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Updates for October 14th

30 Sept - Leonard Peltier Is Finally (Mostly) Free And Has A Lot To Say

In a sit-down interview, the Indigenous rights activist reflects on his nearly 50 years in prison, why he thinks Biden bucked the FBI to free him, and how tribes are "in danger" under Trump.

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by Jennifer Bendery (*HuffPost*)

After living in a windowless, concrete box for nearly 50 years, Leonard Peltier is discovering the little joys that come with being in a two-bedroom house of his own.

He can see the sun. He has a refrigerator, and a TV with more channels than he can count. He has his now-cherished recliner, the fancy kind that lays you all the way back and, with some navigating on a remote control, pushes you up and right out of the seat. It's where Peltier, who just turned 81, is content to spend most of his days, nestled in with a fleece blanket as a home health aide brings him rounds of coffee.

"Trying to look for another word, but I can't find any, so I'll go with the same one: awesome," said Peltier, a term he used repeatedly to describe his life over the past seven months.

Until January, Peltier was the longest-serving political prisoner in America. An activist for Indigenous rights, he was convicted in 1977 of murdering two FBI agents, which he has always denied doing. In fact, there was never evidence Peltier killed anyone. And as he sat in prison for all those years — his story becoming the subject of countless books and films and high school assignments, the injustice of his case triggering demands for his release by international human rights leaders, legal experts, politicians, Indigenous leaders and celebrities — Peltier came to symbolize something much bigger than himself.

Between his early years of trauma in an Indian boarding school, his years of activism with the American Indian Movement and the past five decades spent behind bars, Peltier, for many, became the embodiment of so many of the injustices Native Americans and tribes have faced at the hands of the U.S. government. And the fact that he survived all of it, with a resolute attitude of resistance, has made some hail Peltier as a hero.

But not everyone. As much as there had been political will to release him, there had also been political calls for him to stay incarcerated for the rest of his life. Sitting in his cell early this year, after decades of U.S. presidents in both parties passing him over for clemency, Peltier didn't think President Joe Biden would let him go home, either.

"I had already given up," he said in an extensive interview with *HuffPost* at his home. "So I went and laid on my bunk, and I was thinking, 'Well? This is where I die, I guess.' Because I wasn't getting the medical attention I needed. And I was really feeling sick and weak, and I figured, well? This is it. Because I'm gonna die here."

But a nearby inmate who was listening to his radio heard the news of Biden's clemency announcement, and shouted from down the hall, "You got it! You got it, Leonard!" A month later, he was walking out of his Florida prison and boarding a private plane home.

Peltier keeps Biden's clemency order framed and prominently on display in his living room. But he doesn't think the president freed him out of mercy or a sense of justice. He thinks Biden caved to pressure from

influential Democrats and Indigenous leaders, including his own interior secretary, Deb Haaland, to let him go home.

“I don’t think he did it because he loved me or anything,” Peltier said, shrugging. “I think it was because it would have been bad politics. ... I really didn’t expect anything from him.”

A lot has changed since Peltier went to prison in 1976. He’s essentially been in a time capsule for 50 years, and is playing catch-up to all the advances in technology he’s missed. He’s talked to Alexa. He can’t believe how savvy iPhones are, after years of using prison pay phones. Modern cars are especially wild to Peltier, considering most people he knew didn’t even have cars when he was growing up — and some were still using horses and wagons.

“I can’t believe it,” he said. “I mean, goddamn, some got everything in them.”

But some things have not changed at all. His relentless focus on fighting the U.S. government’s efforts to take civil and legal rights away from Indigenous people and tribes, and lifting up the health and well-being of Native communities, is just as firm as when he went into prison. In the 1960s, he co-owned an auto shop in Seattle that used the upper level as a halfway house for Indigenous people struggling with alcohol addiction. Today, Peltier is eager to work with Native youth to stem drug and alcohol abuse.

His activism with the American Indian Movement in the early 1970s was largely focused on stopping police brutality and defending tribal sovereignty, or the inherent rights of federally recognized tribes to govern themselves, independent of the U.S. government. Tribes entered into hundreds of treaties with the government between 1778 and 1871, and they remain the legal framework in which tribes operate today. Generally, these treaties involved exchanging tribal land for promises of government-provided health care and education.

But the U.S. government has a long history of breaking its promises on its treaties with tribes. And looking at the moment we’re in, Peltier is very concerned.

“We’re still in danger,” he said. “[President Donald] Trump is talking about our treaties [being] too old, and they should be abolished and everything like this. If our treaties are abolished, that means us, as a race, have been abolished completely. We don’t exist no more.”

Peltier didn’t specify what treaties he was talking about, but Trump has taken actions this year that undermine tribal sovereignty and treaty rights. In June, he withdrew the U.S. from a 2023 agreement with tribes to restore fish populations in the Columbia River. In April, his administration unsuccessfully tried to challenge birthright citizenship by citing a 19th-century legal precedent that excluded some Native Americans from birthright citizenship. His sweeping cuts to federal spending may have violated treaty rights, too.

“Right now, this is the only thing that we have that’s keeping us recognized as a sovereign people, as a sovereign nation,” Peltier warned. “So, we’re in danger. Nothing has changed there. We’re organizing.”

Organizing has changed too, though. Unlike his days with AIM, when Peltier and his allies were literally in the streets fighting back against police brutality and racism, today’s social justice movement includes a vast network of local, state and national groups demanding action and fighting for systemic changes for Native people and tribes. The National Congress of American Indians speaks for hundreds of tribal governments. The Native American Rights Fund provides legal aid to tribes and people. Grassroots Indigenous-led groups like NDN Collective and Native Organizers Alliance are constantly organizing on issues like voting rights and environmental protections.

Despite Trump’s current efforts to wipe out diversity initiatives in America, the country has shifted over the years, culturally and politically, in support of lifting up Native communities and people. Indigenous people

aren't isolated in their fight for social justice; they have been welcomed into broader advocacy efforts by organizations all around the country focused on strengthening civil rights for Black, brown and LGBTQ+ people.

Biden centered his administration on supporting Native people and tribes. He prioritized a thorough review of the U.S. government's ugly history of Indian boarding schools. He took meaningful actions to protect sacred Indigenous sites and cultural resources, and to address the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women. He canceled the Keystone XL oil pipeline, a major win for tribes and environmentalists, and filled his administration with high-level Indigenous staff, not the least of whom was Haaland.

Peltier said he's impressed with how sophisticated social justice groups have become. The energy behind them, he said, gives him hope for the next generation of activists.

"We're more unified than we [were] when I left," he said. "I'm reorganizing the American Indian Movement, from 'American Indian' to 'American Indigenous.' ... We're getting a lot of good responses. People want to be part of it. All over the country."

It was only on his flight home in February that Peltier, a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, learned his supporters had bought him a house on his reservation.

Leaders of NDN Collective, some of whom joined Peltier on his trip home, had spent months collecting money from supporters nationwide to help him get set up. Some people could only chip in \$5; others gave thousands of dollars. They also bought him a car, so his friends and family — Peltier has limited vision — can drive him around the community.

Peltier said he wanted to cry when he learned what his supporters had done for him, but he "held it all back" because he wanted to look tough.

"I'm supposed to be a warrior, supposed to be a sun dancer, so you can't be crying in public," he said, referring to the Sun Dance religious ceremony practiced in Native cultures in the Great Plains region. "Trying to be a traditionalist, you know? We believe that as warriors, sundance warriors, we don't believe in crying like a baby."

He's taken trips around the community, visiting his old childhood home and attending a recent powwow, where local Indigenous residents danced and celebrated his return. But Peltier seems most happy when he's holding court from his recliner. His favorite thing to do is "just bullshitting like this," he said, and that's what he's been doing for months, hosting a steady stream of visitors at his house, many of whom are strangers who traveled to this remote town 20 miles south of the Canadian border to bring him gifts and well wishes.

His house, which sits at the end of a nondescript dirt road, feels more like a museum than a private residence. Every inch of wall space in his living room is covered with vibrant, elaborate paintings made by Peltier over the last 50 years, before his eyes went bad. Rows of colorful beaded necklaces hang from the walls, a backdrop for one apparently very effective strip of fly tape dangling from the ceiling. Across the room from his recliner, a large bookshelf is overflowing with feathers, painted animal skulls, sage sticks, faded photographs of ancestors and friends, and unopened packets of Gambler pipe tobacco.

He has even more of his paintings on display in his bedroom — he keeps dozens of others locked up in safes — in addition to dream catchers and a poster from Haaland's 2025 campaign for New Mexico governor. A piece of paper is taped to his bedroom door with a printed message: "DO NOT ENTER." Just below it, in tiny letters, it reads, "UNLESS INVITED."

Peltier can get around his house with a cane or a little assistance from someone, but most of what he needs is within arm's reach from his favorite chair. His cellphone sits on a small table to his left, propped up for easy access to take all the calls coming in at a jarringly loud decibel level. To his right, a small table holds an array of items he might need at any given moment: fly swatters, the TV remote control, a bottle of hand sanitizer and three pairs of sunglasses. A pile of unopened letters and postcards also awaits his attention here.

He's never alone. He has two home health aides who alternate between 12-hour shifts at his house. Old friends drop by. Managing all the visitors and media requests for interviews has been so overwhelming that Peltier's own family has had a hard time getting in the door.

"My children. My grandchildren. Too many people," he said. "But you can't say no to them. They helped get me out of prison. They fought for me."

It was a long fight.

The U.S. government put Peltier in prison after convicting him for murdering two FBI agents during a 1975 shoot-out on Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. But it got caught threatening and coercing witnesses to lie under oath, excluding evidence crucial to Peltier's defense and hiding exculpatory evidence in order to do it. The reality was the FBI and U.S. Attorney's Office desperately needed to blame someone for the high-profile deaths of the two agents, and all of Peltier's other co-defendants had been acquitted based on self-defense. There was nobody left to blame — except Peltier.

Incredibly, the U.S. government later admitted it never did figure out who shot those agents. The U.S. attorney who originally prosecuted Peltier in 1977, Lynn Crooks, told the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals in 1985, "We don't know who killed the agents or what actual participation [Peltier] may have had." A federal judge on that court, Gerald Heaney, later said the FBI deserved equal blame for the shoot-out that day and called for clemency for Peltier.

Another U.S. attorney who had previously helped put Peltier in prison, James Reynolds, later urged his release and conceded, "We were not able to prove that Mr. Peltier personally committed any offense on the Pine Ridge Reservation."

The million-dollar question for decades was always, why is this person still in prison, after all the misconduct that was revealed in his case and despite so many pleas for his freedom, from powerful voices ranging from Nelson Mandela to Mother Teresa to Pope Francis? As Peltier's former attorney Kevin Sharp once put it, the answer was simple: politics, because the FBI was complicit in the misconduct that led to Peltier being imprisoned in the first place.

"In order to get clemency, you have to get the FBI on board. They have an inherent conflict. You have to get the U.S. Attorney's Office on board. They lied to get him in prison. They have an inherent conflict," Sharp told *HuffPost* in 2021. "They're not going to say, 'Oops, sorry.'"

"It's this holdover with the FBI," he added.

Some U.S. presidents were close to releasing Peltier, particularly Bill Clinton. But he backed off his apparent plan after hundreds of FBI agents protested outside the White House in 2000 in an unprecedented show of public opposition by the bureau, and after being privately lobbied by his friend and former fellow state attorney general, Bill Janklow.

Biden knew he was defying FBI leadership by granting Peltier clemency in January. Weeks earlier, then-FBI Director Christopher Wray expressed his "vehement and steadfast opposition" to Biden's apparent plan, and the FBI Agents Association ripped the president for his action afterward, saying the group was "outraged."

Still, the FBI seemed to scramble to defend its position in recent years. When contacted by *HuffPost* for requests for comment in stories about Peltier, it often provided the same boilerplate statement that was wildly outdated and based on evidence that has since been disproven. The FBI still hasn't publicly addressed the wider context of that 1975 shoot-out, either: the evidence that the bureau itself was intentionally fueling intra-tribal tensions on that reservation as part of a covert campaign to suppress AIM's activities. Peltier, an active AIM leader, was a prime FBI target.

An FBI spokesperson initially did not respond to requests for comment. After this story published, a spokesperson said the bureau declined comment.

Even when Biden released Peltier, he did so with a nod to the FBI. He put Peltier under home confinement instead of pardoning him, which would have meant Peltier was fully free and essentially forgiven by the government. Instead, Peltier is serving out the remainder of his two consecutive life sentences at home, with restrictions on his activities.

Peltier has been fighting to loosen those restrictions, of course.

The Federal Bureau of Prisons, which oversees his home confinement, initially told him he wasn't allowed to have a car, but now he can. He wasn't originally allowed to travel more than 100 miles from Belcourt, but now he can with a special pass, for medical reasons. The prison bureau also told him he wasn't allowed to have a girlfriend, which may have infuriated Peltier more than anything, as he made it very clear he loves the company of women.

"I said, 'What the hell, man?' You know, why can't I have a girlfriend? What's that got to do with this shit?" Peltier said, noting he has a girlfriend in Minnesota. "So they said, 'OK, you can have a girlfriend. But she can't spend all night.' Really."

He pushed back on the bureau some more and now he's allowed to have a girlfriend, and she's allowed to spend the night. She just can't move in.

In the hours that we spoke, it was easy to forget that this wasn't just a casual conversation with someone's grandpa. Peltier had lots of anecdotes to share from his long life. He talked about his health, which has greatly improved over the last several months. He gushed about his elementary-school-age granddaughter becoming a strong swimmer, pointing to a photo of her pinned to the wall next to his recliner.

