

“At every turn they have ignored us, misled us and shielded Alex’s killers”

Parents denounce federal cover-up in Border Patrol murder of Alex Pretti

Jacob Crosse
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More than nine months after intensive care nurse Alex Pretti was murdered by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) thugs, his parents, Michael and Susan, held a press conference Tuesday demanding justice for their son. In their first press conference since Alex was killed, they accused US Attorney for Minnesota Dan Rosen and US Attorney General Todd Blanche of withholding information, misleading their family and shielding the men who killed Alex.

“We will no longer stay silent about the actions of the Department of Justice in the 275 days since Alex’s murder,” Michael Pretti declared at the October 27 press conference in Minneapolis.

Alex Pretti, 37, worked at the Minneapolis Veterans Affairs hospital. Federal agents killed him on January 24 during the Trump administration’s occupation of the Twin Cities, just over two weeks after Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agent Jonathan Ross murdered 37-year-old mother Renée Nicole Good. Both killings were recorded on video, yet none of the agents has been charged.

Michael recalled that Alex was their firstborn child and only son, raised in Wisconsin in a close-knit Midwestern family. He said:

We learned about his death from the media as we saw him being shot repeatedly in the back after helping a woman from his community, a fellow Minnesotan, who had been shoved to the ground viciously. He was peaceful. He was observing. He was not protesting. This was not a protest Alex was at.

Video showed Pretti holding a cellphone as he sought to help the woman, who was being assaulted by federal agents. The immigration Gestapo responded with pepper spray and shoved him to the ground. An agent removed a handgun from Pretti’s waistband, which he was legally allowed to carry, and multiple agents proceeded to shoot him in the back repeatedly.

“His hands were in the air before he was tackled to the ground,” Michael said. “He was face down on the ground when he was executed by ICE agents. Everyone in this room has seen that video. Millions of people in this country and around the world have seen that video.”

We know exactly what our eyes saw. Alex was murdered

and he should be here today with us. No one from the federal government called us on that horrible day. But they did go on TV to tell lies about Alex. No one from the federal government has called us since. The lies told about Alex immediately after his murder have been shown to be just that, lies.

Within hours of the killing, senior Trump administration officials launched a campaign to portray the murdered nurse as a terrorist and would-be mass killer. Border Patrol Commander-at-Large Gregory Bovino claimed Pretti “wanted to do maximum damage and massacre law enforcement.” Then-Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem falsely accused him of using his weapon to “assault law enforcement officers” and declared that he had “committed an act of domestic terrorism.” White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller called Pretti “an assassin” who “tried to murder federal agents,” a smear Vice President JD Vance amplified by reposting it.

Michael continued:

It runs through our minds. I think it haunts many Americans to see a US citizen who was peaceful and in his community shot multiple times in the back while on the ground. It’s something that should not have happened. It is not right. Imagine that your child was killed because of the actions of the federal government.

The same government that rushed to slander Pretti has spent months covering for his killers. Michael denounced the “cruelty from Dan Rosen in the US attorney’s office, who has stonewalled us for 9 months, refusing to share a single update of any kind. His only words have been, ‘I can’t tell you.’”

He cited “cruelty from Attorney General Todd Blanche, who told Congress that this investigation would be handled ‘normally’ and then has ignored our letter we sent him begging for basic information the law affords us.”

He added, “At every turn they have ignored us, misled us and shielded Alex’s killers.”

According to CNN’s reporting on the family’s July letter to Blanche, the Prettis met with Rosen on July 13. That same day,

Hennepin County Attorney Mary Moriarty publicly announced that federal authorities had supplied evidence. Yet Rosen would not even confirm the evidence-sharing arrangement to the family. The meeting yielded no substantive update.

“We hear the federal government is not sharing information. Then we hear that they *are* sharing information. Then last week we learned again that they said in court documents they are not sharing evidence,” Michael said.

