



Written by [James Murphy](#) on July 15, 2019

Antifa-linked Terrorist Shot by Police After Attacking Washington ICE Detention Center

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An armed anti-immigration enforcement terrorist was shot and killed on Saturday in Washington State after he threw incendiary devices at an ICE detention center. The man appeared outside the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma with a rifle and incendiary devices and attempted to set fire to the facility and a large propane tank.

Sixty-nine-year-old Willem Van Spronsen, a musician from Vashon Island, had ties to the Puget Sound Anarchists and local Antifa groups. He was shot by Tacoma police after throwing “lit devices” at the facility and the propane tank. One car was also reportedly set afire by Van Spronsen’s attack.

The incident occurred in the overnight hours of Saturday morning at approximately 4:00 a.m. local time. Employees at the detention center called Tacoma police shortly after they got the call. Officers reported “shots fired” but it is still unclear, whether Van Spronsen fired at them first. None of the four officers who responded to the incident was injured.

“It was reported the male was throwing incendiary devices at the Detention Center and then at vehicles in the parking lot,” said a statement from the Tacoma Police. “The male attempted to ignite a large propane tank and set out buildings on fire.”

The detention center is run by GEO Group, a private entity. It is said to hold 1,575 detainees. The company told the AP that “baseless accusations” about how detainees are treated “have led to misplaced aggression and a dangerous environment for our employees, whose safety is our top priority.”

“We are extremely grateful to the officers of the Tacoma Police Department who reacted quickly to the incident that occurred outside the Northwest Detention Center this morning,” Michael Melendez, acting field office director for Seattle Enforcement and Removal Operations at ICE, told the Washington Post. “This incident could have resulted in the loss of many more lives, were it not for the brave actions of all the officers involved.”

Van Spronsen was previously arrested at the same facility in 2018 when he was accused of attacking a police officer who was detaining another protestor. Van Spronsen later plead guilty to obstructing a law-enforcement officer and was given a deferred sentence.

The incident comes at a time when illegal immigration is at the [forefront of our national consciousness](#) and on the eve of a planned federal crackdown on illegal immigrants who have received removal notices or who have missed court dates.



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Van Spronsen apparently sent a [letter](#) to friends on Friday, which some have described as a manifesto. But some phrasing sounded like it may have been a suicide note.

In the letter, Van Spronsen described the detention center as an “abomination.” In a passage that suggests he knew he was going to die, the terrorist wrote, “I regret that I will miss the rest of the revolution.” Van Spronsen went on to declare, “I am Antifa.”

Van Spronsen’s friends in the Seattle Antifa movement believe that he was “murdered” by police, saying in a [Facebook post](#) that they “cannot let his death go unanswered.” Comparing Van Spronsen’s death to that of abolitionist John Brown, Antifa seems to be using the incident as some sort of call-to-action.

“When our good friend and comrade Willem Van Spronsen took a stand against the fascist detention center in Tacoma, he became a martyr who gave his life to the struggle against fascism. He was kind and deeply loved by many communities; we cannot let his death go unanswered. Throughout history we idolize figures like John Brown for their courage to take the ultimate stand against oppression, and today we stand strong in our support for yet another martyr in the struggle against fascism. May his death serve as a call to protest and direct action.”

The phrase “we cannot let his death go unanswered” sounds suspiciously like a threat. So does “May his death serve as a call to protest and direct action.” Why does Facebook, who claims to denounce “hate speech,” allow this group, which openly encourages violence, a platform when [it denies](#) platforms to [so many others](#) based solely on ideology?

This tragedy is a direct result of people such as Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) calling ICE facilities “concentration camps.” Others such as [Shaun King](#), [Andrea Pitzer](#), and pretty much every talking head on MSNBC and CNN have also referred to these centers in the same untrue manner.

Rhetoric — especially hyperbolic and extreme rhetoric — often has consequences. Sometimes those consequences are tragic. Van Spronsen was obviously a disturbed individual who thought he was doing the right thing — attacking the “fascists” who worked at the detention center.

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