

## Bits n' pieces from east, west and beyond (for 7-24-2025)

Compiled by Lorraine H. Marie

East, west or beyond, sooner or later events elsewhere may have a local impact. A recent sampling:

The Pentagon will **end deployment** of 2,000 National Guard troops to Los Angeles, where Trump sent them in early June. One Guard **official** told *The New York Times* that the deployment “is **not** what the military of our country was designed to do, **at all.**”

El Salvador's president (who claims to be the world's “**coolest**” dictator) said on Twitter that the 250 or so Venezuelan migrants President Donald Trump held there at a notorious mega prison were transferred to Venezuela. **Ten** U.S. citizens and permanent residents were returned to the U.S. A high number of those held told of **daily beatings and torture** while in the El Salvador prison.

The *Guardian*: an **Irish tourist** was jailed by ICE for three months after overstaying his US visit by **three days**; a health issue prevented leaving on time. Despite **prior efforts** to make ICE aware of his condition, the engineer endured inhumane detention. He was surprised he was not deported to Guantanamo or El Salvador “because it [ICE] was so **disorganized.**” The National Immigration Project called it “a **waste of time and money**...when...the government wants to cut expenses.” The man was finally returned to Ireland. His U.S. girlfriend went, too, since “**I don't want to be in America anymore.**”

From the **tacky but pertinent** file: Jeffrey Epstein questions are shaking Trump's dedicated base, such as the far-right Nick Fuentes. Fuentes recently fumed that Trump is “fat...a joke...stupid.” (The nice words.) Fuentes said the MAGA movement will be seen as “the **biggest scam** in American history.” The outburst was a response to Trump's broken campaign promise to release “covered up” Epstein files. In early July Trump's Justice Department said they would not release more information. (Epstein had been arrested for **sex trafficking** minors and died a month later in prison.) Trump called his supporters “stupid” and “foolish” when they objected to not seeing everything. Numerous reports say Trump has asked for pertinent grand Jury info to be released, subject to court approval, which could be a lengthy process. The Dept. of Justice will work to make “appropriate redactions.” Recently *Wired* reported **three minutes of footage were cut** from “full raw” surveillance video of Jeffrey Epstein's prison cell, recorded just before his 2019 death (supposedly by suicide). The *Wall Street Journal* recently reported that Trump sent a “bawdy” letter to Epstein on his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday which included the president's signature designed as below-the-waist private hairs, and the message “may everyday be another wonderful secret.” Trump **denied** responsibility and sued the *WSJ* for **\$10 billion**, various media reported. Critics say the *WSJ* piece relied on “fake implants.” Other critics say Trump's denial lacks credibility: his

**past doodles**, auctioned for charities, show similarities. On Truth Social Trump complained that the WSJ's owner told him he would **not** publish their report, despite Trump calling it "fake." Former Trump supporter Elon Musk had claimed Trump was in the Epstein files, and "that is the **real reason** they have **not** been made public." Adding to concerns was a letter to the FBI from a Dem member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, saying Trump's Attorney General urged the FBI to rapidly "flag" Epstein records where Trump was **mentioned**. The House Speaker has blocked the House vote on releasing the Epstein files until at least September, and Republicans have blocked Democrats' attempt to release the files. A speaker on NPR said the case is significant in light of **low-level trust** in government.

The Trump Administration ordered **incineration** for nearly **500 metric tons of emergency food**, enough to feed 1.5 million children, *The Atlantic* said.

More than **250** people held at Florida's "Alligator Alcatraz" have **no criminal record**, according to the *Miami Herald*. Officials had claimed the facility would only be for the "**worst of the worst.**"

**Blast from the past:** Five years ago this month, U.S. Rep. John Lewis passed at age 80. He popularized the term "make good trouble," the theme of last weekend's anti-authoritarian protests. After his birth in 1945, as a young adult he broke racial segregation laws and organized voter registration drives. He was an advocate of non-violence, but that did not stop violence against him; at an Alabama bus station opponents of race-mixing left him unconscious at a bus station, where he thought he would die. He was beaten by mobs and arrested 45 times. By 1963 he chaired the Student Non Violent Coordinating Committee and helped organize the March on Washington, where Martin Luther King Jr. gave his "I have a dream speech." Lewis also spoke there. He was part of 600 marchers in 1965 bent on registering African Americans to vote in Alabama; they stopped to pray at the end of Selma's Edmund Pettus Bridge, where mounted police beat them with clubs and bullwhips; Lewis's skull was fractured. President Lyndon B. Johnson went on TV to support the marchers, and urged Congress to pass a national Voting Rights Act, which he signed that August. In 1986 Lewis was elected Georgia Congressman, and won re-election 16 times. Before he passed, a reporter asked him about being tempted to give up on creating change. Lewis advised voiding despair, bitterness or hostility and once said "When you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, say something! Do something! Get in trouble, good trouble, necessary trouble."