But his 81-year-old body is churning with rage. Peltier's memory is remarkably intact, and he has a wealth of stories he wants to tell, involving decades of U.S. presidents and major moments in American history — all of which inevitably lead back to him losing 49 years of his life to maximum security prisons for a crime he maintains he didn't commit.

"I'm pissed off," he said sharply. Asked how often he wakes up furious about what happened to him, he replied without hesitation, "I think almost every day."

Peltier said he could have gotten out of prison "a long time ago" if he'd been willing to lie and say he shot those FBI agents, but he wouldn't do it. He also said he wasn't willing to falsely accuse others of the crime to secure his own freedom.

To throw a fellow Indigenous ally under the bus like that would be "treason to my people," Peltier said.

Asked if he'd ever considered saying he was guilty of murdering the two FBI agents just to get out of prison sooner, he abruptly rejected that option. "My dear, I took an oath to fight for my people," he said. "I took an oath for our lives. They were trying to terminate us."

Peltier brought up the U.S. government's so-called Indian termination policy, a series of laws put in place from the 1940s to the 1960s aimed at assimilating Native Americans into mainstream culture by abolishing tribes and forcing Native Americans to relocate to urban areas. The policy was reversed in 1970, but it caused lasting damage to tribes and Native communities, namely through the loss of land and disruptions to cultural practices.

"We'd be gone as a race of people" if those policies had continued, Peltier fumed. "One of my uncles brought the newspaper home, I was probably 5 or 6 years old, they said, 'Look at this, they're saying we're the vanishing Americans. They don't know what happened to us.' That was the cover of Look Magazine. Grandma started crying, she said, 'What are they saying that for? We're still here, look at us. Right? Why are they doing that?'"

"So I know that was true," he said of the government trying to wipe out Native Americans. "I was standing there listening to that."

HuffPost asked if he thinks anyone will ever know who killed those FBI agents in 1975.

"I don't give a shit if they ever know," Peltier fired back. He said the bigger question is why dozens of AIM members and allies were murdered on Pine Ridge Reservation between 1973 and 1976, during the years of high tension between tribes and the federal government.

"Nobody wants to say anything about Joe Stuntz," he said, referring to an Indigenous AIM member who was killed in the 1975 shoot-out with the FBI agents, and whose death prompted no legal action. "What about them 62 people who were killed? Who wants to know?"

"They're not doing a goddamn thing about them," he continued. "But those two white people?"

Peltier's puppies broke out of the basement as the interview was wrapping up.

His daughter, who had been drifting in and out with a headache, had just adopted two baby huskies and they ran wild as Peltier beamed and shared their names in Anishinaabe and Lakota, his Native languages. It was one of the many surreal moments of this visit, watching Peltier switch between being an iconic and controversial figure in the Indigenous rights movement, and an 81-year-old man hocking loogies into a can and talking about his dogs.

He has lots of big plans ahead, even in his advanced years. He wants to record an audiobook about his life, because writing books by hand, which he's done in the past, "was a fuckin' killer." He wants to transform his garage into an art studio and get back to painting. He'd need to fix his eyes first, so he's been talking to Mayo Clinic doctors about procedures that could help his vision. He's prepared to travel to the Mayo Clinic based in Minnesota if they can help.

He'll need a special pass from the Bureau of Prisons to go, though.

Peltier's home health aide had been sitting quietly in the kitchen throughout the day. A woman in her early 30s, she said she'd only been on the job for a few weeks, and politely smiled when asked if it's been annoying having so many people coming in and out of the house. She said no, and conveyed that she, too, feels how surreal it is being around Peltier.

"I learned about him in school," she said. "We had to write papers on him."

2 Oct - Stanford pro-Palestine protesters indicted on felony charges

Eleven Stanford pro-Palestine protesters who barricaded themselves inside Building 10, the president's office, as part of a protest in June 2024, were indicted on Monday by a Santa Clara County grand jury on charges of felony vandalism and trespassing.

MORE:

by Francesca Pinney (*The Stanford Daily*)

Eleven Stanford pro-Palestine protesters who barricaded themselves inside Building 10, the president's office, as part of a protest in June 2024, were indicted on Monday by a Santa Clara County grand jury on charges of felony vandalism and trespassing.

After the break-in, officials found damage inside the building, while Main Quad was graffitied with messages such as "kill cops," "death to Israel" and "free Palestine." Thirteen people were arrested following the break-in, including one *Daily* reporter who was later cleared.

One of the 12 protesters was not indicted because they have "become a cooperating witness" and "is testifying against the 11," defense attorney Jeff Wozniak wrote in an email to *The Daily*.

