

Oppose Obama's assault on immigrants!

**Niles Niemuth—SEP candidate for US vice president
14 May 2016**

As the Socialist Equality Party's candidate for vice president of the United States, I call on workers and students in the US and internationally to support our election campaign and build a socialist movement to fight back against the unrelenting attack on immigrants.

A Reuters news report revealed this week that the Obama administration is preparing to launch a month-long series of raids aimed at arresting Central American immigrants in the United States. Multiple Obama administration officials told Reuters that the raids would specifically target mothers and their children, as well as orphans and other children traveling alone.

These raids will likely surpass in scope those already carried out by the Obama administration in January, when ICE officials targeted women and children in Georgia, Texas and North Carolina, arresting and detaining 121 people.

The SEP denounces these raids and calls for an immediate halt to all repressive measures carried out by the police and immigration authorities. We unequivocally defend the rights of immigrants and refugees to live and work wherever they want, free from harassment by the state and super-exploitation by employers.

Obama is completely indifferent to the harsh reality those he deports will face once forcibly returned to the countries they fled. The vast majority of those who will be arrested in the coming raids are the most vulnerable and impoverished of all migrants traveling to the United States. Most of them are seeking refuge from warlike conditions in the Central American countries of Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala—three countries ravished by over a century of US imperialist exploitation. Violence in these countries has skyrocketed in the last year in the wake of the global commodity price crash.

Most of those who are detained by ICE will soon be

deported, and many—especially young men—will likely be murdered by the drug cartels in Central America who target those returning from the US in the belief they are more likely to have money. According to research carried out by San Diego State social scientist Elizabeth Kennedy, at least 45 El Salvadorans, three Guatemalans, and 35 Hondurans were killed after being deported in 2014 and 2015.

So-called “immigration reforms” proposed by both the Democrats and the Republicans would involve an ever-greater militarization of the southern border, forcing those desperately seeking to cross the border to safety into hazardous desert areas where scores of people die each year.

In the context of the 2016 elections, the anti-immigrant operations being carried out under the watch of President Barack Obama expose the fact that all factions of the political establishment are committed to the attack on immigrant workers.

Obama, the Democrats' candidate of “hope and change” in 2008, has overseen the deportation of 2.5 million people since coming to power in 2009—23 percent more than under the Republican president George W. Bush and more than all 20th century presidents combined. Between 2015 and 2016, the total number of orphans and unaccompanied children detained by the federal government increased from 15,616 to 27,754.

While the Democratic Party under Obama has deported a record number of immigrants, the Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump has called for the mass deportations of all undocumented migrants and a ban on Muslim migrants. When Trump promises to “build the wall,” he is only announcing most openly and crudely what the entire political establishment is doing behind closed doors.

The entire political establishment—including Democratic presidential candidates Bernie Sanders and

Hillary Clinton—accepts the “right” of the US ruling class to expel the victims of imperialism, poverty and war. Sanders has blamed immigrants for low wages and job losses, promoting the worst forms of American nationalism.

The ruling class is fanning the flames of xenophobia in an attempt to deflect anger from the wholesale assault on the working class. The big-business politicians and the media scapegoat immigrants, blaming them for mass unemployment, declining living standards and attacks on social conditions that are a product of the policies of the ruling class itself and its political servants.

In contrast to the two big-business parties, the SEP upholds the right of workers everywhere to live wherever they please with full citizenship rights and the right to return to their home country. We fight for the repeal of all anti-immigrant laws and the disbanding of ICE, DHS and the Border Patrol.

The defense of immigrant workers must be connected to the struggle to unite all workers of North, Central and South American in a common struggle against a common enemy, the capitalist system. The assault on one section of the workers is an assault on all! Workers throughout the Americas are often exploited by the same corporations, which seek to pit us against each other in order to demand ever lowers wages.

The attack on immigrants in the US is paralleled throughout the world. In Europe, desperate refugees fleeing the imperialist wars in the Middle East and North Africa are being herded into horrific camps or turned away at the border. Many thousands have died in the process. This madness must stop!

There is no progressive solution to the problems faced by immigrants, refugees and the working class as a whole within the confines of the nation-state system: the defense of migrants will require a mass movement of the working class worldwide for the creation of a unified world socialist state with unhindered travel and migration for all!



To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact