

the SHADOW

INFORMATION IS STRENGTH • KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

HANDS OFF OUR LAND AND LIVES: THE STATE OF THE AI DATA CENTER CRISIS

By Mary Jae

Initially marketed as a convenient and specialized tool to expedite simple tasks, the use of Artificial Intelligence (aka AI) has steadily transformed into an unavoidable part of digital infrastructure and daily life: almost every search engine uses AI-generated answers as the first result, e-mail and social media platforms include an unprompted summarization of every interaction, large sectors of the workforce are being replaced with calculating systems, companies use AI to accelerate personalized advertisement with data farming, while the US government has expanded mass surveillance through AI-employed tools including facial recognition, predictive policing, and location monitoring. To power and “improve” this technology, massive warehouse-style data centers funded by multibillion-dollar corporate giants, including Amazon, Google, Microsoft, and Meta, have been sprouting like weeds across the United States since the start of the AI boom.

According to Pew Data Centers, there are currently over 3,000 confirmed operational data centers across the country, with an additional 1,500 being planned or currently under construction. Pre-existing data centers were initially built as infrastructure to manage non-stop internet traffic and data, handling tasks such as hosting websites, servers, and e-commerce interactions. Because data centers already store and collect unfathomable amounts of personal data at high speeds, with extensive cybersecurity measures, they have now also been tasked with Artificial Intelligence training and upkeep, as well as crypto-mining for cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin.

The new wave of data centers is planned to focus almost exclusively on developing AI and will require significantly more resources to operate. The three major states for AI data center construction and usage are Texas, California, and Virginia. Virginia is leading the charge as the largest data center market globally and the backbone of hyper-scale centers, with a whopping total of 680 facilities (operating and under construction). New York is quickly becoming a hot spot, currently hosting more than 150 data centers, the largest number in the Northeast.

Environmental Damage

Data centers are currently under fire for their exponentially damaging impact on water quality and usage. Their huge amounts of bustling components, such as high-performance computers, wires, hard drives, generators, etc., powered by diesel and gas, result in massive energy consumption, which then translates into heat. To prevent servers from overheating and shutting down, these internet ovens require colossal amounts of water to cool down: one large data center can use up to 5 million gallons

of water per day (Environmental and Energy Study Institute, 2025).

A report from Mordor Intelligence found that North American data center water consumption reached 1.08 trillion liters in 2025, and it is expected to increase to an

usage has a laundry list of disastrous implications: limited clean drinking water, dehydration, public hygiene concerns, higher water costs, droughts, polluted rainwater, endangered wildlife, major declines in agricultural industries, and an



average of 1.69 trillion liters per year by the end of the decade, when 40% of US data centers are already located in drought-prone regions. Earlier this year, UN researchers declared that we have crossed from a water crisis into ‘a state of global water bankruptcy’. Currently, 3% of the world’s total water supply is freshwater, and only 0.5% is safe for human consumption.

However, data centers actively contaminate the water they use, as waste from these facilities includes concentrated toxic minerals, chemicals, and metals like copper and chlorine dioxide that are meant to deter bacteria and corrosion from their cooling systems. As these compounds evaporate into surrounding biomes, the cooling systems also bring foreign microorganisms into nearby lakes and rivers through a process called thermal pollution, where water filtering creates elevated temperatures and welcomes toxic algae blooms. Data centers’ unregulated water

overall acceleration of the climate crisis.

Big Tech conglomerates like Google have made multiple public statements about their goals to be completely net-zero by 2030, yet their real priorities show in the amount of resources they pour into perfecting their AI assistants and language models. Most data centers use non-renewable energy through coal and gas, as it is not only the easiest but the cheapest option to power their operations. By draining increasingly scarce natural resources like fossil fuels, carbon dioxide emissions only increase, with Microsoft’s own reports concluding that their emissions grew by 29% since 2020. They also create harsh air pollution through fine particulate matter, the primary cause of poor air quality health impacts. A study from Piedmont Environmental Council found that the Vantage Data Center in Virginia was responsible for a combined total of \$152 million in annual health damages from associated air

pollution, a record-breaking health-damage estimate for a single facility to date (Cork, 2025). They also concluded that associated damages contribute to increased hospitalizations, respiratory issues, and 3.4 to 6.5 additional premature deaths per year across the region.

A distinct aspect of AI data centers is their non-stop noise and light pollution. Often compared to the sound of giant lawnmowers, their 24/7 buzzing comes from fans, diesel generators, and gas turbines that can reach up to 105 decibels from within (that’s about the same noise volume as a large aircraft). For many surrounding residential areas, this emits a constant humming that can reach into people’s properties day and night, slowly ruining their mental and physical health. High noise pollution disproportionately affects the working class and vulnerable populations like children and the elderly. Commonly linked to health issues like higher stress levels, increased blood pressure, and decreased cognitive performance, many victims of nearby data centers have reported headaches, vertigo, nausea, sleep disturbances, ear pain, and hypertension (Yañez-Barnuevo, 2026). With oversight and regulation of noise control being de-funded and moved from the EPA [Environmental Protection Agency] to local governments by the Reagan administration in 1981, most noise complaints made by frustrated neighbors are neglected, and many feel no choice but to move away. For Big Tech, it will always be AI first, then damage control if and/or when people care.

Some of these data centers’ strain on power grids is equivalent to that of one mid-sized city, as one typical hyperscale center can consume as much electricity as 100,000 households. Demand for AI usage and data centers is evidently skyrocketing, doubling energy use every year and driving up baseline power prices for everyone. A study from Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory found that by 2028, data centers could be using 12% of the total electricity consumed in the United States.

Senior Environmental Program Coordinator of NYPIRG [New York Public Interest Research Group] explained that, “if data centers were not consuming more than ten percent of what residential homes consume, the energy supply would be higher, and costs would be cheaper, and New Yorkers would not struggle as much to pay their bills.” Previous data centers had some capability to lower rates for everyone due to their overall predictability; AI plants, however, are unique in how fast they work and gobble up resources. For locations closer to significant data center activity, electricity can cost 267% more for just one month than it did five years ago (Bloomberg,

Continued On Page 18



EDITORIAL

END THIS WAR

As we go to press [October 1, 2026], US planes and ships are once again accumulating and assuming an “attack posture” at locations in and around the Persian Gulf. They are apparently setting up for a new and imminent set of major strikes. The Iranian command has announced their most urgent military alert level.

At the same time, the US governing regime is clearing a sale of 40,000 one thousand pound bombs to Israel. These bombs, once delivered, are apparently also destined for Iran. One might question the notion that the next big round of attacks would wait for after the Israeli election and the US midterms.

How do we end this war now? For the moment, there are still several wars in motion. They have yet to turn into one war for the world as a whole. We are many steps toward getting there. Even as US forces mass around Iran, the NATO states, including the US, look to Ukraine.

As they have for years already, the NATO states provided the funding and the targeting data for the hundreds or perhaps more than a thousand drones and dozens of missiles the Ukrainian military targeted at Moscow in September.

Most of the projectiles were shot down, it is reported, but some hit apartment buildings and a refinery. The Russian retaliation is sure to be massive, as always. The Western propaganda will depict it as a shock. Where did that come from? The NATO states continue to pretend they’re not belligerents, since so far it’s all Ukrainians who get killed for the money the NATO states pump into their proxy war. (And Russians, who aren’t supposed to count.)

As their economies contract, European governments are manically focused on militarization and what they claim is the prospect of an imminent direct attack on their countries by Russia. Their top foreign policy figures dream out loud in public of how they want to break the Russian Federation up into balkanized states with full access to Western capital. They do this while continuing to pretend they’re not belligerents themselves, just innocents being threatened by the awful Russians. They have lost their marbles. Their people do not want this. In most EU countries, there seems to be a sane majority (unlike, say, Israel). But antiwar voices and press are being censored, defamed, and prosecuted.

Among political parties, all of the nominal leftists are captured by the war push, with the apparent exception of the French left [LFI]. Right, center and left are otherwise all in the war party. They are for war with Russia. They also favor continuing material support for Israel, despite noises about how “this time they’ve gone too far.” They are against Iran. But they insist, for the most part, that they are not really involved in the war on Iran. All this helps the European far-right parties, who get a moderate boost from voters by posing as anti-war.

The anti-war bit worked for Trump. Even though he has revealed the mockery by escalating all wars, the same bit works for the European far-right. So far, if they get elected, they turn coat on the peace talk, like prime minister Meloni in Italy. Saudi is on the brink, deservedly so after re-starting the war on Yemen.

What did they think would happen? So far, Saudi Arabia’s ruler Mohammed bin Salman has been left to hang and dry by Trump, Pakistan, and his other supposed allies. War is degrading both of the biggest oil producing regions in the world outside of North America. The production stoppage so far is small for Russia, closer to full for West Asia. Obviously, this means great bottom lines for US suppliers, but they can’t cover all forms of oil needed, such as diesel. If diesel is up to \$5.00+ here in the US, it’s double that in Europe. Hard economic times have started, everywhere, and we ain’t seen nothing yet. Dramatic disruptions in supply chains on the way.

Meanwhile, the AI bubble has reached so precarious a state that AI companies have joined in a defacto cartel and started threatening that the world is about to be destroyed by their own creatures. This has brought no consequences to them so far, or a detectable actual “slowdown” of their business. They’re focused on securing the bailout from the government. Trump, who sees no AI crisis and calls it a hoax, is all-in.

For a start, he wants to call forth an “AI Force,” so he can funnel more military money to them. Since paying the president and his family is now treated as legal, the AI junta will buy his crypto coin or whatever scam he pushes next. If he retires and is replaced by Vance, that’s even better for them, because they bought J.D. years ago.

Back in corporate media land, New York Times and company are headlining that... hundreds of angry and refined old white people are protesting the closure and possible demolition of the Kennedy performance center in DC. Hundreds, I tell you! That’s the story, all the news fit to print above the fold. Trump last night announced he wanted to convert his planned “triumphal arch” into a dual-use project. The arch will also be a military tower in the center of Washington -- stocked with surveillance centers, drones and snipers able to hit targets anywhere in the city. Seriously, that’s what he posted. No, I don’t care if it’s “trolling.” He’s Commander-in-Chief and once again he fantasizes about the streets of the capital under martial law, with summary killings authorized and gamified. But the big story is still supposed to be the Kennedy Center. Some wag posted that the NPR-inflected audience marching for the Center are acting like it’s their Tahrir Square, their Arab Spring. But then they go home.

How do we stop the war?
-- Evan G.

THE POST 9/11 ERA:
25 YEARS OF REVISIONIST HISTORY
AND IMPERIAL TERRORISM

The attacks of September 11, 2001 didn’t happen in isolation. The interventionist ambitions of American empire abroad not only laid the foundations for 9/11 to occur, but set the stage to usher in an unparalleled era of violence and exploitation.

[September 12, 2026] Around this time of year, we are told to “Never Forget”. To never forget the tragedy of the over 2,977 people who lost their lives on that fateful Tuesday morning on September 11, 2001. And yet, for the astute observer, the slogan “Never Forget” rings hollow. For a quarter of a century, the phrase has been used as a propaganda tool to promote constant war, excessive government overreach, and blatant racism.

We are told to never forget, while the commemoration of the attacks are used as convenient cover to purposefully obfuscate the historical record and induce a collective amnesia as to forget the most pivotal inconvenient truths.

Never forget the nearly 3,000 people who died that day, but definitely make sure you forget that roughly three times that many people have died in the years since due to exposure to toxins after New York City officials deliberately lied to the public when they assured them that the air was safe to breathe.

Definitely make sure you forget the estimated 4.5 million people that have been senselessly murdered and another 38 million displaced as a result of the so-called “War on Terror” (War OF Terror) waged in the years since.

Pay no mind to the fact that, for two and a half decades afterwards, the national security state ushered in under post 9/11 emergency powers has trampled on every civil liberty and constitutional protection we have.

Totally disregard the numerous whistle blowers that have come forward in the years since refuting the official story.

Certainly forget that over two decades of study conducted by hundreds of architects, engineers, and other reputable scientists has conclusively debunked the official narrative and determined that the World Trade Center collapsed as a result of controlled demolition.

Don’t bring up the fact that declassified internal documents show that US officials were aware of, and covered up, the fact that several of the alleged hijackers were aided by Saudi intelligence, or that released court documents show at least two of the “hijackers” were confirmed to be Saudi-managed CIA assets.

And no matter what you do, make sure to completely ignore the fact that operatives of the Israeli intelligence service Mossad were arrested shortly after the attacks and found to have had advanced knowledge of it taking place, as evidenced by their admissions of being tasked with documenting the event.

In short, the real message behind the slogan is “Never Forget the tragedy, but only remember what we want you to. Always forget how and why it happened, and what occurred afterwards.”

The how, and the why, and the what came after can generally be summed up with one word: Imperialism. To truly understand 9/11 in its broader scope, how it came about, and its destructive ramifications thereafter, one has to understand the nature of US imperialism.

From the very outset, the United States has been a project of imperial ambitions built upon the destructive nature of colonialist expansionism. From the genocidal extermination of this land’s indigenous peoples, to the ruthlessness of the Monroe Doctrine, the aim of the American experiment has been that of every empire that has come before it: To use unprecedented levels of violence to attempt to be the most dominant force on the planet.

Prior to 9/11, the US empire had already been hard at work destabilizing the Middle East. From facilitating a coup in Iran in 1953, another in Iraq in 1963, and again in 1968, helping to bring Saddam Hussein to power. In 1979, imperialist ambitions would lead to the creation of Operation Cyclone, in which the US would back jihadist militants to provoke the Soviet Union into an invasion of Afghanistan. It was precisely this operation providing assistance to Islamic fundamentalists, including Osama bin Laden who worked as a key CIA asset, that led to the creation of Al Qaeda and the Taliban. Meanwhile, due to Western

Continued On Page 7

THE SHADOW IS:

EDITORS: Chris Flash, A. Kronstadt, Paul DeRienzo

REPORTAGE: Matt Agorist, Penny Arcade, Stanley L. Cohen, Linda Covelio, Eric Danville, Paul DeRienzo, Bob Feldman, Chris Flash, Evan G., Angelo Giuliano, Kurt Hill, Mary Jae, Les Jamieson, Caitlin Johnstone, Carl Kolshak, Axel Krieger, A. Kronstadt, Ronald Kuby, Sarah Kunstler, Dorothy Lennon, Peter LeVasseur, Frank Morales, Elizabeth Muldanado, Nick Pagliccia, Greg Palast, Sarah Raymundo, Don Via Jr.

ART: Marisa Acocella, Ken Avidor, Eric Drooker, Maya Drooker, Fly, Eric Garcia, Danny Hellman, Peter Missing, John Terhorst, Andrew Wendel

ATTORNEYS AT LARGE: Stanley L. Cohen, Ronald Kuby, Sarah Kunstler, Norman Siegel, [William Moses Kunstler 1919-1995]

COPY AND SUBSCRIPTION RATES: THE SHADOW IS \$2.00 PER COPY RETAIL, \$4.00 PER COPY BY MAIL, AND \$30.00 FOR 10 ISSUES BY FIRST CLASS MAIL. THE SHADOW AND ALL PUBLICATIONS BY SHADOW PRESS ARE AVAILABLE IN BULK AT WHOLESALE RATES. PLEASE INQUIRE FOR MORE INFORMATION. ANYTHING IN THE SHADOW MAY BE REPRINTED AND USED FOR ANY INFORMATIVE PURPOSE, AS LONG AS THE SHADOW IS CREDITED. WE GLADLY TRADE PUBLICATIONS WITH OTHER PUBLISHERS -- PLEASE TURN US ON!

SHADOW ADVERTISING RATES: BUSINESS CARD SIZE: \$30.00 1/8 PAGE: \$50.00 1/4 PAGE: \$100.00 1/2 PAGE: \$200.00 BACK PAGE: \$250.00 (B&W) DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE FOR LONGTERM ADS. PLEASE INQUIRE FOR MORE INFORMATION. WE CAN ONLY ACCEPT PAYMENTS BY MONEY ORDER MADE PAYABLE TO “SHADOW PRESS.” ANY AND ALL DONATIONS ARE MUCH APPRECIATED.

PLEASE SEND ADS AND/OR CORRESPONDENCE TO: SHADOW PRESS, P.O. BOX 20298, NEW YORK, NY 10009. EMAIL: SHADOWPRESS6@GMAIL.COM. THE SHADOW IS ONLINE AT: SHADOWPRESS.NET + SHADOWPRESS.INFO

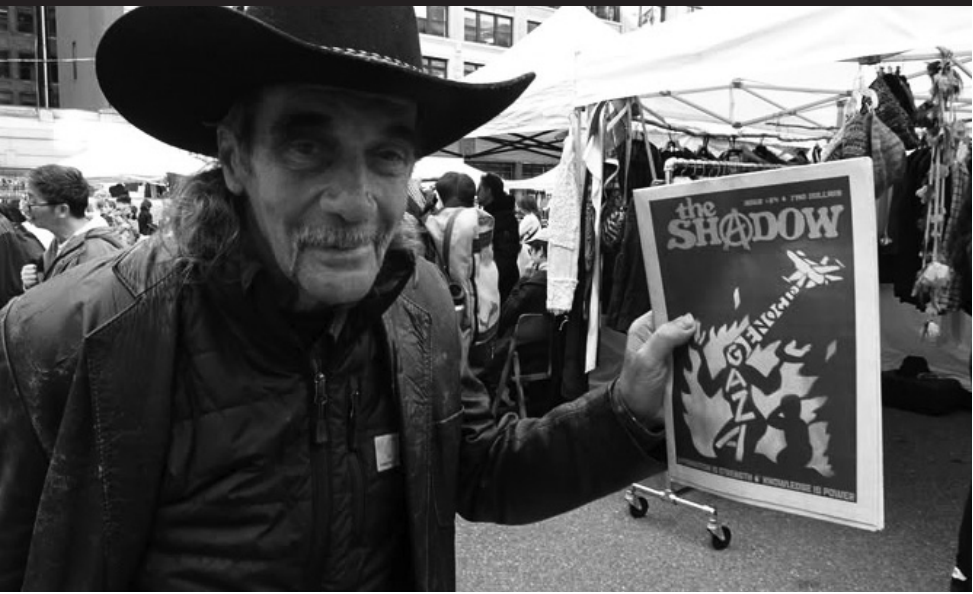


911Truth.org

Think for Yourself.

Explore the Facts.

BEN MOREA: 1941-2026



Ben Morea at the Chelsea Flea Market in November 2024

Some people are larger than life, yet they fit into the landscape so completely that we don't notice their towering presence. These are people who play against the cult of personality, whose values are not only their cornerstone, but their edifice, and we don't understand their importance until they're gone. Ben Morea, lately known as Ben Eagle of Wallenberg, Colorado and of East 39th Street in NYC is one of these rare entities.

Before he became Ben Eagle of southern Colorado, he was Ben Morea of the Lower East Side, the LES of the 1960s, the LES of America's fomenting cultural revolution, populated by some of the architects of the counterculture, populated by personages like poets Allen Ginsberg, Tuli Kupferberg, Ed Sanders and Aldo Tambellini, Judith Malina and Julian Beck of The Living Theater, activists Abbie Hoffman, Jerry Rubin, Paul Krasner and the much younger Dana Beal of the Yippies and Ben Morea of UATW/MF, The Up Against The Wall Mother Fuckers.

Ben Morea was not the leader of the Motherfuckers - he was its driving force. UATW/MF had no leaders. Unlike Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin, Ben fought against cult celebrity and preferred to be in the background, one among the many.

Unlike the misogyny and sexism of the New Left, UATW/MF was a feminist organization - its leadership horizontal, dedicated to equality and liberation for all, the women were up front and visible.

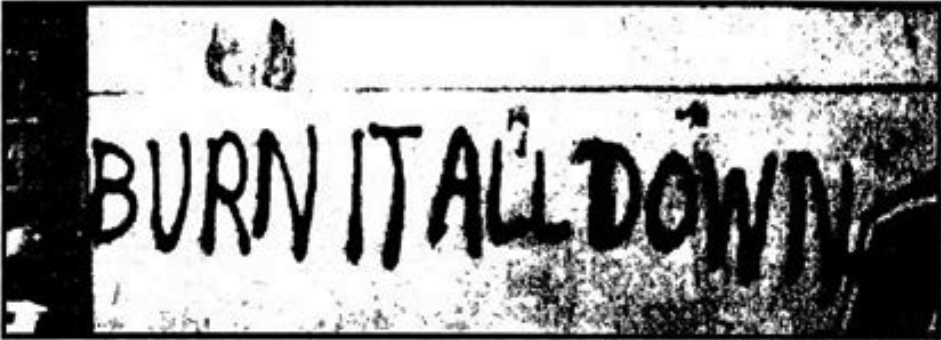
sion, he discovered painting and then, through some incredible Providence, he ran into Judith Malina and Julian Beck, who was then a highly regarded abstract Painter. These founders of The Living Theater raised Ben's consciousness and, while Ben showed no interest for life in the theater, a life of activism beckoned.

Philosophically, he found in Malina and Beck a way to live his politics, and soon after, he met Aldo Tambellini, the American born Italian painter, sculptor, and filmmaker, whose insistence on art as the public good had a long reaching impact on Ben's ideas about art and inclusion and elitism and the structures of privilege that keep art from the people, i.e. that keep freedom from the people.

I met Ben Morea as a 17 year-old on the streets of the Lower East Side. I don't remember any longer where I first ran into the "family", as they referred to themselves, although they would say that they were part of the Motherfuckers when pressed. I probably met them at "Ukie's," as we referred to Veselka's, the Ukrainian coffee shop on the corner of East Ninth Street and Second Avenue, which, with its row of telephone booths, operated for many years as everybody's office on the LES before that neighborhood was re-named the "East Village" in an effort to lure NYU students from the higher rents in Greenwich Village to the gentrifying Lower East Side.

There were always a few UATW/MFers

UP AGAINST THE WALL MOTHERFUCKER



FLOWER POWER WON'T STOP FASCIST POWER

Ben Morea started out in Hell's Kitchen, specifically San Juan Hill, before that neighborhood was obliterated to make way for Lincoln Center. Ben grew up in the real West Side Story landscape of poverty and gangs and drugs. As a teenager, he discovered Heroin and Jazz, or the other way around. After a period of incarceration for posses-

sion, he discovered painting and then, through some incredible Providence, he ran into Judith Malina and Julian Beck, who was then a highly regarded abstract Painter. These founders of The Living Theater raised Ben's consciousness and, while Ben showed no interest for life in the theater, a life of activism beckoned.

Continued On Page 16

JOHN PENLEY: 1952-2026



If there was an army of John Penleys, the world would be a better place. If you were a downtown New York City rebel between 1979+2013, you probably knew or heard about John Penley. John was a familiar presence at, and often organizer of, many events and uprisings that defined protest in NYC during those years.

John was a combination of photo-journalist, protest organizer, agitator, and warrior against gentrification, homelessness, racism, government and police tyranny, social injustice, and nuclear proliferation. He relentlessly championed the underdog, and those dealt a dirty hand by the power structures that harm our lives. He was a self-described "Disruptive Anarcho Yippie Pinko."

John's first encounter with revolutionary thought was when he served in the US Navy as an air traffic controller while stationed in Crete. There, he met Greek resistance fighters fighting against the dictatorship supported by the Truman Doctrine and the CIA's fight against communism. The fighters explained to John the negative impact the US was having on their country. Whatever they told him, they lit a spark that John said changed how he viewed the world, his military service, and awakened his understanding of US imperialism around the world.

In the video John Penley: Anarcho Yippie (available on YouTube), John explains his arrival at the doorstep of Yippie headquarters at 9 Bleeker Street in the 1970s, after connecting with them at a cannabis legalization rally he organized in Florida, the first such rally Florida had seen. Number 9 Bleeker became an incubator for John's activism. It was there where he formed connections to New York's network of resisters and underground luminaries, inspired by the Yippie style of combining fun and protest that Abbie Hoffman, Aron Kay, Dana Beal, and others had trail-blazed. At about that time, John became a member of the Church of Realized Fantasies, run by Mickey Cesar, the "Pope of Pot," that delivered the sacrament of cannabis throughout the city.

John was not afraid to put his freedom and sometimes his life on the line if he saw an injustice that needed correcting. After being arrested for blocking entry into the Savannah River Site that produces tritium and plutonium for nuclear bombs, he jumped bail and fled the country to Sandinista Nicaragua where the Reagan administration was waging a war against the recent revolution. Deported for overstaying his visa, he was immediately taken into custody upon return to serve one year in federal prison.

