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Updates for April 14th

28 Mar - Officials at Florida's 'Alligator Alcatraz' must give attorneys access to clients, judge rules

Authorities must also provide detainees access to free and private legal phone calls and allow lawyers to visit unannounced

MORE:

by José Olivares (*The Guardian*)

A federal judge ruled on Friday that officials at Florida's state-run immigration jail, dubbed "Alligator Alcatraz", must give attorneys better access to their detained clients.

The order by federal judge Sheri Polster Chappell, from the middle district of Florida, said facility officials must provide access to confidential, private, free and unmonitored outgoing legal telephone calls from people detained in the facility. Polster Chappell also ruled that attorneys are allowed to make unannounced visits to see their clients, bypassing the facility's pre-scheduling requirement.

The state of Florida opened the detention center in summer 2025 to detain undocumented immigrants caught within the state. Since its opening, the facility has faced severe criticisms of the treatment of detainees.

Amnesty International, the human rights group, published a report in December detailing conditions inside, finding that "people arbitrarily detained in 'Alligator Alcatraz' are being held in inhuman and unsanitary conditions, including overflowing toilets with fecal matter seeping into where people are sleeping, limited access to showers, exposure to insects without protective measures, lights on 24 hours a day, poor quality food and water, and lack of privacy".

The facility is run by the state of Florida, not Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the federal agency tasked with carrying out the Trump administration's mass deportation agenda. Since the Trump administration took office last January, Florida has been aggressively pursuing undocumented immigrants and collaborating with the federal government in its anti-immigrant push.

In July of last year, attorneys and civil rights groups, including the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and Americans for Immigrant Justice, sued the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), ICE, Ron DeSantis, the Florida governor, and other Florida agencies and state officials. They claimed the government was blocking attorneys from visiting and providing legal help to detained immigrants inside the detention facility.

According to the advocacy groups, as recently as February, officials required attorneys to schedule in-person legal visits three days in advance. But before they were able to meet, the detained immigrants were transferred to another facility "immediately" before the legal visits.

The facility is run by private contractors hired by the state to run operations there. One of the contractors operating in the facility told the federal court they "never enforced" the three-day requirement.

Additionally, the advocacy groups continued to report to the court that any outgoing calls from their clients were on monitored and recorded phone lines. According to court records, one man detained inside "Alligator Alcatraz" was not able to contact his attorneys and when he asked for help, officers inside the jail told him to contact his family instead "because there was nothing that they could do".

The federal judge on Friday ordered officials overseeing the remote jail to publish policies allowing attorneys to visit their clients. The judge also ruled that officials would have to provide detainees access to private phone calls to their lawyers.

As part of the state's push, local, county and state agencies have signed agreements with ICE to help target undocumented immigrants in the state. The program, known by its technical name, 287(g), after a section in the Immigration and Nationality Act, allows local officials to arrest immigrants and turn them over to ICE. The 287(g) program has been accused of perpetuating civil rights abuses.

As of Saturday, there are 344 local law enforcement agencies in Florida coordinating with ICE under the program, according to ICE data reviewed by the *Guardian*. The 287(g) program is what has allowed the facility to continue operating. According to the records, ICE has a limited role with the facility, but federal officials with the agency are "there every day" at the facility.

DeSantis's government is spending over \$1m a day to run and operate the facility. Although the federal government promised to reimburse the state, recent reporting suggests the reimbursement may not come through.

30 Mar - Defendants in Landmark Prairieland ICE Detention Center Case Move to Overturn Recent Federal Convictions

Two Weeks After Stunning Verdict, Prairieland Defense Lawyers Filed Motions Friday for Judgments of Acquittal and New Trial, Based in Part on Allegations of Juror Misconduct. NOTE: The following mentions nine convicted defendants. NYC ABC only recognizes eight as political prisoners, as the ninth, Meagan Morris, following arrest, sat to be interviewed by the FBI which lead to future arrests of others.

MORE:

Lawyers for nine recently convicted defendants in the landmark Prairieland ICE Detention Center protest case filed motions late Friday in an effort to overturn the jury verdicts reached two weeks ago. All defense lawyers filed motions for judgments of acquittal and, in the alternative, a new trial, based on Rule 29 and Rule 33 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, respectively. Defense lawyers claimed the government failed to enter evidence that supported a conviction on the alleged charges. The lawyers collectively argued that a conviction must be vacated where no rational juror could find each element beyond a reasonable doubt, which is a standard that ensures convictions are based on evidence and not speculation.

On March 13, nine Prairieland defendants—Savanna Batten, Zachary Evetts, Autumn Hill, Meagan Morris, Maricela Rueda, Daniel "Des" Rolando Sanchez Estrada, Benjamin "Champagne" Song, Elizabeth Soto, and Ines Soto—were convicted of numerous federal charges, including riot, material support for terrorism, possession and conspiracy to use explosives, and conspiracy to conceal documents. Song was found guilty of attempted murder for allegedly shooting an Alvarado police officer.

Song's lawyer, Phillip Hayes, challenged his client's attempted murder verdict. "The intent to kill is disproven by the evidence that Benjamin Song intentionally fired into the ground and not in the direction of any individual, but the government investigators failed to photograph, preserve, or test any of the evidence that these ground-strikes occurred," Hayes argued in a motion for judgment of acquittal. "There were thousands of photographs taken during this investigation, but none of the bullet strikes on the concrete," Hayes continued. "In this particular count, it is incumbent on the government to prove intent to murder—not intent to shoot or even intent to harm, but instead the specific intent to murder—that was not done in this case."

Tailim Song also filed a separate motion for a new trial on behalf of Benjamin Song, arguing Brady violations and a due process failure to preserve exculpatory evidence. A Brady violation, based on the 1963 Supreme Court case *Brady v. Maryland*, occurs when prosecutors conceal exculpatory evidence favorable

to the defense. In this case, the government failed to inform defendants that Lt. Thomas Gross, the Alvarado police officer who was allegedly injured at the noise demonstration, was the first one to draw a weapon that night. The defense also first learned during trial that crime-scene investigators did not take photographs of the alleged bullet strikes into the ground that the government relied on to argue direction of fire, trajectory, and intent. Tailim Song argued that the government “had a duty to disclose the omission in time for the defense to use it,” and called on the court to, at minimum, hold a “bad faith” evidentiary hearing to address potential Brady violations.

Also notable was the motion for a new trial filed by Batten’s attorney, Christopher Tolbert, on the grounds that juror misconduct and irregularities during jury deliberations compromised the integrity of the verdict and deprived Batten (and other defendants) of a fair trial. Tolbert noted that there was “a loud and sustained disturbance emanating from the area of the jury room,” which was observed by several people on the day the verdict was reached. Based on information obtained after the verdict, Tolbert stated in his motion, “there is reason to believe that jurors engaged in a heated confrontation inside the jury room and that certain jurors may have been subjected to intimidation or coercion during deliberations.” Juror misconduct is a legally proper reason for granting a new trial.

“Because there is credible evidence that the jury’s deliberative process was disrupted by misconduct and possible coercion, and because such conduct creates a reasonable probability that the verdict was affected,” Tolbert continued, “the Court should grant a new trial in the interest of justice.” At a minimum, Tolbert said, “the Court should conduct an evidentiary hearing and permit examination of jurors to determine the extent and impact of the misconduct.” When credible allegations arise that the jury’s deliberative process may have been affected by improper influence or misconduct, the appellate court has made clear the trial court has an affirmative duty to investigate and ensure the integrity of the verdict, requiring the involvement of all parties in a properly conducted hearing.

Despite the sinister charge of conspiracy to use and carry explosives, evidence showed that the so-called explosives were nothing more than consumer grade fireworks. The motion filed on behalf of Ines Soto argued that the fireworks did not result in damage to the detention center and, in fact, “the initial investigation viewed the fireworks so inconsequentially that they were left in the field when the crime scene was released and were retrieved late the next day.”

Lawyers for Maricela Rueda argued in her post-verdict motion that, “where the record demonstrates that the jury’s deliberative process was compromised, that prejudicial evidence was improperly introduced, or that the proceedings as a whole deprived the defendant of a fair trial, the Court not only has the authority, but the obligation to grant a new trial in the interest of justice.”

Backing up that claim, Rueda’s lawyers emphasized that the government introduced extensive evidence regarding ‘Antifa,’ including “generalized alleged ideology, historical materials, literature, and an expert whose testimony framed Antifa as a dangerous movement.” The Fifth Circuit, which reviews cases from the Northern District of Texas where the trial took place, has repeatedly cautioned against the admission of evidence that invites conviction based on ideology rather than conduct, yet the trial was “saturated with evidence designed to evoke fear, political bias, and guilt by association,” according to Rueda’s lawyers.

Lawyers for Sanchez Estrada, who was accused of transporting and concealing First Amendment-protected material consisting entirely of “literature and expressive content that was not evidence of any crime,” argued in their post-verdict motion that “no link of the materials found in Mr. Sanchez’s home, vehicle, or box was ever established to any codefendant’s case.”

US District Court Judge Mark Pittman is expected to rule on the post-verdict defense motions in the coming days.

The Prairieland cases, involving 19 people charged with 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. After the protest, 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 reportedly released from the hospital shortly afterwards. Authorities have still not provided hospital records to justify these claims, eight months later. Alvarado police arrested ten people in the area, and a manhunt ensued in the subsequent days for another defendant. Nine more defendants were arrested in the days, weeks, and months following the protest.

April 10th - A Dallas man removed Prairieland defendants from group chats. Now he's accused of aiding terrorism

by Penelope Rivera (*KERA*)

Dario Sanchez woke up to the sound of a loudspeaker blaring outside his home on July 15, 2025: "Come out with your hands up."

Before he could finish getting dressed, Sanchez said his door burst off its hinges. The FBI rushed in, handcuffed both Sanchez and his girlfriend and began asking what he knew about a recent shooting that occurred outside an immigration facility in Alvarado.

"They threatened me with 50 years of jail time and told me to tell them about some other people, and I didn't know what the hell they were talking about," Sanchez told *KERA News* during an interview at his home. "I had nothing to do with any of this stuff. But they're coming after me like I'm somehow involved."

Sanchez isn't accused of pulling the trigger or even being at the scene of the shooting. But just a few days earlier, he said he got a visit from a fellow member of the Dallas-Fort Worth chapter of the Socialist Rifle Association named John Thomas. Thomas was asking to be removed from group chats in the messaging app Discord. Sanchez obliged.

That simple act reeled Sanchez into a case that has become the biggest test of President Donald Trump's domestic terrorism designation for "antifa" — short for anti-fascist, but used by the administration as an umbrella term for many left-wing beliefs and groups.

"Antifa" isn't a centralized group with formal leadership, but it's been described in this case as a collection of organizations that believe in anarchy and oppose the U.S. government — and its "presence" may have increased recently, said Errin Martin, a former assistant U.S. attorney in the Northern District of Texas.

While Martin said she can't comment on what ideologies "antifa" may hold, it's normal to see different groups rise within different administrations.

"Political climates change and activism changes," Martin said. "Depending on the political climate at the time, you see more activities from groups within different ideologies."

Some experts dispute whether the president has the power to issue a domestic terrorist designation in the same way he can declare a foreign terrorist designation. But it can help in cases involving charges allegedly motivated by domestic terrorism, Martin said.

"It certainly aids in things like sentencing enhancements, and there is a federal definition of domestic terrorism," Martin said.

Sanchez was charged with tampering or fabricating physical evidence, a third-degree felony, in the wake of the July 4 shooting outside the Prairieland ICE Detention Center.

Prosecutors have called what happened that night a targeted and coordinated attack against law enforcement, and the indictments appear to be the first of their kind.

“It’s just weird to have this whole antifa thing that was a joke like eight years ago,” Sanchez said. “People were cracking jokes about how people think that there’s this group funded by George Soros, and now the FBI director’s running around being like, ‘we got them, we found antifa and it’s a bunch of protesters.’”

'Incomprehensible'

According to court documents unsealed in July, 11 people dressed in all black were shooting fireworks towards Prairieland that night. An Alvarado police officer arrived, and several people began to flee the scene on foot and ignored verbal commands, according to a more recent complaint.

That’s when prosecutors say a person in the woods opened fire, hitting the Alvarado officer once in his neck, with the bullet exited through his back, he told jurors during the other Prairieland defendants' federal trial. That officer has since been treated and released from the hospital.

“This escalation in violence is incomprehensible, and those responsible will be held accountable to the fullest extent of the law,” acting ICE Director Todd M. Lyons said at the time. “This is precisely what we have been warning against, as disinformation and dangerous politically-motivated rhetoric spreads.”

Ten people were arrested that night, and another the following morning. After a 10-day manhunt, the FBI arrested Benjamin Song on July 15. Prosecutors have pointed to Song as the alleged shooter that night.

Seven more people — including Sanchez — were later arrested for their alleged involvement in helping Song escape. A copy of Sanchez’s indictment obtained by *KERA News* accused him of tampering with evidence when he removed Thomas from those group chats and allege he may have removed Song as well.

Sanchez says the chats were primarily used by different chapters of the rifle association to coordinate and build relationships with one another.

“They’re just scooping up as many people as they can and then, you know, holding them up like fish from the lake to say, ‘oh look, I found a terrorist,’” Sanchez said.

With 19 codefendants charged in connection with the case, prosecutors could use that to their advantage, according to Leigha Simonton, former U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Texas.