Prosecutors estimate that the protesters caused hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage.

"Stanford is demanding \$300,000 in restitution. The legal team supporting the 11 have demanded a dialogue with the University, but so far no response has been received," Wozniak wrote.

Wozniak sought a preliminary hearing to question the validity of the accusations before trial, but due to the indictment prosecution will move straight to trial proceedings.

Robert Baker, a deputy district attorney leading the case, wrote in an email to *The Daily* that he expects the trial to occur before the end of the year.

"We presented the case to the grand jury to get it to trial as soon as possible and conserve judicial resources," Baker wrote.

Baker told *KQED News* that the decisions in this case were made entirely by the district attorney's office without any outside pressure from Stanford.

The Daily has reached out to the University for comment.

Amanda Campos '26, a member of Stanford Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), said that the occupation of the president's office was a warranted instance of civil disobedience.

"Students acted to break through indifference, to force attention on an injustice that holding signs outside an office could never achieve," she said. "DA Rosen is wasting judicial resources to score points in a Trumpian attack on free speech and dissent, consistent with his history of overcharging."

The indicted students will be arraigned on Oct. 6 at 9 a.m. at the Hall of Justice in San Jose.

3 Oct - Illustrated Guide Version 18.6 Uploaded!

https://nycabc.wordpress.com/2025/10/03/guide_18_9

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. Unfortunately, this edition includes the addition of Casey Goonan.

5 October - Eat kidnapped by the police and held incommunicado

Indonesia: After the uprising in August 2025, the Indonesian state is weakened and looks for scapegoats. On the 23rd of September, the bastards claimed another one and kidnapped comrade Eat.

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via *Dark Nights*

Eat is a well-known anarchist who had spent time in prison on several occasions, such as for armed robbery and an incendiary attacks against a bank. The cops seized his laptop and phone, so that will be part of his case buildup. The police bastards are holding him incommunicado, like the rest of the anarchists. Right now, he's being held at the West Java Regional Police Station in Bandung. That's where many comrades are held. We don't know what official charges and accusations they will hit him with. We do know that he was being publicly accused of being the leader of the anarchist "Star of Chaos" variant in Indonesia, in connection with the riots last August. We have not heard about such a leader of anarchists, let alone nihilists, before. Nor have we heard of any such formal network of chaotics yet. Evidence of cops is simply, possession of flag or items, zines, music, social media profile, participation or not in the riots, in many cases it appears, to try to legitimate the use of the anti-terrorist laws. At first sight seems like another absurd and fantastical concoction of the anti-terrorist unit, such as the lie that international funding of \$500,000 created the revolt. This is part of the Indonesian state trying to change the narrative. Across the region our currents and tendencies grow. Their future is finished, anarchism is the narrative.

We know that according to the news circulating in Indonesia, after arresting 42 people accused of being part of egoist/insurrectionist cells, the police were pursuing Eat because he was also suspected of being a fundraiser, working on prisoner solidarity and connected to international anarchists, that is, he maintained friendships across borders. The police try to weaken the anarchist resolve by blaming snitches and creating anarcho-phantasms, but we know they lie and use torture. What we know is that the police arrested Eat in Makassar, and he was brought to the West Java Regional Police in Bandung on 23rd September, where he remains.

Direct Action at Indonesian embassies, corporate interests and related.

Freedom for the prisoners – Death to the state.

5 Oct - Jamil Al-Amin update

Imam Jamil was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer in March following gross neglect by the prison system of an untreated tumor on his face.

MORE:

After being wrongfully imprisoned for the past 25 years, his case is currently under review and represented by lawyers from The Innocence Project.

Follow [@_freemamjamil](#) and Imam Jamil's son, Kairi [@shaykhri](#), for updates. Pray for Imam Jamil's freedom and for him to be reunited with his family

5 Oct - The only protester still locked up after Trump's campus crackdown breaks silence: 'I feel helpless'

Growing up in the West Bank, Leqaa Kordia was separated from family in Gaza by Israeli restrictions on movement between the territories.

MORE:

by Jake Offenhartz and Adam Geller (*Associated Press*)

So aunts and uncles in Gaza would call from the beach there, allowing Kordia to share her cousins' laughter and glimpse the waves.

Now many of those relatives are dead, killed in the war that has destroyed much of the Strip. And more than 200 days after Kordia was swept up in the Trump administration's crackdown on pro-Palestinian protesters, she despairs over being unable to give her family a voice.

"Most days I feel helpless," said Kordia, 32, speaking from a Texas immigration detention center where she has been jailed since March. "I want to do something, but I can't from here. I can't do anything."