Not to be deterred by prison, a few years later, John returned to the Savannah River Site to again be arrested for disrupting traffic going into the plant, narrowly avoiding being run over by angry bomb makers on their way to work. The judge offered

him a \$50.00 fine, or two weeks in a hot, overcrowded South Carolina county jail. He chose jail on the principle that it was better that the government support him for the two weeks than his giving the system one red cent.

In John's rules for radicals, the benefit of this arrest was that he had an opportunity to speak with inmates, mostly Black, about significant mismanagement and malfunctions of the aging facilities and radioactive releases threatening their community. DOE [Dept of Energy] engineers had recently blown the whistle on DuPont's lax waste disposal, including their burying radioactive waste in cardboard boxes and shallow trenches that contaminated surface and groundwater. An elevated rate of leukemia among workers was verified by a CDC [Center for Disease Control] panel.

John used imprisonment to raise inmate awareness of the federal government's history of snatching their land through eminent domain to create the bomb plant in the 1940s. Rural homesteads and even whole Black communities, including the town where singer James Brown grew up, were uprooted to create the 310 square mile monument to mass destruction.

Occupy Wall Street, Washington DC veterans encampment, the Tompkins Square Uprising, Act-Up, yuppie condos, the front door of the Ninth Precinct, the Berrigan brothers, anti-nuke protests, a Charlottesville Nazi rally, and presidential



conventions were some of the places you would find John. Carrying signs, shouting protest slogans, taking photographs, blocking traffic, and engaging the police was where John was in his element. He camped out for months at the VA headquarters in Washington, DC, in order to bring attention to homeless veterans and on cold winter New York City streets with the homeless to bring attention to their plight. AntifaWatch, the group that monitors and doxes left wing activists, thought John's life of protest so prolific that they put him on their list.

Political activism wasn't John's only forte. He became proficient at planting stories in the press and getting his own

Continued On Page 20

LANDLORD GREED VERSUS AFFORDABLE HOUSING

SRO TENANTS UNDER SIEGE ON EAST NINTH STREET

By A. Kronstadt

Located between Third and Fourth Avenues, 109 East Ninth Street is one of the last Single Room Occupancy [SRO] buildings existing on the Lower East Side, providing bare-bones housing to long-term residents at the lowest rents.

In the 20th century, SROs were an essential resource for transient and low-income residents and immigrants that needed cheap housing. By the 1950s, there were approximately 200,000 SROs in NYC -- more than 10% of rental units at that time. Since 1955, when the New York City Council banned the construction of new SROs, an estimated 175,000 SRO units were eliminated, removing a safety net for the city's poorest residents. Destruction of SROs accelerated under Mayor Edward Koch [1978-89], who assisted real estate developers in removing them throughout the city. The disappearance of SRO hotels coincided with the rise of modern homelessness. Currently, there are approximately 25,000-30,000 SRO units left in New York City.

Musician Zak Hall, who has occupied his 96 square foot room at the 109 East Ninth Street SRO for the past 15 years, finds this kind of housing "Spartan," but appropriate to his way of life. Tenants in the building pay about \$200 a month for an 8x12 foot room. On the same block, typical rents are in the area of \$3,000-\$4,000 per month for one room, willingly paid by yuppies and NYU students.

"I believe that my home helped make me who I am," Patterson Beckwith, who has occupied his room at the SRO since 1992, told **The SHADOW**. Beckwith says: "I have always worked and worried about money, but have never had to obsess over it, and I am an artist and teacher in large part because of affordable housing."

In June of 2021, the 14 unit SRO was purchased by Michael Geylik for \$3.35 million. He then converted the ground floor space, formerly the Central Bar, into an office for his real estate consulting firm MGNY, founded in 2008 by himself and his brother Yuri (now CEO of MGNY).

Initially, Geylik was friendly with building residents, promising to repair long-standing violations in the Civil War era building, winning their support in order for him to obtain a Certificate of No Harassment

[CONH], required by the Department of Buildings for carrying out major renovations in SRO dwellings.

Then, a campaign of harassment and invasion of privacy began. On the pretext of removing violations remaining from the previous landlord, Geylik demolished the communal kitchen and two communal bathrooms serving the tenants, leaving no cooking facilities and only two toilets for the entire building. He also claimed that bathtubs in two of the tenants' units had been illegally-installed and demanded that they be removed at the tenants' expense. Beckwith told **The SHADOW**: "We used to have toilets on every floor. The landlord presented the removals to tenants as something he was 'required' to do, but I don't believe that at all. It was a choice."

On our recent visit to the SRO, Zak showed **The SHADOW** security cameras that Geylik has placed within inches of bathroom doors, surveilling each resident going in and out of the toilet and shower. Another camera upstairs was observed in a corner of the narrow hallway, recording comings and goings of tenants from their units.

Eventually, Geylik initiated eviction proceedings against the tenants, claiming "non-primary residence" and other accusations that he has not been able to prove. These hardships and the looming threat of a vacate order were responsible for causing two tenants to leave the building, leaving six residents remaining. Currently, the second floor of the SRO is completely vacant, with residents occupying rooms on the upper floors.

With the help of tenant advocates at the Cooper Square Committee and Take Root Justice, the residents have fought back in court. After a protracted administrative hearing, the Certificate of No Harassment that had been previously granted to Geylik with the cooperation of the residents was rescinded. "The judge essentially ruled that Geylik had harassed the tenants into letting him have the CONH," said Anna Baker-Hearns, an activist with the Cooper Square Committee. It is very rare for a court to rescind a CONH once granted. "We were not able to find a precedent," Baker Hearns told **The SHADOW**. "In order to get the

CONH back, all the landlord needs to do is to rebuild the bathrooms and kitchen, since the judge ruled that their removal was what constituted the harassment."

Thomas Dukleth, another long-time resident of the SRO, told **The SHADOW**: "We'd like him [Geylik] to be the reasonable man that he tried to present himself as when he bought the building." But Geylik has hunkered down, seemingly relishing the battle to remove remaining tenants.

Michael and Yuri Geylik are immigrants from Uzbekistan. In addition to 109 East Ninth Street, Michael Geylik owns buildings in the Little Russia area of Brooklyn, including 291 and 410 Brighton Beach Avenue, each of which were purchased for \$3-4 million.

MGNY, the agency run by the Geyliks, started out counseling landlords on how to file appeals on their property taxes. Yuri Geylik developed a software application called Client Portal to facilitate this process. More recently, MGNY has moved into counseling for wealthy property owners seeking to avoid the "pied-a-terre" tax on expensive second homes.

In 2017, MGNY began acting as brokers for "affordable" housing, specializing in the "130% area median income market" selling and renting government-subsidized housing for individuals earning \$140,000 per year and higher, often in areas experiencing rapid gentrification. Specifically, it is Geylik and his employees at MGNY who examine income qualifications of each applicant for affordable housing and they manage lotteries in which applicants must participate in order to be considered.

Among the housing lotteries that MGNY administers is the one for the Brooklyn Tower, a 1,035 foot "super tall" in downtown Brooklyn, offering 150 condos and 425 apartments subsidized by the government, deemed "affordable", but nevertheless limited to persons making \$90,172 per year (single occupants in studios) to \$215,150 per year (for families of four), with corresponding rents of \$2,630 to \$3,872 per month.

These sophisticated players (Michael Geylik is a graduate of the NYU Schack Institute of Real Estate) do not acquire buildings as a hobby, or as a service to poor

people. Zak told **The SHADOW** that, in the early days following his acquisition of the building, he had asked Geylik why people that Zak knew who needed housing could not rent the eight vacant rooms remaining in the SRO. Zak says that Geylik replied: "the less SRO tenants that I have in occupancy, the more valuable my property becomes."

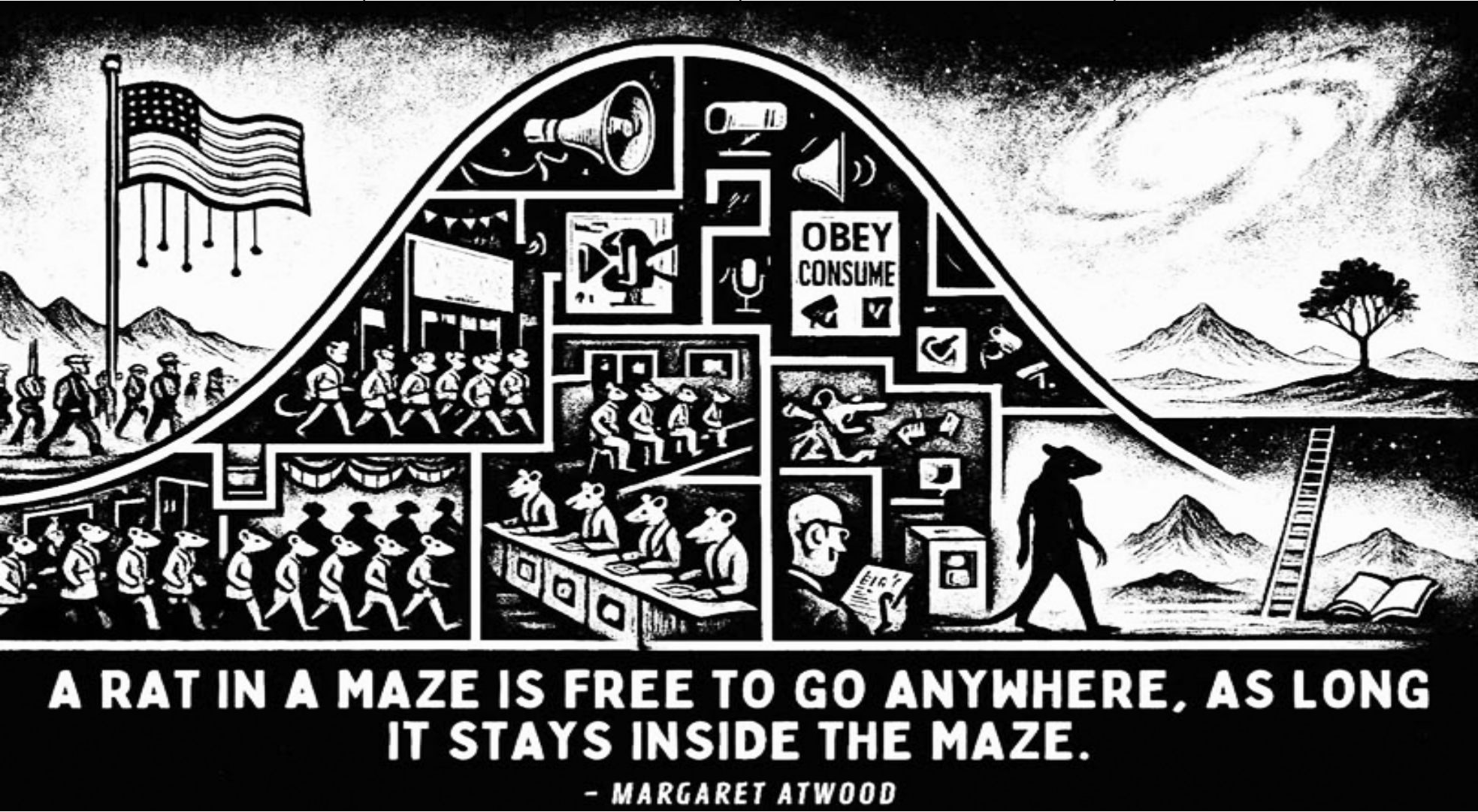
There are those who ask why Michael Geylik wanted to own 109 East Ninth Street in the first place, considering its SRO status. The most obvious possibility is that he wants to replace the five story SRO building with a larger building. A few doors away from the SRO, at the corner of Fourth Avenue, on the site of a recently-demolished one story dry cleaner, a 115 foot luxury residential tower is now under construction.

Another potential incentive for Geylik is that the SRO building has unused development rights, or "air rights," which are based on the difference between the area of the floor surface of the existing building and the area that could be built under the zoning where the property is located.

An estimation found on the website RegWatch states that 109 East Ninth Street has 4,493 square feet of air rights -- "up to two more floors at current footprint." This means that two additional floors could be added to the existing building, or that the air rights could be sold to adjacent developments, such as the big construction project soon to be underway in the vacant lot at 11th Street and Third Avenue and similar projects in the area, enabling developers to build higher. At an average price of \$1,734 per square foot for real estate in the 10003 zip code, the SRO could reap a potential \$7,800,000 from air rights alone.

With Geylik standing to make that kind of money from property that does not even exist yet, it appears unrealistic to expect him to maintain decent living conditions in his building for a handful of long-term residents of our community.

Zak told **The SHADOW**: "I've lived here for 15 years; other people have lived here for over 30 years. I have no intention of ever leaving. I've done nothing to deserve being harassed by Michael Geylik."



DEEP AFFORDABILITY OR DEEP DECEPTION?

EAST FIFTH STREET HOUSING PROJECT TESTS MAMDANI'S COMMITMENT TO HOUSING THE POOR

By A. Kronstadt

The idea of housing for people and not for profit is not a new one. Most of the city's 335 NYCHA [New York City Housing Authority] projects were built between the 1950s and 1970s. Despite its flaws, NYCHA has housed hundreds of thousands of low-income New Yorkers for decades.

On January 1, 2026, his first day in office, Mayor Zohran Mamdani signed Executive Order 4, which created the Land Inventory Fast Track [LIFT] Task Force to identify under-utilized city-owned land that is suitable for housing. The Task Force focused on a five lot parcel of land located on the south side of East Fifth Street, between First and Second Avenues, across from the ninth precinct, which has been used by cops to park their vehicles.

The 324-332 East Fifth Street parcel was once the site of Public School 25, which abutted another school building, now known as the Manhattan School for Career Development (aka PS 751) on Fourth Street. It is unknown why the city chose to demolish PS 25. After World War Two, from the mid-1940s through the 1960s, countless tenement buildings in New York City were torn down in the name of "Urban Renewal" as "slum clearance" projects, under which the city removed low-income residents, demolished their buildings and gave the land to developers to build new expensive housing. Like many other slum clearance sites on the Lower East Side, the parcel on Fifth Street remained vacant until the present. It was suggested for development when the Soho/Noho Rezoning Plan, created to allow taller buildings to be constructed throughout a wide swath of Lower Manhattan, went into effect in 2021.

In 2024 and 2025, New York City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development [HPD] commenced a process of "Community Visioning" to enable "Development Informed by Community" of the Fifth Street parcel. HPD has not been held in high esteem by housing activists on the Lower East Side, who have nicknamed it the "Department of Housing Prevention and Destruction" for keeping city-owned lots and abandoned buildings vacant for decades, until real estate developers could move in to create "market rate" housing.

Typically, HPD has facilitated so-called 80/20 contracts, meaning 80% market rate and 20% "affordable." In these deals, there has often been fine print whereby even

so-called "affordable" apartments revert to "market rate" after six to ten years. Since the Fifth Street parcel is in the area that has been re-zoned, it is mandated by law that "affordability", however defined, must be maintained in perpetuity.

According to the Community Visioning Report on HPD's website, "Community Visioning" was achieved by distributing flyers for a few days at a subway station and in libraries, sharing information with "stakeholders", whomsoever they may be, posting on HPD's Facebook page, holding a public workshop with 34 people, and ultimately recruiting 380 people to answer a questionnaire stating their preferences regarding various features of the new building.

Some key takeaways that can be found on the HPD website [search "324 East Fifth Street" and "Community Visioning" to find the document] are:

- That the largest category in the sampled group by age was "65 and over" with 34% and 55-64 years of age with 16%.
- That the sampled group was 71% white.
- That "Nearly 30% of respondents who gave their income make less than \$50,000 per year, and of that group, about a third make less than \$25,000 per year." However, if you carefully look at their bar graph tabulating the income ranges of the sampled group, 30% of the group were in the income range of \$75,000-\$174,999 per year.
- That 26% of those sampled owned their own homes - probably referring to co-ops and condos, since we are talking about Manhattan).
- That only 3% of those sampled rented in a NYCHA building or rented using a voucher.

At one point, the report states that the sampling consisted of 337 Manhattan residents, including only 179 residents with a 10003 zip code, the area where the Fifth Street parcel is located, and 20 others from other boroughs, but there is no indication of which community was sampled and how the numbers add up to 357 when elsewhere in the Visioning Report they say 380 questionnaires were filled out. It seems clear that few of the people recruited to fill out this questionnaire were in the low-income category and that the high-income category, including co-op and condo owners, was quite well-represented.

The vague process of obtaining this community input was matched by the vagueness of the conclusions. 57% of the

respondents indicated "seniors" as the group most needing affordable housing on Fifth Street, 28% answered the same question with "households with children", 20% answered "young adults", 10% answered "single people", while 30% answered "homeless families and individuals". When we talk about seniors, people with kids, young adults, and single people, these are categories that can include the poor as well as straight-up wealthy persons. Only the "homeless" category implies any particular income range, namely low income.

Hence the skepticism concerning the term "affordable" -- affordable for whom? Is the Visioning Report a mandate to house the poor or to attract a "better" class of people to Fifth Street, i.e., a mandate to gentrify? Most so-called "affordable" housing projects throughout the city reserve only a handful of apartments as "deeply affordable," i.e., less than \$1,000/month, with the lion's share in the range of 80% to 130% of the Area Median Income [AIM], which the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD] defines for all of NYC as about \$120,000 per year for a single individual or \$175,000 per year for a family of four. Included in this statistic are wealthy neighborhoods like the Upper East Side and Riverdale in the Bronx. A comparable figure for the Lower East Side comes to about \$54,000 per year (the mean and not the median, but it is enough to give an idea).

A logical question would be: Will the Fifth Street project be an actual effort to house the poor, or yet another example of "liberal gentrification?" [See SHADOW #62: BLUEPRINT FOR GENTRIFICATION: De Blasio's Affordable Housing Plan: Megatowers, Apartments That We Can't Afford, and More Power to Goldman Sachs!]

Then there is the somewhat ominous note in the Visioning Report regarding rezoning. The report states: "Community members would like to see a building that offers more units than would be allowed under the as-of-right R8B zoning scenario." R8B zoning has limited construction height on the Fifth Street parcel to 75 feet, whereas rezoning to R7X, which the city is seeking at the time of this writing, would permit buildings of up to 125 feet on that site. Such a rezoning would increase land values and increase development pressure on the block

as a whole, encouraging demolition rather than renovation.

On July 13, 2026, the Mamdani administration announced the project to build on the Fifth Street parcel as a done deal. By then, the project already had the name of "The Aurea". A development team consisting of the Cooper Square Committee, the This Land is Ours Community Land Trust, and Spatial Equity had already been put in place by HPD and the mayor's office. These groups are all nonprofits. Cooper Square Committee is an activist organization that once battled un-elected "urban planner" Robert Moses' "Urban Renewal" projects and which now manages the Cooper Square Urban Renewal Area, bounded by Stanton Street, Chrystie Street - Second Avenue, East Fifth Street and the Bowery. This Land is Ours is essentially a project of the Cooper Square Committee -- their project director is long-time Cooper Square Committee manager Valerio Orselli.

In the early 2000s, the Cooper Square Committee served on HPD-sponsored committees, which ultimately approved massive luxury housing developments in the Cooper Square Urban Renewal Area, like those that presently stand between Houston and Second Street, from Second Avenue to the Bowery.

These housing activists turned real estate brokers signed off on a pittance of 20% for "affordable" apartments, while the rest were sold off as condos and rented at "market rate", ushering in a yuppie apocalypse for the Lower East Side. In short, we were sold out.

Many features of the Aurea, scheduled for completion in 2030, were announced independently of any community input. In particular, the scale of the building -- 14 floors high and 100 feet wide -- was already determined. In exchange, ninth precinct cops will get an underground garage to replace their parking lot.

The SHADOW asked New York City Council member Harvey Epstein: "Are all of the apartments [in the Aurea] going to be in the range affordable to people in the surrounding neighborhood or are there going to be any '130% of Area Median Income' apartments?" Epstein's vague response was: "...decisions on how many units, unit size, and AMI are not resolved yet..."

"not your average bookstore!"

afterword bookshop

216 east 6th street, ny, ny

open every day, 11am-8pm

afterwordbookshop.com

@afterwordbookshop

Instagram

THE WORLD'S SMALLEST RECORD STORE

117 ORCHARD ST, NEW YORK, NY

11AM-7PM TUESDAY-SUNDAY

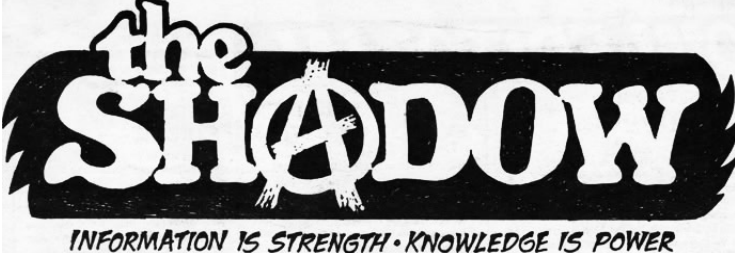
RECORD YOUR OWN RECORD
WITH THE VOICE-O-GRAPH!

CONTACT US! earthlibraries.com | recordstore@earthlibraries.com
Follow us on Instagram: @elrecordstore

confectionery!

Vegan Artisanal Sweets -- 440 East 9th St NY, NY 10009

WHO BOMBED THE WORLD TRADE CENTER?



50¢
\$1.00 OUT OF TOWN
OCT. 1994/JAN. 1995
ISSUE #34

INFORMATION IS STRENGTH • KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

SHADOW EXCLUSIVE:
**FBI BOMBED
WORLD TRADE
CENTER!!**

[This exclusive report was published in SHADOW #34 in 1994. We believe that if Emad Salem’s tape recordings had not been “frozen” by the judge overseeing the prosecution of Sheik Omar Rahman and his co-defendants, the jury, aware of FBI foreknowledge and involvement in the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, may not have found the defendants guilty. In view of what Salem’s tapes reveal, it is not hard to accept that the US government was also involved in the successful destruction of the World Trade Center eight years later, on September 11, 2001 – Ed.]

By Paul DeRienzo, Frank Morales and Chris Flash

Two cassette tape recordings, obtained by SHADOW reporter Paul DeRienzo of telephone conversations between FBI informant Emad Salem and his Bureau contacts reveal secret US Government complicity in the February 26, 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City, in which six people were killed and more than a thousand were injured.

After careful deliberation, The SHADOW believes the question regarding the bombing boils down to the following: Did the FBI do the bombing, utilizing informant Salem as an “agent provocateur” or did it allow or fail to prevent an independent Salem and his associates from doing it? The taped conversations obtained by The SHADOW seem to indicate the former:

FBI Informant Emad Salem [speaking with his FBI handler]: *“We was start already building the bomb which is went off in the World Trade Center. It was built by supervising supervision from the bureau and the DA and we was all informed about it and we know that the bomb start to be built. By who? By your confidential informant. What a wonderful great case!”*

Who is Emad Salem? FBI bomber, Arab double agent or just greedy? Possibly a combination of all three. Salem is a former Egyptian Army officer who is currently the US government’s star witness against Egyptian cleric Dr. Omar Abdel Rahman, whom the FBI says was the ringleader in several bombing plots, including the World Trade Center. Shortly after the bombing at the Twin Towers, the US government moved to take Salem into the Witness Protection program.

According to the FBI, Salem was aware of the plot ostensibly because he had infiltrated Sheik Rahman and his associates. He was recruited as a government informant shortly after the 1991 assassination of right-wing militant Rabbi Meir Kahane. As an associate of Rahman, Salem traveled in the cleric’s inner circle, surreptitiously recording conversations and selling his information to the Bureau. But unknown to his FBI handlers, Salem was also secretly recording his conversations with them, most likely to protect himself.

According to attorney Ron Kuby, after Salem was taken into the Witness Protection Program on June 24, 1993, he told the Feds about the more than 1,000 conversations he had recorded sometime between December 1991 and June 1993. Kuby says that while some of these tapes are not significant, others contain substantive dealings between Salem and his FBI handlers. Salem

was actually bugging the FBI.

The World Trade Center bombing, along with subsequent alleged plots to bomb prominent targets in New York City, spawned a number of federal indictments and trials resulting in the conviction of more than a dozen men, all of Arabic descent. Salem’s exposure as a government informant who had a year earlier infiltrated the group of men later charged in the bombing conspiracy caused many to wonder why he and the FBI failed to provide any warning of the pending World Trade Center bombing.