Minnesota officials sued in March for access to evidence concerning the killings of Pretti and Good. According to court filings reported by *Spectrum News*, Moriarty was told September 10 that evidence sharing had been suspended indefinitely. State investigators still lack materials, including a recorded statement from an officer who shot Pretti, the officers’ firearms and phones, and projectiles and casings.

Susan Pretti described a son whose concern for others stood in stark contrast to the government’s cruelty. Alex “loved working with the veterans,” she said.

He understood that this was a community that deserved our respect but was too often ignored. He had a deep sense of justice. He believed that everybody should be treated equally and with respect, regardless of who you are.

Of course, many parents would say this about their kids, but I know I wasn’t the only person to see these qualities. I know this because we heard from so many of his friends, his colleagues who told us these are the things they loved about Alex.

She thanked the strangers who had written to the family from across the country and around the world.

I know this because of the thousands of cards, letters and messages that we have received across the country and around the world, and I brought some of those here today as a thank you to those strangers who have written to us. It truly has helped us with our grief.

Contrasting this solidarity with the administration’s response, Susan declared:

The federal government went on TV and lied about Alex. They tried to slander his memory to cover up their crime. Not only was it wrong. It was shameful, unfair and unacceptable.

We want to clear our son’s name. We want the world to understand who Alex really was. We want our son’s killers brought to justice once and for all. Minnesotans said “no” to this injustice. Americans said “no” to this injustice, and today we are here begging for the Department of Justice to do what is right, to hold the men who murdered our son accountable for what they did.

Why, more than nine months after Good and Pretti were murdered, have their killers not been charged? The killings provoked mass

outrage, student walkouts and demands for a general strike. More than 50,000 marched in Minneapolis on January 23, the day before Pretti was gunned down. There was no shortage of courage or willingness to fight among workers and youth.

The decisive obstacle was the Democratic Party and the trade union bureaucracy. As the WSWs documented in January, union officials invoked collective bargaining agreements and no-strike clauses to keep workers on the job. At an online meeting, CWA Local 7520 President Keiran Knutson responded with hostility when this reporter proposed a mass meeting where workers could decide on collective strike action.

The Democrats presented the reorganization of the ICE occupation under Trump’s “border czar” Tom Homan as grounds for optimism. Governor Tim Walz praised Homan, while federal agents were being integrated more closely into local jail operations. The pseudo-left supplied political cover. *Left Voice* portrayed the administration’s tactical adjustments as concessions and promoted illusions that “pressure” would turn the trade union apparatus and the Democrats into instruments of class struggle.

What has happened in the nine months since Pretti was murdered? ICE agents similarly shot and killed father, husband and construction worker Lorenzo Salgado Araujo in Houston on July 7. Johan Sebastián Durán Guerrero, also a father and worker, was murdered in Biddeford, Maine on July 13. None of their killers have been charged. On October 27, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that an immigrant inside the Otay Mesa concentration camp died, bringing the skyrocketing death toll of people in ICE custody under Trump to 61.

Immigration Gestapo have been deployed to airports throughout the country. Arrests have occurred in terminals across at least nine states. At San Francisco International Airport and Boston Logan International Airport, immigrants have been confined for days in windowless holding rooms.

The Democrats’ efforts to channel mass opposition into elections and court proceedings, enforced by the union bureaucracy and defended by the pseudo-left, have helped the administration continue Trump’s mass deportation operation, which serves as spearhead for dictatorship. There has been no accountability or justice.

Justice for Pretti, Good and all victims of immigration police violence requires the independent mobilization of the working class. The institutions of the capitalist state are not neutral but instruments of class rule.

Workers, immigrant and native-born, must build rank-and-file committees and prepare a general strike against both capitalist parties and independent of the union apparatus. Its demands must include the abolition of ICE and Customs and Border Protection, freedom for those kidnapped in the deportation campaign, and the prosecution of the agents and officials responsible for ordering, financing and carrying out this criminal violence. This struggle must be directed against the capitalist system that produces dictatorship and against the financial oligarchy whose interests the repression serves.



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