Kordia, a Palestinian who has lived in New Jersey since 2016, was one of the first arrested in the government's campaign against protesters, many of them prominent activists. All the others have gained release.

Only Kordia — mischaracterized by the government, largely overlooked by the public and caught in a legal maze — languishes in detention. That is, in part, because her story differs from most others who thronged campuses.

When she joined demonstrations against Israel outside Columbia University, she wasn't a student or part of a group that might have provided support. As the arrests of activists like Mahmoud Khalil drew condemnation from elected officials and advocates, Kordia's case largely remained out of the public eye.

And Kordia has been reluctant to draw attention to herself.

In her first interview since her arrest, Kordia said recently that she was moved to protest because of deep personal ties to Gaza, where more than 170 relatives have been killed. The government has cast those ties as suspect, pointing to Kordia's money transfers to relatives in the Middle East as evidence of possible ties to terrorists.

Lawyers for the Department of Homeland Security didn't reply to calls for comment. An agency spokesperson declined to answer questions about the case.

In a blistering decision this week, a federal judge found the Trump administration unlawfully targeted protesters for speaking out. That ruling isn't binding, though, in the highly conservative district where Kordia's case is being heard.

"The government has tried again and again to muster some kind of justification to hold this young woman in custody indefinitely," said her immigration attorney, Sarah Sherman-Stokes. "It doesn't seem to matter to them that they have no evidence."

'Go to the streets'

Kordia grew up in the West Bank city of Ramallah. Her parents divorced when she was a child and her mother remarried, eventually becoming a U.S. citizen. In 2016, Kordia came to the U.S. on a visitor's visa, staying with her mother in Paterson, New Jersey, which is home to one of the nation's largest Arab communities.

Soon after, Kordia enrolled in an English-language program and obtained a student visa. Her mother applied to let Kordia remain in the U.S. as the relative of a citizen.

The application was approved, but no visas were available. Government lawyers say Kordia has been in the U.S. illegally since she left school in 2022, surrendering her student status and invalidating her visa. Kordia said she believed then that her mother's application assured her own legal status and that she mistakenly followed a teacher's advice.

Kordia worked as a server at a Middle Eastern restaurant on Paterson's Palestine Way while helping to care for her half brother, who has autism.

Those routines were upended in October 2023, after Hamas attacked southern Israel, killing about 1,200 people and taking 251 hostages. Israel responded with a massive military campaign, killing more than 66,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, part of the Hamas-run government.

In calls with relatives in Gaza "they were telling me that 'We're hungry. ...We are scared. We're cold. We don't have anywhere to go,'" Kordia said. "So, my way of helping my family and my people was to go to the streets."

Kordia said she joined more than a dozen protests in New York, New Jersey and Washington, D.C. In April 2024, she was arrested with 100 other protesters outside Columbia's gates — charges quickly dismissed by prosecutors and sealed.

Soon after taking office, President Donald Trump issued executive orders equating the protests with antisemitism. DHS intelligence analysts began assembling dossiers on noncitizens who criticized Israel or protested the war, based on doxing sites and information from police.

"To all the resident aliens who joined in the pro-jihadist protests, we put you on notice," Trump said in a fact sheet accompanying the orders. "Come 2025 we will find you and we will deport you."

Surveillance, arrest and confusion

In March, immigration agents showed up at Kordia's home and workplace, as well as her uncle's house in Florida. "The experience was very confusing," she said. "It was like: Why are you doing all this?"

Kordia hired a lawyer before agreeing to a March 13 meeting with Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials in Newark. She was detained immediately and flown to Prairieland Detention Center, south of Dallas.

Once there, she was assigned a bare mattress on the floor and denied religious accommodations, including Halal meals, her lawyers said.

When her cousin, Hamzah Abushaban, visited Kordia about a week after her arrest, he was taken aback by the dark circles under her eyes and her state of confusion.

"One of the first things she asked me was why was she there," Abushaban said. "She cried a lot. She looked like death."

"I must've asked her a thousand times, like, you're sure you didn't commit a crime?" he said. "What she thought and I thought was probably going to be a few more days of being detained has turned into almost, what, 7 months now."

Kordia said that she didn't understand the reasons for her detention until a week or two later, when a television at the facility was tuned to news of protester arrests.

"I see my name, literally in big letters, on *CNN* and I was like, what's going on?" she said.

Payments scrutinized

Administration officials touted Kordia's arrest as part of the deportation effort against those who "actively participated in anti-American, pro-terrorist activities." A DHS press release noted her arrest the previous year at a "pro-Hamas" demonstration, mistakenly labeling her as a Columbia student.

Court papers show New York police gave records of her dismissed arrest to DHS — an apparent violation of a city law barring cooperation with immigration enforcement. Federal officials told police the information was needed in a criminal money laundering investigation, a police spokesperson later said.