The answer now appears self-evident. According to William Kunstler, attorney for Ibrahim El-Gabrowni, one of those accused in the larger bombing case, the entire conspiracy was the product of Salem, the government informant. Kunstler’s law partner Ronald Kuby told The SHADOW that, within hours of the World Trade Center blast, Salem checked into a midtown hospital, complaining of a loud ringing in his ears. There is a growing belief that some of the four men charged and since convicted and jailed for the World Trade Center bombing, Mohammad Aboulhima, Mohammad Salameh, Nidal Ayyad and Ahmad Ajaj, may be innocent victims of a government frame-up.

Attorneys for those convicted have maintained that the government’s case is circumstantial at best, with no evidence or motive linking the accused with the bombing. The FBI and federal prosecutors have not as yet responded to questions over the lack of warning of the attack on the Twin Towers, despite the strategic placement of their informant.

Two possible scenarios emerge. One: Salem is a rogue FBI informant who created the conspiracy to bomb the World Trade Center for the money his information about the plot (minus his role) would bring. An attorney for one of the convicted men told The SHADOW that Salem was an FBI informant from November of 1991 to the summer of 1992. The attorney says that the FBI became aware of the World Trade Center bombing plot through informant Salem during this period, but they refused to believe his information or to pay Salem’s exorbitant fees. In fact, the feds claimed that they dropped Salem as an informant during the summer of 1992 after he refused or failed a lie detector test. This left Salem with a bombing plot but no one to sell it to.

According to the attorney, Salem let the plot that he hatched go forward, and the World Trade Center was bombed so that he could get money and publicity. The attorney says that within 48 hours of the bombing, the FBI requested Salem to help them solve

FBI BOMB BUILDERS EXPOSED!

the case. Salem quickly pointed his finger at the defendants, all followers of Sheik Rahman.

So, who did it? From the above point of view, Salem constructed the bomb plot with those whom he subsequently set up. The US government and its FBI were innocent bystanders who failed to prevent the carnage due to their unwillingness to take Salem’s claims seriously, despite his close collaboration with Bureau agents for the better part of a year.

The other scenario looks like this: Informant Salem organized the bomb plot with the “supervision” of the FBI and the District Attorney as part of a classic entrapment setup. He befriended certain individuals, possibly some of the defendants, convinced them that his intentions to bomb the World Trade Center were sincere, and convinced them to get involved. The bomb goes off. Greedy Salem, with his ears still ringing, sells out his accomplices while attempting to sell more information to the Bureau. In order to protect him and their relationship, the FBI sequesters Salem and utilizes him against the real target of the FBI, Sheik Rahman.

In one of the taped conversations between Salem and “Special Agent” John Anticev, Salem refers to his and the Bureau’s involvement in making the bomb that blew up the World Trade Center. As Salem is pressing for money while emphasizing his value as a Bureau asset, the conversation moves in and out of references to the bombing and the FBI’s knowledge of the bomb making:

FBI: *But ah, basically nothing has changed. I’m just telling you for my own sake that nothing, that this isn’t a salary, but you got paid regularly for good information. I mean the expenses were a little bit out of the ordinary and it was really questionable. Don’t tell Nancy I told you this.* [Nancy Floyd is another FBI agent who worked with Salem in his informant capacity. The second tape obtained by The SHADOW is of a telephone conversation between Salem and Floyd -- Ed.]

SALEM: *Well, I have to tell her of course.*
FBI: *Well then, if you have to, you have to.*
SALEM: *Yeah, I mean because the lady was being honest and I was being honest and everything was submitted with receipts and now it’s questionable.*
FBI: *It’s not questionable, it’s like a little out of the ordinary.*
SALEM: *Okay. I don’t think it was. If that what you think guys, fine, but I don’t think that because we was start already building the bomb, which is went off in the World Trade Center. It was built by supervising supervision from the Bureau and the DA and we was all informed about it and we know that the bomb start to be built. By who? By your confidential informant. What a wonderful great case! And then he put his head in the sand I said “Oh, no, no, that’s not true, he is son of a bitch.” (Deep breath) Okay. It’s built with a different way in another place and that’s it.*
FBI: *No, don’t make any rash decisions. I’m just trying to be as honest with you as I can.*
SALEM: *Of course, I appreciate that.*

(Later in the conversation..)

SALEM: *Did I ever falsify information to the Bureau?*
FBI: *Falsify? No.*
SALEM: *So everything in the information I supplied it, it’s very excellent and correct. I was talking to Sayyid Nossair’s [El Sayyid Nossair, acquitted in the killing of Rabbi Kahane, was convicted on related gun charges and is presently in Attica Prison -- Ed.] wife yesterday and she’s going to visit him today and I would be going to visit him next week as per the arrangement. What am I supposed to do this trip? I don’t have money to do this trip and then go over there and the guy will ask me to build a bomb again or*

to kidnap Ajaj again, or to get in touch of so and so to help me do so and so. Who will do that? Who else will do that?

FBI: *Nobody. You’re the only one who could do that.*

AGENTS PROVOCATEUR AND THE SECRET GOVERNMENT

The Emad Salem tape recordings speak volumes about the ongoing influence of “the secret team”, which has, over the last four decades, assassinated democratic government in America. As concealed as it is deadly to victims of its methods, which include outright murder, this techno-fascism of control utilizes a type of state terrorism fond of grand spectacles of fiery destruction: SLA [Symbionese Liberation Army] in Los Angeles, MOVE in Philadelphia, and the Branch Davidian Church in Waco, to name a few. An arsenal of weapons at its disposal, including various forms of entrapment, the creation of “patsies” and subsequent conspiracy “frame-up” trials, this strategy has been in operation for a long time.

In 1969-1970, an FBI informant known to student radicals as Tommy the Traveler, organized, planned and helped carry out the bombing of an ROTC [Reserve Officers Training Corps] building at Hobart College in Geneva, New York. Tommy, the prototypical “agent provocateur” masquerading as an organizer for SDS [Students for a Democratic Society], was always the one at anti-Vietnam War meetings to push for the most extreme and violent measures. These agents specialize in infiltrating groups, adopting the most radical pose and pushing legitimate political concerns into illegal areas, hence criminal activities. On one occasion, Tommy showed some students a carload of dynamite. Then, after the ROTC building was blown up, nine students were arrested and charged with conspiracy in the bombing. After a lengthy trial, at which time Tommy (The Traveler) Tongyai, a Thai national, was exposed as an FBI informant, two college freshmen were convicted in the case, despite their obvious entrapment by the informant.

More recently, targets as diverse as Earth First, animal rights groups, Central and Latin American solidarity organizations, and Black and Latino liberation movements, have been victimized by this strategy of manipulation and criminalization by way of the “agent provocateur.”

This is the tried and true method the State uses to instill paranoia, restrict civil rights, call for more stringent laws, and imprison revolutionaries and others active in political struggle while criminalizing whole communities of people and nations: in this case Arabs worldwide, active on behalf of justice and human rights.

The implications of the further exposure of US secret government complicity in the domestic bombing of its citizens are profound. State terrorism of this sort can never be justified. In fact, it is a crime against the people. The sad irony is that the people are not sufficiently strong to prosecute these crimes, crimes perpetrated by elite, fascist America’s “secret team”.

An especially chilling declaration by “Special Agent” Anticev at the close of his conversation with Emad Salem reaffirms the point of view of the “invisible government.” Anticev says:

“We’re doing this for a higher reason. We know what we’re doing and we know what it’s gonna mean in the future. Forget about bureaucrats! Forget about them. They come and go, okay? We know what we’re doing and at the end we’re gonna at least be able to look at each other and say we tried the best we could, ya know, not for the government. The government is a very, you know, what do you call, unidentifiable thing, you know? It’s a, sometimes it’s one person affecting you, sometimes it’s bureaucratic things, but we still know what we did. That’s all we’re gonna say.”

GROUND ZERO

By Frank Morales

A few days after the destruction at the World Trade Center, I received a call from a staff person at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, who asked me if I, being a priest, would be willing to journey down, through all the militarized checkpoints that had been set up immediately following the bombings, to perform last rites for the dead.

“Frank,” she said, “we’re really not talking bodies here, you know. It’s mostly body parts.” She said that my name had come up in discussions as somebody who might have the stomach for such an assignment. I instantly accepted, taking the 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. shift, feeling, probably like a lot of people, that I could be useful there, that I could help. Little did I realize then that it was I who would be helped, that it was I who would gain so much from the wisdom that was smoldering there.

Walking down lower Broadway into the heart of darkness, I could clearly smell the stench of death, a perfume, I thought later, of a sacrificial fire, a human pyre, deeply sacred in its’ essence. How was I to know what wisdom was locked within that incomprehensible scene?

After a while, I passed through the last of the checkpoints manned by National Guard people, at which point I was escorted to a series of tents set up along the Hudson River, facing due east, situated in the belly of the monster. I stood, along with dozens of firemen and construction and rescue workers, within what often appeared to be some kind of opera set.

In front of me, a full 180-degree semi-circle, floodlit in the dead of night, I could see the entire devastation, spiked remains of the South Tower, whose lower portion reminded me of the Parthenon, an earlier testament to a doomed civilization. To the left was a 2,000-degree pit, the infernal ruin of the North Tower. The entire death scape cast in front of me, sitting in my director’s chair, in a remake of “Apocalypse Now,” I could see the tiny machines and men traverse the mountains of twisted steel and rich brown earth, the whole picture so large as to defy comprehension. Standing there, I was approached by a fireman, a fortyish football player-looking guy from Queens. This fireman, whose name I never got, told me he’d been there since immediately after the catastrophe. He told me that the wives of his friends buried somewhere beneath the burning toxic earth were calling him every day and asking him if he’d found their husbands yet. He looked at me and said, “I know I’m going to lose 10 years of my life here, but I can’t let my buddies down. I can’t go.”

Recognizing that I was somewhat overwhelmed by the spectacle of devastation all around us, he said to me, “Father, you don’t see any chairs or tables, no desks, do you? All you see is steel and earth. “Look at the earth,” he said, “the people are in it.” As he said this, he motioned me to examine the soil that I was standing in. It was rich and moist, enriched with the ground-up bodies of the dead. My feet inside my boots began to tingle.

At this point, recognizing that I had truly arrived in hell, I was moved to utter in his presence, possibly for his benefit, “Hey, if I had somebody in this mess, I’d be pissed as shit, and yeah, I’d wanna get those mother fuckers,” at which point he put his hand on my shoulder and whispered, “Hey, it’s not about that.”

“You wanna know something,” he said, drawing near to my ear, “Bush and bin Laden have the same banker.”

I was stunned by his grasp of current events. (Another fireman would later advise me that the whole situation was one of “rich people fighting over oil with all of us caught in the middle.”)

What I came to recognize slowly was that the message of these men and women who were rubbing shoulders with the dead 24/7 was quite at odds with the then-prevailing ethic -- that it made no human sense to inflict what was in front of us on anyone

else.

For beneath the uninformed M.O. of the long-distance bomber and the long-distance armchair warrior is a lack of appreciation of death up close. Living with the dead, squeezing their bloody acre between your fingers, lifting small bits of fingers from beneath your boots, placing the pieces in red plastic seal-up “one-pound bags,” one loses the ability to replicate the violence, loses the desire to duplicate that which one becomes akin to, namely the murder of innocent people.

In other words, for the people at Ground Zero, death was real, and hence not to be taken lightly. All night I found no one who was in any kind of mood to inflict that which we were living in on anyone else. It was instinctually not viable. Slowly, the lesson of Ground Zero dawned on me, the lesson that the vicious circle of violence breeding violence was passe’ here, a bad joke foisted upon a dehumanized complicit public, unsupported by those in the know at the ground zero of moral wisdom.

Of course, this explains the documented inability of many soldiers during World War II to kill another, even the manufactured “evil one,” in a direct one-on-one confrontation. (See “On Killing,” by David Grossman, 1996.) And yet, while we do all in our power not to kill, we are manipulated into pulling the trigger -- they kill in our name.

Truth is, killing and humanity (who we are) are opposites, and the guys at Ground Zero knew this better than anyone, and this was their message: “Hey, Father, tell them out there that they should organize buses for people to come through here, everyone should see this.” They said, everyone should get this inoculation against the sheep-like murderous idiocy that was rising like the smoky spirits of the dead from the ruins in front of me.

As dawn approached, men covered in the gray-brown soot which was everywhere approached me and, as if in a fit of elation, mentioned that they had found an intact body of a young girl. Given the circumstances, this was cause for muted celebration. I tagged along with them to the boiling 2,000-degree pit that was the North Tower. A cherry picker emblazoned with an American flag fitted with the image of a Native American with peace pipe lowered in the lonely place of death to retrieve the girl, who looked to be a teen, in a striped dress, raised her from the dead, resurrecting her identity and placing her at my feet. We gathered there among the smoke and flames and despite the inescapable stench prayed for her spirit, her family, for one another, for this broken world, in this exiled place.

9/11:
BLUEPRINT
FOR TRUTH
The Architecture of Destruction



Watch the
DVD Now!

 ARCHITECTS
& ENGINEERS
for 9/11 TRUTH

AE911Truth.org

THE POST 9/11 ERA

Continued From Page 2

interference in the 1979 Iranian revolution backfiring spectacularly, the managers of American Empire gave the go ahead for its Iraqi proxy Saddam Hussein to go to war with Iran, with chemical weapons supplied by the CIA.

False flag attacks used to be considered a “conspiracy theory.” Until just some years ago, the existence of these provocation operations was finally acknowledged as a reality by the ruling class and corporate media, amid the US empire’s instigated conflict between Ukraine and Russia.

The Free Thought Project has thoroughly documented several of these historical events, including the infamous Reichstag fire and Operation Himmler of the Third Reich, to the deliberately-provoked attack against Pearl Harbor, and many more events used to manufacture the pretext necessary for waging war. One of the best known among these operations, despite ironically being one that never actually made it past the planning phase, was Operation Northwoods.

Northwoods, among many proven plots by our government to carry out terrorist attacks against its own population, was a plan devised by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, along with co-ordination from the Central Intelligence Agency in 1962, which would have had CIA assets carry out a series of bombings and mass shootings throughout central Florida and Washington DC, along with plane hijackings and the use of drones disguised as commercial airliners, to simulate a mass casualty event to be blamed on Cuba, as justification for war.

It goes without saying, when one looks at the plethora of available evidence, that the attacks of September 11, 2001, was another of many false flag events. It is a matter of public record that the plans for the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks had already been laid well in advance.

According to president George W Bush’s former ghostwriter Mickey Herskowitz, he was dreaming of invading Iraq as early as 1999, before even taking office in 2001. Investigative reporting from late 2001 revealed that plans for the US to invade Afghanistan had already been established long before 9/11.

The intent to use a mass casualty event as an “opportunity of the ages” to expand US global hegemony were explicitly detailed in internal documents of the neo-con think tank called the Project for The New American Century [PNAC], founded by several imperialists like Donald Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney, Paul Wolfowitz, and Scooter Libby, all of whom later found themselves firmly nestled within the Bush Administration.

In September of 2000, almost exactly a year to the day of the 9/11 attacks, PNAC published Rebuilding America’s Defenses -- a plan for strengthening and expanding America’s global military preeminence by waging multiple simultaneous campaigns of war. The documents noted that undertaking such ambitious aims would be arduous “absent some catastrophic and catalyzing event -- like a new Pearl Harbor.”

Award-winning journalist John Pilger wrote in 2002: “Two years ago, a project set up by the men who now surround George W Bush said what America needed was a ‘new Pearl Harbor.’ Its published aims have, alarmingly, come true.”

For the last twenty five years, 9/11 has served as the excuse for imperialists to wage forever wars of death and destruction as a means to maximize power and profit. The United States spent 20 years after 9/11 ruthlessly pillaging and occupying Afghanistan, only for the Taliban to immediately regain control after the American withdrawal. Afghanistan was left remarkably worse after the occupation ended. And for its efforts in the 20 year quagmire, all the American people got out of it was skyrocketing debt and thousands of dead American service members.

Similar fates have befallen numerous countries throughout the global south, each one a deliberately calculated and targeted effort of Imperial psychopathy. Just as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were planned ahead of time, so were all of the subsequent conflicts that arose from the expanded global War on/of Terror.

In 2007, former NATO supreme allied commander US Army general Wesley Clark revealed the overarching agenda of the ruling elite, in what he describes as a “foreign policy coup.” Clark recalls being informed of the pre-planned agenda to topple the government of seven nations: Iraq, Sudan, Libya, Somalia, Syria, Lebanon and Iran.

Iraq has been destroyed. Sudan has become ravaged by US-backed civil war. The assassination of Muammar Gaddafi turned Libya into a failed state and a hub for terrorism and open air slave trading. Similarly, Somalia has all but collapsed into a haven for piracy and CIA-backed terrorists. The Syrian government was toppled, replaced with a US-supported Al Qaeda affiliate.

The Trump administration hasn’t been shy about its imperialist ambitions either. While maintaining every conflict initiated by his predecessors around the globe, Trump himself has launched an Illegal assault against Venezuela, continues to aid and abet the genocide in Gaza, and has initiated a disastrous war with Iran. Meanwhile, he continues to publicly opine fantasies of annexing and colonizing all of the United States neighboring nations.

Just recently, Trump renewed post 9/11 emergency powers, just as his predecessors have, for the 25th year in a row, demonstrating how the false pretenses of a quarter of a century ago remain to maintain the perniciousness of American global conquest.

- Don Via Jr.
-
- FOR MORE INFORMATION, CHECK OUT THESE RESOURCES:
- 911: Press for Truth (2006)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_yxsYXtfeY
 - 911: The Myth and the Reality
Lecture by Dr. David Ray Griffin
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z9UwsSXwTYg>
 - Loose Change / Second Edition (2005)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXf5hZkdAXQ>
 - 911 Loose Change: American Coup / Final Cut (2007)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TjYQP0ly-lw&t=5754s>
 - 911 ‘TURNING THE TIDE’ 2026 CONFERENCE
<https://turningthetide911.org/turning-the-tide/>
 - The Best Evidence Panel
<https://www.consensus911.org/the-911-consensus-points.htmlvaporized?>

LAPD MURDER FOR HIRE?

The Killings of Tupac and Biggie

By Paul DeRienzo

The investigation into the killings of hip-hop icons Tupac Shakur in 1996 and Christopher Wallace, also known as The Notorious B.I.G. in 1997, centers around two major conflicting theories. The first theory is the official law enforcement narrative, primarily shaped by the Las Vegas and Compton police departments, which frames the violence as the result of a deadly gang war. The competing theory alleges that the murders were instigated, or possibly aided, by the Los Angeles Police Department [LAPD].

The first theory culminated in a Las Vegas courtroom in August with the conviction of Duane “Keffe D” Davis. Prosecutors successfully argued that Davis acted as the mastermind and “shot caller” for the South Side Compton Crips, providing the weapon and orchestrating the Las Vegas drive-by shooting of Shakur in retaliation for a casino fight involving his nephew, gang member Orlando Anderson.

The Los Angeles Times, a powerful advocate for the official narrative, called the conviction “the turning point in one of America’s most enduring pop-culture mysteries.” Journalist Randall Sullivan, however, took a more nuanced view of the verdict. His books **LABYRINTH** and **DEAD WRONG** detail how LAPD officers may have been involved in the killings through connections to Death Row Records founder Marion “Suge” Knight, who was Shakur’s manager. Sullivan concluded that the “full scope of the murders will never be truly resolved.” Former LAPD lead investigator Greg Kading also stated that the crimes occurred too long ago to ever be fully solved.

War of the Hip-Hop Stars

Tupac Shakur and The Notorious B.I.G. were the top hip-hop acts of their time. Shakur was the son of Afeni Shakur, a member of the Black Panther Party and one of the “Panther 21” defendants who were charged in a trumped-up murder and bombing conspiracy by the NYPD. The 21 were acquitted of all charges in 1971. One month after her acquittal, Afeni’s son, Lesane Parish Crooks, was born; he was renamed Tupac Shakur in 1972.

Brooklyn-born and raised Christopher Wallace, known as The Notorious B.I.G., was the first artist to sign with Sean “Diddy” Combs’ Bad Boy Records in 1993. He was widely celebrated for his deep lyrics and strong connection with his fans. Wallace recorded a track with Michael Jackson before his death, while another album was released posthumously.

Each star was at the top of their game by the mid-1990s, but both were also embroiled in the so-called East Coast-West Coast rap wars.

Reflected in diss tracks throughout the decade, the verbal battles and insults eventually escalated into a full-scale, yet still mysterious, street war between competing drug traffickers—a time when lines of blow delineated a culture of excess from Hollywood to New York City.

The Second Theory

The second theory, presented in the book **LABYRINTH** and recounted by retired LAPD detective Russell Poole and author Randall Sullivan, alleges that Knight used off-duty corrupt LAPD officers—who secretly worked security for the record label—to organize a retaliatory strike against Wallace.

The central figure in this alleged plot was David Mack, a corrupt LAPD officer convicted of masterminding a \$722,000 bank robbery in 1997. Mack spent 14 years in prison for the robbery. Poole’s investigation suggests that Mack acted as a spotter at the scene of Wallace’s murder, while a mortgage broker named Amir Muhammad (born Harry Billups) acted as the hired hitman.

Sullivan claims the LAPD deliberately buried the investigation to contain the fallout of the wider Rampart police corruption scandal from the late 1990s, leaving the murder officially unsolved. However, despite intensive scrutiny from the Rampart corruption task force and subsequent claims by prison informants, the LAPD officially dropped Muhammad as a suspect in 2000, claiming they lacked solid proof. No criminal charges were ever filed against him or Mack in connection to Wallace’s death.

Cali’s Own CIA

The LAPD has a long history of targeting Black liberation groups, the Black Panthers, and anti-war activists. The department covertly maintained illegal, non-criminal intelligence files on political organizers, working alongside private groups like the Western Goals Foundation to track prominent figures and community groups. When the federal government ordered the destruction of these illegal political dossiers in the 1980s, department officials falsely claimed the materials had been destroyed. Investigators later discovered that an LAPD detective had secretly preserved them in a storage trailer.



The Notorious B.I.G. and Tupac Shakur: murdered by LAPD?

The Los Angeles Times had already discovered that the LAPD was keeping files on “very important people,” some of which were among those the police commission had ordered destroyed in 1975. According to informants, those files had instead been offered to the local school district.

A subsequent investigation revealed connections between the LAPD’s “red hunters” and the Western Goals Foundation, a right-wing organization set up as a tax-exempt group “to strengthen the political, economic, and social structure of Western Civilization so as to make any merger with totalitarians impossible.”

Wealthy business interests provided the LAPD with a computer where the files were secretly transferred by Detective Jay Paul. Among the many progressive targets of the investigation were actors Susan Sarandon, Richard Dreyfuss, Mike Farrell of tv show *M*A*S*H*, and legendary television producer Norman Lear.

Fast-forward to the hip-hop murders: critics argue that the LAPD viewed the rise of powerful, politically conscious artists and heavily armed Compton street gangs through the same lens as they saw the Black Panthers and other political groups of the 1970s. The deep, documented LAPD infiltration of gangs like Compton’s Mob Piru Bloods and the South Side Crips by corrupt officers is why the narrative surrounding the deaths of these music icons remains fiercely disputed.

The Hip-Hop Murders

The 25-year-old Tupac Shakur, at the peak of a meteoric rise to fame and fortune associated with his poetic rap style, was shot on September 7, 1996, around 11:15 PM Pacific Daylight Time. The shooting took place on the Las Vegas Strip while Shakur was stopped at a red light in a car driven by Death Row Records mogul Marion “Suge” Knight, who was also wounded.

Industry players had gathered in Las Vegas to watch the championship boxing match between Bruce Seldon and Mike Tyson at the MGM Grand Garden Arena. The fight was a blowout, ending in a TKO after just one minute and 49 seconds. In attendance were members of two opposing drug-dealing networks based in Compton, California: the Bloods, marked by their red attire, and the Crips, a network often represented by the color blue. Within these larger groups were specific local sets that were frequently pitted against each other, making it far from a unified scene.

The initial altercation occurred at the MGM Grand Hotel. Closed-circuit television showed groups of men in the lobby when Orlando “Baby Lane” Anderson, a member of the South Side Compton Crips, crossed

straight into Knight’s inner circle.

Competing Narratives

In a Las Vegas courtroom, a jury convicted former Compton gang leader Duane “Keffe D” Davis of first-degree murder as an accomplice to the killing of Tupac Shakur. In 2009, Davis was being investigated by the FBI for another crime when anti-gang task force officers questioned him about the Shakur killing. Davis had signed a proffer agreement with prosecutors, meaning the specific admissions he made in that room could not be used to prosecute him directly. However, Davis later went public with his claims of helping orchestrate the murder, claiming he was in the vehicle with Orlando Anderson. Davis repeatedly denied pulling the trigger himself.

