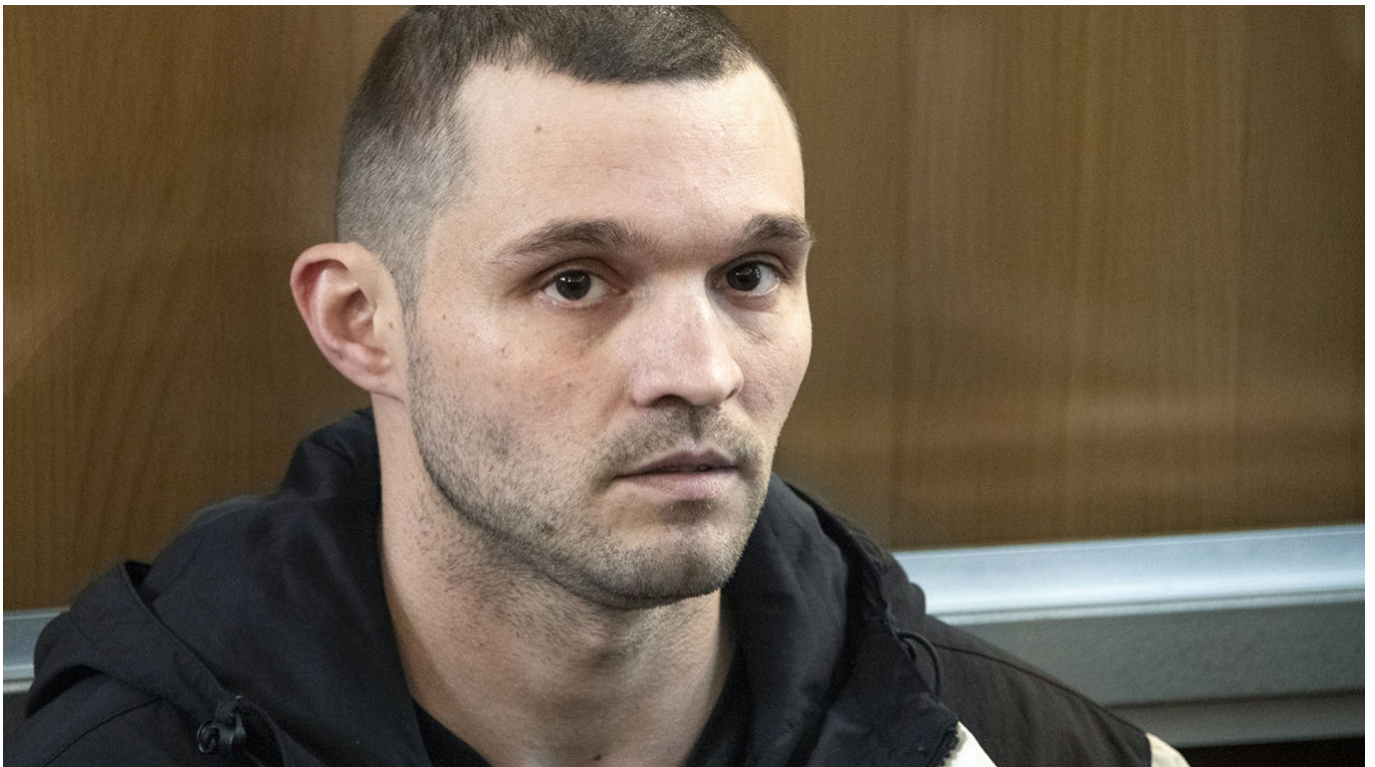


U.S. Man Jailed in Russia Interviewed on State TV

By [AFP](#)

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Gordon Black. **AP / TASS**

A U.S. soldier serving a prison sentence in Russia's Far East appeared on state television Tuesday, saying he hoped to be exchanged at some point in the future.

Gordon Black spoke to state broadcaster Rossiya from prison, looking pale and wearing the same clothes he had on at the time of his arrest earlier this year. It was not clear whether he was speaking under duress.

“Of course, I want to go home but the decision is up to my government,” Black said in comments dubbed into Russian. He added that U.S. diplomats “did come and visit me in the prison” but “they did not say anything about my possible return to my home country.”

Black was reportedly serving in South Korea when he was arrested in June. A judge in the Far East city of Vladivostok found him guilty of threatening to kill his Russian girlfriend, whom he

was visiting after meeting her online, and stealing 10,000 rubles (\$102) from her.

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Black told Russian TV that he was in touch with U.S. diplomats “over a review of my sentence but I think there isn't much chance of it.”

He said he did not plan to ask for a pardon from Russian President Vladimir Putin, something that would normally be required for a prisoner to be exchanged.

Black was quoted separately by RIA Novosti state news agency as saying that he "wasn't included [in the August exchange], I think because I was not in the system long enough."

In his interviews, Black said he was currently in a cell alone and was shown reading a copy of J.R.R. Tolkien's “The Lord of the Rings.”

Other U.S. citizens in Russian prison include Marc Fogel, a teacher at the Anglo-American School of Moscow, who was convicted of “large-scale” drug smuggling and sentenced to 14 years in prison after reportedly trying to bring in 17 grams of cannabis and cannabis oil into the country.

Ksenia Karelina, a dual U.S.-Russian citizen, was sentenced in August to 12 years in prison for “treason” after allegedly donating a little over \$50 to a pro-Ukraine charity.

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