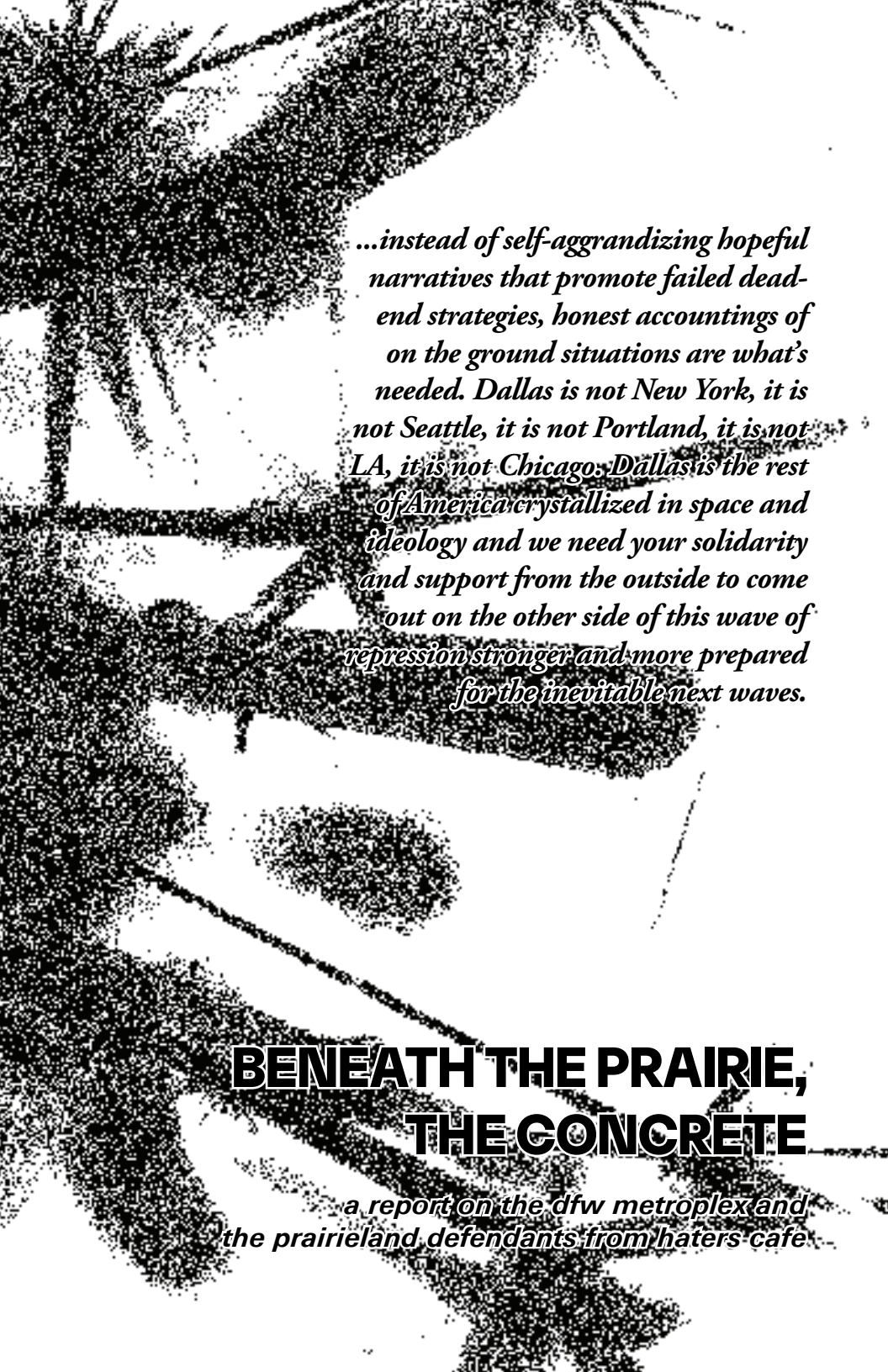

...instead of self-aggrandizing hopeful narratives that promote failed dead-end strategies, honest accountings of on the ground situations are what's needed. Dallas is not New York, it is not Seattle, it is not Portland, it is not LA, it is not Chicago. Dallas is the rest of America crystallized in space and ideology and we need your solidarity and support from the outside to come out on the other side of this wave of repression stronger and more prepared for the inevitable next waves.

