia. To donate, contact *Dark Nights*, *Actforfreedomnow*, IWOC UK or any long-running established ABC group.

25 Jan - Drop the Charges Against Nick Tilsen

Nick Tilsen is scheduled to be brought to trial on Monday, January 26, 2026, on false, inflated, and politically motivated charges.

MORE:

Nick is currently being charged with aggravated assault, simple assault, and obstruction of a police officer from an incident in 2022 in downtown Rapid City, when Nick saw a police officer interacting with an unhoused relative. Concerned for the relative's well-being, Nick stopped his car nearby to observe the situation and ensure he was safe.

Rapid City police accused Nick of trying to hit an officer with his car and then surrounded Nick's vehicle. Eventually, an officer permitted Nick to leave without pressing charges. Despite video evidence proving Nick never made physical contact with a police officer in any way – and despite no immediate action being taken at the time – more than a year later, the officer involved accused Nick of attempting to run him over. This accusation led to a complaint and warrant for Tilsen's arrest being filed on June 30, 2023 – the same day NDN Collective announced they would host a July 4th March Towards Justice.

NDN Collective believes this case to be a politically motivated effort to silence a movement leader by criminalizing his actions and misusing the legal system. If found guilty, Nick could face up to 26 years in prison.

Learn more about the trial and what this fight for Nick's freedom means by listening to the LANDBACK For The People podcast, "Silencing a Movement Leader: Nick Tilsen's Fight for Justice."

Additional ways you can support:

1. Contact the prosecutor's office: 605.394.2191 then press 4 or send an email using this link to demand they drop the charges against Nick.

2. Attend the trial:

- Meet at NDN Collective HQ 1/26 at 6:45 AM, we will travel to the Pennington County Courthouse in the afternoon after jury selection concludes.
- The trial will begin at 8 am, 1/27 -1/28. Please arrive early to allow time to go through security.
- We will begin with prayer. Light refreshments, lunch, and dinner will be provided.

- No clothing with written letters will be permitted. No outbursts or interruptions during the trial are allowed. Keep phones on silent.
- If you are unable to attend in person, we ask that you pray for Nick during this trial for his freedom.

January 28th - Nick Tilsen Trial Update

We just wrapped up the third day, the decision is now with the jury. We are awaiting the verdict and will update you again when the verdict is in. We ask you to please keep Nick, his family, and our community in your prayers as the jury deliberates.

Throughout the trial we began each day with a prayer circle and breakfast at the NDN Collective Headquarters with Rapid City community members, including Lakota elders. We spent the first day waiting for jury selection to conclude, on the second day we heard witness statements, attorneys did cross examination, and today we ended with closing statements and now await the Jury's verdict.

Even with the weight of what's happening in Minnesota, across the nation, and the world, the Rapid City community has shown up with love, steadiness, and commitment. This is grounded in the belief that we must protect Indigenous people and that no one should be criminalized for acting with care and responsibility.

We also invite you to encourage others in your community to donate to the NDN Legal Fund, so we can continue to show up, protect our people, and carry this work forward in a good way; with integrity, care, and collective strength. We know that while this fight is about Nick, is also about the suppression of movements in a time where we need all of us.

We will continue to share updates as this case comes to a close. We also want to thank you, your support makes it possible for us to meet this moment with strength, care, and community.

January 29th - Special Message From Nick Tilsen

ICYMI, yesterday, the judge declared a mistrial due to a hung jury. The state of South Dakota now has 45 days to notify the judge of their intention to retry the case.

After 3 days of hearings, the jury could not come to a unanimous decision. Nick continues to be under indictment, facing charges for aggravated and simple assault on a law enforcement officer and obstruction of a law enforcement officer, and is facing up to 26 years in prison.

"I'm grateful for everyone who stood with me through the latest iteration of this lengthy legal battle – the support of my family, lawyers, spiritual leaders, medicine people, and community means everything to me," said Nick Tilsen, founder and CEO of NDN Collective. "The fight is not over."

"Nick's community continues to stand behind him," said Gaby Strong, NDN Collective's Vice-President.

26 Jan - The fundraising campaign for Ruslan Sidiki's defense has been completed

Russia: In less than two months, you have donated 235,000 rubles (2600 euros) for Ruslan Sidiki's legal defense.

MORE:

via *avtonom*

We have already paid the lawyer's fees for November and December, and the remaining amount will cover expenses through the end of February.