Davis was arrested by Las Vegas police in 2023 and charged with handing Anderson the gun used to shoot Shakur and Knight. Davis’ defense attorney, Michael Sanft, claimed the prosecution was a retaliatory move by police after decades of failing to find Shakur’s killer. Prosecutors countered with allegations that Davis was the “shot-caller” for the South Side Compton Crips who explicitly “went hunting” for Tupac Shakur that night. The jury deliberated for less than three hours before convicting Davis of first-degree murder.

Money B

A close friend of Tupac was rapper Ronald Brooks, known as Money B, a co-founder of Digital Underground—an Oakland-based group known for its light-hearted and humorous lyrics.

Brooks stated that police hated Tupac because of an altercation a year prior with two drunk, off-duty officers. The brothers had pulled a gun that was later found to have been removed from a police evidence locker. Charges of aggravated assault against Shakur were dropped because the officers had initiated the confrontation by firing their weapon first. Brooks believes that law enforcement had infiltrated Shakur’s circle long before the shooting. “They had a hand in it,” he said. “Those agencies turned a blind eye, probably assisted or knew what was going to happen.” He then added nervously, “I don’t know.”

Most of the direct witnesses to the murders of Tupac Shakur and Christopher Wallace are now dead, several by reported suicides and murders. While the murder of Wallace officially remains open and unsolved, the LAPD claims he was shot by a Mob Piru Blood known as Wardell “Poochie” Fouse, who was killed in a 2003 gang-related shooting in Compton.



12 ST. MARKS PLACE
BOOKS ON NYC CULTURE
OPEN LATE EVERY NIGHT
@VILLAGEWORKSNYC

Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro is Innocent



On January 3, 2026, United States forces illegally entered Venezuela, attacked targets in and around Caracas, seized President Nicolás Maduro and his wife and an elected official, Cilia Flores, and transported them to the United States. Two days later, shackled and injured, Maduro appeared before a federal court in Manhattan. ‘I am innocent. I am not guilty’, he told the court. Both defendants entered pleas of not guilty and are now imprisoned in Brooklyn while awaiting a trial provisionally scheduled for June 2027.

The United States alleges that Maduro participated in conspiracies to import cocaine, possess machine guns and destructive devices, and collaborate with organizations Washington has designated as “terrorist groups.” These charges developed out of an indictment announced during Donald Trump’s first presidency in March 2020. The case was substantially expanded after Maduro was kidnapped through a fourth superseding indictment. An indictment, however, is not evidence tested before a court. It is a document prepared by prosecutors and approved through a grand-jury proceeding at which the defense is normally neither represented nor permitted to challenge the government’s account.

The prosecution relies heavily upon the idea that Maduro directed the so-called Cartel de los Soles, or Cartel of the Suns. But even organizations deeply hostile to the Venezuelan government acknowledge that this is not a cartel in the conventional sense. The name has long been used as an umbrella expression for disparate Venezuelan officials allegedly involved in criminal activity, long before Maduro entered political life. It does not describe an organization with a demonstrated membership, command structure, headquarters or chain of authority comparable to Mexico’s Sinaloa Cartel.

When Washington designated the Cartel de los Soles a foreign terrorist organization in 2025, the Associated Press noted that it was ‘not a cartel per se’. This matters because the prosecution’s language performs much of its political work. Allegations concerning individual acts of corruption are assembled into the image of a unified organization, the organization is then attributed to the Venezuelan state, and responsibility for everything allegedly done by anyone within that loose network is placed upon Maduro. The indictment must still demonstrate that Maduro knowingly joined the specific conspiracies charged. Political authority over a state in which crimes occur does not by itself establish personal criminal responsibility for those crimes.

Venezuela is not a major producer of coca leaf or cocaine. The principal cocaine-producing countries remain Colombia, Peru and Bolivia. Venezuela has been used as a transit territory, particularly for cocaine originating in neighboring Colombia. But transit through a country does not prove that its president commands the traffic, nor does it substantiate the extravagant political image of Venezuela as the central source of the drugs entering the United States.

The US Drug Enforcement Administration’s own 2025 threat assessment concentrated overwhelmingly upon Mexican organizations and their supply chains. The global cocaine trade operates primarily through production in the Andean region, maritime export corridors, Central America and Mexico, not through a single organization supposedly commanded from the Venezuelan presidential palace. The International Criminal Court’s investigation into the situation in Venezuela, for example, is an investigation into alleged crimes within its jurisdiction. It is not a conviction of Maduro and has not produced an individual judgment of guilt against him.

The US government is expected to rely upon cooperating witnesses, including former Venezuelan intelligence chief Hugo Carvajal and former general Clíver Alcalá. Both men pleaded guilty to serious offences in the United States. Their evidence cannot be treated as disinterested truth. Cooperating defendants may hope to obtain sentencing benefits by assisting prosecutors. Their claims must therefore be corroborated and subjected to cross-examination. Until that happens, their statements do not establish Maduro’s guilt. In fact, it is better to see their statements as proof of their own attempt to lighten their sentences and launder their soiled reputations.

The circumstances under which Maduro was brought before the US court create an even deeper problem. Washington did not request extradition through an agreed upon legal process. It employed military force within another sovereign country without Venezuela’s consent or authorization from the United Nations Security Council. Article 2(4) of the UN Charter prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of a state, subject to narrow exceptions such as self-defense. Arresting a person accused of drug offenses is not one of those exceptions. International-law specialists described the operation as an unlawful use of force, while governments including Brazil, Mexico, and China condemned the violation of Venezuelan sovereignty.

Maduro’s lawyers have argued that the prosecution violates the immunity enjoyed by an incumbent head of state. Venezuela continued to recognize Maduro as its constitutional president when the United States seized him – a fact tacitly recognized by the United States when it calls Delcy Rodríguez the “Acting President.” Washington cannot necessarily extinguish the international legal status of another country’s head of state merely by withholding diplomatic recognition. The defense has consequently requested dismissal of the indictment on immunity grounds and has separately challenged the “narco-terrorism” count for lacking an adequate jurisdictional connection to the United States. Oral argument on these questions is scheduled for November 2026.

Continued On Page 22

CULTURE AND RESISTANCE IN CUBA TODAY: A CONVERSATION WITH CUBAN JOURNALIST CIRA PERAZA SANCHEZ

By Elizabeth Ruf Maldonado, Ph.D.

My first visit to Cuba was in 1991 with the US-Cuba Labor Exchange as a member of the actors’ and teachers’ unions. Since then, I’ve returned many times for theater events and cultural conferences, spending the 1998-1999 academic year there with my toddler daughter by my side as I conducted research for my dissertation on Cuban theater during Cuba’s “Special Period.” Having navigated the varying degrees of travel restrictions for US citizens during the administrations of each of the past six US presidents with a home base in a community of cultural workers in Havana, I’ve witnessed the cruelty of the 65-year-old US Blockade on Cuba first hand and spend much of my time organizing to end it, as well as to remove Cuba from the State Sponsors of Terrorism list. Now that president Trump and secretary of state Marco Rubio are incessantly leveling threats at Cuba, people ask me what will happen there in the event of a US attack. There’s no lack of reporting on the paralysis of essential services in Cuba brought on by Trump’s energy siege of January 2026, but a view of the culture -- centered in resistance -- of daily life in Cuba is far from accessible here in the US.

I hope this conversation with a woman I esteem as a comadre, 79-year-old Cuban journalist Cira Peraza Sánchez, will offer useful culture-based analyses of Cuba’s preparedness in the face of US aggression, as well as insights into the quotidian poetry of Cuba’s ongoing resolve, since the triumph of the Revolution in 1959, to resist imperialism in surprising ways.

ERM: Great to be in touch, Cira. Let’s start with your childhood.

CPS: I was born in 1947 in Marianao, a working-class barrio in Havana. My father was a mechanic, and my mother did domestic work. When the Revolution triumphed in 1959, I was not yet 12 years old. I was instantly fascinated with the arrival of Fidel Castro in Havana, the bearded ones, everything that was set in motion in Cuba. I joined the literacy initiative on my own and went to Camagüey, where I taught many Cubans and even Haitians to read and write. We came back to the famous March of the Torches in 1961 when we said to Fidel, “tell us what we have to do.” And he said: “Study.” I dedicated the rest of my youth to study, and in 1968, they admitted me to journalism school at the University of Havana. But I got a job at the cartooning studios of the ICRT [Cuban Institute of Radio, Film, and Television], and I put journalism on “standby.”

In 1972, the ICRT asked the workers to contribute to the construction of the building that would house them, a microbrigada, or housing project, built with materials provided by the Cuban State. Workers can own their apartments when the building is complete. Being a young militant, I left my job and went to help build the building where I live to this day. I returned to my journalism studies in 1974.

My husband, actor Julio Alfonso, and I met here in the micro. When the micro was complete in 1978, I went back to working in the ICRT as a journalist doing the cultural collective for the prestigious Radio Rebelde. Later, I participated as a founder of Radio Taíno, whose mission is to promote Cuban culture. Now I’m 79 and still working with the ICRT at Radio Taíno. I’ve covered cultural events all over Cuba, as well as in Italy and Switzerland. For me, it’s a source of pride to have reached this age and still be working.

ERM: Would ending the US Blockade alleviate Cuba’s economic woes?

CPS: I believe so. Cuba is being strangled because of having to buy things from foreign countries, exchanging currency and transporting goods across multiple borders and losing money on every transaction. We well know that the “gentlemen” from the United States intervene in order to make things



more difficult for us and more expensive.

ERM: It’s worth mentioning that Cuba, as the country with the most doctors per capita in the world, also provides medical services in exchange for goods or on a humanitarian level.

CPS: Of course. But when people from the outside criticize us for experiencing scarcity, they don’t talk about all that.

ERM: After seeing what the US did to Venezuela in January, many friends have been asking me, “What’s going to happen in Cuba?” And I answer, “Look, Cuba’s not Venezuela, but...”

CPS: Cuba is not Venezuela, but, but... the “gentleman” the US has as a president is pretty crazy and does whatever he wants. So we are really in danger. One day he may wake up with one idea and one day he may wake up and pulverize us. We know we have to be prepared for anything.

What Trump did in Venezuela was criminal. Illegal. But he did it. There were Cubans there, defending Maduro and his wife and the country of Venezuela to the death. For many years, Venezuela had security personnel from Cuba. And 32 of them lost their lives in the attack on January 3. I can’t guarantee it, but some officials who understand this case claim there was treason in the high command of Venezuela.

ERM: With Cuba’s 65-year history of successfully thwarting US aggression, I don’t believe Trump would dare put boots on the ground in Cuba. Of course, there are bombs that can do a lot of damage. Groups like the one I’m active in—Cuba Sí NY/NJ Coalition—organize for peaceful co-existence with Cuba.

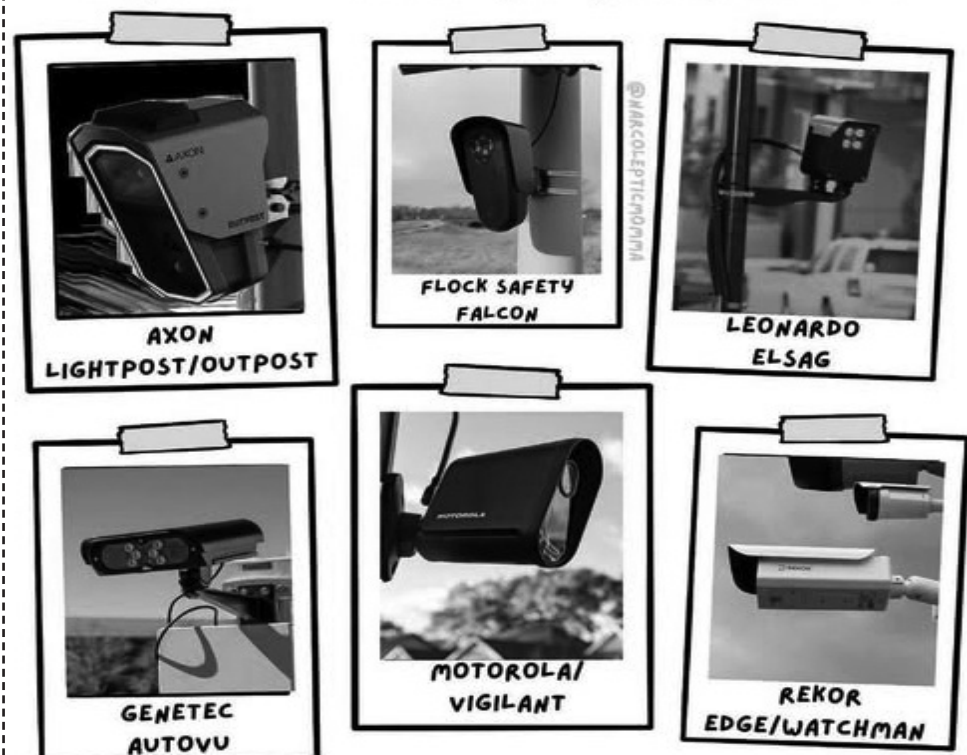
CPS: Cuba has many friends like you around the world, who help put the brakes on the madness of the US, of Trump, and especially of Marco Rubio, this obsession with wanting to destroy us. Rubio isn’t even Cuban. He was born in the US to parents who left Cuba well before the Revolution triumphed. In Cuba, of course, there are opinions of all kinds. But there is still a great sense of rebellion, of sovereignty, and the identity of a well-educated people, shaped by the Revolution, that isn’t going to let any-

Continued On Page 23

HEY FLOCK: GO FLOCK YOURSELF!

By Frank Morales

A FLOCK CAMERA BY ANY OTHER NAME...



...WOULD BE JUST AS CONCERNING

As a result of mass protest, cities across the country are cutting their contracts with Flock, the American technology company that builds mass surveillance systems for law enforcement agencies, businesses, and private neighborhoods. According to the company, more than 5,000 law enforcement agencies use its technology. More broadly, there are more than 130,000 AI-powered automated license plate readers on American streets, according to DeFlock, an advocacy group that tracks the cameras. Automated License Plate Readers [ALPRs], with their solar-powered and LTE-connected cameras on streets and poles, take photos of passing cars and scan license plates with cameras connected, via AI, to a shared national police cloud network.

Sold as crime fighting “public safety” tools for tracking stolen cars, locating missing people and investigating crimes, communities aren’t buying the hype, for it has become obvious that the technology has been misused, with cops using it to stalk ex-partners, or to access data for terrorizing immigrants without a local government’s consent. A sheriff’s office in Texas even used it to track a woman who may have had an abortion. And, it is wrong most of the time! A 2024 analysis by a police department in California found Flock misread license plates in 71% of the alerts it sent to police. And of course, the indiscriminate nature of the data collection violates the Fourth Amendment, which protects us all from being searched unreasonably, that is, spied upon and tracking our movements.

An increasing number of people are combating the technology in both legal and illegal ways. According to an NPR review of local news reports, Flock cameras have been vandalized in at least 36 states. People have stolen the cameras, sawed them down, crashed into them with cars, covered them in paint and stickers, and shot at them. According to reports, at least a hundred cities have deactivated the cameras or canceled contracts with Flock or similar companies. Unfortunately, many of these cities (actually, city council pols and/or police department heads) have signed up with other AI license plate reader companies

who do the exact same thing, but are even more sinister than Flock.

The two companies benefiting most from Flock’s demise are Axon Enterprises and Motorola Solutions. Yes, we know family friendly Motorola TV’s and phones, but in 2019, they swallowed up Vigilant Solutions and got into the automated license plate reader business and, until quite recently, were doing pretty good. That is until a lesser-known company, Axon Enterprise [formerly TASER International], based in Scottsdale, Arizona, got busy. Manufacturers of body cameras and cloud software, Axon captured all the city agencies that were fleeing Flock. As we said, once known as TASER International, they changed their brand in 2017 to Axon Enterprise to reflect their expansion into software, sensors, and artificial intelligence. Axon has contracts with 85 percent of US police departments, supplying body cameras, car cameras, and tasers.

They used to partner with Flock, but in 2025, they split from them and decided to get in on the mass surveillance business themselves. Since then, Axon won hundreds of millions of dollars of federal contracts, including a \$220 million contract to supply ICE with body cameras, just two weeks after trump bought \$5 million in their stock!

There are a flock of companies all engaged in one form or another of manufacturing invasive technology, the wherewithal of mass surveillance, placing license plate readers across the country which aim to log our movements and download that information (including facial recognition) into AI police department databases, all integrated into an AI-assisted “emergency assistance platform” set up by a16z, a Silicon Valley venture capital firm headed up by billionaire Marc Andreessen, who helped finance trump’s 2024 presidential campaign by donating \$3 million to MAGA Inc., a super PAC that supports the idiot president. An associate of Elon Musk, Peter Thiel et al, Andreessen is said to have been influenced by the Italian writer Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, the founder of Futurism and co-author of the Fascist manifesto.



MAYA DROOKER

Privacy for me, not for thee

The CEO who wants to make money off your data with a camera on every corner in America also wants you to stop looking at him.

Garrett Langley runs Flock Safety, which sells license plate readers to police in 49 states. Drive past one and it logs your plate, where your car goes, when, and how often. Whether you do anything wrong or not. Flock’s communications chief admits that there is no way to opt out. Privacy for me, cameras for thee.

Langley’s pitch to the rest of us? We have to “compromise” on privacy to stay safe.

Then people online turned the cameras around. They shared his address and a Street View shot of his house, and suddenly privacy mattered a whole lot. Google blurred his home. Photos reportedly came down from Zillow and Redfin.

So your plate gets scanned every time you drive to work, the pharmacy, or your mom’s house. His front door gets a blur filter.

There have been at least 50 cases of police misconduct involving unauthorized Flock access. Flock’s big “fix” is to cut data retention from 30 days to 7.

When an investigative reporter filmed a Flock crew installing a camera on a public street outside Atlanta, the installer called 911 and said he was being “harassed.” Three police cars showed up, and the reporter was pulled over and held for about 17 minutes... for doing EXACTLY what Flock cameras do all day long.

Now it’s all catching up with them. 93 cities and counties have dumped Flock in August alone. Florida pulled license plate cameras off its state highways, Texas cut off state funding, and Flock is now offering its own employees buyouts.

Even Republican Sen. Josh Hawley opened an investigation into who gets their hands on the data. Rep. Alexandria Cortez summed it up: “I don’t even know how they’re legal half the time.”



WHY WALKING AWAY FROM THE CONTROLLED MONETARY SYSTEM IS THE MOST POWERFUL WAY TO FIGHT THE TECHNOCRAT ELITE

Every camera, every prosecution, and every deplatforming runs on a single power: the ability to see your money and stop it.

By Matt Agorist

The license plate reader bolted to the pole at the end of your street can log where you went, but it takes the money system to stop you from buying the gas to get there. The camera watches, and the ledger decides. Civil forfeiture, debanking, frozen stablecoins, and keyword sweeps of your bank transactions are a single weapon with different handles, and every one depends on two conditions the state has spent half a century engineering: It can see your money, and it can order an intermediary to seize it.

This has never been a story about left versus right. In 2022, it was Canadian truckers who woke up to frozen accounts. In 2013, the original Operation Choke Point squeezed payday lenders and gun dealers, and a decade later, its 2025-2026 sequel went after crypto founders. It is a story about rulers and the ruled and the ledger is the ruler's favorite tool because it never has to kick in a door.

Consider how much they already see. Financial institutions filed 4.7 million suspicious activity reports and 20.5 million currency transaction reports in fiscal 2024, roughly 27.5 million reports in all, or about 75,000 a day, every one of them searchable by 472 agencies and more than 25,000 authorized personnel. By the government's own accounting, only about 13 percent of IRS criminal investigations originate from any of it.

After January 6, the House Judiciary Committee found that FinCEN [Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, which collects and analyzes information about financial transactions] and the FBI held back channel discussions with Bank of America, Barclays, US Bank, Charles Schwab, HSBC, and PayPal, urging them to filter Zelle messages for "MAGA" and "Trump," flag purchases at Cabela's, Bass Pro, and Dick's Sporting Goods, and treat "the purchase of books (including religious texts)" as an indicator of extremism. None of it required a warrant, because last year, the Supreme Court declined to hear Harper v. O'Donnell, leaving intact an IRS summons that swept up more than 14,000 Coinbase users without individualized suspicion of any of them. The moment your money touches a bank or an exchange, the Fourth Amendment stops following it.

Stablecoins, a type of cryptocurrency, are not the escape hatch from this either. They are the panopticon rebuilt in code. Tether, a blockchain-enabled platform designed to facilitate the use of fiat currencies in a digital manner, now works with more than 340 law enforcement agencies in 65 countries and has frozen more than \$4.4 billion, including a single \$344 million action coordinated with OFAC [Office of Foreign Assets Control, a financial intelligence and enforcement agency of the US Treasury Department]. It blacklisted 4,163 addresses in 2025 alone and froze \$514 million in one 30-day stretch this year. Tether's stated policy is to freeze assets "upon request" from law enforcement, and a request is not a warrant, an indictment, or a hearing in front of a judge.

A private company flips a switch on an agency's say-so, and you find out when your money stops moving. Innocent users get swept in through what the industry politely calls "transactional contamination," meaning they received USDT [a tokenized form of the US dollar designed for use on blockchain networks] that at some point passed through a flagged wallet. Circle [another blockchain-enabled platform for use of fiat digital currencies] did the same thing in 2022, freezing unsuspecting users' USDC [a digital

currency issued by Circle] by calling a blacklist function in its own contract. No charge, no notice, no day in court, just guilt by proximity enforced by software.

The GENIUS Act [Guiding and Establishing National Innovation for US Stablecoins Act, federal law to create regulations for stablecoins, signed in July 2025] requires every stablecoin issuer to maintain the technical ability to freeze, seize, and burn tokens, and bars foreign issuers that refuse from American markets. This spring's FinCEN and OFAC rule spells out the mandated "technical capability to block, freeze, and reject" transactions. The same House that voted to ban a central bank digital currency handed the identical kill switch to Tether and Circle, with the Treasury's hand on the button and a private logo to blame. It is a CBDC [Central Bank Digital Currency] by proxy, and the head of the Bank for International Settlements has never hidden what the real thing is for: "the central bank will have absolute control on the rules and regulations that will determine the use of that expression of central bank liability. And also, we will have the technology to enforce that." The European Parliament approved the digital euro 416 to 169 in July for a 2029 launch, complete with per-person holding limits set by the Commission.

This is why the state, regardless of the puppet at the podium, viciously stalks innovators. As we've seen time and again, when someone builds a way out, the state cages the builder.

When the Fifth Circuit ruled that 2022 sanctions against Tornado Cash were unlawful, the Treasury Department de-listed the code in March 2025, then told Congress that lawful users may use mixers to protect their financial privacy. Prosecutors in Manhattan convicted Tornado Cash developer Roman Storm anyway and are retrying him on counts that carry up to 40 years. [Tornado Cash is a cryptocurrency tumbler that offers a service that mixes potentially identifiable or "tainted" funds with others, so as to obscure the trail back to the fund's original source.]