At a bond hearing weeks later, government attorneys argued for Kordia's continued detention, pointing to subpoenaed records showing she had sent "large amounts of money to Palestine and Jordan."

Kordia said she and her mother had sent the money, totaling \$16,900 over eight years, to relatives. A \$1,000 payment in 2022 went to an aunt in Gaza whose home and hair salon had been destroyed in an Israeli strike. Two more payments last year went to a cousin struggling to feed his family.

"To hear the government accusing them of being terrorists and accusing you of sending money to terrorists, this is heartbreaking," Kordia said.

An immigration judge, examining transaction records and statements from relatives, found "overwhelming evidence" that Kordia was telling the truth about the payments.

That judge has twice ordered her released on bond. The government has challenged the ruling, triggering a lengthy appeals process — highly unusual in immigration cases that don't involve serious crimes.

Typically, when the government goes after someone for overstaying a visa, they are rarely arrested, let alone held in prolonged detention, said Adam Cox, a professor of immigration law at New York University.

"The kind of scale and scope and publicness of the campaign against student protesters by the Trump administration is really nothing like we've seen in recent memory," said Cox, who studies the rise of presidential power in immigration policy.

'One person left behind'

Kordia has sought release in federal court, the same path taken by Khalil and others. Whether she succeeds may depend on an appeals court in New York, which heard arguments this week from government attorneys who contend that such relief should be largely off-limits to noncitizens.

Khalil, who was freed in June, said he had followed Kordia's case closely, asking lawyers to relay messages and reminding his supporters "that there is one person left behind."

"She came straight from the West Bank, escaping the daily ordeals of settlers and administrative detention only to deal with a version of that here," said Khalil, referring to Israel's practice of jailing some Palestinians indefinitely without charge or trial. "It breaks my heart that she's going through all of this."

As detention stretches on, Kordia said it's been difficult to follow developments in the war, let alone maintain contact with relatives caught in the conflict.

But it's provided many hours to think about a time when the war is finally over and she can find peace.

That would start by being reunited with her mother and other relatives, she said, and maybe one day having a family of her own. She dreams of opening a cafe and introducing people to Palestinian culture through food. She wants to pursue an American life.

"That's all I wanted, to live with my family in peace in a land that appreciates freedom," she says. "That's literally all that I want."

10 Oct - Dario Sanchez's experiences in jail and after release on bond

One of the DFW anti-ICE arrestees has written about experiencing jail and multiple arrests.

MORE:

At first, my incarceration was the same as everyone else's. Isolation, in a dirty cell. After my bond was lowered and I was released, they pull a bait & switch at a hearing to add conditions to my release. They indicted me on a second charge and sent me to jail for labor day weekend.

While I was in booking for two days, I heard a young, disabled man in an isolated cell scream and beg for his parents for hours at a time. I can still feel the thump of his body against the door and walls because it shook my cell too. When I went to make a phone call, I watched a guard spark up his taser and joke about hurting that boy. Eventually, the guards agreed to put him in our holding cell if he calmed down. I had to take the lead and comfort him, talking to him about his loved ones while trying not cry, because I knew that if I couldn't keep him calm, they'd hurt him again. Guards would taunt and laugh at him or crack jokes, and I couldn't bear to see it happen again. Hours later they housed me in gen-pop and I hoped he made it home.

My third arrest was a clown-show. My local PD followed me halfway to Johnson County where I was called in for a random piss test. They boxed me in and drew guns on me, ordered me out, and cuffed me before cussing each other out because one guy didn't properly execute their tactical twink capture.

Later, at the jail, they got the cuffs stuck on me because the guard bought his key off of Amazon and it got stuck. Fifteen minutes later, they popped it free and put me in stripes. All of this happened because my bond officer saw me search for how to replace my Gameboy Advance SP battery, then he apparently searched up how to use that battery to make "trigger devices" and passed it off to the DA who then said I searched that up. When my lawyers showed them proof that I never did that, they had to back off immediately.

Between now and the end of my trial I cannot look at anything anti-government or violent, not even movies or music. My phone is monitored by spyware that logs all my activity.

10 Oct - Securing Freedom & Protecting Mumia's Vision

"Tell Mumia we love him!" We hear this sentiment expressed by people all over the world.

MORE:

Our challenge over the past months has been to put our revolutionary love — for Mumia, for justice, for the human rights of all prisoners, into action.

It has been a dramatic summer on many fronts. From genocide in the Middle East to increasing repression at home. Solidarity is the antidote. From Martinique to the gates of Mahanoy it is proved again and again, that when people come together, we change the world.