As a reminder, the anarchist Ruslan Sidiki is still being held in Pretrial Detention Center No. 2 (SIZO-2) in the city of Ryazhsk, Ryazan Region. He is awaiting consideration of an appeal against a sentence that sentenced him to 29 years in prison. The lawyer regularly visits him at this remote detention center and is preparing additional materials for the appeal. The defense is also working to hold accountable the law enforcement officers who tortured Ruslan during his arrest.

In the Ryazhsk SIZO, Ruslan is not being given books from parcels, nor books from his personal belongings that he brought with him from the Ryazan SIZO. The administration refers to a provision of the law according to which detainees may only use books from the institution's library or books purchased through the administration.

In this situation, letters are even more important for the prisoner. Write to Ruslan—ask him what he would be interested in reading, what topics he would like to discuss. In freedom, Ruslan enjoyed working with his hands: building, carpentry, gardening, and farming; he is interested in technology, including AI and robotics. Overall, Ruslan is a very versatile person, and you will surely find common topics to talk about!

26 Jan - After Exposing Prison Horrors, Whistleblowers Moved to Solitary

Subjects of The Alabama Solution have led protests for years, using cell phones to expose brutality and forced labor.

MORE:

by Katie Rose Quandt (*The Appeal*)

Grainy footage, filmed with contraband cell phones, forms the backbone of *The Alabama Solution*, a 2025 Oscar-nominated documentary that exposes the horrifying realities of life inside Alabama's prisons. Throughout the film, shocking videos from incarcerated activists Raoul Poole, Robert Earl Council (who goes by the name Kinetik Justice), and Melvin Ray reveal how the Alabama Department of Corrections (the Alabama DOC) shields its prisons from outside scrutiny — and brutally retaliates against incarcerated people who try to make their conditions public.

Now, the Alabama DOC has further proved the underlying argument of the film. In mid-January, the three men featured in the film were abruptly taken from their facilities and transferred, via convoys, to an isolated unit in Kilby Correctional Facility, where they are being held in extreme solitary confinement, a lawyer whose team is in contact with the men said. Poole, Council, and Ray are currently the only people in the five-cell unit, according to David Gespass, an attorney who has represented Council in past litigation. He said they have not been given a reason for their transfer.

In a social media post, a co-producer of *The Alabama Solution* said that the transfer came after the men announced a nonviolent work strike in December.

In the film, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in January 2025 and was released on HBO in October, Poole, Council, and Ray's videos and interviews depict a side of Alabama prisons that officials would rather keep hidden: filthy and flooded living spaces, people sleeping all over the floor in overcrowded dorms, officers asleep at their posts, and forlorn eyes peering through the food slots of heavy solitary confinement cell doors. Their footage also depicts groups of heavily drugged people, unconscious men being rushed to the infirmary by fellow incarcerated people following an overdose, and pools of blood left behind from assaults.

"We're in these walled-off secret societies," Poole says in the film. "These are state institutions. But it's one of the only state institutions that the public or the media has no access to. How can a journalist go into a war zone, but can't go into a prison in the United States of America?"

"Given the history of institutional violence in the Department of Corrections, including beatings by guards ... they're afraid for their lives," said Gespass, of the activists' recent transfer.

They are no strangers to activism and retaliation: Council and Ray co-founded the Free Alabama Movement in 2013, a group dedicated to fighting forced prison labor and dangerous prison conditions. In an interview in the documentary, they tell the filmmakers how the Alabama DOC responded to their activism by sending them each to solitary confinement for about five years, and classifying them as enemies so they could not remain in the same institution. Years later, after the Free Alabama Movement initiated a state-wide prison work strike in late 2020 that drew significant public attention, Council expected further retaliation.

“I try to keep two to three people with me at all times, and I try not to get caught in an isolated spot,” he says in an interview in the film. Soon after, in January 2021, correctional officers beat him unconscious, leaving him with a cracked skull, broken ribs, and permanent vision loss. The film depicts footage of the pools of blood left behind in his cell.

The documentary emphasizes the prison system’s use of violence and retaliation to keep incarcerated people in line. The filmmakers followed Sondra Ray, whose son, Steven Davis, was brutally beaten to death by correctional officers in 2019. Prison officials alleged the officers acted in self-defense — a claim disputed by multiple incarcerated witnesses, who spoke to Sondra Ray’s attorney. In a phone interview included in the film, Davis’s cellmate, James Sales, promised to tell Sondra Ray the full truth of her son’s murder after he was safely released. But Sales suddenly and mysteriously died in 2021, shortly before his release.