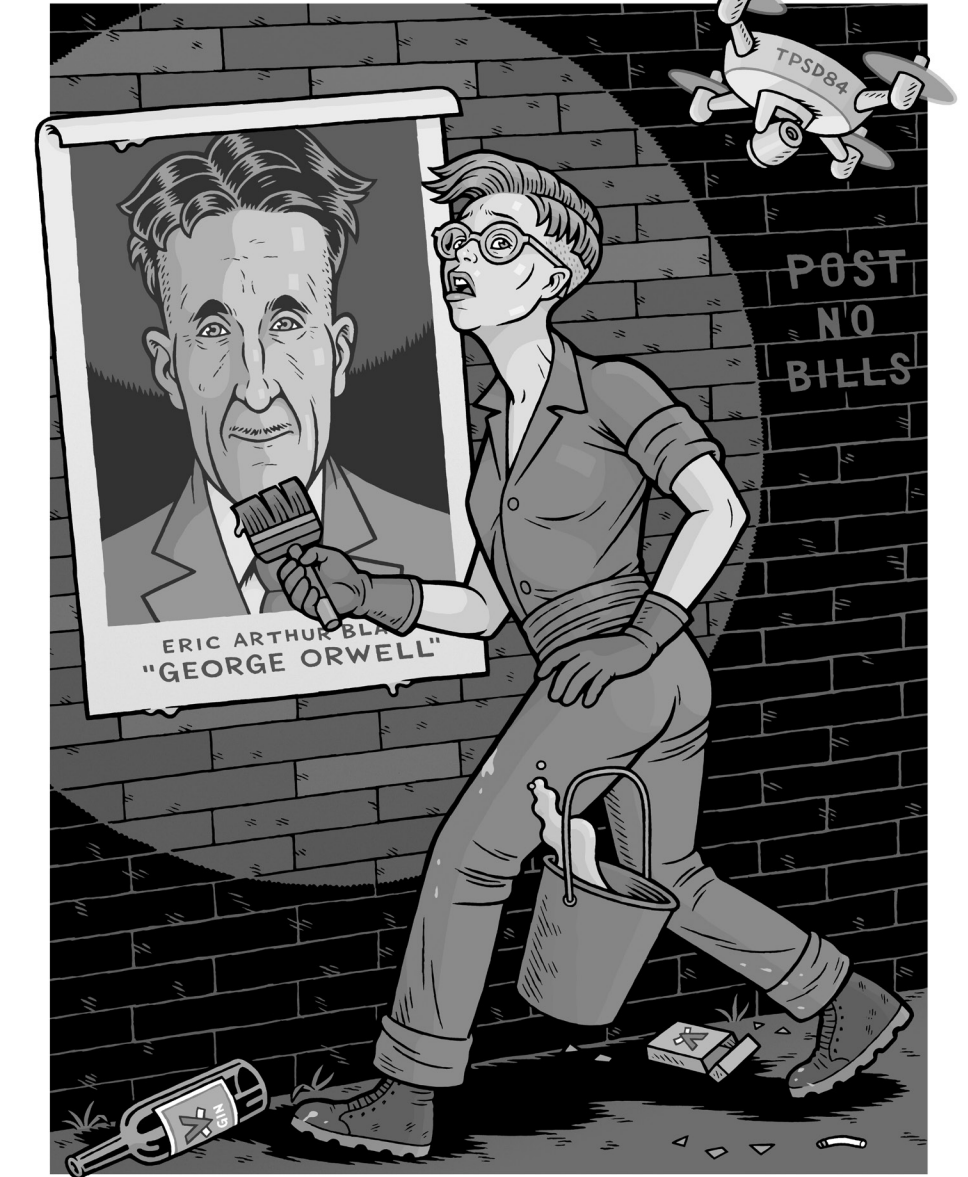
Developers of Samourai Wallet, a privacy-focused Bitcoin wallet that uses a Coinjoin tool that mixes a Bitcoin transaction with other transactions, got five and four years in prison for writing a bitcoin wallet that never held anyone's coins.

Across the Atlantic, regulated providers may not touch "anonymity-enhancing coins" or anonymous accounts, cash payments above €10,000 are banned outright, and any crypto transaction over €1,000 requires identification. The message is unmistakable: you may have digital money so long as it reports to them.

Every lever above needs two things, visibility and an intermediary that takes orders, and once you remove both, there is nothing left to pull. That is the entire case for Zano, an open-source cryptocurrency and privacy-focused blockchain ecosystem. On Zano, the sender, receiver, amount, and asset type are hidden on every transaction at the protocol level. There is no issuer, no administrator, and no blacklist function to call, because as the project puts it, "nothing in a wallet transaction identifies the parties or the amount, so there is nothing for anyone to filter on. Coins carry no visible history, so there is nothing to build a blacklist from." Anyone who wants a dollar that no one can freeze can hold Freedom Dollar [fUSD], an over-collateralized, USD-pegged stablecoin backed by audited reserves that recently passed \$10 million.

It's important to point out that none of

The Surveillance Cascade: How Bad This Actually Gets



DANNY HELLMAN

- Stage 1: The convenience layer.** Loyalty cards, store apps, phone numbers at check-out (not a huge deal...)
- Stage 2: The financial footprint.** Every credit card purchase, every online login, payment history, bank balances, investment accounts
- Stage 3: Physical tracking.** Flock cameras logging your license plate everywhere you drive. Traffic cameras. Cell tower pings. Location data from every app on your phone.
- Stage 4: Habits and preferences.** Alcohol purchases and frequency. Cannabis dispensary visits and quantities. Firearm purchases from FFL records. Every internet search you've ever made. Every AI conversation you've ever had.
- Stage 5: Private records.** IRS filings. Health records. Prescription history. Insurance claims. Employment history. Legal records.
- Stage 6: The tie-together.** Massive data centers merge all of it. AI processes the entire dataset to build a profile of exactly who you are, what you value, what you fear, and what you'll do next.
- Stage 7: The weaponization.** AI generated video and audio has crossed the threshold where it's indistinguishable from real footage. Your movement history plus your face plus your voice can now be reassembled into evidence of any crime the people in power want to charge you with. Concrete "proof" of things you never did.
- Stage 8: The compliance system.** Tie all of it to a monetary system (digital dollar, CBDC, social credit-style scoring) and now if you're "naughty" by their standards, you don't get approved to buy food this month. You can't book a flight. Your account is frozen. Your access to society is conditional on their approval.

-- Rob Benson

.....

these privacy protocols would matter if you could not spend it. That's why you can spend Zano anywhere: at more than 50 million merchants through AEON Pay, with the merchant settled in local currency, and at any shop whose owner has a phone and the Bitcoin.com Checkout app. Zano also runs through Zebec, whose card lets users spend it straight into fiat anywhere Mastercard is accepted. Or, if you prefer Visa, you can use Privacy Gateway, which has a similar no-KYC setup. [No-KYC crypto cards allow you to spend your cryptocurrency without providing personal identification documents]. It is private on-chain and spendable in fiat anywhere, and the state's only counter-move, choking the exchanges, matters less every time another merchant plugs in or another Zano user loads a card. Zano is creating spaces of genuine, permissionless liberty where the State cannot track, control, or coerce the peaceful transactions of individuals.

You do not have to storm the Federal Reserve at all; you merely have to stop feeding it. Every dollar that crosses a private ledger is a dollar the state cannot see, flag, freeze, or forfeit, and every merchant who accepts it is one less checkpoint on the road to a programmable cage. The left and the right have finally agreed that the camera on the pole is the enemy. The ledger underneath it is the same enemy, and this is the one they can actually walk away from. Pay one bill this month in private money, hold one dollar in fUSD instead of Tether, and tell one shop owner they can accept it with nothing but a phone.

Cages come down the way they go up, one transaction at a time.

USE YOUR NOODLE!



Advertise in The SHADOW!!

MISSING FOUNDATION

1933





WE WILL NOT ACTIVILIZED IN THIS FUCKIN' CITY.



JON HEARTFIELD (PHOTO:
JUSTICE) 30 NOVEMBER 1935

YOUR HOUSE IS MINE LP 1933
PURGE SOUND LEAGUE

DOWN BY LAW...

THE PRAIRIELAND NINE: TRUMP’S FASCIST REGIME AND THE WAR AGAINST ANTI-FASCISTS

By Paul DeRienzo

President Donald Trump has escalated his war against anti-fascists in the United States, with the June 23 sentencing of eight protesters to between 30 and 100 years in prison by Federal Judge Reed O'Connor, a Trump appointee, who relied on anti-terrorism enhancements personally ordered by Trump. A ninth protester is awaiting sentencing.

The activists were found guilty of “material support for terrorism,” for setting off fireworks during a “noise protest” on the Fourth of July last year at the Prairieland ICE detention prison near Ft. Worth, Texas. The “terror” charge freed Judge O'Connor to ignore the fact none of the activists had a criminal record before the protest.

Trump’s “terrorism enhancements” allow the government to hit American citizens engaged in constitutionally-protected first amendment free speech protests with years of added sentencing.

Benjamin Song was sentenced to 100 years for firing his AR-15 rifle at an ICE agent whom Song, in a statement, said: “was staged to shoot an unarmed protester.” Song, a firearms instructor and a United States Marine veteran, shot at the ground, causing the cop minor injuries from a ricocheted bullet.

In his statement, Song said he saw the cop “aiming his gun at the back of a running protester,” and was “terrified,” adding that he didn’t want to see “another Renee Goode or another Alex Pretti,” referring to two activists killed by ICE agents in Minneapolis last January.

Song took responsibility for the shot, and said he was alone in his actions and understood the implications. In his statement, he added that other protesters had nothing to do with his actions, “This is mass punishment, collective punishment, guilt by association, this is injustice,” he said.

Draconian punishments were also handed out to Zachary Evetts, Autumn Hill, Savanna Batten, Elizabeth Soto and Meagan Morris, who were each sentenced to 50 years in prison for alleged “riot.”

Daniel Sanchez Estrada, husband of one of the political prisoners, wasn’t at the noise protest, but was sentenced to 30 years in prison anyway for “conspiracy to conceal documents,” stemming from his allegedly moving a box containing zines and pamphlets at the request of his wife Maricela Rueda, who was sentenced to 70 years for “material support of terrorism and attempted murder.”

Rueda had left the protest before the shooting, but an extra 20 years was tacked onto her sentence for the moved box of zines. Her appeal has been taken up by the National Security Defense Center.

Chief of Advocacy for the Freedom of the Press Foundation Seth Stern says that Judge O'Connor’s decisions allow prosecutors to “link a person to a conspiracy,” based on any written materials, anarchist newspapers like **The SHADOW**, for example, or pamphlets and zines.

Usually, manifestos or documents exposing plans to carry out violence are used as evidence, not free speech materials like books and magazines, but Stern says that the administration is not trying to stop protest in America, but protests specifically targeting Trump’s policies.

Stern, speaking on Counterspin, a radio show hosted by Janine Jackson on WBAI radio (99.5FM), compared the Prairieland Nine case to 61 people recently vindicated of conspiracy charges for participating

in Stop Cop City protests in Atlanta, Georgia in 2022-2023 [See **SHADOW #64** -- Ed.]

Activist attorney Stanley Cohen, who defended one of the Cop City activists, told **The SHADOW** that the Georgia conspiracy and federal racketeering and terrorism charges were trumped up to link a network of organizers to individual protesters who allegedly damaged construction equipment. Zines were also used as evidence in the Cop City case.

Stern said the Prairieland case is much more serious than Cop City because the defendants are accused of “terrorism.” The implication is that that tactic could be used against protesters not just locally, but throughout the U.S.

Stern said Trump has blurred the line between protesting his government and the legal definition of terrorism. Trump’s National Security Presidential Memorandum-7 broadens domestic terrorism investigations to include politically-motivated intimidation, non-governmental organization involvement in civil disorder, and actions linked to “hostility towards those who hold traditional American views.”

The Prairieland case threatens establishment opposition to Trump as well. Former CNN anchor Don Lemon and journalist Georgia Ford are also facing conspiracy charges after an anti-ICE protest last January at a church run by a pastor, who moonlighted as an ICE agent.

The fact that the two were in the church to cover the protest is being cited as evidence they had prior knowledge. They were indicted under an 1871 civil rights law aimed at the KuKluxKlan for allegedly obstructing a church service.

Lemon and Ford were also charged under the FACE [Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances] Act, a law meant to protect access to abortion clinics often blockaded by anti-abortion fanatics. FACE also protects places of religious worship from disruption. Ironically, anti-abortion forces on Capitol Hill have been trying to overturn that law, apparently to facilitate harassment of people trying to get healthcare.

Stern says the government has subpoenaed a list of thousands of subscribers to Lemon’s Youtube channel in an attempt to link them all to Lemon as part of an anti-Trump conspiracy. He says that the Prairieland case is not about a box of zines used as evidence against an anarchist, but is aimed at press freedom for everyone.

Judge O'Connor was also able to extend the sentences against the Prairieland Nine by the unusual practice of stringing sentences consecutively, one after another, rather than concurrently, or all at once. Usually, if a person is convicted of a string of related crimes, they serve the longest single sentence, not the total of all the sentences.

Donald Trump’s former lawyer and currently interim Attorney General Todd Blanche was ecstatic over the harsh sentences levied against the Prairieland Nine. “ANTIFA terrorists,” Blanche said, “will face swift and uncompromising justice,” adding, “the DOJ [Department of Justice] will continue to aggressively investigate, disrupt and prosecute protesters.”

Blanche’s insult mirrors the FBI’s Counter-Intelligence Program [COINTELPRO], used during the civil rights and anti-war movements, when police and federal agents infiltrated political movements with provocateurs and spies, crafted “snitch jackets” turning people against each other, leading to assassinations of movement lead-

THE LUIGI MANGIONE NON-TRIAL

By Ron Kuby, Attorney at Law

[As reported in **SHADOW #65**, on December 9, 2025, police in Altoona, Pennsylvania arrested then 26 year old Luigi Mangione for the shooting death of UnitedHealthcare Chief Executive Officer Brian Thompson in Manhattan in the early morning hours of December 4. Many Americans, having had negative experiences with healthcare insurance “providers” that have refused to pay for basic and for lifesaving treatments, resulting in long periods of suffering, as well as deaths of loved ones, have been cheering Mangione as a folk hero.

On August 14, just weeks before a scheduled September 8 state trial date, Mangione pleaded “guilty” in federal court to stalking and killing Thompson. NY Supreme Court judge Gregory Carro postponed the trial indefinitely after Mangione’s defense team filed a motion to dismiss New York’s case on grounds of constitutional double jeopardy. They argue that the state charges covering the same homicide amount to Mangione being prosecuted twice for the same act, which the Fifth Amendment prohibits.

Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg’s office has until October 9 to respond. A hearing in state court has been set for December 10, a week before Mangione is scheduled to be sentenced in federal court on December 18 – Ed.]

The Luigi Mangione show closed in previews. Trump’s DOJ canceled the show. People who were looking forward to a searing indictment of the health insurance system (me), or an enraged exposition of capitalist wrath (them), are all sad. Apparently, the only person who didn’t want a big show was Luigi Mangione. So WTF happened here, and what does it mean?

The State trial is brain dead. It is being maintained on life support for a bit as the grieving DA’s office tries to persuade Judge Carro to not pull the plug. But it is dead. It died when Mangione took his plea. New York State law prohibits a trial for substantially the same conduct after a federal trial or plea.

What we do not know is what Mangione’s sentence will be--and no one will learn it until the day he is sentenced. Here is the explainer:

Unlike the State system, federal judges do not participate in the plea bargain process. The parties can agree to anything they want, but the judge is not bound. There are three factors that dictate outcome.

1. The maximum sentence allowed by law. In this case, it is natural life without parole.
2. The sentencing guidelines. According to the Feds in their letter, the guidelines provide for a determinate sentence (a specific number of months), anywhere between 292 to 365 months. The Feds cannot retreat from this, and the defense agreed that is the proper guideline. The judge can find that a different guideline applies and sentence higher or lower, but probably will not for a number of reasons -- most notably, it is the right guideline.
3. The judge’s discretion. The guidelines are not binding and the judge may go above them or below them. But most judges, most of the time, follow the guidelines. You cannot be reversed if you impose a guidelines’ sentence. Such a sentence reflects what the legislature thought is appropriate. And the entire plea-bargaining system would be thrown in disarray if defendants cannot trust that they will get a guidelines sentence. The Feds can argue for life without parole, but they already surrendered much of that ground when they agreed on the guideline range.

So, let’s do some math!! Assume that Luigi gets the maximum guideline sentence of 365 months. Subtract 15% for “good time.” Then subtract another 24 months of “jail time credit” he will get when he is sentenced. A little over 286 months, or slightly under 24 years. This was the best possible outcome.

How much of it was driven by Trump’s hatred of Alvin Bragg--I mean, in Trump world, canceling someone’s show is the worst pain that can be inflicted. We may find out one day. In the meantime, show is over.

PS: A New York Post columnist wrote about this like it is a bad thing: “Mangione’s brazen assassination of [United Healthcare CEO Brian] Thompson on a Midtown Manhattan street also shattered a fragile sense of security for anyone with success, as his shots declared war and open season on individuals with a high net worth or any sort of perceived power.” Um, yeah.

[For updates on Luigi Mangione’s case, go to:
<https://www.luigimangioneinfo.com>]

ers like Chicago Black Panther Chairman Fred Hampton.

COINTELPRO was revealed when activists broke into an FBI office in Media, Pennsylvania in 1971 at the height of the Vietnam War and purloined boxes of documents, many marked as “COINTELPRO.” Hearings in the late 1970s led by Senator Frank Church uncovered a massive conspiracy against political activists involving the CIA, NSA and military intelligence.

Stern compares the terrorism enhancements used against the Prairieland Nine to the charges brought against the January 6, 2021 U.S. Capitol invaders who were blamed for the deaths of five police officers. Soon after being re-elected, Trump pardoned 1,500 individuals charged for the J6 invasion, including Proud Boys leader Enrico Tarrio, who had been sentenced to 22 years, the longest stretch of all the invaders.

The Prairieland Nine are appealing their convictions and sentences. While in prison, they are continuing to stand fast with immigrants, trans people, anti-war activists and others who have been targeted by the United States government for standing up against fascism.



• CUSTOM T-SHIRT PRINTING

• GRAPHIC DESIGN

• INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

59 EAST 4TH STREET
NEW YORK CITY
10003

THE 13TH AMENDMENT: FREEDOM FROM SLAVERY OR FREEDOM TO ENSLAVE?

By Chris Flash

Contrary to popular belief, slavery never truly ended in America. The Thirteenth Amendment to the US Constitution, ratified in 1865, says:

"Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

In 1935, Black scholar, writer, editor, and civil rights pioneer W.E.B. DuBois wrote: "Slavery was not abolished even after the Thirteenth Amendment. There were four million freedmen and most of them on the same plantation, doing the same work they did before emancipation, except as their work had been interrupted and changed by the upheaval of war. Moreover, they were getting about the same wages and apparently were going to be subject to slave codes modified only in name. There were among them thousands of fugitives in the camps of the soldiers or on the streets of the cities, homeless, sick, and impoverished. They had been freed practically with no land nor money, and, save in exceptional cases, without legal status, and without protection."

As the 13th Amendment's "punishment" exception permitted labor for convicted criminals, Southern states responded with what historian Douglas A. Blackmon called "an array of interlocking laws essentially intended to criminalize Black life."

Southern business owners sought to reproduce the profitable arrangement of slavery with a system called "peonage," under which disproportionately Black workers were entrapped by loans and compelled to work indefinitely due to the resulting debt. Peonage continued well through Reconstruction [1865-1877], ensnaring a large proportion of Black workers in the South. These workers remained destitute and persecuted, forced to work dangerous jobs and further confined legally by racist Jim Crow laws that governed the South. Peonage differed from chattel slavery because it was not strictly hereditary and did not allow the sale of people in exactly the same fashion. However, a person's debt, and, by extension, a person, could still be sold, so the system resembled antebellum slavery in many ways.

Mississippi was the first state to pass "Black Codes," with an 1865 law titled "An Act to Confer Civil Rights on Freedmen." The Mississippi law required Black workers



to contract with White farmers by January 1 of each year or face punishment for vagrancy. Blacks could then be sentenced to forced labor for crimes, including petty theft, using obscene language, or selling cotton after sunset. Other states passed strict vagrancy laws that were selectively enforced against Blacks without White "protectors." The labor of these convicts was then sold to farms, factories, lumber camps, quarries, and mines.

While a 1935 law makes it illegal to transport goods made by "convict labor" across state lines, an exemption exists for agricultural commodities, a small portion of the labor performed by incarcerated people nationwide. In addition to farming, prisoner labor is used for making license plates, park benches and picnic tables, military jackets and uniforms, helmets, shoes, and even flak vests. For police officers, prisoners craft body armor, holsters and even human silhouette targets for law enforcement training. Prisoners also make canoes, college dormitory desks, bookshelves, jeans, jackets, T-shirts, and hats.

Currently, countless laws are on the

books designed to keep persons imprisoned for the sole purpose of involuntary servitude. That includes work in prisons, for prison industries, and for prisoners who are leased out to work in the free world. For the vast majority, that work is barely paid, if at all, with the average prison salary maxing out at about 50 cents per hour. Prison labor is also performed without health and safety protections, even for extremely unsanitary or dangerous work, like fighting wildfires.

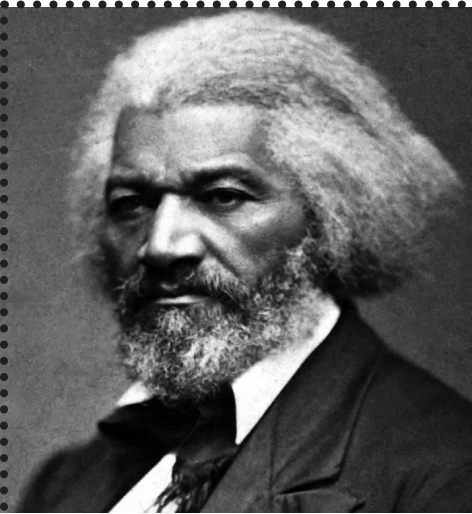
State and federal institutions that profit from prisoner slave labor include: CORCRAFT, UNICOR, the Department of Defense, Colorado Correction Industries [CCI], Federal Prison Industries [FPI] and Florida's "Prison Rehabilitative Industries and Diversified Enterprises" -- [PRIDE].

Today's prison slaves are mostly convicted persons of color, and/or persons too poor to mount a successful defense against what they were charged with, and/or persons who are set up by the State by way of false evidence and testimony that make cops and district attorneys appear to be "tough" on crime, innocence be damned. And now they are going after homeless per-

sons who have committed no CRIME.

In June 2024, the Supreme Court ruled that punishing a person for sleeping in public, even if they have nowhere else to go, does not violate the Eighth Amendment's "cruel and unusual punishment" clause. In a 6-3 decision, the court upheld an Oregon camping ban ordinance, which barred people from sleeping outside in public using a blanket, pillow, or even cardboard sheet, opening the door for other cities and states to pass laws to jail, ticket, or otherwise make it a crime to be homeless.

A new law signed into law on June 9, 2026 by Gov. Jeff Landry of Louisiana will criminalize homelessness, setting the stage for their forced "treatment" or labor. The new law makes it a crime to sleep on public property. An un-housed person could face a fine of up to \$500, or jail for up to six months for a first offense. Jail could be avoided by entering a 12-month treatment program, for which the prisoner would have to pay, or by performing unpaid labor. The National Homelessness Law Center calls this "one of the cruelest, most extreme anti-homeless bills anywhere in the country."



"What, to the American slave, is your Fourth of July? I answer: a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciations of tyrants, brass fronted impudence; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, with all your religious parade, and solemnity, are, to him, mere bombast, fraud, decep-

tion, impiety, and hypocrisy— a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages. There is not a nation on the earth guilty of practices, more shocking and bloody, than are the people of these United States, at this very hour."

-- Frederick Douglass (July 5, 1852)



WAR IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD: The classic graphic novel created by World War Three Illustrated co-founder Seth Tobocman in 1999, republished by Ad Astra Comics and SHADOW Press in 2016, about the struggles over homelessness, gentrification, police brutality and human rights that raged on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, in the area surrounding Tompkins Square Park, through the 1980s and 1990s. This is a first hand account of New York City's squatters movement, in which abandoned buildings were seized by activists in order to create genuine low-income housing, which then had to be defended within a divided community. This updated version has 344 pages. Only \$35.00 (includes shipping + handling) - A FREE copy of The SHADOW included with your order!

Send your money order payable to: SHADOW Press, P.O. Box 20298, New York, NY 10009. All orders shipped immediately.

**SEE SOMETHING?
SAY SOMETHING!!**



**REPORT
SUSPICIOUS
ACTIVITY**

**TELL THE SHADOW:
SHADOWPRESS6@GMAIL.COM**

BEN MOREA: 1941-2026

Continued From Page 3

who sat all day with a cup of tea or a bowl of soup, which they were flush.

We would sit all day watching people coming and going to use the phone booths. I spent most of my time with Carol, a big, powerful lady figure with a small baby which she breast-fed in public at all hours, much to Old Man Veselka's horror.

The Motherfuckers had no hierarchy, but even as a 17-year-old, I understood that Shadowy, dark-haired, mustachioed man in the black leather motorcycle jacket who moved at the periphery of the loosely-formed mob was important. I had been volunteering at the Yippie hotline on East Sixth Street, and, being conversant at a young age with leftist political honchos of all stripes, from young communists to Provos, the difference in the structuring of the Motherfuckers was very noticeable, i.e. there was no structure. There were no meetings. There were no missives. There was no authority and there was no celebrity. But most stunning of all, there was no patriarchy and that was such a far cry from the Yippies, the socialists, The Left of the Leninists, the Trotskyites, the Maoists, the Stalinists.