BENEATH THE PRAIRIE, THE CONCRETE

a report on the dfw metroplex and the prairieland defendants from haters cafe

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The Prairieland case is a political repression case stemming from a protest in solidarity with ICE Detainees that occurred on July 4th at the Prairieland Detention Center in Alvarado, Texas, south of Fort Worth. There are currently 18 defendants facing life-altering state and federal charges. All but one are still in custody, being held on multi-million dollar bails and enduring horrific conditions. The accusations of the government are absurd, and the police response has been extreme, making it obvious that this is part of an effort to criminalize dissent along with the other high profile cases in Spokane, Portland, and Illinois. It has repeatedly been used by the Trump administration and its allies as an example of violence by "antifa."

What do we know?

- There was a noise demo held at the Prairieland Detention Center on July 4th in solidarity with ICE detainees.
- In all, 18 people have been arrested and charged with a variety of crimes. 9 people were arrested that night, and another was arrested the next day during a raid on a house. The spouse of one defendant was arrested and charged with federal obstruction of justice with the evidence of a box of anarchist zines found in his car. One person the police believe to have been at the protest was detained after a 10 day manhunt involving the eventual arrest of 6 others. One of those arrested as part of the manhunt was charged with tampering with physical evidence for removing someone from group chats.
- Loved ones have good reasons to believe the state's narrative is ludicrous based on their knowledge of the defendants and statements defendants have made since their arrest.
- As on November 13th, ten of the defendants have been combined onto a single indictment with a total of twelve charges. Seven others are charges separately on information.

What does the state allege?

- The state alleges that toward the end of the demonstration an individual fired a gun at an Alvarado police officer. The officer was allegedly injured in the neck and was released from the hospital within hours.
- The prosecution alleges that this was a coordinated ambush planned by all those in attendance. The subject of the manhunt and only accused shooter, Benjamin Song, is claimed to have been hidden by a number of individuals.
- The DOJ claims that the defendants are part of a violent ideological movement they call "antifa." As evidence they cite zines, political rhetoric, and many practices common for activists such as using Signal, wearing black, and asserting their rights when arrested. They also use as evidence the printing press found in 2 defendants' garage, which they used to print books for small left-wing presses.

- From the Support FAQ on dfwdefendants.noblogs.org/resources

Prairieland Detention Center, located just south of the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, is one of ICE's newest detention facilities. Holding kidnapped migrants and facilitating their deportations allows ICE to carry out the repression of the state's internal political enemies. For example, the Prairieland facility detained Ángel Espinosa Villegas[1], an anarchist participant of the George Floyd Uprising who was deported to Chile earlier this year and as of this writing, it still detains Leqaa Kordia[2], a Palestinian participant of the Columbia encampment protests.

As mentioned in the quoted FAQ, this heavy repression of the Prairieland Defendants is being touted by the US government as its first legal case against "antifa." Des Revol has been indicted on "corruptly concealing a document or record" for allegedly moving a box of zines, labeled as "antifa materials" by the government, from his spouse's home. He is currently in federal prison with other defendants as his case moves forward and will likely be facing deportation proceedings afterwards[3]. In addition, a second FBI-led raid was conducted on the home of two defendants specifically to seize the printshop printer, the FBI justified this seizure by claiming their home printshop was used to print and distribute "antifa" and related "subversive" materials. Repression of anarchist publishing is nothing new of course, but this attack on speech in conjunction with the Oct 7th detainment of a local Filipino DACA recipient, Ya'akub Ira[4], specifically for his advocacy of Palestinian liberation portend concerning headwinds for the currently unfolding repressive environment.

Setting aside the annoying and misinformed discourse of antifa in US social media, the significance of this legal maneuver should not be understated. Texas is located in the most conservative federal court circuit, the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals, the same court circuit responsible for bringing the case that overturned Roe v. Wade to the Supreme Court in addition to an attempt to bring a case to fully ban mifepristone (aka the abortion pill) in the US. On a bureaucratic level, this court also bucks standards of clearing its court dockets; its cases are heard at a much more rapid pace than other federal courts in the country. Already lawyers have expressed shock at the speed of the indictments and court hearings with the first of the trials starting in early-January according to the DFW Support Committee. To make matters worse, local Fort Worth courts have already felt emboldened to reprosecute organized leftist drag show defenders like Chris "Big Tex" G[5] after their first failed attempts and the

