

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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by [Jean Casella](#) | December 15, 2013



The following roundup features noteworthy news, reports and opinions on solitary confinement from the past week that have not been covered in other Solitary Watch posts.

Alan Prendergast reports in [Westword](#) that the Colorado Department of Corrections has directed its wardens to stop sending people with mental illness to solitary confinement. (Look for more on this subject later this week on Solitary Watch.)

The U.S. Justice Department's Inspector General has issued a [year-end report](#) that describes a Growing Crisis in the Federal Prison System, Andrew Cohen reports for the [Atlantic](#).

Babar Ahmad and Syed Talha Ahsan, two British nationals, [pleaded guilty](#) this week to terrorism-related charges. The two men, who were subject to a [highly controversial extradition](#) to the United States last year, had been held in extreme isolation in a supermax prison in Connecticut, and will likely face more solitary confinement in the future.

As the [Los Angeles Times](#) reports, Federal judges considering California's request for more time to reduce prison crowding have asked the state in turn to limit how long some mentally ill prisoners spend in solitary confinement.

[NBC News online](#) reported in detail on the case of the so-called Dallas 6, a group of Pennsylvanians who were charged with rioting after staging what they say was a peaceful protest in their solitary confinement unit to draw attention to conditions there. After hearing several motions, a federal court set a trial date in January.

A [BBC News](#) piece asks: Are California's prison isolation units torture?

Federal prison officials have begun transferring mentally ill inmates from the Supermax prison in Florence to a prison in Atlanta following a lawsuit that accuses guards of ignoring severe symptoms, reports the [Denver Post](#). The Bureau of Prisons says it may eventually transfer about 30 men.

Jean Casella is the director of Solitary Watch. She has also published work in The Guardian, The Nation, and Mother Jones, and is co-editor of the book *Hell Is a Very Small Place: Voices from Solitary Confinement*. She has received a Soros Justice Media Fellowship and an Alicia Patterson Fellowship. She tweets [@solitarywatch](#).

Accurate information and authentic storytelling can serve as powerful antidotes to ignorance and injustice. We have helped generate public awareness, mainstream media attention, and informed policymaking on what was once an invisible domestic human rights crisis.

Only with your support can we continue this groundbreaking work, shining light into the darkest corners of the U.S. criminal punishment system.

by [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 19, 2022

by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 12, 2022

by [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 5, 2022

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