The most noticeable thing about the Motherfuckers was the equality between men and women. Even my opinion as a 17-year-old was taken seriously, not that I had a lot of opinions. There was no cult of personality as there was with Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin, Paul Krasner, and the rest of the boy's club. The Motherfuckers was not a boy's club. Everything was horizontal, ideas floated, and then actualized, because at the heart of it, Ben Morea believed in action and activity. What planning there was happened on the hoof, while moving towards the action.

The Motherfuckers were less an organization than a swarm of galvanized individuals. They grew because of the services they provided its participants: crash pads for runways, food doled out several times a week at their Free Store, based on the San

Francisco Diggers -- this was a far cry from the Yippies, who operated as an elite ruling committee with the charismatic leadership of Abbie and the more structured Jerry, with a strong senate of young leftist boys. At the bottom, left out and mostly ignored, were the girls, although I did several actions with Anita Hoffman, Abbie's wife, but they were done in the shadows without any of the fanfare reserved for Abbie's activities.

An early experience with UATW/MF I remember was attending a meeting of the Young Communists. Someone baked hash brownies, which were a relatively new phenomena in 1967, and I brought them to the meeting. The leader of the Young Communist party Walter and his pals greedily ate the brownies as they expounded on how ineffective everyone on the left was, getting loopier each second. It was like a Marx Brothers movie. That was when Ben acknowledged me for the first time. "You have quite a sense of humor", he said, "and timing".

As Ben himself said: "Most people observing UAW/MF just thought we were crazy." I participated in many actions with Ben and company -- a Whitehall Street anti-draft demo, carrying garbage to Lincoln Center ("Trading garbage for garbage for garbage"), levitating the Pentagon with Allen Ginsburg and Ed Sanders and Tuli Kupferberg, although I wasn't one of the UATW/MFers who breached the Pentagon and actually broke in, and the Columbia University takeover.

One of the last demos I did with Ben was the Stonewall Riot in June 1969. We carried bricks from the East Village that we threw at the cops on the second night of the riot. Most people are unaware that what occurred at the Stonewall for three days after the initial riot was created by a loose coalition of activist groups acting in solidarity.

Sometime after that, Ben was forced underground. We now know he and his partner spent two years on horseback in the Sierra Madre mountains, living off the land, aided by Indigenous people who eventually adopted him. None of this amazing story of survival would be known till 2006, when Ben returned to NYC, a different man from the New Yorker who left. He had traded his New York accent for a laconic western drawl and his black motorcycle jacket for a cowboy hat and fringed leather jacket.

Ben appeared one night on the LES just as he had left. He returned to NYC to share his experiences organizing with younger generations. We were lucky to have his humble wisdom again.

In the past few years, a loose group of young people assembled an autobiography called "Full Circle: A Life in Rebellion", as told by Ben. I recommend that you order it from Detritus Books.

Ben died on his own land in Southern Colorado on May 2, 2026. He was 84 years old. He is deeply missed.

-- Penny Arcade



SHADOW BOOK REVIEW

BLACK MASK & UP AGAINST THE WALL MOTHERFUCKER: The Incomplete Works of Ron Hahne, Ben Morea, and the Black Mask Group

Reviewed By A. Kronstadt

Imagine for a moment a 1960s political group so off the beaten path of capitalist society that its very name included one of the most lurid obscenities in the English language, perhaps the dirtiest of the seven dirty words. By thus inoculating themselves against co-optation, indeed from publicity itself, the Up Against the Wall Motherfuckers confirmed their choice to be a revolutionary street gang, even as better known dissidents like Abbie Hoffman, Jerry Rubin, Dave Dellinger, and Dr. Benjamin Spock actively sought out the talk show circuits. In its May 30, 2026 obituary for Ben Morea, one of the principal players among the UAW/MF who passed away on May 2, the New York Times amusingly pussyfoots around this still taboo word.

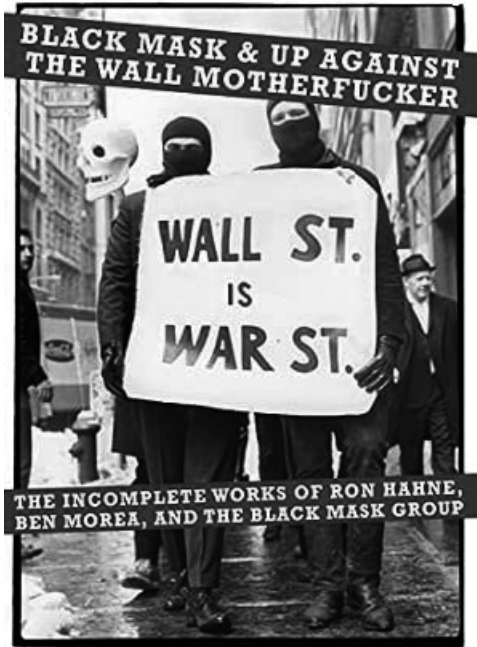
We can thank Morea himself and ex-UAW/MF activist Ron Hahne for republishing as an anthology their magazine **Black Mask**, along with other writings by constituents of the UAW/MF. [**Black Mask & Up Against the Wall Motherfucker**, PM Press, originally published in 2011]. In this book, contributors to **Black Mask**, published from November 1967 to May 1968, developed an anarchist theory on a depth comparable to Kropotkin or Bakunin, while at the same time relating this to the daily struggles of street people on the Boston Common, Haight-Ashbury, and St. Marx Place, facing massive police repression as governments came to fear the cultural revolt represented by hippies taking over public spaces.

However, the UAW/MF did not consider themselves hippies—they did not believe in "peace" in the sense of reconciliation between the social classes—and were determined to drag the hippies, kicking and screaming if necessary, into the struggle. Morea and the UAW/MF focused a scathing contempt of liberal peace activists and celebrity hippies like Timothy Leary and Allen Ginsberg. In Ben Morea's own words: "What we were trying to say at that time was that they were allowing themselves to be used as a safety valve. We wanted to attack the core of society and believed they weren't doing that."

Black Mask and UAW/MF make it clear in their writings that their goal differs from that of political Communism in that they strive not just for the takeover of the means of production by workers, but for the abolition of "work" in the economic sense and the dawn of a new form of human being who lives life and creates a world fit for free people. In addition to the Vietnam War, the world revolt of youth, and Black and Latino peoples' struggle for liberation, they mention a great deal about art.

The fact that rich people buy art to become their private possessions determines the nature of the art itself. The painting that is created on an easel in a form that can be hung on the wall of a private dwelling or institution will not exist in a world where free people generate their own art. As artists, **Black Mask** and UAW/MF advocated and predicted a return to the world of tribal people, for whose very tools and cooking implements are created in the form of art.

For the Motherfuckers, art took on not only the form of magazines, leaflets, and graffiti, but of their own political actions. They shut down the Museum of Modern art for a day and invaded scholarly conclaves of art critics to inject their revolutionary perspective. But their most quintessential Motherfucker moment took place during the NYC sanitation workers strike in February of 1968, when they recruited a posse to collect putrefying garbage off of the side streets between Avenues C and D and bring it up



to the city's revered Lincoln Center, to be dumped on the front steps. They described this as a cultural exchange—garbage for garbage—between Alphabet City and New York's gentrified elite.

Through actions like this, commodified painting and sculpture and music, embodied by the commodified ticket allowing the rich access to places like the Museum of Modern Art and Lincoln Center are abolished. The protest action itself is the work of art.

The UAW/MF and **Black Mask** were prescient of a whole series of issues that we consider specific to the 21st Century. The abolition of work, conditioned upon technology that enables the machines to manufacture the machines, is described as the prerequisite for the world of free people who live not for the economy, but for life and pleasure.

Decades after those words were written, we find ourselves contemplating the effects of Artificial Intelligence and consequent mass unemployment. Will it be utopia or dystopia? UAW/MF saw the answer to this in who is victorious in the class struggle. Will it be leisure and the time to become human again, or will it simply be depravity and starvation? In 21st century terms, will it be US or Elon Musk?

On a street level, Morea predicted that simple spontaneous rioting is not always a viable tactic because the police are learning tactics of crowd control. In answer to this, revolutionaries must organize into affinity groups based on intimate human relations between people. As stated in **Black Mask**:

THE SMALL GROUP EXECUTING 'SMALL' ACTIONS IN CONCERT WITH OTHER SMALL GROUPS/'SMALL' ACTIONS WILL CREATE A WIDESPREAD CLIMATE OF STRUGGLE WITHIN WHICH ALL FORMS OF REBELLION CAN COME TOGETHER AND FORGE THE FINAL FORM: REVOLUTION!

It may well be that our comrades in the anti-ICE struggle in California, Minnesota, and New Jersey have discovered this Motherfucker principle on their own. Since the days of the Vietnam War, counterculture and rebellion continue to re-invent themselves in new forms corresponding to the injustices that we face. The **Black Mask** anthology is full of cryptic statements like **A MOTHERFUCKER IS A WEREWOLF**, which is a short poetic summary of the philosophy of Morea and UAW/MF.

The rebel must not shy away from inspiring fear in the respectable and corrupt. We are not here to reconcile with evil, but to attack it.

SHADOW BOOK REVIEW

SILENT WEAPONS FOR QUIET WARS:

An Introduction Programming Manual (<https://tinyurl.com/5389z kf2>)

Reviewed by Linda Covello

There is a war against the human race being waged by a small group of individuals who consider themselves above and apart from the mass population. The outline of their plan for total world domination was revealed in 1991, with the publication of a seminal conspiracy book written by a former Navy Intelligence Officer, Milton William Cooper, titled "Behold a Pale Horse". Cooper included, as the first chapter of his book, a document he maintained was discovered in 1986 by a Boeing employee inside an IBM copier that had been purchased at auction from McChord Air Force Base.

"**Silent Weapons for Quiet Wars**" marks the 25th anniversary of the Third World War.

This war ostensibly began in 1954, as indicated by the publication date of "Operations Research Technical Manual TM-SW7905.1" in May 1979. The average reader may question the claim that a conflict exists on a scale comparable to the first two global wars. This is where the silent aspect becomes relevant, with details presented in the manual's pages that are both remarkably calculating and disturbingly callous.

Those with access to the information are given a blueprint for controlling humanity that is both brutal and strategically admirable. Perhaps the most shocking aspect of the manual, for those uninitiated into the machinations of secret orders controlling our world, is that such a document exists in the first place.

Cooper included "**Silent Weapons for Quiet Wars**" in his book to illustrate to patriots and defenders of constitutional freedoms that a significant agenda has been underway for many years to establish a New World Order. This order seeks to dominate the entire globe, with its foundation firmly rooted in the United States of America. Cooper asserts from the outset that the conspirators are the Illuminati, a shadowy and, for some, mythical organization of sinister individuals who manipulate global events behind the scenes and have been doing so for centuries. The masterminds of the agenda are organized under the Council on Foreign Relations, a think tank that bills itself as a non-partisan, independent group of experts that analyze the issues and events that shape our world.

Basing their tactics on military strategies developed during World War II, it was recognized by those in positions of power in the CFR that better tools would be necessary to control a society through social engineering. Meeting for the first time in May, 1954 at the Hotel de Bilderberg, in Oosterbeek, Netherlands, the global elites, who believe themselves superior due to their lineage and upbringing, laid out their secret plans for their quiet war against humanity. The high-speed computerized data processing system necessary to predict when society would be ready to capitulate to the one world order first came into existence in 1946, with the invention of the electronic computer. Two other breakthroughs followed: the development of the simplex method of linear programming and the invention of the transistor. With these three inventions under their power, the elites believed it would be possible for them to control the whole world with the push of a button.

In 1954, it was recognized by the global elites that it was only a matter of time

before the state of technology would reach a point where the general public would be able to upset the balance of power by taking hold of it for the creation of their own utopian society. Intent upon preserving their private utopia, the global elites focused on the issue of primary concern, that of dominance, and energy was the key to that end. The ruling upper class is determined to maintain a degree of social order, peace and tranquility for themselves, and they believe it is essential that they harvest and direct the energy of the lower class into slavery through the use of subtle and sophisticated silent weapons.

One of these weapons is the education of the lower class. The elites create a "moat of ignorance" to isolate the inferior class from the superior class through the administration of the "poorest quality of education". Established by John D. Rockefeller, in 1902, the General Education Board's stated mission was "the promotion of education within the United States of America, without distinction of race, sex or creed", but critics noted the board promoted standardized curricula and vocational or industrial training tracks, which some historians argue aimed to foster a reliable and compliant workforce. The General Education Board was absorbed by the Rockefeller Foundation in 1964, which is currently the 35th largest foundation by endowment globally, with assets of over \$6.4 billion in 2023.

John D. Rockefeller Sr. was a staunch eugenicist and the Rockefeller Foundation poured millions of dollars into eugenics research and gave grants to the Eugenics Records Office in Cold Spring Harbor, which pushed forced sterilization laws and restrictive immigration rules in the U.S. The Rockefeller Foundation's hookworm eradication program in Latin America and Asia in the nineteen-teens through the thirties killed over 200 people, mostly children, through the use of the highly toxic oil of chenopodium. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation came under fire in 2009 when PATH [Program for Appropriate Technology in Health], an NGO [Non-Governmental Organization] funded by the Gates Foundation, administered clinical trials of a cervical cancer vaccine to 14,000 tribal schoolgirls in India, resulting in 7 deaths and several participants reporting severe side effects. Gates called India "a kind of a laboratory to try things out" in a 2024 podcast with LinkedIn co-founder Reid Hoffman, which landed him in hot water again, bringing continued scrutiny on his vaccine initiatives in developing countries.

Controlling and culling the population through vaccines and birth control has been one of the silent weapons in the global elite's arsenal for years. The key weapon is the banking system, however. Mayer Amschel Rothschild, the founder of the Rothschild banking dynasty that dominated international finance in Europe during the greater part of the 19th century, discovered the passive component of economic theory known as "economic inductance." This is where the study of energy systems became a bookkeeping system that combined the study of natural science, the sources and control of natural energy, and social science, the study of sources and control of social energy. This primary bookkeeping system is mathematics, and though he did not foresee it when he made the quote for which he is famous, "Give me control of the nation's currency, and I care not who



DANNY HELLMAN

makes its laws", by the time the global elites met that first time in the Bilderberg hotel, the computer system to run this program was well established. Not for nothing that money is called currency, for the transfer of electricity was the model that allowed the bankers at the top of the pyramid to shock the system from time to time and control society through inflation.

The global elites believe that the mass of humankind is basically lazy, and desires to crawl back into the womb of safety from whence it emerged at birth. Exploiting this need of a people who refuse to use their intelligence is the backbone of the political structure of a nation, the craving for a human god to eliminate all risk from their lives, put a chicken on every table, and assure them that everything will be alright. In exchange for this security, the masses are content to breed and feed the fodder to fuel the wars that allow the global elites to cull the ignorant herd and make money off the war machine. The most galling aspect of the technical manual for quiet wars is the socio-military institution known as the draft.

According to "**Silent Weapons for Quiet Wars**", the main purpose of a draft is to instill, by intimidation, in the young males of society the "uncritical conviction that the government is omnipotent". And today, that counts for the females of society as well.

Critical to this process is how parents can be induced to send off to war, and possible death, the children they are supposed to love. Once the draft was dissolved, another method was required to induce the young to die for rich old men, and through military agencies such as DARPA [Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency], founded in 1958 for the development of emerging technologies for use by the military, video games like XBOX have been designed to desensitize decent working class folks from killing people. Video games have been most successful in teaching young people that their job is to kill.

"**Silent Weapons for Quiet Wars**" is now outdated as a field manual for opera-

tives being initiated into the deep state programs that run things behind the curtain of democracy that passes for government in a supposedly free nation. The technology for controlling the unsuspecting masses has evolved to the point today where people willingly police themselves and each other, through social media platforms accessed through handheld devices that are being surveilled and tracked in real time by sophisticated algorithms that are then fed into data collection systems. Selling the New World Order to billions of programmed and under-educated sheep, which is exactly how the elites view the mass of humanity, is easy when their vanity makes them eager to upgrade to the latest model device that tracks and aggregates every bit of their personal data into one big data center to rule them all.

The billionaires, some of whom are members of the Epstein Class, and the global elites that comprise the ruling class who have held the real power of the world for centuries, such as the descendants of Mayer Amschel Rothschild, who first discovered how to channel human energy into building the infrastructure of the control system, no longer require human beings for much of anything anymore. They don't need humans for cannon fodder, factory assembly lines, customer service jobs, and it's already possible, through advancements in AI, to replace doctors, lawyers, teachers, as well as many other specialized occupations. The military and police will soon become totally robotic, with drones and satellites already taking over many of the tasks once performed by highly-trained human beings, thus saving time and resources better spent elsewhere, like the underground bunkers and rail systems the deep state diverts tax dollars into every year.

The weapons will soon be completely automated, operated from remote distances, even deep underground, and when the day comes for the human herd to willingly accept a chip inserted into the body, the target will be deleted anywhere, anytime, with the push of a button.

HANDS OFF

Continued From Page 1

2026). We are seeing a surge of socialized utility prices and privatized profits paired with a worse quality of living, and it's completely legal! According to the Carnegie Investment Council, "When a utility projects the need for more power, they build out their infrastructure, and regulators allow them to earn a return on investment [ROI]. Utilities earn this ROI by charging all customers more to deliver electricity." The costs are passed on and spread among all ratepayers, regardless of individual energy usage.

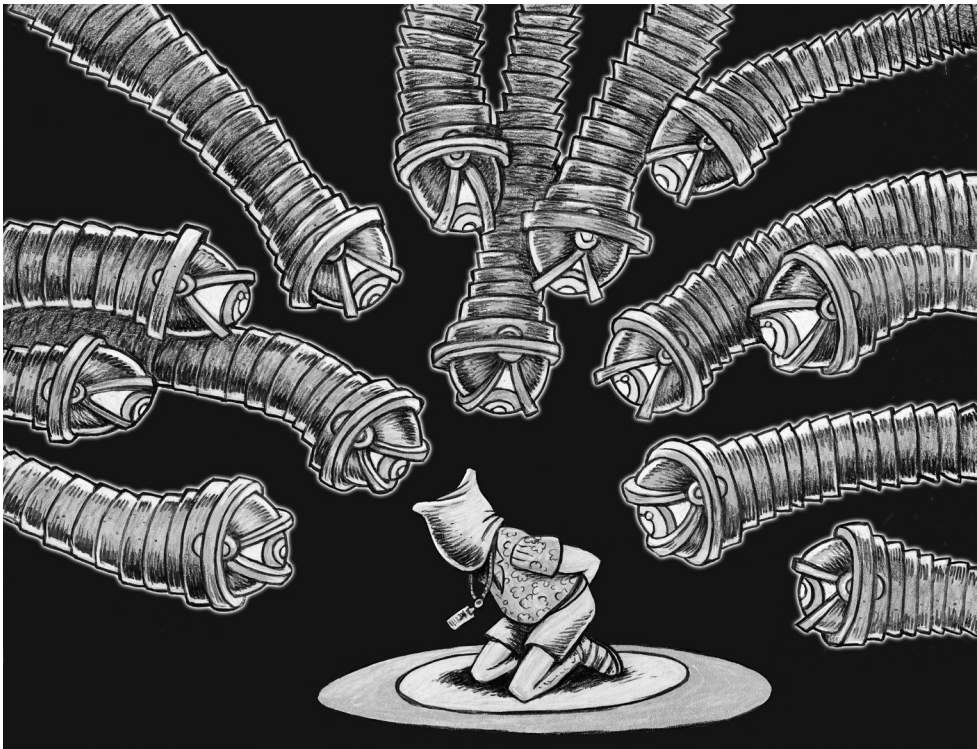
In Ohio, Amazon currently holds a 10-year agreement between the state's largest utility company and its state regulator that could save Amazon more than \$135 million annually, a massive discount homeowners and smaller businesses are shouldering (Geiger, Thomas, 2026). Many states are desperately trying to improve business and attract new centers by bestowing hefty tax breaks, yet another financial benefit for tech billionaires to enjoy. Research from CNBC found that "42 states provide full or partial sales tax exemptions to data centers or have no state sales tax at all. Of those, 37 have passed legislation specifically granting sales tax exemptions for data centers, and 16 of those states have granted nearly \$6 billion in exemptions over the past five years." Still, the economic trade off looks bleak; the same study discovered that a single Microsoft data center in Illinois received more than \$38 million in data center sales tax exemptions, but created just 20 permanent jobs.

Surveillance - AI in the Digital Police State

Along with operations to replace massive chunks of our human workforce, the recent promotion of artificial intelligence can be largely attributed to the government and private sectors using it to accelerate and refine mass surveillance systems, violating millions of Americans' fundamental rights to privacy and against unreasonable searches (supposedly protected by the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution). Many US companies track what workers do on their devices, including monitoring keystrokes and facial expressions to promote maximum productivity (West, 2025).

The Trump administration, ICE, DHS, and other federal agencies have been using AI tools like ELITE [Enhanced Leads Identification & Targeting for Enforcement] developed by Palantir and ImmigrationOS from Babel Street to scan through millions of social media posts and collect data on any "extremist" rhetoric. This includes anything deemed "antisemitic", potential terrorists, or individuals applying for American citizenship as part of their massive "catch and revoke" initiative. ELITE is also used for location tracking by law enforcement, in which it "populates a map with potential deportation targets, brings up a dossier on each person, and provides a 'confidence score' on the person's current address" (404 Media, 2026), often pulling records from the Department of Health and Human Services, which includes public programs like Medicaid.

The New York Police Department [NYPD] has increased its usage of drones and other AI-powered tools (originally propelled by former mayor Eric Adams) with justifications of improved crime fighting and public safety, despite their extensive history of corruption and targeting low-income communities. Similar models are utilized for Automatic License Plate Readers [ALPR] and facial recognition software, going as far as being used to help a Texas police department investigate a woman for terminating her pregnancy (ACLU of Massachusetts, 2026). These are just a handful of examples of how AI and automated data analysis have been used within the country, with little to no guardrails on surveillance and privacy violations. However, its tracking power has now been extended into the Pentagon, where it is



KEN AVIDOR

being applied to international military operations, resulting in one of the deadliest airstrikes of the US-Iran War.

On February 28, 2026, Claude, an AI model developed by tech giant Anthropic, was deployed in an airstrike in Minab, Iran. It ended up hitting the Shajareh Tayyebah primary school twice, causing the deaths of more than 170 civilians, most of whom were schoolchildren. Public outrage over the use of artificial technology in targeting infrastructure led to Anthropic's CEO as well as US government officials (including Trump) trying to excuse the incident and explain it as a technical error, which they will be "investigating". A perfectly crafted response to deflect and continue the military kill chain with little to no human accountability, while fully admitting that innocent lives are being put in the hands of an unreliable technology. In actuality, this tragedy stemmed from the team of people who failed to update a database and programmed a system so fast that their result of neglect was lethal. These horrific events with shameless bureaucratic public relations cover-ups will only increase if corporations and governments can continue to use fragile and hallucinating technology, as automated tools grant them the ability to cut more people from their workforce, shift blame for people's lives, generate more profits, and spend less money on paychecks. The current abilities of artificial intelligence are a fascist government's dream: AI never sleeps, it never refuses, it doesn't need lunch breaks, it never stops and never forgets. All it needs is a home near our homes.

Despite impacts on our climate, bills, and privacy, the explosion of data centers has remained widely unregulated. Recently, oversight through local legislation has started to take hold in many towns and cities. Seattle, Denver, Nashville, and Baltimore have all imposed moratoriums in 2026, which would mean yearlong holds on any new data center construction. California's Monterey Park, New York's Dryden, and Rhode Island's Smithfield have all voted for outright bans on AI data centers in their zones. Certain states are holding big tech companies accountable for ballooning electric bills, like Oregon, which recently passed the POWER Act (HB 3546), which would protect the state's citizens from covering AI's rising energy costs.

On February 6, 2026, the New York State Senate introduced Senate Bill S9144A, a moratorium that would impose at least a three-year hold on new large data center permits (anything 20 megawatts and above), as well as funding research and proposing ways to avoid/mitigate negative environmental effects. Instead, Governor Kathy Hochul decided to pass her own executive order on July 14, which would mark the first statewide moratorium in the nation. However, her environmentalism looks more like a ploy for positive public reception for the upcoming 2026 New York gubernatorial elections. Firstly, executive orders are weak and can be easily overturned, compared to legislative bills. Secondly, this executive order only pauses proposed 50-megawatt data centers (with

existing centers and construction projects being exempt) for only a year. Hochul was actively asked to sign the already existing Senate bills; however, she made the active decision to pass something that would barely make any positive impact on people and the environment.

