

FBI informant, undercover agent played major role in alleged Turtle Island Liberation Front New Year's bomb plot

Jacob Crosse
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In what appears to be another case of Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) entrapment, the *Intercept* reports that FBI agents and informants were intimately involved in a New Year's bomb plot allegedly orchestrated by a group called the "Turtle Island Liberation Front" (TILF) located in Los Angeles, California.

The TILF appears to be a tiny and relatively new organization. It is unclear how many people are in the group. Prior to last week's charges the TILF Instagram account had fewer than 1,000 followers and only began posting earlier this year. In one of the few videos on the Instagram account, a person identified as "Mary" states, "Turtle Island Liberation Front is looking for reparations and land back for these indigenous groups..."

According to a Department of Justice criminal complaint, four people, along with an FBI informant and an undercover FBI agent, were planning on testing pipe bombs in the Mojave Desert of Southern California on December 12 in preparation for a New Year's attack targeting two corporations at five different locations across the United States.

The plot was not aimed at killing anybody. As the complaint notes, the alleged bombers planned to warn any security guards or bystanders before setting off their pipe bombs at midnight on December 31, 2025. The complaint alleges that as of yet planned further attacks in 2026 would be aimed at Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) vehicles and personnel.

The alleged members of TILF that participated in the bomb plot include Audrey Carroll, Zachary Page, Dante Gaffield and Tina Lai. All four were arrested last week by the FBI while in the Lucerne Valley in the Mojave Desert in western San Bernardino County, California. They are currently facing charges of conspiracy and possession of an unregistered destructive device. If convicted, the accused would face a maximum sentence of five years in prison for

conspiracy and up to 10 years for the unregistered destructive device charge.

In the criminal complaint, it is clear that the FBI's Confidential Human Source (CHS), i.e., informant, played a crucial role in every step of the alleged bomb plot. The affidavit alleges that near the end of November 2025, Carroll provided the CHS with an eight-page handwritten document titled "Operation Midnight Sun" that described the alleged bombing plot. Page was also allegedly present at this same meeting with Carroll and the FBI informant.

The alleged plan called for building pipe bombs, placing them in backpacks and setting off the improvised explosive devices (IEDs) simultaneously at five locations targeting two US corporations across the country at midnight on New Year's Eve.

In the document Carroll allegedly provided to the FBI informant were instructions on how to create "complex pipe bombs," including how to do so without leaving evidence. Carroll is also accused of discussing with the CHS the prospect of testing the explosives "in the desert" in mid-December 2025.

It is unclear from the document how long the FBI informant had been a part of TILF and his specific role. Nothing in the affidavit confirms who first suggested the bomb plot, Carroll or the informant. It is also not clear if the informant participated in planning discussions before November, prompted or steered the plot into a more violent and illegal direction or if some of the bomb-making material and documentation originated with the informant.

Notably, the complaint makes clear the informant had been working with the FBI long before TILF began posting on Instagram. In a footnote the complaint states:

The CHS is cooperating with law enforcement and is a validated and vetted source. The CHS has been a reliable source of information since in or around

August 2021. The CHS is cooperating for financial compensation. The CHS does not have any criminal history. The CHS provided past reliable reporting on other cases, and has provided reliable reporting in this case.

In other words, this informant has been working with, and getting paid by, the FBI for over four years.

The complaint goes on to allege that Carroll and Page recruited Lai and Gaffield to take part in the plot. On December 12, the complaint claims all four, along with an undercover FBI agent and the paid informant, drove into the Mojave Desert and began constructing the pipe bombs for testing, at which point FBI agents intervened and arrested Carroll, Page, Gaffield and Lai.

The informant provided the FBI with the eight-page document on how to make pipe bombs and also supplied the FBI access to a TILF Signal messaging group called “Order of the Black Lotus.” In the text chain the government claims the accused discussed the bomb plot and plans to test the bombs in the Mojave Desert on December 12. The informant also provided the FBI a recording of a December 2 meeting in which Carroll, Page and the informant discussed the plot further while in downtown Los Angeles.

On December 7 another meeting was held, this time with Carroll, Page, Gaffield, the informant and an undercover FBI agent. During this meeting the bomb plot was allegedly discussed again and Page is alleged to have said that the FBI was “100,000 percent” onto them.

The government alleges that Turtle Island Liberation Front (TILF) is an “anti-capitalist, anti-government movement.” To back this claim, the FBI cites posts from the TILF Instagram account, one of which calls for the “working class to rise up” while another states that “direct action is the only way.” It appears only one post on the TILF Instagram references the “working class,” the rest as a mix of radical phraseology, appeals for donations and aborted events.

While the phrase “Turtle Island” originates among some indigenous peoples before European colonization to describe North America, it is only in the last few decades, beginning in the 1960s and 1970s, that the term gained political connotations associated with indigenous, decolonization and Native American movements. The movements are oriented to appealing to the US government for tribal recognition, restitution and other agreements within the existing capitalist framework.

In the more recent period, decolonization politics have been cultivated at major universities as a form of middle class identity politics focused on reparations and even

reverse migration. This elevation of Native identity above all else is easily adapted into diversity, equity and inclusion frameworks and is attractive to the upper-middle class and professional activists, who reject Marxism and the revolutionary role of the working class.

As poverty among indigenous peoples continues to climb, environmental and anarchist groups, and even capitalist politicians have adopted “decolonization” rhetoric, including by providing corporate-friendly “land acknowledgments” before campaign stump speeches, such as was the case at last year’s Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

There is nothing “left-wing” or anti-capitalist about the alleged actions initiated by TILF. The overthrowing of capitalism and its replacement with socialism will not be accomplished by acts of terrorist violence. Individual acts of terrorism, carried out by one person or by small clandestine groups, provoke intensified state repression and censorship, which is turned against the socialist and working class movement first and foremost.

Under conditions where the Trump administration is widely hated for its unconstitutional and illegal actions, the administration is already trying to use the alleged plot to further attacks on all its opponents.

In a post on X, Attorney General Pam Bondi claimed that TILF is “a far-left, pro-Palestine, anti-government, and anti-capitalist group.” FBI Director Kash Patel likewise claimed TILF is “an extremist group motivated by pro-Palestinian, anti-law-enforcement, and anti-government ideology.”

Bilal “Bill” Essayli, first assistant United States attorney for the Central District of California, also described the group as a “far-left, anti-government, domestic terror cell.” Notably, Essayli confirmed that the investigation was “initiated in part due to the September 2025 executive order signed by President Trump to root out left-wing domestic terror organizations in our country, such as Antifa and other radical groups.”

The executive order to which Essayli is referring is the National Security Presidential Memorandum-7. NSPM-7 is aimed at turning the entire repressive machine of the police-intelligence apparatus, including the Department of Homeland Security, against all left-wing opposition to the US government, while at the same time creating a fiction that terrorist violence is centrally directed and largely perpetrated by left-wing organizations.



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