"It's like dominos — it comes as a unique circumstance that you have so many people who are charged, because that's a lot of leverage for the government to have once they can convince a few of them to play guilty," Simonton told *KERA News* in an interview. "Then the remaining defendants will automatically feel more pressure to plead guilty."

Nine other defendants pleaded not guilty to a mix of federal and state charges. Their federal trial began Feb. 17. Seven defendants pleaded guilty and will be sentenced later this month and next month.

Arrested three times

Sanchez is the only one of the 19 suspects not in custody — but that hasn’t always been the case. He’s been detained three separate times between July and September, all of which his attorneys called wrongful arrests.

Sanchez’s bond for the July 15 arrest was set at \$5 million. Court records show the bond was reduced to \$100,000 and he bailed out Aug. 20.

Then when Sanchez went to a court hearing for his bond conditions Aug. 28, he was rearrested — a Johnson County grand jury indicted him with an additional charge of hindering prosecution of terrorism, a first-degree felony.

Sanchez was released again on a \$150,000 bond the next day, with several bond conditions. Part of those included having his electronic devices monitored for "gun violence, anti-government and any violence in general," according to court documents shared with *KERA News*.

On Sept. 22, Sanchez was notified he had a hearing for a bond increase. When he was on his way to the courthouse, he said he was stopped by Irving police who then held him at gunpoint after he was pulled over.

Sanchez was arrested for a third time for the same two charges, and now had a \$1 million bond.

He was accused of violating his bond conditions over "concerning internet history." Court documents claim the concerning searches included how to melt and make molds out of plastic, researching radio-controlled transmitters, the use of Nintendo Game Boy batteries as power sources for trigger devices, temperature and pressure sensors, and various small electronic circuit boards.

But according to his attorney, Frank Sellers, the internet searches that landed Sanchez back in jail were conducted by his bond supervisor — not Sanchez.

For example, although court documents claim Sanchez searched, "is the 900 mAh battery from a (Game Boy) capable of being used in a trigger device," Sellers said that was actually a search from the supervisor, who was cross-referencing real searches from Sanchez to see if they could be used to make explosives.

Coyle then took a screenshot of his own search history and sent it to the district attorney, leading to a violation of Sanchez's probation and his rearrest, Sellers said.

The attorney maintains Sanchez's searches only pertained to gaming and scale car models, and that the screenshot from Coyle's computer clearly did not include the monitoring software that was on Sanchez's phone.

"He's stuck at home trying to find a hobby, something to tinker with," his attorney Frank Sellers told *KERA News*. "And instead of allowing a person to live their lives, Johnson County has thrown him in jail for what George Orwell would call 'thought crime.'"

Sanchez said he knew the search wasn't his and called it "ridiculousness."

"Why would I look that up in the first place?" he said. "Why now of all times? You know, when they tell you that [search] is yours, at first, you're like, 'what possible way could this have happened?' And then I thought, 'wait a minute, there's no way this is mine.'"

KERA News reached out to the bond supervisor, Richard Coyle, who no longer supervises Sanchez and said was not authorized to speak about the case. Johnson County District Attorney Timothy Good did not respond to requests for comment.

Sanchez was re-indicted in December with more specific charges: fabricating or tampering evidence with the intent to impair, along with hindering prosecution of terrorism, court records show.

Sanchez is facing state charges instead of federal charges — something Simonton said is not surprising with the limited amount of evidence of his alleged involvement.

"He is one of the lesser players in this alleged conspiracy or sequence of events," Simonton said. "It could suggest that both the Johnson County's DA's office and the U.S. Attorney's Office understand there is a difference in terms of the amount of evidence in the seriousness of the conduct."

What's next?

Sanchez's trial, initially set for January, has been moved to April 20. He maintains his innocence and hopes the charges can be dropped. His lawyers argue the tampering with evidence charge only applies to physical evidence, not digital.

"I think that people go to law school to learn how to read the law, presuming they know how to read the English language," Sellers, his lawyer, said after a court hearing Jan. 22. "And quite simply, 'digital' and 'physical' don't mean the same thing."

Sanchez also said he didn't think any Socialist Rifle Association members in attendance the night of the shooting expected any gun violence. Multiple defendants from that night have also told *KERA News* it was meant to be a noise demonstration and peaceful protest in support of people detained by ICE.

An email shared with *KERA News* shows SRA's DFW chapter has been suspended by its national director amid the ongoing cases.

Sanchez said the group was more than just a rifle club. It also taught other skills like emergency medical training, which he said was crucial in his role as a now-former teacher.

"We would teach people what to do if someone's been shot, how to treat that injury up until EMS arrives and they can get to a hospital," Sanchez said. "As a teacher, that's a real big piece of mind thing for me because, unfortunately, my line of work involves a lot of worrying about if a mass shooting might happen."

But now, he's worried he may not ever return to teaching.

"I can't imagine a principal reading all this stuff about me and thinking it's a good idea to hire me regardless of my innocence," Sanchez said. "It's just hard to account for all the ways that this has just torn my life apart."

31 Mar - Mamdani Names Nonprofit Leader / Ex-Rikers Inmate to Run N.Y.C. Jails

Stanley Richards is taking over as correction commissioner at an inflection point for the city's jails. Mayor Zohran Mamdani also named Dr. Alister Martin to lead the health department.

MORE:

by Maia Coleman and Hurubie Meko (*New York Times*)

Mayor Zohran Mamdani announced a new leader on Saturday to run New York City's Department of Correction, selecting Stanley Richards to helm the agency just days after a federal judge placed a former C.I.A. officer in control of the city's troubled jail complex on Rikers Island.

Mr. Richards, who most recently served as the chief executive of a prisoner advocacy nonprofit, will be the first formerly incarcerated person to lead the Correction Department. He will take the reins at a tense moment, after years of violence and mismanagement at Rikers Island led a federal judge to appoint Nicholas Deml, the former C.I.A. officer, to oversee the complex.

As the correction commissioner, Mr. Richards will face a slate of mounting issues in the city's jail system — including a growing number of in-custody deaths and an impending deadline to close Rikers Island — along with a new power structure that limits the commissioner's and the mayor's authority over the jails.

"I will turn to Stanley as we work to build a city where justice is at the heart of our corrections system, where every Department of Correction employee and incarcerated New Yorker is safe," Mr. Mamdani said during a news conference at the Bronx Museum of the Arts.

At the conference, the mayor also named Dr. Alister Martin to lead the city's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and made three other commissioner appointments — to the Department of Youth and Community Development, the Department of Veterans' Services and the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings.

Mr. Richards will replace Lynelle Maginley-Liddie, whom Mayor Eric Adams appointed in 2023. The new commissioner was incarcerated decades ago at Rikers and has spent most of his career at the Fortune Society, a nonprofit that supports former inmates as they re-enter society. According to the group, Mr. Richards began working there in 1991 as a counselor and most recently served as its president and chief executive.

Mr. Richards's appointment is not the first time he has held a high post overseeing the city's jail system.