1: https://thefinalstrawradio.noblogs.org/post/2025/05/04/former-uprising-defendant-from-ice-detention-angel-espinosa-villegas/

2: https://www.npr.org/2025/11/03/nx-s1-5591478/radio-diaries-columbia-protester-leqaa-kordia-is-still-detained

3: https://theintercept.com/2025/11/23/prairieland-ice-antifa-zines-criminalize-protest-journalism/

4: https://www.keranews.org/news/2025-10-30/north-texas-yaakub-vijandre-ice-transfer-georgia

5: https://freetex.noblogs.org/post/2025/08/13/tothefreeworld/

neighboring city of Arlington (the real host city of the FIFA World Cup Semifinals and Dallas Cowboy Stadium) has become one of the first cities to roll back LGBTQ anti-discrimination protections[6]. While Chicago is facing outright kidnappings from ICE, its legal justification, alongside heavier repression, may well come from this region.

All of this, of course, comes from a broader context. Texas is famously a bulwark for right wing politics and policy experimentation. In Johnson county alone, where the noise demo took place, Flock network surveillance cameras were used to collect evidence and prosecute a woman for allegedly self-administering an abortion. During the initial detention of Prairieland Defendants in Johnson County Jail, a fellow inmate (unrelated to this case) was forced to give birth in her cell and only afterwards was transferred to a hospital[7]. The sheriff of the county has been arrested, and released on bond, on unrelated sexual harassment, witness tampering, and aggravated perjury charges. In good old Texas fashion, a rally was held in the town in support of the sheriff after this news broke and a judge allowed him to continue working as sheriff[8].

This last anecdote reflects the socio-political dynamics of the Dallas-Fort Worth area, and Texas more broadly. Everyone knows about the stereotype of the rambunctious gun-toting and freedom-loving Texan cowboy, but the imagination of freedom in Texas was conceived under the dual world-constitutive violences of the slave plantation and frontier settler-colonialism. On a more granular level, social life is heavily influenced by evangelical churches and their thinly-veiled political allegiances. Social interaction is determined by whatever church one decides to attend or not attend. The counterculture doesn't fare much better. What often passes for radical is open support for the Democratic Party or its social democratic critics. While not a novel dynamic, it nevertheless thoroughly limits the political imagination. For example, a punk benefit show was organized to raise funds for the Prairieland Defendants, but Growl Records, the venue that initially booked the show and regularly hosts punk shows, backed out of hosting the show 3 days before the event was supposed to take place in the interest of keeping the venue a "safe space" for both sides of the political spectrum i.e. safe for Trump supporters. In addition, the owner of Growl is allegedly friends with police officers who informed him that the show would be surveilled and arrests made for language used for "attempts" at inciting a riot. This cowardice is not an isolated incident, local crust bands have asked for noise permits when asked to perform at squatted venues. Luckily a venue was secured at the last minute, but this is emblematic of the stupidity and political cowardice of local punk and punk-adjacent communities, despite their ethnic diversity, working class composition, and most significantly, radical posturing.

To say the least, it's an uphill battle for the dozens of us that live in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex and actively seek and work towards the destruction of a settler-slaver conception of freedom that smothers us and is so readily valorized by people from all walks of life. Despite the grave legal implications from this case,

6: https://www.texastribune.org/2025/12/09/arlington-texas-lgbtq-discrimination-protections/
7: https://www.keranews.org/criminal-justice/2025-09-08/woman-gives-birth-johnson-county-jail
8: https://www.wfaa.com/article/news/local/no-decision-in-civil-case-to-determine-whether-johnson-county-texas-sheriff-accused-of-sexual-harassment-can-remain-sheriff/287-8eea9f54-e4d0-4d6-d-b2b4-6fbca6aebbe5

there's very little local support for the defendants, either due to pure ignorance or from being written off as "crazy extremists" or worse. Most "organizing" is relegated to digital spaces like discord servers or signal group chats due to the low-density suburban development of the entire metroplex resulting in car trips for simple errands regularly lasting 30+ minutes. Offline projects do exist of course and are important oases of radical relief, but if we are honest with ourselves, rarely do they become anything bigger than survival groups or glorified study groups with fluctuating attendance. We can contrast the Prairieland case with the recent inspirational anti-repression mobilization surrounding Sam Turnick's arrest in Atlanta which of course comes in the wake of the Stop Cop City moment and the more robust radical community which preceded it[9].