Hochul's order should be taken as a lesson: there should be an active push for permanent and detrimental action, as politicians will continue to take shortcuts in order for the public to shut up and vote for them. The fight against artificial intelligence is not as simple as individuals switching to different technologies, refusing certain websites, or governments creating temporary pauses/regulations.

Industries that damage our land thrive on individualist arguments and impermanent solutions, like the oil and gas industries, which launched their expansive recycling campaigns in the 1980s to improve public image and convince the public that it would be an effective form of curbing their waste production (Copley, 2024). In a 1994 meeting with the American Plastics Council, a vice president of Exxon Chemical stated, "We are committed to the activities, but not committed to the results".

Considering the intersecting histories of industrialized manufacturing, climate damage, and capitalist-driven greed, there needs to be a complete and widespread dismantling of data centers; these affluent and tactical megacorporations will continue to find loopholes for their constructions to outweigh policy.

Supporters of data centers argue that their impact on communities would be largely positive, creating new job opportunities and stimulating the economy. In an article from the New York Post, Julie Samuels, president and CEO of Tech: NYC against the proposed NY moratorium argued it, "...would slow investment in the next generation of infrastructure projects our economy increasingly depends on, and we urge Governor Hochul to veto this bill." But when one considers environmental and public health damages, combined with the economic strain on surrounding citizens, who do AI data centers really benefit? Are we supposed to believe that the same companies and their representatives who prioritize profits and actively replace their employees with half-complete software genuinely want increased economic mobility and better conditions for the working class?

Last year, Terawulf, an American digital infrastructure company known for its development of AI data centers and cryptomines, obtained an 80-year lease for the

183 acres of the defunct Miliken Station coal power plant on Cayuga Lake, New York. Despite public outrage and possible damages to the local environment, Terawulf has been proposing a redevelopment of the plant into a massive 400-megawatt AI data center - that's enough energy to power up to 400,000 homes per day. Alongside the harm to neighboring wildlife, an interview with an Ithaca local revealed the real-time data center's effects on the Finger Lakes and other upstate communities: "I think obviously the most apparent side effect is noise pollution. Currently, there's a similar cryptomine near Seneca Lake in Dresden, Greenridge Generation Cryptomine. People there have compared it to a small airport in terms of its decibel range; the locals hate it. The coal and gas industries at least provided a lot of jobs here, but these data centers will only last about 10 years. They abuse the area and leave. People think it will bring in jobs, but it will only bring in temporary contract jobs like seasonal construction. These jobs will last 6-10 months, and then only 2 people will be left over to run the whole thing. So, this economic stimulation will also only be temporary. We have a few small community organizations trying to speak against it, but it doesn't get talked about as much, especially with all the wars going on. We're trying it out there more and more."

Legislature and organizing against data centers is undoubtedly important, and it would be a shame to downplay the efforts to protect the safety of communities, wildlife, and daily life against data centers. However, it is just as important to consider the bigger picture of why there has been such an incredible push by corporations and governments for artificial intelligence, beyond monetary gain. It is a tool to replace the majority of humanity, representative of the intentional and manufactured physical, spiritual, social, and psychological weakening of the common man. Every day, self-interested billionaires, industries, and governments are enabling one another while testing our limits, seeing how much they can appropriate and commodify before we break, and they are winning.

The great American myth of the honest, hard-working man is dead; we are no longer worthy of what we make but for what we consume. AI is not your friend; it is not a tool for you, but a tool of you. Their currency is our data. Their degradation of our Earth and its resources contributes to our worsening health, with contaminated water and polluted air that stain our lungs and weaken our hearts. We find ourselves in a non-stop hamster wheel, recovering from rising living costs, chasing paychecks to afford bills that line the pockets of already-bloated executives. We are given illusory opportunities to create change by and within systems that have ultimately always had the upper hand, resulting in utter political apathy, nihilism, and despair. As our time, energy, and bodies have already been taken away, every inch of our personal lives will be extracted by technologies we never asked for, keeping us in a constant state of feeling surveilled, fearful, overwhelmed, yet catered to.

The final stage of artificial intelligence tackles our drive, passion, and innate sociability through easily accessible comfort. It automates the production of manufactured needs and entertainment, tracking us to keep us watching and consuming. In doing so, we lose our desire (and eventually ability) to create, organize, speak, and simply coexist.

As much as the goal includes greed and profit, the AI data center crisis poses a far more sinister threat to humanity and a critical battle for our lives. Will we let them win?



QUIMBY'S BOOKSTORE NYC
536 Metropolitan Ave
Brooklyn, NY 11211

zines-books-photography-taxidermy-fiction-poetry
LGBTQ-feminism-minorities-anarchy-punkrock-tattooing
cycling-drugs-occult-morbid anatomy-erotica-fortean

quimbysbookstorenyc@gmail.com
@quimbysbookstorenyc

HOURS
MON-SAT 11-8
SUN 12-7

Summer of Ludd and the Movement Against Big Tech

By Captain Ludd

We are caught in a race with Silicon Valley: they are trying to control all of our infrastructure before we realize that they are the drivers of war, global warming, alienation, lack of labor protection, and the fascist takeover of our democracy -- to put it plainly, the new colonialists. The once libertarian strains of Silicon Valley (coming out of the hippie movement), have coalesced into authoritarian governmental power, showcasing a true techno-fascist intent. It is hard to fully comprehend, but these CEO's don't merely want to make money at the expense of the workers, they wish to overhaul nation states, sow apocalypse, and instate themselves as "Sovereign Individuals" who rule as feudal kings. As FaceBook co-founder Peter Thiel says, to him, "Democracy and freedom are incompatible."

Yet this existential threat is merely one of many, spurned by Silicon Valley. Children are being reared on ipads, creating a social-emotional deficit, with parents too swamped with work (or addicted themselves) to meaningfully intervene. Rural citizens are fighting data centers, which threaten to dry up rivers, halt farming, and destroy the electrical grid. People all over the country are being harassed by Police and ICE with the help of ALPRs [Automated license plate readers. Aka Flock Cameras]. People of all ages are resorting to chatbot "friends" and "spouses," sometimes leading them to suicide or psychosis. And what's worse, we are too attached to our phones, either drowned in information or droned with entertainment, to even begin to address the problem.

How could one possibly incorporate all these issues under one banner? With their root so clearly being Big Tech, but with technology being an illusive and slippery term, the NYC Luddites devised a plan to introduce the resistance to Silicon Valley at scale...

Utilizing the Event as the Medium -- a blueprint for political and personal engagement -- with participation as the real metric (rather than clicks, likes, press releases), and public space as the grounds for plurality, the Summer of Ludd kicked off with 150 events in 8 days, from June 28-July 5: Jamborees, how to fight data centers, radio in public space, daily meditation, free lunch, piracy 101, SHITPHONE, a march to Palantir Technologies at 15 Little West 12th Street, Bread and Puppet Theater, workshops on getting off Big Tech, and countless others. The medley of events allowed for people of all ages, interests, and work-schedules to come and participate. We hosted over a thousand people a day.

The road to fighting Silicon Valley is fraught with contradictions due to the ubiquity of technology. Often other groups use platforms like Instagram and Facebook to criticize or mobilize against Meta, the same corporation that operates it. We Luddites use the constraints of rejecting these platforms as a way to innovate. For Summer of Ludd, we had a wheat-paste poster department, 15k Guidebooks distributed in local bookstores and radical spaces, a hotline for updated information, non-extractive digital calendars (such as NYC OFF TECH and RedCal), and an info tent called the "Ring-master" in the heart of Tompkins Square Park. This created a culture of asking questions, finding others on the way to events, and community care, rather than clutching for the phone to tell you where to go and

what to do.

We braved a three day 101 degree heatwave with the help of Tompkins Distro, which set up a cooling center alongside our own. With their support we were able to continue doing events, proving that even in a climate catastrophe, the capacity for in-person politics was still possible. This was momentous -- the physiological warfare of global warming keeps us perpetually inside. And as each summer rolls over as the "hottest summer for the rest of our lives," we increasingly come to value our indoor time, surrounded by creature comforts; AC, TV, which gives the illusion that we can participate via Youtube, Instagram, while the rest of the world burns -- flames lapping just below our windows. This only exacerbates the crisis, feeding more data to the machine, and weakening our social and organizational skills. The Summer of Ludd pulled us from this slump, reminding us that public space is the place.

The Event is the Medium -- the key organizing text for Luddites -- asserts that to free us from this awkward, individualist, tech-reliant political rut we need new containers for inputting information, interacting with each other, and putting on actions. The Event seeks maximum involvement from every avenue of person, breaking the predisposition to "watch things play out"; standing at the sidelines. No more shoulder shrug politics. If you know something, then run a teach-in. If you have even one friend, you have enough people to start an event. If you do it in public space you surrender yourself to the magic, danger, and pluralism of other people. Through this process of event-running we go through the praxis wheel, learning and churning out culture, politics, and new ways of living.

With the Summer of Ludd now in the rear view and the technological dystopia still smashing through the front windshield, we Luddites continue to resist despair through building a popular movement against Big Tech. Often times it may feel too late, "AI is inevitable" or "it's just a tool" are common phrases. These two statements encapsulate the hidden ideologies of control, which have lead us into our current crisis. The First, Technology Equals Progress: A society's wealth is measured by its technological "advancement." Second, Technology is Neutral: The political aspects of tech are in the application of it, rather than the structure.

Our framework still hails from the original Luddites of the 1810's: "We are against machinery harmful to commonality, which tears unduly at the social fabric." We neither believe certain technology is inevitable nor inherently progressive. Instead, we investigate holistically its intent, its structure, and its effect on the social fabric.

We ask you to reassess how these silent dogmas may have entered your life, acting as a go-ahead to give your data, your time, your attention, your life, to technofascists like Peter Thiel, Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg, Sam Altman... What's more, we ask you to then meet us in person.

[NYCOFFTECH.com is the most comprehensive list of techno-critical events in NYC. Luddite Club meets every Sunday, 2pm, at Tompkins, in the courtyard behind the bathrooms. Tompkins Distro is every Saturday, 11am, usually on the corner of Avenue B and 7th Street]

HAPPY NEWS ABOUT CATS!

By Evan G.

The tech oligarchs themselves are suddenly calling for regulation. Several companies at once. Like a switch was flipped: Imagine a group of corporations fed by a vast, unsustainable financial bubble.

Imagine they can see the money backing them at great risk is getting nervous and preparing to flee. They are spending tens of billions of dollars every month building enormous chip fortresses that, assuming these are even completed, will be obsolete and in need of replacement within a couple of years. Their sector is drastically over-invested. Their operating costs are astronomical. They require exorbitant levels of energy. Their promise that they will cut net costs and raise net productivity for the business clients that hire them at the prices they actually need to charge is looking dubious. They will never be able to sell their product on the market at prices and volumes that keep their present business model afloat.

Their foreign competition is much cheaper, largely open-source, bears lower costs, and is less ecologically disastrous. Some competitors are set to surpass them in quality and perhaps even in speed within the short to medium term. Their IPOs, endlessly touted as epic and historic and imminent, have been delayed and appear to be in danger.

To keep their investors on board and block their competitors, they now move to form a cartel. They will disguise it as government regulation. The railway companies of the 19th century provide a time-tested model. From the start, the agency responsible for "regulating" them can be captured, under their effective management. The present regime is of course the most amenable to such deals in all of US history. The oligarchs

aim to design their own regulatory agency from the start, together with their friends and lackeys in Congress, the White House, and the courts.

Re-organizing with a regulatory agency governing a de-facto cartel will allow them to designate foreign competitors as potential threats to life itself, and domestic political opponents as terrorists. It will make it much easier for the government to provide bailouts to the companies when they begin to fail financially. They will no longer merely be "too big to fail." Given the claim that the technology is an imminent and potentially autonomous threat to humanity, preserving these companies will be seen as essential to the survival of life itself. They will present themselves as the only safe managers of the monster they have created.

All this, finally, will be a further step in the effort to replace all of government, if possible, with private for-profit entities that run--and constantly down-size--all public services. They already have a big hand in running the military and look to feed off the planned increases in that budget. The funniest part is that the ones now seeing their own salvation in action by governments will remain as the world's loudest and most aggressive whiners every time it is suggested that the government should do anything other than serve their interests.

That, at least to me, seems to be the vision behind certain developments of the past week. Politicians are already following the companies' lead. The master of the last Too Big To Fail-a-Thon, Barack Obama, has joined the call.

But I am not seeing it as inevitable. It reeks of a response to unfolding failure, of desperation.



**THE
SHADOW
NEVER
SLEEPS**



**This land was once a plantation
On this corner now called "7th & B"--
Mutual Aid breaks through enchaind gates together running Free!
Picadillo by & for the People--coffee, toothpaste, snacks, & Praxis
Keep a book, meet a neighbor, cook rice, drink some tang if you wish...
It's the comradery of the dishes' clank & eclectic chatterings of the street!
Never a pot of lentils unstirred, nor carnitas pan ever left unscrapped
Saturdays these Loisaída trees, between sunbeams & sewers, welcome All**

**Down by the Square's edge, realities and necessities converge
In this Park of Solidarity Past, Present, Future
Share soup from a bucket with a stranger--now a friend
Take What You Must / Do What You Can // Take What You Can / Do What You Must
Riot with a full stomach as a vengeance--through the system's closed fist
On this corner forever, wielding spoons in hand**

--Axel Krieger

JOHN PENLEY: 1952-2026

"I ain't got a home in this world anymore."

Continued From Page 3

photographs published, including front pages, in all of the New York City newspapers: the Post, Daily News, and NY Times. His address book was filled with the famous and the infamous, from underground and mainstream figures like Jackie “was just speeding away” Curtis, to Yippie co-founder Abbie Hoffman, to the mayor’s office. John’s thirty to forty thousand negatives documenting the fight against East Village gentrification, homelessness, the squatter movement, Act-Up demos, Tompkins Square riots and skirmishes with kops, cultural figures, KKK and US Nazi rallies, and much more are archived at NYU’s Tamiment Library, Robert F Wagner Labor Archives, catalogued as the “John Penley Papers” [call number TAM.501].

Scrolling through John’s archives, you see papers from his lawsuit against the mayor’s office for being arrested while registering homeless persons to vote and criminal trespass at the nuclear bomb plant. John’s photos include squatter arrests at community board hearings, the 13th Street squatter eviction in 1995 by an army of kops using a tank, Keith Haring at a Wall Street Act-Up protest, a Hell’s Angels tattoo convention, a



Then there was the time when John found out about a big patch of marijuana growing in Tompkins Square Park, out in the open, next to the men’s bathroom. He was right there, taking shots of park workers removing the plants. After calling his media contacts FIRST so that the city could be embarrassed by it. One of his photos made the front page of the Daily News. (I have always wondered if he had a hand in the planting of that marijuana so that he could have the pleasure of rating the city out!) -- Ed.



Beat reunion in the 1990s, Wigstock shows, KKK cross burning at the birthplace of the Klan in Pulaski, TN, beat poet Alan Ginsberg reading poetry in Tompkins Square, an anti-fur protest, model Amanda Lepore, metal jams, an Act-Up AIDS political funeral in Grand Central Station, a sex party at Hotel 17 and much more.

A mysterious association with the underground led to John clandestinely obtaining a printing press from a radical collective with tangential connections to the notorious German Baader-Meinhof Gang. He was blindfolded and taken in a van to pick up the press, which he installed at a squat on lower Second Avenue, between First and Houston Streets, known as CUANDO, where community groups in solidarity with the 1980s East Village zeitgeist were able to use it for free.

John’s temperament and character portrayed someone who spoke with authority and conviction. He had an authoritative understanding of the ways to organize provocative, confrontational protests that challenged the injustices he saw by marshaling media contacts, gossip columns, and legal advisors, including Stanley Cohen and Norman Siegel, whom John often called for legal advice. Norman recalls how John believed in the power of the people. “John thought about how it should be, not how it is. If we worked together, we can make it how it should be” Norman reminisced. “He didn’t understand how some people didn’t give a shit about injustice. He was let down by anyone who wouldn’t fight the status quo.”

John’s spirit never gave out, but his body did. Luckily, a trust fund and veteran disability benefits supported him until the end. John had been suffering from lung cancer and other ailments and was in a lot of pain, especially back pain, for which he was taking opiates. At the end, he was hoping to get into a Veteran’s Administration assisted-living facility, but it didn’t happen in

time. Fortunately, John was taken in by kind friends in Lake Havasu City, Arizona, who took good care of him as his health deteriorated. An abdominal tumor, a heart attack followed by a mini stroke and then another stroke left his legs unusable and confined him to a bed.

John’s other wish was to live out his days on the beach in Oaxaca, Mexico, where he used to go in his heyday in his 40s and would DJ. He was known there as “Gringo Loco.” In typical Penley style, John also wanted to go to Las Vegas for a blowout birthday party, plus do a “peace tour” in a bus or van around Arizona, plans that didn’t pan out in the end, because he just didn’t have the stamina. “It was a good dream,” his friend said of Oaxaca. “Those dreams kept him alive.”

A memorial will be announced.

-- Peter LeVasseur



Heading out early in the morning for a meeting a long way off with federal prosecutors, FBI agents and others with no ID or name, for some reason I stopped to take a look at a group of large incredible photos by John Penley that have adorned my walls for decades. The Tompkins Square riot... the 13th Street squatter standoff against rows of cops and an armored vehicle... one of myself, Father George and Judge Elliot Wilk before the squats... the Daily News front cover, SIEGE... me leaving court with my late law partner and client Lynne F. Stewart... the armed standoff at Oka... and me entering federal court with the family of Hamas founder and leader, Dr. Mousa Abu Marzook. Though I had passed those stunning



Stanley with Tent City resident Keith Thompson and John in Tompkins Square Park in the summer of 1989

virtual captures hundreds of times before, for some reason I stopped that morning and said hi. Little did I know...

On the road for hours for that meeting with the feds, I arrived at the inn. Though I saw a long-recorded message from a strange number I was too tired to deal with it and crashed. Early the next morning as I drove off, I played the message learning that one of my oldest friends, brother and comrade, John Penley, a/k/a J.P., a/k/a Gringo Loco had passed. I froze... Though I knew John was terminally ill, not all that long before he told me his prognosis had changed from several months to another year or so... a wonderful update from what he had told me.

Just five days before that call, John and I had spoken and continued our 35-year tradition of arguing over how many dancing angels we saw on the head of a pin.

Like so many of his fellow travelers, we argued, not out of anger, but solidarity and true love. For John, it was never about compromise no matter how personally dangerous it might be whether shooting a photo or leading a demo. He was after all not one to draw a line between what you want and what you need.

As I left, I had to fight off tears of decades of love and respect for JP as I had to think about my client alone on the drive to the federal hideaway. For five hours, the meeting went on and on, touching on a wide reach of international issues. Not once could I stop to think about John, although throughout I heard him in my mind’s eye repeatedly say tell the feds to fuck off.

With the meeting done, I left to prepare for a serious sentencing matter elsewhere the next day for a young mother of infant twins facing prison on a drug offense because her former attorney accepted a guilty plea and sentence of three years. As I drove off, the tears fell like a river from my eyes and my heart for the loss of my beloved brother JP. All night long, I walked the pathway of our collective journey and struggle for freedom, justice and truth. There were so many times, places and battles we fought together... whether side by side or in spirit, as very much fellow travelers.

For John, the march from Tompkins

Square Everywhere to Black Block, to ACT-Up, to Occupy, to the Mohawk Warrior Society, to the Zapatistas, were but a few of his professional, but more important, political journeys where his camera and his voice gave powerful meaning to resistance. No less so were his lens exposés on the Klan, the JDL, neo nazis and other hate groups from coast to coast.

Morning came and off I went to court. The door opened to a shout of all rise. I did and when I looked to my right to see how my client was doing, I saw John standing between us with that sarcastic stare of his as he tossed his middle finger at the Judge. With the three of us taking a seat John whispered in my ear... tell that judge to fuck off

-- we need justice... With the court asking if I wished to address her before sentence John yelled out give her hell...

I stood up, as did John right next to me, and told the judge just what I have written of here... about a wonderful fighter who may have lost his life but who was very much alive in this courtroom inspiring me to revisit our journey which I did on the record. With the judge staring, the prosecutor frozen and court officers hypnotized by JP’s apparition, I spoke of John and his lifetime chase of justice especially for the young, like our client that day, hoping and praying that she and her infants would have a life together with a second chance... growing as one to shape their family and world.

I recounted John’s battle to help save the youth shelter on 8th Street, between First Avenue and Avenue A in Loaisaida, noting that our client before the court would no doubt have found comfort and redemption in that brownstone, as did the many dozens of other young women and men living in the squats of the LES, or on its streets, or in the park all the while with JP standing next to them.

When I finished speaking, the judge reflected a bit, looked down at us and said “probation”; she then conveyed her condolences as we got up to leave. But when I turned and looked around... John was gone. Yet the sage words of Woody Guthrie’s commentary about a brother in arms who had died echoed in my mind.... “he ain’t passed.... he’s just moved on.”

As we left the courtroom... there he was again, standing up against the outside wall smoking that well-known cigarette with his proverbial fuck you finger pointed at the courtroom. And as his image began to fade, I said to John “save a spot for me brother.” You ain’t ready to go yet, he replied, and with his phantom turned to memory he departed to join all those other great truth seekers and fighters of history.

In our final exchange of this world, as JP passed through the walls of this journey, I told him.... I love you brother... gone but not forgotten.

-- Stanley Cohen, Attorney at Law

GLORIA STEINEM: 1934-2026

An Anti-Requiem for Gloria Steinem, A Cold War Icon

As the media machine unleashes a flood of fawning tributes, the usual suspects inevitably honor Gloria Steinem -- a spectacle revealing little about liberation and everything about their own bankrupt politics, brazen opportunism, willful blindness to historical fact, and the hackneyed claims to "complexity" and "nuance" held so dear by these intellectual mercenaries.

How does one assess a life after it ends? Those who benefit and are in a good position in this system honor Gloria Steinem for contributing to stabilizing a system oppressive to many and dis-aligning them from revolutionary ideas -- this is not what women want and need.

The September 2nd death of Gloria Steinem will undoubtedly unleash an avalanche of sanitized obituaries, performative tributes, and ruling-class hagiography. Western media will mourn her as a "groundbreaking icon" and a pioneer for gender equality. But for the global majority -- the millions of women across the Third World and the working-class masses who remain crushed beneath the boot of imperialist exploitation -- her passing marks the end of a legacy that fundamentally weaponized feminist rhetoric to protect the empire.

Steinem did not liberate women; she weaponized women's liberation to serve the interests of US hegemony. The foundational sin of her career was never a mere footnote: Her early leadership of the CIA-backed "Independent Research Service" in the late 1950s and 1960s was explicitly designed to undermine anti-imperialist, socialist, and communist youth movements at international youth festivals. When exposed, Steinem didn't apologize; she defended the covert arm of the US imperialism, describing its operatives as "liberal and honorable." This was not an innocent blunder of youth, but the blueprint for her entire career.

Through Ms. Magazine and her manufactured status as the singular, polished face of "second-wave feminism," Steinem pioneered a dangerous model of liberal counter-insurgency. As radical feminists, Black Panthers, and anti-capitalist women were rising up to demand the dismantling of the triad of imperialism, white supremacy, and capitalism, Steinem offered a palatable alternative: bourgeois, reformist faux feminism.

This imperial feminism detached gender oppression from its economic and geopolitical roots. It told American women that liberation meant climbing corporate ladders, breaking glass ceilings inside war-mongering state institutions, and achieving parity within an exploitative system—all while the very empire housing them carpet-bombed, starved, and destabilized nations across the Global South. By framing patriarchy as an



THE FEMINIST WAS A SPY

abstract cultural enemy separate from class struggle and US military domination, her brand of activism effectively depoliticized the feminist movement and severed its solidarity with anti-imperialist struggles worldwide.

It was precisely this co-optation that radical groups like Redstockings rightly called out in 1975. They recognized Ms. Magazine and Steinem's elevated media stature as a parallel organization meant to channel radical anger into benign electoral politics. When challenged on her intelligence connections and corporate backing, her apparatus used legal threats and publishing pressure to suppress internal dissent, silencing the very radical women whose ideas she had watered down and monetized.

For the global majority, Steinem's legacy is not one of freedom, but of co-optation. Her pro-imperialist ideology gave feminist cover to US soft power, making Western liberal democracy look progressive while its economic structures continued to siphon labor and resources from women in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. She normalized a brand of identity politics that allows female CEOs, drone operators, and politicians to be celebrated as triumphs for "womanhood," even as their actions inflict violence on millions of impoverished women globally.