He was the vice-chair of New York City's Board of Correction, the agency responsible for protecting the rights of incarcerated people, and in 2021, he served briefly as the first deputy commissioner of the Correction Department.

Rikers Island has been under federal oversight since 2015, when the city agreed to settle a class-action lawsuit. The agreement focused on curbing the use of force at the jail and on minimizing violence, which has run rampant inside its walls for years. Laura Taylor Swain, a federal judge, appointed a monitor that year to oversee progress at the complex.

Last May, however, Judge Swain ordered that the jail be taken out of the city's control and placed under the direction of a remediation manager who would report directly to her. This week, she named Mr. Deml, who led the Vermont Corrections Department, to that role, which she has said would have "broad powers."

Mr. Deml will work with Mr. Richards on developing a plan for improvements at the jail, but Mr. Deml will also be given powers traditionally held by the commissioner, Judge Swain has said, complicating Mr. Richards's authority. Mr. Deml will be allowed to hire and fire personnel, change policies and, if he finds that established contracts are impeding his efforts, he can petition the court to override them.

In addition to the altered power structure, Mr. Richards will face a fast-approaching deadline to close Rikers Island and replace it with four smaller borough-based jails, an initiative he oversaw in his previous role at the Correction Department. Under a law passed by the City Council in 2019, Rikers must be shuttered by August 2027, though the city is unlikely to meet that deadline.

The estimated costs for the four jails has risen to \$15.5 billion, a ballooning price tag that arrives as New York faces a steep budget deficit, according to the city comptroller.

In his remarks on Saturday, Mr. Richards described a vision of reform for the department, focused on making the city's lockups safer and on building borough-based jails that "prioritize dignity, opportunity and humanity." He also pledged to increase access to social services for inmates re-entering society.

"Under Mayor Mamdani's leadership we will chart a path of hope, healing and transformation," Mr. Richards said. "His administration made clear that the future of Rikers is not endless confinement, scapegoating or demonizing."

The announcement on Saturday elicited support from public defense organizations, as well as a message of tentative openness from a union representing correction officers. "We have been ready, willing and able to meet and work with anyone, as long as they respect the rights of our correction officers," Benny Boscio, the president of the Correction Officers' Benevolent Association, said in a statement.

Like Mr. Richards, Dr. Martin will take control of the health department at a moment of relative upheaval.

Thousands of city nurses went on strike on Jan. 12, walking out of some of New York's top hospitals amid a bitter labor dispute. The effort is the largest nurses' strike in the city in decades and nearly 15,000 workers have remained on strike since, enduring frigid conditions on the picket line as they push for increased staffing, more security and better pay.

In his role as health commissioner, Dr. Martin will have no influence over the strike or the hospitals, which are regulated by the state.

But Dr. Martin, an emergency room physician and White House fellow under President Joseph R. Biden Jr., could face headwinds of his own.

Dr. Martin will have to convince parents to continue vaccinating their children at high rates, even as the federal government overhauls the childhood vaccine schedule and sows doubts about the necessity of many vaccines. He will also be tasked with ensuring that the city is prepared for the next pandemic, even as many health department employees with experience in fighting outbreaks have departed in recent years.

On Saturday, Dr. Martin said he would focus not only on keeping New Yorkers healthy but also on ensuring that they remained insured and housed.

"We're going to prove that public health is not just about disease, it's about dignity," he said.

Mr. Mamdani also appointed Sandra Escamilla-Davies as commissioner of the Department of Youth and Community Development; Yesenia Mata as commissioner of the Department of Veterans' Services; and Vilda Vera Mayuga as commissioner of the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings.

After the news conference concluded, Mr. Richards's wife, Satara Richards, said it was a powerful moment.

"It's history in the making," Ms. Richards said, adding: "No matter what change is possible, no matter where it comes from or where it's going. And I support my husband 100 percent because he's a person of change."

2 Apr - Oregon DOC is actively disappearing Malik Muhammad

After over a week without any answers, we were finally able to locate our dear friend Malik, who was moved to a prison in South Carolina.

MORE:

In the wake of a call-in campaign to get Malik out of solitary confinement (once again), something even more alarming happened. On Monday March 30th, 2026, a member of Malik's support team realized they disappeared from the prison messaging app GettingOut. Similarly, the inmate search database for the state of Oregon showed no record of them.

Family and friends have been frantically calling Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution (EOCI) and various contact numbers for Oregon Department of Corrections (ODOC). State representatives were very reluctant to provide any information, though one in the Office of Population Management stated that Malik was moved to a "confidential location" but refused to specify where or for what reason.

Prisoners do not simply disappear from state records; they do not disappear from a state prison with no documentation about a transfer or their current whereabouts.

As of this moment, after dozens and dozens of phone calls, we have no idea where Malik is located. We have not been able to speak with them since they entered solitary confinement.

Nobody at the federal level with the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) has acknowledged they now have custody of Malik. They are just gone and nobody is saying a word.

We have plenty of experience with the long stretches where Malik has been cut off from loves ones, refused any communications while enduring the torture that is extensive time in the hole. We are aware of the power and cruelty exercised by the state on a regular basis. But this is entirely different; we are scared. We know nothing about Malik's condition, location, current circumstances, or how / why ODOC has taken the extraordinary steps to block all access and information about our beloved friend.

April 7th - Update on Malik Muhammad

DOC cut Malik's hair – their locs. They transferred them to South Carolina – even farther away from friends, family and their attorney.

Prison officials hate Malik's identity and principles and are punishing them in every way they can. Isolating and terrorizing and stripping away any semblance of stability or due process.

If you know good journalists interested in covering these exceptional injustices, please DM us. We are so grateful for the excellent coverage thus far but we need more visibility.

The folks in Malik's corner have been doing prisoner support work for many years (decades in certain cases); these particular circumstances have shocked and infuriated us all.

April 9th - Malik Muhammad moved to South Carolina in rare Interstate Transfer

We got no information from ODOC, BOP, or any other DOC—the only reason we were able to find them is because they were able to send a letter. They still haven't gotten an attorney call.

Malik is currently being held in South Carolina. ODOC chose to send them as far as they could away from their lawyer and support base, to another state carceral system on the complete other side of the country. This is a blatant attempt to isolate Malik and break down their support system. Moving an inmate from one state system to another like this is highly unusual and represents an alarming escalation.

In the short time they've been in South Carolina, Malik has been horrifically mistreated, with SCDC cutting off their hair and forcing them into an overcrowded cell where they have to sleep on the ground. They are currently being held at the Kirkland Reception and Evaluation Center (a holdover facility) and they have no idea how long they will be there before they are transferred elsewhere. Some inmates have been kept there for months and months with extremely limited access to basic things like showers and comms. Holdover life is in many ways as bad or worse than solitary, since inmates have no property, no programming, and few chances to leave their cells. We know from Casey Goonan's account of their recent prolonged holdover time at Mendoza what a toll this time can take. We don't know how long Malik will be at their current location, but we hope it won't be long.