There's sparse radical history or tradition for us to learn from. Significantly, and despite existing racial tensions, there was an absence of militant organizing and unrest in Dallas during the famous 'long, hot summer of '67' and its afterlife in the 1970s. Rallies and marches, especially from the left, are fairly uncommon and low in energy. When they do occur, rest assured they will be heavily policed by overzealous activists or groups like the Brown Berets and other state-communists like PSL and FRSO's front groups. You can read the last two reportbacks on the haters cafe noblogs for a more in-depth look into these dynamics[10]. To date, if memory serves correctly, there have only been two small riots in the Dallas-Fort Worth area by those outside prison walls. The first after the murder of the 12 year-old Santos Rodriguez in 1973 and the second during the 2020 George Floyd rebellion. The latter really only describing some windows of gentrifying business getting smashed and graffitied — a low bar but better than nothing.

Whether due to Southern manners or genuine fear, open defiance against higher ups is rarely seen. Agree with the cop to his face and flip him off when he turns his back; truly the Texan spirit is rowdy! Local government collaboration with ICE is the norm and designations of "sanctuary city" or the like are rightly met with eye rolls and skepticism. Shame and ostracization are poor deterrents for people, including children of migrants, to join organizations like ICE and CBP. After all in the end, we all have to get our bag and even better if it's in the service of a country that "we" were raised to be patriotic and grateful for.

Any sustained resistance — maybe more aptly described as avoidance — against ICE or the state in general, happens in the mundane. Undocumented communities already have a wealth of experience in avoiding the state from their homelands and through previous migration crackdowns. Recently there's been increased reporting of ICE activities in Latino-majority areas of Dallas, but previous activities of so-called rapid response groups are stymied by the distance between neighborhoods and inflexibility of work life. Instead undocumented families and friends rely on each other by noting immigration checkpoints in WhatsApp groups, beginning their commutes earlier in the morning before the checkpoints are set up, and falsifying car registrations renewals or other bureaucratic necessities. Social ties, both genetic and chosen, are heavily relied on to bring amenities for those unable to travel outside

9: https://atlpresscollective.com/2025/12/05/samuel-tunick-atlanta-activist-arrest/
10: https://haters.noblogs.org/post/2025/06/20/reportback-our-enemies-in-yellow/

their home or to raise funds via raffles or parties. Of course we are not uncritical of the fraught dynamics that this support can operate from, nor do we conflate this with an underlying practice of a latent "brown anarchy" as the direction of these actions often point towards an integration and even pride in the maintenance of broader capitalist American society, but in light of these practices, the skills and best practices recommended in pieces like “States of Siege” from Ill Will seem asinine by those of us raised and embedded in undocumented communities. Do so-called revolutionaries have nothing else to offer us?

We write this report not just to complain about the state of radical politics in DFW, but to emphasize the odds we're up against. We are not trying to undermine the work of DFW Support Committee, and other comrades and groups, but the community is small here in Texas and lacks connection to broader networks. Haters Cafe is not blameless in this, we have so far failed to cultivate propulsive capacity to generalize an understanding of rebellion beyond the spectacular and recuperative (i.e. marches, activism, orgs, etc.) or a substantive counter-narrative to combat the deep acceptance and striving of suburban American ideals for most of the population. We often see the assumption that people of color, both immigrant and homegrown, are resistant to the latter values which is not just patronizing, but quite plainly wrong. There are various causes for this failure of a counter-narrative on our end from grave interpersonal failures to the constant demands of daily life, but instead of self-aggrandizing hopeful narratives that promote failed dead-end strategies, honest accountings of on the ground situations are what’s needed. Dallas is not New York, it is not Seattle, it is not Portland, it is not LA, it is not Chicago. Dallas is the rest of America crystallized in space and ideology and we need your solidarity and support from the outside to come out on the other side of this wave of repression stronger and more prepared for the inevitable next waves.

Prairieland Defendants Support Primer and FAQ

What is the Prairieland Case?

The Prairieland case is a political repression case stemming from a protest in solidarity with ICE Detainees that occurred on July 4th at the Prairieland Detention Center in Alvarado, Texas, south of Fort Worth. There are currently 18 defendants facing life-altering state and federal charges. All but one are still in custody, being held on multi-million dollar bails and enduring horrific conditions. The accusations of the government are absurd, and the police response has been extreme, making it obvious that this is part of an effort to criminalize dissent along with the other high profile cases in Spokane, Portland, and Illinois. It has repeatedly been used by the Trump administration and its allies as an example of violence by "antifa."