We must refuse the myth-making that surrounds her death. True liberation for women will never come from the handshakes of CIA handlers, corporate sponsors, or ruling-class media elites. It will come from the destruction of the imperialist, capitalist structures that Steinem worked so tirelessly to legitimize. Her death should serve as a stark reminder: a feminism that aligns itself with the empire is no feminism at all—it is merely the soft edge of oppression.

-- Sarah Raymundo

Feminist icon Gloria Steinem has passed away. I must admit, when I observed her career early on I was enthralled with her journalism and organizing. But as the months turned into years, she was sadly absorbed into the very system she fought against.

Here's some evidence...

After government documents were declassified, it was revealed Steinem worked for the CIA. From 1958 to 1962, Steinem served as the director of the "Independent Research Service" [IRS], an organization established and funded by the CIA. Its mission was to counter Soviet influence at youth events worldwide, specifically by sending American non-communist students and activists to the World Youth Festivals in Vienna (1959) and Helsinki (1962).

When RAMPARTS Magazine exposed widespread CIA funding of youth and student groups in 1967, Steinem spoke openly about her role. She confirmed that she knew the CIA was bankrolling the organization and defended the arrangement. Steinem famously stated that "if I had a choice I would do it again."

Transitioning into the 1990s, Steinem became a defender of the sexual predator, Bill Clinton. She drew sharp criticism for a March 1998 New York Times op-ed titled "Feminists and the Clinton Question," in which she defended President Clinton against allegations made by Paula Jones, Kathleen Willey and Monica Lewinsky. Steinem wrote that even if the allegations were true "for the sake of argument," Clinton was not guilty of sexual harassment and argued that Clinton's conduct amounted to a "clumsy sexual pass."

During the 2016 presidential campaign, she was a surrogate for Bill Clinton's war criminal wife, Hillary Clinton. During an appearance on Bill Maher's program, she suggested young women were only joining Bernie Sanders' campaign to meet boys. She told Maher, "When you're young, you're thinking, 'Where are the boys? The boys are with Bernie.'" She later apologized.

For me, I place Steinem in the same category as a figure like Noam Chomsky: people I recognized as heroes, only to be disappointed and let down as they were slowly absorbed into the Deep State and neoliberal structure. Yes, I don't deny Steinem inspired a lot of women, but how many of those women know the aforementioned about her?

-- Dorothy Lennon

EAST VILLAGE BOOKS

The Best above and underground books on the Lower East Side, culture and counter-culture, including The SHADOW. Sell us your books, we pay the highest prices. We also buy estate libraries. This store is Yuppie-free!

99 St. Mark's Place (First Avenue - Avenue A)
212-477-8647

Open 1:00pm till Late....



331 East 9th Street
New York, NY 10003
Tel. 212-473-7833
Fax. 212-673-5248
e-mail: santo@sourceunltd.com

"It's Worth The Trip Down The Street!"
www.sourceunltd.com

COPIES & MORE SINCE 1982

Maduro

Continued From Page 9

The case of former Honduran president Juan Orlando Hernández exposes the selectivity of Washington’s supposed war against narco-states. Hernández was a close US ally during his presidency from 2014 to 2022. After leaving office, he was extradited – not abducted through a military invasion – and tried in the same federal district in New York where Maduro is now being prosecuted. In March 2024, a jury convicted Hernández after a three-week trial. Prosecutors presented evidence that he had accepted millions of dollars from traffickers, protected cocaine shipments with the Honduran police and military, and helped move more than 400 tons of cocaine towards the United States. He was sentenced to 45 years in prison.

Unlike the claims against Maduro, these allegations were tested through testimony, cross-examination and a jury verdict. Yet, on December 1, 2025, President Donald Trump pardoned Hernández and secured his release, claiming that the former president had been treated unfairly.

The contrast could hardly be more revealing. Trump pardoned a former president whose participation in cocaine trafficking had been established in a US courtroom, while threatening and eventually invading Venezuela to seize a president against whom no verdict had been rendered. Hernández belonged to Washington’s political camp; Maduro did not. One was released despite his conviction, while the other was captured despite his legal innocence. This disparity does not by itself disprove the accusations against Maduro, but it demolishes the claim that Washington acted from a consistent concern about narcotics. The determining distinction was political alignment, not the strength of the evidence.

The implications of this case extend far beyond the specific circumstances of Maduro and Cilia Flores or their consequences for Venezuela. Allowing a foreign state to override the jurisdiction of another country’s legal system, pursue an accusation for which there is no evidence, and proceed with a trial that lacks a basis in international law effectively establishes the US court system as one with global and unlimited jurisdiction. The ambivalence of governments around the world toward this case is therefore alarming, as it risks signaling consent and normalizing such gross overreach. This is particularly relevant for Mexico, which is already facing a series of accusations and extradition demands from the United States with clear political implications. The outcome of Maduro’s trial could set an important precedent for how Mexico – and other countries – are treated in similar circumstances.

Nicolás Maduro’s innocence therefore expresses the only defensible conclusion at this stage. He was seized through an act of military force, placed before the courts of the state that had pursued his overthrow for years, and charged based on a politically constructed theory that has yet to survive adversarial examination. He remains innocent unless and until admissible evidence proves otherwise beyond a reasonable doubt. Sovereignty is not an ornament, an indictment is not a verdict, and an accusation issued by a powerful state does not become truth merely because that state possesses the weapons to seize the accused.

Maduro has not been convicted of any crime. He has pleaded not guilty to every charge brought against him, and the accusations made by the United States remain precisely that: accusations. Under the presumption of innocence – recognized in the United States Constitution and in Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights – the burden rests entirely upon the prosecution to prove guilt. It is not Maduro who must prove his innocence, but it is the United States government that must prove his guilt.

-- Globe Trotter

María Corina Machado Could Never Deliver the Oil: Why Trump Chose Delcy Rodríguez Over the CIA Asset in Venezuela

By Angelo Giuliano

Trump didn’t pick the CIA asset. He picked the one who could actually deliver the oil. That is the whole story. Everything else is theater.

María Corina Machado was the product. Nobel Peace Prize, exile ops, CIA extraction, the photogenic face of “democracy.” She was useful when the job was to scream, sanction, and wait for collapse. She was useless when the job became: keep the army from splitting, keep the oil flowing, keep the streets from burning while Washington takes majority control of 65 billion barrels.

Delcy Rodríguez did what the US-controlled opposition was never going to do. She sat across the table, signed the 25-year deal, smiled for the cameras, and called it “endless benefits” and “sovereignty.” Machado could never have signed that paper without setting half the country on fire. The security services would not have followed her. The colectivos would not have stood down. The oil infrastructure would have become a battlefield. You would have had Libya with extra steps.

The Empire understood this. The CIA assessment was not mysterious. Regime loyalists were “best placed” for a temporary government. Translation: we need someone who already commands the guns and the ministries, not someone we airlifted out and then tried to parachute back in as president. So they kept Delcy. They kept enough of the old machine to avoid civil war. Then they made her sell Venezuela’s main asset.

That is the humiliation.

Chavistas now watch their own vice-president — the one who used to shout anti-imperialist slogans — defend a deal that gives the United States majority control of strategic fields for a generation. Some peanuts for a barrel to Caracas. The rest to the partnership. “We keep sovereignty.” The language of a surrender dressed as a historic victory.

And the Machado clan? They go along. Of course they do. The US-friendly opposition was never going to fight a deal that Washington wanted. They get to stay relevant, stay funded, stay in the conversation while the actual transfer of resources happens under a Chavista letterhead. Perfect. No messy civil war. No need to occupy. Just a traitor on the inside and a compliant opposition on the outside.

Chávez never trusted Delcy Rodríguez. After she called him “huevo” [“lazy bum”] on the plane, he sidelined her for years. He saw the character: ambitious, pretentious, not really of the project. The slogans were a job. When the job changed, so did the slogans. Palestine one season, coordination with the people who kidnapped the president the next. Empty words. Then the contract.

The crowds now look quiet. They are watching the deals, the overconfidence, the humiliation negotiated in their name. But then.....the Chavez revolution left something the powerful still fear: Chavez cultivated political consciousness and critical thinking.

Another revolution is possible.

Revenge is a dish best eaten cold.

Delcy Rodríguez will not end well. Neither will the people who thought they could auction Venezuela and keep the title.

[See WHEN VENEZUELA’S DE-FACTO PRESIDENT DELCY RODRIGUEZ BANGED ON MY DOOR AT 2AM, By Greg Palast, in SHADOW #66 - Ed.]



“WHEN THEY TELL YOU TO STOP ASKING
QUESTIONS— START ASKING QUESTIONS.”

BETRAYAL IN VENEZUELA

On May 16, 2026, the United States got its hands on Alex Saab a second time in order to use him in its case against Nicolás Maduro. Saab, once Venezuela’s Minister of Industry and National Production, who was imprisoned by the US in 2021 and released in 2023 during a prisoner swap, was handed to the US by interim Venezuelan president Delcy Rodríguez. In February 2026, after the US kidnapped Nicolás Maduro, Saab was arrested in a joint operation by American and Venezuelan intelligence agencies.

Since May, US control over Venezuela has only worsened, with an agreement that deposits its oil revenues into a US Treasury account and doles out small amounts, while keeping the lion’s share. Members of the Israeli Defense Force [IDF] were allowed to provide “assistance” after an earthquake and to even meet with Rodríguez. The US Southern Command [SOUTHCOM] has free reign over Venezuela, and the ubiquitous murals portraying Maduro and Hugo Chavez are being removed from public view.

On September 15, Saab pleaded guilty to US charges of money laundering lodged against him in a federal court. Why would Saab plead guilty? An obvious answer is that he was promised some sort of leniency, perhaps even his freedom, if he agreed to a guilty plea.

According to corporate media sources, “The money laundering offense carries a maximum 20-year penalty, but prosecutors agreed to recommend a sentence at the low end of the recommended range and seek additional reductions should his co-operation, including against four unnamed co-defendants, prove valuable.” It is safe to assume that Nicolás Maduro is one of those who are unnamed and that Saab will testify and help prosecutors win in court with what is actually a very weak case.

The charge of money laundering is itself quite dubious, meaning only that Saab sought to circumvent US coercive measures that were literally starving the Venezuelan people.

The Delcy Rodríguez administration put him in custody in February, lied for several months about having done so, and finally turned him over to the US while publicly smearing him, and even deported his wife back to her native Italy. The US cannot make a good case against Maduro unless Saab testifies against him, and Saab would not do that unless prosecutors offered him a good deal that might include his freedom.

-- Black Agenda Report
.....

PRINT
MOR

nyc

SINCE 1987

INFO@PRINTMORNyc.COM

CULTURE AND RESISTANCE

NOBODY SINCERELY BELIEVES CUBA THREATENS THE UNITED STATES

Continued From Page 9

one come into Cuba and take power. Cuba’s culture is central to its resilience.

There’s a youth movement that includes many theater artists, the Asociación Hermanos Saiz, celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. It has a selective membership of over 3,500 artists under 35, who pour their talents into projects that incorporate surrounding communities and address the needs of the country. The Festival de Jazz may experience blackouts, but people stay until the lights come on again, or until the event plays out acoustically. ICAIC (Cuban Institute of Cinematographic Art and Industry), put batteries in all the film houses, so they never have to cancel an event. They even put big screens out in the streets. The Cuban film industry is bouncing back, with several new films by Cuban filmmakers and co-productions with other countries. Things are moving little by little. There are difficulties with transportation, in getting certain materials. But artists have the drive; this is going to keep working.

ERM: Yet here in the United States, we hear more about a handful of dissidents in Cuba -- bloggers, rappers, many funded by the CIA, making claims about racism and repression—than we hear about the thousands in Cuba who are giving their life’s blood to community culture. What do you think the bloggers want?

CPS: I don’t know. If they’re trying to overthrow the Cuban government, why don’t they take up arms and go into the mountains, like Fidel?

In Cuba, there is no institutionalized racism. There could be racism on an individual level, but it’s not a movement. I am a Black woman. No person of color has to experience racism here, thanks to the Revolution. Before, yes. My family was poor and Black and knew what it was to be despised and excluded. There is deep work going on in cultural organizations, among them the UNEAC [National Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba], to prevent that from happening.

ERM: What about the energy siege? Are buses running at all?

CPS: Transportation is in pretty bad shape, Eli. Buses? Almost none. Because they mostly run on diesel, which is scarce because of the Blockade. But Cubans always invent something, and the government also looks for solutions. We have countries like China and Russia that have helped us, too. Now you’ll see triciclos, electric vehicles with three wheels that can fit six or eight people. Everyone was criticizing the pileup of garbage. So China sent us some triciclos that are designed to pick it up. They have their regulations now, their pickup schedule.

ERM: Do you still have the human-powered bicitaxis?

CPS: Yes, mostly in Old Havana.

ERM: Has anyone gone back to the Chinese bicycles like the Flying Pigeon I rode in the 1990s?

CPS: No, although we’ve started assembling bicycles in Cuba. We’re always hustling!

ERM: What wishes do you have for your 10-year-old granddaughter, who lives there with you?

CPS: I want my granddaughter to be able to do whatever she wants to do. She’s very creative! She does things that leave us -- Ahhh! -- like that, speechless, because she makes surprising things with sticks, paper... whatever materials she gets her hands on she turns into something beautiful. And well, you know that here children are treasured, they don’t work, no one is allowed to abuse or take advantage of them. Children are our stars.

[The author is a member of the Cuba Sí NY/NJ Coalition and a cultural worker based in the Lower East Side of New York City]

In a sign that the US is preparing for yet another evil war, Secretary of State Marco Rubio is now claiming that Cuba poses a “national security threat” to the United States, saying the likelihood of a peaceful agreement is “not high”.

“Cuba not only has weapons that they’ve acquired from Russia and China over the years, but they also host Russian and Chinese intelligence presence in their country — not far from where we’re standing right now,” Rubio told the press. “So Cuba has always posed a national security threat to the United States. They, by the way, have been one of the leading sponsors of terrorism in the entire region.”

Rubio’s comments come as a US intelligence report laundered through Axios claims that Cuba may be preparing to launch a drone strike against US military forces. Havana said the Axios report misrepresents Cuba’s defensive measures as a preparation to attack, accusing the US of “fabricating pretexts, creating and spreading falsehoods, and distorting as extraordinary the logical preparation required to face a potential aggression.”

The US has also unsealed an indictment for Raul Castro, the 94 year-old brother of Fidel Castro, in a move that resembles the playbook used for the kidnapping of Venezuela’s President Nicolas Maduro.

The excuses for military action are already being rolled out. This happens as US war machinery relocates to the Caribbean, and as Cuba flounders under a crushing US oil blockade that is already inflicting a severe humanitarian toll.

And everyone knows it’s all based on lies. You know it. I know it. Marco Rubio knows it. The war propagandists know it. The gusanos brigading social media begging for war know it. We all know it’s a sham. Not one person sincerely believes Cuba poses a threat to the United States.

No one sincerely believes Cuba just coincidentally became an urgent menace to US national security all of a sudden right when the US began scrambling to consolidate geostrategic control in the middle east and the western hemisphere. Nobody actually thinks that a tiny, impoverished island nation is preparing to launch a war of aggression against the United States. This is a performance put on by warmongers and boot lickers. It insults our intelligence and robs us of dignity.

If things cool down with Iran, then it’s a safe bet they’re going in for the kill shot on Cuba. The US empire never

makes peace, it just moves the cross-hairs of its war machinery from nation to nation. We see this over and over again.

Yay! The troops are leaving Afghanistan — oh, now they’re waging a proxy war in Ukraine. Excellent, they’re de-escalating against Yemen — whoa, now they’re kidnapping the president of Venezuela. Oh hey, it looks like the mass slaughter in Gaza has slowed down — oh, now they’re going to war with Iran. Look, they’re pulling thousands of troops out of Germany — oh, it’s so they can move them to Poland. Hey these Iran negotiations are finally getting somewhere — ah man, now they’re invading Cuba.

Over and over and over and over again. As soon as the human butchery slows down in one place, it picks up somewhere else. The US empire exists in a constant state of war. War is the glue that holds the empire together. If the wars stop, the empire stops. That’s why the denizens of the empire are never allowed to vote for an end to wars. You can vote for candidates who will end abortions or trans rights or corporate regulations, but you can’t vote for a candidate who will actually end the wars. Peace is never on the ballot, because war is too critical for the functioning of the empire.

Which is why it’s so important for us all to stand against the war machine. If we can end the wars, we can end the empire. Not until then will we have a shot at building a healthy world.

--Caity Johnstone



THE RIOT IS ONE NIGHT...



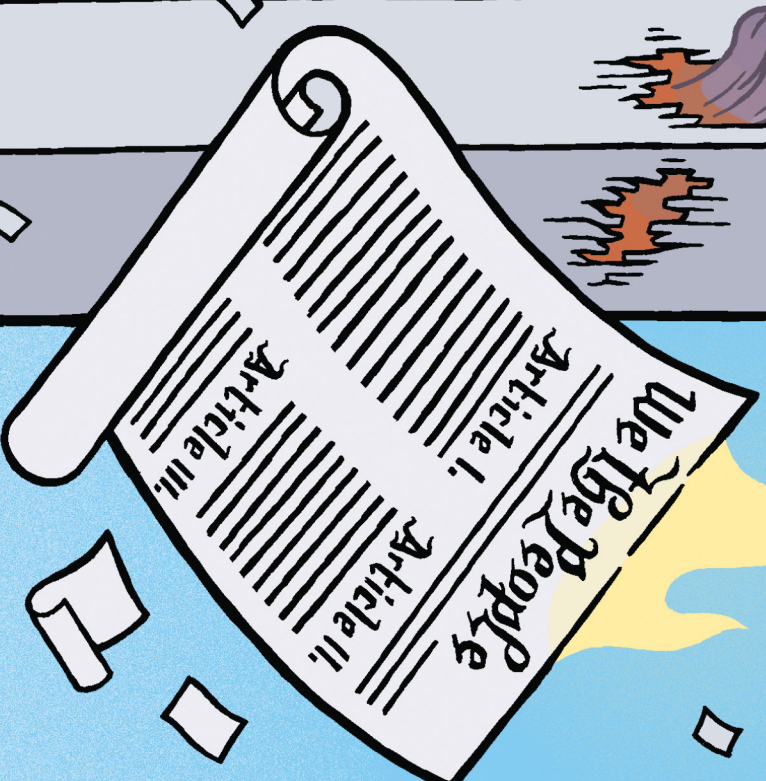
- COVER YOUR
FACE AND
HAIR • THINK
BEFORE YOU TEXT
• ENCRYPT YOUR SHIT
• WEAR GLOVES • DON'T
USE FACEBOOK, PERIOD
• WATCH OUT FOR
GOOGLE TOO • USE
PUBLIC COMPUTERS OR
ENCRYPTED NETWORKS
• DON'T SPECULATE ABOUT WHO DID WHAT
• WATCH OUT FOR RFID TAGS • DON'T PUT YOUR
PICTURE ONLINE • DON'T BRAG • LEAVE YOUR PHONE AT
HOME • REMEMBER THAT THE NSA READS YOUR EMAIL
• BE CAREFUL, NOT PARANOID • NEVER SNITCH, EVER

...BUT METADATA LASTS FOREVER.



the SHEDDOW

ISSUE #67 • \$2.00



INFORMATION IS STRENGTH • KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

the SHADOW

INFORMATION IS STRENGTH • KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

HANDS OFF OUR LAND AND LIVES: THE STATE OF THE AI DATA CENTER CRISIS

By Mary Jae

Initially marketed as a convenient and specialized tool to expedite simple tasks, the use of Artificial Intelligence (aka AI) has steadily transformed into an unavoidable part of digital infrastructure and daily life: almost every search engine uses AI-generated answers as the first result, e-mail and social media platforms include an unprompted summarization of every interaction, large sectors of the workforce are being replaced with calculating systems, companies use AI to accelerate personalized advertisement with data farming, while the US government has expanded mass surveillance through AI-employed tools including facial recognition, predictive policing, and location monitoring. To power and "improve" this technology, massive warehouse-style data centers funded by multibillion-dollar corporate giants, including Amazon, Google, Microsoft, and Meta, have been sprouting like weeds across the United States since the start of the AI boom.

According to Pew Data Centers, there are currently over 3,000 confirmed operational data centers across the country, with an additional 1,500 being planned or currently under construction. Pre-existing data centers were initially built as infrastructure to manage non-stop internet traffic and data, handling tasks such as hosting websites, servers, and e-commerce interactions. Because data centers already store and collect unfathomable amounts of personal data at high speeds, with extensive cybersecurity measures, they have now also been tasked with Artificial Intelligence training and up-keep, as well as crypto-mining for cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin.

The new wave of data centers is planned to focus almost exclusively on developing AI and will require significantly more resources to operate. The three major states for AI data center construction and usage are Texas, California, and Virginia. Virginia is leading the charge as the largest data center market globally and the backbone of hyper-scale centers, with a whopping total of 680 facilities (operating and under construction). New York is quickly becoming a hot spot, currently hosting more than 150 data centers, the largest number in the Northeast.

Environmental Damage

Data centers are currently under fire for their exponentially damaging impact on water quality and usage. Their huge amounts of bustling components, such as high-performance computers, wires, hard drives, generators, etc., powered by diesel and gas, result in massive energy consumption, which then translates into heat. To prevent servers from overheating and shutting down, these internet ovens require colossal amounts of water to cool down: one large data center can use up to 5 million gallons

of water per day (Environmental and Energy Study Institute, 2025).

A report from Mordor Intelligence found that North American data center water consumption reached 1.08 trillion liters in 2025, and it is expected to increase to an average of 1.69 trillion liters per year by the

usage has a laundry list of disastrous implications: limited clean drinking water, dehydration, public hygiene concerns, higher water costs, droughts, polluted rainwater, endangered wildlife, major declines in agricultural industries, and an overall acceleration of the climate crisis.



end of the decade, when 40% of US data centers are already located in drought-prone regions. Earlier this year, UN researchers declared that we have crossed from a water crisis into 'a state of global water bankruptcy'. Currently, 3% of the world's total water supply is freshwater, and only 0.5% is safe for human consumption.

However, data centers actively contaminate the water they use, as waste from these facilities includes concentrated toxic minerals, chemicals, and metals like copper and chlorine dioxide that are meant to deter bacteria and corrosion from their cooling systems. As these compounds evaporate into surrounding biomes, the cooling systems also bring foreign microorganisms into nearby lakes and rivers through a process called thermal pollution, where water filtering creates elevated temperatures and well-known toxic algae blooms. Data centers' unregulated water

pollution, a record-breaking health-damage estimate for a single facility to date (Cork, 2025). They also concluded that associated damages contribute to increased hospitalizations, respiratory issues, and 3.4 to 6.5 additional premature deaths per year across the region.

A distinct aspect of AI data centers is their non-stop noise and light pollution. Often compared to the sound of giant lawnmowers, their 24/7 buzzing comes from fans, diesel generators, and gas turbines that can reach up to 105 decibels from within (that's about the same noise volume as a large aircraft). For many surrounding residential areas, this emits a constant humming that can reach into people's properties day and night, slowly ruining their mental and physical health. High noise pollution disproportionately affects the working class and vulnerable populations like children and the elderly. Commonly linked to health issues like higher stress levels, increased blood pressure, and decreased cognitive performance, many victims of nearby data centers have reported headaches, vertigo, nausea, sleep disturbances, ear pain, and hypertension (Yañez-Barnuevo, 2026). With oversight and regulation of noise control being de-funded and moved from the EPA [Environmental Protection Agency] to local governments by the Reagan administration in 1981, most noise complaints made by frustrated neighbors are neglected, and many feel no choice but to move away. For Big Tech, it will always be AI first, then damage control if and/or when people care.

Some of these data centers' strain on power grids is equivalent to that of one mid-sized city, as one typical hyperscale center can consume as much electricity as 100,000 households. Demand for AI usage and data centers is evidently skyrocketing, doubling energy use every year and driving up baseline power prices for everyone. A study from Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory found that by 2028, data centers could be using 12% of the total electricity consumed in the United States.

Senior Environmental Program Coordinator of NYPIRG [New York Public Interest Research Group] explained that, "if data centers were not consuming more than ten percent of what residential homes consume, the energy supply would be higher, and costs would be cheaper, and New Yorkers would not struggle as much to pay their bills." Previous data centers had some capability to lower rates for everyone due to their overall predictability; AI plants, however, are unique in how fast they work and gobble up resources. For locations closer to significant data center activity, electricity can cost 267% more for just one month than it did five years ago (Bloomberg,

Continued On Page 18