The recent escalation in Malik's treatment comes as the state has dramatically increased repression of antifascists. It's only been a couple of weeks since the verdict in the first Prairieland court case showed that the state will use torture, intimidation, and blatant lies to get its way when it comes to repressing antifascism and advancing its "Antifa Scare" agenda. Malik's removal to SC is yet another example of the state targeting them for their identity and their antifascist politics.

Malik only gets two envelopes a month and has no other access to comms at the moment, but you can still write to them to express your support.

3 Apr - Marius Mason to be released to halfway house 5.4!

Political prisoner Marius Mason — known for his art, environmentalism, anarchism, and trans advocacy, among other things — is scheduled to be released from prison in May 2026 to a halfway house in Detroit.

MORE:

At this time we don't know what restrictions will be in place, nor for how long. We recognize the many people who have advocated, supported, and worked toward this outcome, and we hope this transition is met with dignity, safety, and care for everyone involved.

We will share more details as they become available. In the meantime please consider donating what you can to Marius's support fund at supportmariusmason.org/support

April 6th - Statement from Marius Mason on his May 2026 release

It feels like this will actually happen at this point — so I finally think it's time to reach out and say thank to all of you who have been steadfastly in my corner, backing me up and helping me stay centered all of these 17 years incarcerated in the FBOP. I will be leaving prison in May and returning to my home state of Michigan, back to Detroit.

This time would not have been the same without you all — and I have met so many people who had no one to turn to while they did their time, so I know what a difference it made to always have my people holding me up. And there has been a lot to get through, what with advocating for my transition, at each step — I knew that I had legal advice, medical information and material support. Thank you so much, I owe you all more than I can ever repay.

I have tried for my own part to be a support and comfort to the people around me in each place the BOP put me, passing on the love I have been shown.

What I really want you all to know is how incredibly proud it made me to be part of a community of resistance that stood together. It impressed the people I met in prison for so much love and solidarity to be expressed so powerfully for someone who was behind the walls.

It demonstrated that in our movement, though we were physically separated, we could stay together in spirit, that solidarity and love are action words, and that we are all in it for the long haul.

Change does not come easy, but solidarity is when we flex our strength as a people. I don't really know what comes next, but I hope I can still serve my community in some way to help. I have been studying to be a writing tutor through my Yale Prison Education Initiative scholarship — and hope to volunteer at the Literacy Project in Detroit. I have earned a Paralegal Degree and studied immigration law, and hope to be of service in that capacity, also.

So much to do, but many hands make the work easy! Thank you, thank you, a million times over — thank you! As Elton John used to sing — I'm Still Standin' (yeah, yeah, yeah).

See you on the outside!

5 Apr - See you may 11th-14th

Cara and Celeste had a pretrial conference recently, and dates for trial were set!

MORE:

May 11th will be jury selection, and the trial will be May 12th-14th. They'd appreciate people traveling to Sunbury PA to be there in person for court support. There will be more info about logistics for court support posted as the trial date gets closer, including a new chat for people planning to attend. For now, consider blocking that week off if you think you can be there!

Also, trial will cost additional money. Please donate and/or share the fundraiser if you can!

Fundraiser link: phillyabc.org/northumberland-2
Venmo: @PhillyAntiRepression with note "for cc"

6 Apr - Priscilla Grim needs help

March brought meaningful movement in Priscilla's case, but not relief.

MORE:

On December 30, 2025, Judge Kevin Farmer dismissed the racketeering charges against all 61 people swept into the Stop Cop City RICO case, including Priscilla. Then, on March 6, 2026, a new judge heard motions from Priscilla and 13 others seeking dismissal of unindicted and unprosecuted "dt" charges.

That matters; it is real progress. But the most odious allegations still hang over defendants' lives.

Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr's office is working on a RICO appeal and may seek re-indictment, extending a process that has already consumed three years. The legal threat is not over. Neither is the emotional, political, and financial toll.

And right now, the need is urgent: Priscilla needs to raise \$615 to finish paying March rent while also starting to cover April rent and living expenses.

Political repression is not only what happens in court. It reaches into the basic conditions of a person's life. It makes rent harder to cover, work harder to sustain, and everyday stability harder to hold onto.

Even when charges are dismissed, that does not undo what has already been set in motion. The financial pressure remains. The uncertainty remains. The strain does not end when a hearing does. In many ways, that prolonged instability is part of the punishment.

Priscilla has given years of care, political commitment, and creative labor to movements and the community. She should not have to carry this alone now.

Please give what you can to help her close the gap on March rent and face April with a little more room to breathe. Every gift helps. Every bit of support matters: supportpriscilla.org/#donate

7 Apr - For those who insist on risking everything

Chile: Please read the latest by political prisoner Francisco Solar.

MORE:

via Act for Freedom Now!

For those whom neither repression nor prison can subdue.

For those who, knowing that little or nothing of the oppressive reality will change, still risk everything for a few moments of freedom. True freedom from the moment you decide to confront power first-hand.

For those who don't adapt.

For those who are not satisfied with criticism which, no matter how radical it might be, remains just words.

For those who do not expect others to take the risks, but take the reins and decide to attack.

For those who don't rest on their laurels after actions already taken.

For those who believe anarchy means doing what you say.

For those who gamble and throw themselves into practicing revolutionary violence.

For those who thrill to conspire and attack.

For those who, ultimately, cannot be tamed and do not contemplate passivity in their lives.

For those who stubbornly insist on risking everything.

For Sara and Alessandro who led a life of struggle and whom anarchy will not forget.

7 Apr - Support Tinka and Zulu

Germany: Tinka and Zulu are two humans from so called Germany that have suffered a heavy raid by the cops linked to an investigation on the destruction of hunting towers and other hunting infrastructure.

MORE:

Their phones, laptops and other tech infrastructure were seized, and Zulu was evicted from their house by the landlord due to the raid. They are being investigated under § 129 (formation of a criminal organization), which is an extreme legal overreach but it is increasingly being used against climate activists in Germany.

They are asking for support to face the difficulties of surviving repression by the state, so if you can help them in any way, please drop some coins in their GoFundMe: gofund.me/232a07874

8 Apr - Finally Free, Leonard Peltier Offers Intergenerational Wisdom for Resistance

The beautiful and painful thing about organizing is that sometimes you're part of multigenerational fights that you don't see won in your lifetime. For many, freeing Leonard Peltier was one of those fights.

MORE:

by Nick Tilsen (NPQ)

Five decades ago, Indigenous leader, activist, and revolutionary Leonard Peltier was illegally convicted of killing an FBI agent and wrongfully imprisoned for 49 years and two months. Many people who fought for his freedom passed on to the spirit world before the remainder of his sentence was finally commuted by President Biden on January 20, 2025, before Biden left office. It is one of the greatest privileges of my life that I got to see Leonard's freedom and help carry him home.