Protecting Mumia's Vision

Many of you know that Mumia Abu-Jamal has been struggling with diminishing eyesight. For eight long months, since January 2025, he was forced to cultivate his inner vision and prophetic insight, while experiencing outer blindness.

Mumia's eyesight dramatically worsened in the winter. In February he reported his condition to chronic care clinics and at multiple appointments on site at the prison which promised relief. He filed grievances and sent notes to doctors at SCI Mahanoy. His PhD advisor wrote to the prison superintendent asking for accommodations so that he could continue working. He demanded ADA accommodations. He received promises in reply, and no action.

Noel Hanrahan, Esq. of *Prison Radio* helps prepare grievances, retrieving and reviewing medical records and demanding appropriate diagnosis of his conditions and care. After months of legal and political pressure from people around the world and a demonstration by organizers outside SCI Mahanoy Mumia is able to see, after having the simple post-cataracts surgery on September 2nd, 2025, that he could have received in January 2025. Yet, he is not out of danger for blindness based on a number of conditions.

The Campaign to Prevent Blindness is Not Over

Our outside expert ophthalmologist has confirmed that without further treatment for diabetic retinopathy, Mumia could still experience permanent vision loss. Mumia does not have diabetes but in 2015 he had a steroid induced diabetic crisis. Steroids used to treat his severe eczema associated with his active Hep C caused him to go into renal failure when the prison failed to test his already noted high blood sugar for two months. This was a temporary diabetic incident. Mumia was cured of Hep C after the Abolitionist Law Center filed a lawsuit on Mumia Abu-Jamal's behalf and secured a preliminary injunction ordering care. This was the first such court order in the country for treatment of prisoners with the fast-acting anti-viral cure for Hep C.

Activism Works

The Phone-in Zap Campaign, the demonstration at the gates of SCI Mahanoy, and the legal work to hold the prison system accountable contributed to the restoration of his eyesight. However, continued pressure is necessary! Get involved because freedom is truly the only cure. In prison, health issues compound because care is scarce and medical needs are buried under bureaucracy and administrative neglect. This most recent challenge underscores the medical abuse and elder abuse that so many unprotected and vulnerable people in prison experience at the hands of the prison system.

Though Mumia's outer sight is endangered, his insight remains as clear as ever. He tells us,

"What we need is a new medical model because what we have is really in the service of capital, not in the service of the health needs of prisoners. And as long as capital rules then people will suffer and profits will be made — vast profits."

Since 1992, *Prison Radio* has been on the forefront of responding to every medical challenge Mumia has experienced. We know that fighting for Mumia's eyesight means we are fighting for the right to healthcare for all imprisoned people. For example, the court case initiated for Mumia's right to receive Hep C treatment resulted in the potential for all prisoners to receive the lifesaving medication. A win for Mumia is a win for all. We call this the "Mumia Effect."

International Solidarity Is Key

In addition to confronting a hostile prison health care system, we have also been building bridges abroad. This year we went to Martinique, Ireland, England, Switzerland, Germany, and France in order to strategize and plan with our international partners. In Geneva we attended and networked at the United Nations' Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement, building international connections. Mumia was invited by Mireille Fanon Mendès-France and the Fanon Foundation to co-chair the 100th anniversary events throughout 2025. In July we traveled to Martinique to attend the 'Fanon at 100' conference put on by the Caribbean Philosophical Association. As some of you know Mumia Abu-Jamal is completing his doctoral dissertation on the revolutionary thinker, Frantz Fanon an Afro-Martinican psychiatrist and philosopher.

This is the path we are on. Freedom is in our future. Join us, jump on board, give us another push, be an inspiration, donate time money and prayers. It is going to take it all to bring this freedom train home!

16 Oct - Through Padlocks, Behind Barricades

WHAT: Opening Reception

WHEN: 6:00pm, Thursday, October 16th

WHERE: Interference Archive, 314 7th Street, Brooklyn

COST: FREE

MORE:

Through Padlocks, Behind Barricades is an upcoming exhibit and programming series exploring the squatter movement on New York's Lower East Side (Loisaida) in the 1990s. It features Margaret Morton's photographs of life in Glass House, an abandoned glass factory at the corner of Avenue D and East 10th Street. Several dozen squatters made the building their home for sixteen months, until police evicted them in winter 1994. The exhibition presents Morton's in-depth portrait of one squat, with an array of printed materials exploring the debates that arose over squatters' rights.

Interference Archive worked in partnership with the Margaret Morton Archive to produce the exhibition, an accompanying zine, two panel discussions and a film screening. Exhibition dates: October 17, 2025 – January 5, 2026