Now, Gespass said the three whistleblowers and their advocates fear further retaliation in their isolated solitary unit. “DOC has always been secretive about everything that goes on within the prisons,” he said, noting the more than 1,350 deaths in Alabama prisons tracked by *The Alabama Solution* between 2019 and 2024. “They’re completely opaque ... And the DOC just does not allow any real information to come out.”

In an Instagram post, the official account associated with *The Alabama Solution* documentary asked people to call the prison and demand safety for the three whistleblowers. Gespass explained: “From our perspective, the more eyes that are on what the DOC is doing, the better.”

27 Jan - Updated Action Alert for Political Prisoner Xinachtli

In the past couple of weeks, we have gotten a more complete picture of the severity of Xinachtli’s medical conditions and the state’s medical abuse.

MORE:

We have learned through newly obtained medical records that he is at a risk of cancer, given his sudden weight loss and lack of proper screening, that he previously suffered from a stroke, has a heart condition, at least one chronic irreversible neurological condition, a hernia, and more.

Xinachtli was NEVER informed of any of these medical issues by TDCJ medical staff. These revelations show us that it is even more critical for us to be pushing for and preparing for his immediate release.

31 Jan - Man sentenced for throwing Molotov cocktail at deputies during protest against immigration raids

A man was sentenced to four years in federal prison Friday after he admitted to lighting a Molotov cocktail and throwing it at Los Angeles County sheriff’s deputies during a protest last year against immigration raids. Corporate media follows, please read with a critical eye.

MORE:

by Alene Tchekmedyian (*Los Angeles Times*)

Emiliano Garduño Gálvez, 23, pleaded guilty in October to one count each of possessing an unregistered destructive device and obstructing law enforcement during a civil disorder. Federal authorities said Gálvez

is an immigrant from Mexico in the U.S. illegally, having entered more than a decade ago and staying beyond the time permitted in his visa.

“This defendant’s reckless behavior threatened the lives and safety of law enforcement officers and that of a lawful protester,” Bill Essayli, the first assistant U.S. attorney for the Central District of California, said in a statement. “My office remains steadfast in its efforts to prosecute and punish those who commit acts of violence against others.”

The events occurred in June, when Border Patrol agents convened near Home Depot in Paramount, drawing protesters.

According to the U.S. attorney’s office, the group threw objects such as rocks and cinder block chunks at federal and local law enforcement officers, and set off fireworks. Authorities declared the protest an unlawful assembly.

The U.S. attorney’s office said Gálvez was hiding behind a stone wall when he lit and threw a Molotov cocktail toward sheriff’s deputies, who were engaging in crowd control. The incendiary device landed in a grassy area near a protester’s foot, about 15 feet from sheriff’s deputies. Gálvez then fled the area.

Federal prosecutors had argued in a sentencing memorandum for Gálvez to serve a longer sentence — more than seven years — because of the seriousness of his offenses. Video recordings appear to show that the flaming wick separated from the bottle after he threw it.

“Defendant endangered everyone — law enforcement and civilians in the area — and is lucky that, despite his actions, no one was injured,” the prosecutors’ sentencing memo said.

Gálvez’s federal public defenders asked for a more lenient sentence of three years, saying in a sentencing memo that he was “caught up in a historic social movement and under the influence of Brandy and nitrous oxide,” and now “readily admits and acknowledges how serious his actions were and the harm that could have ensued.”

31 Jan - Illustrated Guide Version 19 Uploaded!

nycabc.wordpress.com/2026/01/31/guide_19

MORE:

We’ve finished the latest version of the NYC ABC “Illustrated Guide to Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War” and it’s available for viewing (and download) by visiting the link at the top of this post. This update includes updated mini-bios, photos, and address changes for several prisoners. Amazingly, this edition includes the removal of Casey Brezik. Welcome home, Casey!

5 Feb - *Survival Without Rent*

WHAT: Film Screening

WHEN: 7:00pm, Thursday, February 5th

WHERE: P.I.T. - 411 South 5th Street, Brooklyn

COST: FREE

MORE:

Survival Without Rent is a visceral collage of unearthed archival media showing how artists and activists transformed abandoned buildings into a radical enclave.