"Thank you...for being able to fight for my freedom. But what's more important than that is that you continue to fight for your land and to continue to fight for your people and all people."

On December 1, 2025, NDN Collective's LANDBACK for the People podcast released an episode on Leonard Peltier. In that episode, I interviewed Leonard himself and reflected on my lifelong relationship to his freedom—from writing him a letter at age 13 promising to fight for him, to coordinating logistics and care to get him back to his homelands at the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa in Belcourt, ND. But like many Indigenous people, my connection to him extends to before I was even born.

My grandfather, Ken Tilsen, provided legal support to members of the American Indian Movement (AIM) in the early days of its organization, and my mother, JoAnn Tall, was part of the Oglala Lakota people who invited AIM to first come to Pine Ridge during the 1970s. My parents met at the occupation and siege at Wounded Knee in 1973, and my grandfather helped found the Wounded Knee Legal Defense Committee. And so, years before I was born, my grandfather was part of the people who helped assemble the legal team to fight for Leonard Peltier.

Leonard responded to my letter all those years ago. He wrote, "Thank you, young brother, for being able to fight for my freedom. But what's more important than that is that you continue to fight for your land and to continue to fight for your people and all people."

Peltier's Impact on Indigenous Organizing

As I interviewed Leonard in person for the podcast last year (an honor of my lifetime), he was generous, sharing with us details about his life beginning when he was nine years old in a boarding school in Wahpeton, ND. He described the profound cruelty he and his schoolmates experienced there, where the children were beaten if they spoke their languages or practiced their cultures. Leonard described trying to escape the school at age 10, almost drowning in the attempt—a move that he describes as his first act of resistance.

Leonard shed light on the Termination Era and Indian Relocation Act days in the 1950s and 1960s, when the United States government was terminating the federal status of federally recognized tribes in order to cut off tribal resources. They called it relocation because they were taking people from the reservation and then relocating them, which is why 75 percent of the population of Native people today live in cities. Leonard described how his reservation, Turtle Mountain, successfully resisted Termination, and, in turn, inspired hundreds of tribes to fight back, resulting in the end of Termination altogether.

Later, Leonard talked about joining AIM in the 1970s in response to witnessing police brutality against a young Native woman. He talked about how the group would go into peaceful actions that involved things like sit-ins at the Bureau of Indian Affairs—to which the cops would respond by attacking the protesters and then characterizing them as dangerous. He described how AIM functioned as a security force for tribal leaders, chiefs, and elders there to minimize harm and act as a political muscle in fights for things like housing and broken treaties.

When I thanked Leonard for his commitment and sacrifice to helping the people, telling him we wouldn't have the Indigenous organizing foundation we stand on today without it, his response was this:

I wasn't the only one though. I was just one of the people that took an oath to fight for the people. There was a lot of people that fought out there, gave their lives up and will probably never even be mentioned, but there was a lot of them. And I wanted to say to them people and their families, thank you. Thank you for standing up, showing me how to stand up.

"I want you to have a good life. I want you to have a better life than I had...I'm sorry to tell you this, but if you don't get up and fight, it ain't going to happen....You have to resist for your children and your grandchildren."

The Generations Worth Fighting For

Leonard sees a clear connection between Native people of Turtle Island and the Palestinian people. In that same interview, he said:

Look what they're doing in Palestine. They're doing the same thing they did to us....So it hasn't stopped and it won't stop as long as we continue to deny these things happened. These things did happen. They did this to us. This is why we should be identifying with the Palestine people. What they're doing to them is outrageous. It's crimes against any kind of humanity there ever was in this world.

When I asked if Leonard had a message for young Indigenous people, he said, "If they terminate our treaties, we no longer exist. We no longer exist as a people. So, we have to make damn sure that we don't get our treaties terminated."

He added, "I want you to have a good life. I want you to have a better life than I had. And I want you to be able to live in freedom and everything like this. But I'm sorry to tell you this, but if you don't get up and fight, it ain't going to happen....You have to resist for your children and your grandchildren."

Before the interview concluded, he offered a heartfelt message:

I won't be around much longer, but I'm going to continue to speak this way because it's going to be what's going to save us from total extermination. But I know we can win....I know there's a fighting generation behind me and I can die and pass on knowing that the resistance hasn't stopped....That's what I believe in my heart.

Throughout all my work, I hold gratitude for the generations before us close to my heart. For Leonard, and for all the ones who came before him. Leonard's freedom is a testament that we have to continue to fight and rise up. I believe we can—and must—continue to resist with both love and fierceness held in our hearts.

9 Apr - Judge Compares Federal Bureau of Prisons to “Soviet Gulag”

In a scathing ruling, a federal judge lambasted the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) for neglecting the medical needs of incarcerated people, comparing federal lock-ups to the “Soviet Gulag.”

MORE:

by Elizabeth Weill-Greenberg (*The Appeal*)

“Outside medical referrals are like Solzhenitsyn’s sick bay in the Soviet Gulag: a coveted but nearly inaccessible refuge for which only prisoners near death qualify for admission,” U.S. District Judge Roy B. Dalton wrote in his order granting compassionate release to a woman on home confinement in Florida.

In 2021, the woman was sentenced to eight years in prison. In 2025, the BOP moved her to home confinement.

On January 16, 2026, she filed a motion requesting compassionate release after a doctor found lumps in both breasts and blood discharge from her nipples, according to the judge’s order.

The doctor concluded she was at high risk for breast cancer and gave her an “urgent referral” to a breast surgeon. In a letter submitted to the court, her doctor wrote that “evaluation by a breast surgeon is ‘medically necessary and urgent.’”

However, the BOP waited weeks to schedule an appointment with a general surgeon, not a breast surgeon.

The government opposed her request for compassionate release, telling the court that “there does not appear to be any documented emergency.”

In a hearing held in February, the judge disagreed with the BOP’s assessment, ordering the agency to bring her to see a breast surgeon by March 27.

“To the surprise of no one, the BOP did not do what it was ordered to do,” Dalton wrote in his order.

In a statement to *The Appeal*, the BOP said the agency “does not comment on pending litigation or matters that are the subject of legal proceedings,” and that “for privacy, safety, and security reasons, we do not discuss any incarcerated individual’s conditions of confinement or specific release plans.”

Unfortunately, as Dalton wrote in his ruling, her experience is far from unique. Lawsuits and government investigations have detailed numerous instances of medical neglect in federal prisons. In 2023, David Blakeney, who was incarcerated at USP-Canaan in Pennsylvania, died from a “treatable, highly preventable ulcer,” according to a complaint filed last year by his mother. At the time of his death, he was 32.