What do we know?

- There was a noise demo held at the Prairieland Detention Center on July 4th in solidarity with ICE detainees.
- In all, 18 people have been arrested and charged with a variety of crimes. 9 people were arrested that night, and another was arrested the next day during a raid on a house. The spouse of one defendant was arrested and charged with federal obstruction of justice with the evidence of a box of anarchist zines found in his car. One person the police believe to have been at the protest was detained after a 10 day manhunt involving the eventual arrest of 6 others. One of those arrested as part of the manhunt was charged with tampering with physical evidence for removing someone from group chats.
- Loved ones have good reasons to believe the state's narrative is ludicrous based on their knowledge of the defendants and statements defendants have made since their arrest.
- As on November 13th, ten of the defendants have been combined onto a single indictment with a total of twelve charges. Seven others are charges separately on information.

What does the state allege?

- The state alleges that toward the end of the demonstration an individual fired a gun at an Alvarado police officer. The officer was allegedly injured in the neck and was released from the hospital within hours.
- The prosecution alleges that this was a coordinated ambush planned by all those in attendance. The subject of the manhunt and only accused shooter, Benjamin Song, is claimed to have been hidden by a number of individuals.
- The DOJ claims that the defendants are part of a violent ideological movement they call "antifa." As evidence they cite zines, political rhetoric, and many practices common for activists such as using Signal, wearing black, and asserting their rights when arrested. They also use as evidence the printing press found in 2 defendants' garage, which they used to print books for small left-wing presses.

Why should this be a concern to all?

- This is a propaganda gold mine for the Trump administration. A number of the defendants are trans and many have associations with radical left and anti-fascist groups. They are using it as an opportunity to validate the conspiratorial fanta-

sies of transgender anti-fascist armed terrorist cells invading small towns to kill cops. This is evidenced by Trump's use of this example as the first bullet point in the press release announcing the designation of "antifa" as a terrorist organization. (https://www.whitehouse.gov/articles/2025/09/president-trumpisnt-backing-down-from-crushing-radical-left-violence/)

- The goal of this case is to criminalize dissent. Regardless of what happened at the demonstration on July 4th, the scale and nature of the state's response was clearly meant to spread fear and demobilize anti-ICE protest.
- The charges, bail, and police action in this case are extraordinary and are occuring at a time when all systems are being overwhelmed, both on the side of the movement and the state. If we allow them to pursue this unopposed it will be clear that they can "flood the zone" of repression and easily undermine any legal rights we still have.

What are the problems with the state allegations?

- The core issue with the allegations around July 4th is that the state has provided no evidence that there was coordination to fire at police. Most of the individuals were actually arrested a few blocks from the alleged incident and the evidence presented by the federal prosecutors is heavily politicized and nearly entirely circumstantial.
- There is obvious evidence that those who went to the protest that night planned to return home. Some left pets or children at home with no care plan.
- Statements by defendants since the arrest have consistently asserted their innocence. See: https://www.keranews.org/criminal-justice/2025-09-10/protest-or-ambush-womanarrested-in-alvarado-ice-facility-shooting-says-it-started-peacefully
- For more see: https://thebarbedwire.com/2025/09/24/new-details-july-4-ice-attack-holesfeds-case/, https://truthout.org/articles/these-dallas-residents-are-on-the-front-lines-oftrumps-war-against-antifa/

Other important facts:

- Early on defendants were held in horrible conditions. They were held in isolation, subject to invasive and unncessary strip searches, denied access to lawyers, and had legal notes confiscated. One defendant was placed in a cell with feces smeared on the walls and told to clean it herself.

Who is supporting the defendants:

- The DFW Support Committee has been formed from family, friends, and loved ones of the defendants. It's based locally in DFW but has been actively coordinating with people around the country.
- Des has his own support committee who has been working on the particularlities of his situation including his immigration case.

Where can you find more information?

Website: prairielanddefendants.com
Fundraiser: givesendgo.com/supportdfwprotestors
IG: @dfwsupportcommittee
Daniel "Des" Estrada Sanchez's Support Committee IG: @free.des.revol