For months, prison staff allegedly ignored his worsening symptoms, including excruciating abdominal pain and rectal bleeding. The complaint alleges that as his mental and physical health worsened, staff tortured him. Shortly before his death, staff allegedly kept him chained to a bed in four-point restraints for close to two straight weeks, according to the complaint.

“They repeatedly pepper-sprayed him, sent him to solitary confinement, punched and kicked him, and left him in dehumanizing and painful restraints—all of which exacerbated the ulcer and prevented him from getting the medical care that would have saved his life,” the complaint says.

In another case in 2020, Frederick Mervin Bardell sought compassionate release based on the high likelihood that he had colon cancer, according to a government investigation into his death. Bardell’s petition for compassionate release ended up before Judge Dalton, who initially denied the request based on the BOP’s assurances that Bardell was receiving adequate care in custody.

About four months later, Dalton granted Bardell’s request and ordered his release.

But Bardell's ordeal was not yet over. The federal agency arranged for another prisoner to drop off Bardell at the airport. He was left at the curb without a wheelchair. By the time he arrived home in Florida, his clothes were soiled with excrement and blood. He died nine days later from metastatic colorectal cancer.

After Bardell's death, Dalton held the BOP in contempt of court for misleading him about the seriousness of Bardell's condition. Dalton requested that the Department of Justice's Office of the Inspector General (OIG) investigate "the conditions of Bardell's confinement and treatment," as well as any "misrepresentations" made to the Court in connection with Bardell's case.

In January, about five years after his death, OIG released its report.

Dalton had initially denied Bardell's petition "[b]ased, largely, on the Government's assurance that Mr. Bardell's condition had not been determined to be critical and that he was receiving adequate care," according to the OIG report. However, this determination "relied on the government's inaccurate representation about the BOP's capabilities."

The judge referenced the OIG report in his ruling, writing that BOP "delayed scheduling urgent medical appointments, leading to [Bardell's] death by treatable cancer."

When asked for comment on the OIG report, BOP told *The Appeal* in an email that the "matter has been carefully reviewed and is informing improvements regarding internal controls, interdisciplinary coordination, and the Reduction in Sentence (RIS) process."

"It is the mission of the Bureau of Prisons to operate facilities that are safe, secure, and humane," the agency said. "The BOP takes seriously its duty to protect the individuals entrusted to our custody, as well as maintain the safety of correctional staff and the community."

Elected officials and government agencies have repeatedly sounded the alarm about dangerously substandard medical care in federal lock-ups, which has been exacerbated by understaffed prisons.

According to a 2023 OIG report, 21 percent of correctional officer positions were unfilled as of September 2022. In an attempt to address the staffing crisis, the BOP has used nurses, cooks, teachers, and others as guards, a practice known as "augmentation." After the report's release, Congress warned the BOP to limit its use of augmentation, and directed the agency to have at least two officers on duty in each housing unit. However, many prisons have failed to comply with Congress's request, according to lawmakers.

Earlier this year, four Democratic members of Congress sent a letter to the BOP director about the understaffing crisis, writing that it has further restricted "the availability of medical and mental health care." Without a sufficient number of staff, many prisons rely on lockdowns that "disrupt scheduled medical treatment and impede the timely response to medical and psychiatric emergencies."

The lawmakers wrote that they learned of one man who had a heart attack and had to wait an hour for help because of understaffing. In another case, a person's dental appointment was rescheduled 14 times. The delays led to "more serious medical issues that could have been avoided had appropriate treatment been provided when originally scheduled," according to their letter.

In Dalton's ruling, he bemoaned the BOP's refusal to change.

"Nothing seems to move the nation's federal prison system operators to improve their response to the urgent medical needs of the federal prison population," Dalton wrote. "Court orders go unread or ignored. OIG reports are dismissed, recommendations unheeded. Sanctions brook no change."

9 Apr - Trump Officials Push Allies to Pursue Antifa and Far Left as Terrorists

When senior Western officials met in Ottawa last month to discuss potential terrorism threats in light of the U.S.-Israeli war against Iran, a top State Department counterterrorism official delivered an unexpected message.

MORE:

by Jack Nicas, Alan Feuer, Matina Stevis-Gridneff, Edward Wong and Jim Tankersley (*New York Times*)
The United States was as concerned as always about Islamist terrorism, said the official, Monica A. Jacobsen, according to a copy of her prepared remarks reviewed by *The New York Times* and three officials briefed on the meeting. But, she told her counterparts from Europe, Canada and Australia, the Trump administration also wanted more attention on what it believed was an insidious, underestimated threat: the far left.

Western governments must combat “antifa and far-left terrorism,” Ms. Jacobsen’s prepared remarks asserted, casting the effort as an evolution in counterterrorism following the “global war on terror.” Her prepared speech defined far-left terrorism to include threats from communists, Marxists, anarchists, anticapitalists and those with “eco-extremist” and “other self-identified antifascist ideologies.”

“It is important to recognize their actions as political terrorism rather than mere protest or criminality,” said her prepared remarks, though it was unclear if she delivered them exactly as written. As evidence, the speech pointed to left-wing protesters who had recently clashed with the police in Italy.

Ms. Jacobsen’s appeals were part of a sweeping new effort by the White House to press foreign governments and embassies abroad to join its fight against what it calls far-left terrorists. The Trump administration is deploying its global counterterrorism machine against far-left movements like antifa — shorthand for “antifascist” — despite offering little evidence they present a dire threat to U.S. citizens.

This article is based on internal State Department documents and interviews with current and former U.S. officials, as well as officials in foreign governments that were asked to aid the effort, all of whom spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive security issues and closed meetings.

A leader of the initiative is Sebastian Gorka, the senior counterterrorism director on President Trump’s National Security Council. He has pushed to designate more far-left groups abroad as terrorist organizations, to pressure foreign allies to investigate the groups and to search for connections between them and Americans.

In November, the State Department took the first major step in the strategy by designating four leftist groups in Europe — two in Greece, one in Germany and another in Italy — as terrorist organizations. None of the groups has been known to have plotted attacks on Americans in the past decade, which is usually a criterion for such a designation.

Although the designations generally impose financial restrictions, the administration could try to use them to expand the powers of the government to surveil, investigate and prosecute left-wing activists on American soil. The administration is already targeting many activists on the left.

Mr. Gorka has repeatedly told U.S. officials that “there are no lone wolves,” according to two officials who have witnessed the comments, in urging them to find links between left-wing extremists abroad and Americans, which could create a legal avenue to investigate U.S. citizens.

That possibility has alarmed current and former U.S. officials who worry the Trump administration is politicizing counterterrorism efforts, with the ultimate aim of punishing Mr. Trump’s opponents at home, potentially with charges of supporting terrorism. The unusually expansive way in which the administration has defined far-left extremism, they warned, could allow investigators to use slender connections to people overseas to go after Americans who have no real history of violence.

“They are trying to invent antifa as an international threat to tie it to groups and individuals in the United States,” said Tom Joscelyn, a counterterrorism expert who helped write the congressional report on the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol. “It suggests that the administration is further down the path of twisting the counterterrorism machinery of the U.S. government to going after domestic political opponents than people realize.”

Redirecting Counterterrorism

The current and former officials also worry that the administration is funneling counterterrorism resources toward left-wing extremists just as intelligence is showing an increase in potential threats to Americans related to the Iran war. It comes after the teams at the F.B.I. and the Justice Department responsible for addressing those threats have already been stretched thin by a year of firings, resignations and reassignments.

The strategy reflects a shift in U.S. counterterrorism. The Biden administration identified right-wing extremists like white supremacists as the chief threat. The Trump administration has now largely redirected those resources toward far-left groups like antifa.

Over the past decade, right-wing extremists have killed 112 people across 152 terrorist attacks in the United States, according to an analysis by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a bipartisan research institution. Over the same period, left-wing extremists killed 13 people over 35 attacks, according to the analysis, while jihadist attacks left 82 dead.

Christopher A. Wray, the F.B.I. director appointed by Mr. Trump, testified to Congress during the Biden administration that the top domestic terrorism threat facing the nation came from “racially or ethnically motivated extremists,” particularly white supremacists. He noted that antigovernment extremists from both the right and the left were also a significant threat.

The State Department said in a statement that it was working with international partners to counter “antifa-aligned terrorism,” including by targeting the funding and travel of violent leftist groups. The State Department has offered a \$10 million reward for information that helps disrupt such groups’ finances. The department said many European nations shared its concerns, though it did not name the countries.

Mr. Gorka, a firebrand conservative commentator, has been coordinating the new push with Thomas G. DiNanno, the under secretary of state for arms control and international security.

At a counterterrorism meeting in Budapest in December, Mr. DiNanno expounded on his belief that antifa is a terrorist group. “Antifa is a false prophet that embraces intimidation, censorship and, ultimately, violence. Antifa is fascism,” he said. “We have learned from our decades-long struggles with Al Qaeda and ISIS that we must stop threats from this destructive cancer before it metastasizes.”

He applauded Hungary for pushing the European Union to designate antifa as a terrorist organization. Many Trump administration officials see Hungary and Viktor Orban, its prime minister, as a cornerstone of a transnational hard-right movement against liberal values. Mr. Gorka also has family roots in Hungary and ties to hard-right groups there.

In a text message, Mr. Gorka said the reporting in this article was “wrong” but did not respond to an email that laid out the findings. Mr. DiNanno did not respond to requests for comment. The State Department referred to his public remarks.

Internal Action

Trump appointees have added antifa to a list of targets laid out in the National Intelligence Priorities Framework, a classified document that the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and other

agencies use to determine where to focus their resources and attention, according to a current U.S. official and a former one. Antifa has never before appeared on the list, which has included established terrorist organizations like Al Qaeda and the Islamic State.

In September, Mr. Trump signed an executive order labeling antifa a “domestic terrorist organization,” even though there is no such designation in federal law. And in reality, antifa is not a single organization. It is a broad movement of loosely affiliated groups that identify with the antifascist label, and it lacks clear membership or hierarchy. Puck and Reuters earlier reported on some of the administration’s recent moves against antifa.

For months, Mr. Gorka has led a regular counterterrorism meeting with dozens of officials from U.S. security agencies. In those meetings, he has pushed for more attention on antifa, as well as other groups, like transgender activists and undocumented migrants.

Participants were frequently frustrated that the focus on left-wing groups was distracting from more pressing threats, such as ones tied to Iran and the Islamic State, according to two officials who have attended.

In an effort to attract support, the State Department is seeking to host a May workshop for foreign law-enforcement officials in The Hague to teach them about the dangers of far-left groups and how to counter them, according to an internal State Department document, a current official and a former official.

Planned invitees include officials from Canada, Britain, Germany, France, Italy, Hungary, Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, India and Indonesia, according to the document. So far, U.S. officials have received less interest than they had hoped for, the two officials said.

The State Department is also planning a summit on the topic in Washington in July for foreign government officials.

The proposed gatherings resemble an earlier program known as the Counterterrorism Law Enforcement Forum, which brought together international investigators largely to discuss the threat of right-wing extremists, said Ian Moss, a State Department counterterrorism official under President Joseph R. Biden Jr. The Trump administration shut down that program, but now appears to be trying to revive it and aim it at the far left, but without much justification, he said.

The administration has also largely halted a Department of Homeland Security initiative to map networks of far-right groups, according to a former department official.

At the same time, the administration has sought to strengthen ties with right-wing groups overseas and to bolster their standing in their own countries.

Pressuring Allies

In September, days after signing his executive order on antifa, Mr. Trump issued a national security memo that called on the government to counter violence fueled by ideological beliefs, including anticapitalism, anti-Christianity and hostility toward “American views on family, religion and morality.”

In November, Secretary of State Marco Rubio pointed to similar concerns when he designated the four European groups as terrorists. The State Department said the groups had all carried or threatened violent acts, including planting bombs at government buildings. Yet the acts the department outlined in a fact sheet were a far cry from the violence carried out by established terrorist organizations, which often aims for mass fatalities.

At the same time, U.S. diplomats have pushed governments abroad, particularly in Europe, to investigate the far left, telling them terrorist groups were operating within their borders.

U.S. allies have been unsure about how to respond.

The two Greek organizations newly designated as terrorist groups are seen as small and not particularly active, a senior Greek government official said. Yet to avoid upsetting the Trump administration, the Greek authorities did not oppose the U.S. designation, the official said.

Michalis Chrysochoidis, Greece's minister in charge of counterterrorism, told a Greek news outlet in November that antifa is not a terrorist group. "Antifa exists across Europe, including in Greece," he said. "But, until this day, they have been activists. They have not engaged in any terrorist activity."

German officials were similarly flummoxed when the State Department designated a small, loosely organized group called "Antifa Ost" as a terrorist organization. In its designation, the department noted that some of the group's members used hammers to attack far-right protesters in Hungary.

German officials declined to call the group a present danger.

"The potential threat posed by the group has recently decreased considerably," Sarah Frühauf, a government spokeswoman, told reporters in November. "The ringleaders and particularly violent members of the group have either already been convicted or are in custody."

One group in Germany expressed delight at the designation: the far-right Alternative for Germany party, or AfD, which German intelligence has labeled a "suspected extremist" group. In interviews, several AfD members said they had pushed the State Department to apply a terrorist designation to Antifa Ost, and boasted that the agency's move was a sign of their influence.

18 Apr - Saxapahaw Prison Books Packing Party

WHAT: Book packing

WHEN: 4:00pm, Saturday, April 18th (and every other Saturday)

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

COST: FREE

MORE:

Join Saxapahaw Prison Books to get packages of books loaded up and sent out to prisoners.