

# Milwaukee County Sheriffs Department will arrest immigrants on behalf of ICE

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On March 8, Milwaukee County Sheriff David A. Clarke, Jr. sent a letter to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) director Thomas Homan requesting the effective assignment of his officers to enforce ICE immigration and deportation regulations.

Clarke, an ardent supporter of President Donald Trump's immigration and domestic policies attacking working people, oversees the notorious Milwaukee County Jail and Correction Facility, known for a spate of prisoner deaths at the hands of police.

The Immigration and Nationality Act Section 287 (g), enacted September 30, 1996 with bipartisan support and signed into law by Democrat Bill Clinton, authorizes the federal government to enter into agreements with local and state law enforcement entities. This allows police officers and sheriff's deputies to act as ICE agents and to arrest persons if they cannot demonstrate legal citizenship status at the time of a request to "show papers." Sheriff Clarke has requested his deputies receive the legally required 4 weeks of training at a designated school in Charleston, South Carolina.

The ICE website identifies 37 law enforcement agencies in 16 states that thus far have requested the training and authorization to round up illegal aliens for deportation. More departments are considering joining the program in the coming weeks and months.

In effect, police departments are signing up to serve as the Trump administration's modern-day slave catchers, working on behalf of federal agents to tear immigrants away from their families. The impact of the Section 287(g) program will be to terrorize immigrants and their families, discouraging them from leaving their homes, sending their children to school, or going to the hospital in case of medical emergency. Now, even a broken tail light or jaywalking ticket can trigger

Milwaukee sheriffs to ask the Gestapo question, "Papers, please."

On February 23, Clarke spoke at the Conservative Political Action Conference in Maryland and called for local government officials to be jailed for preventing their police from cooperating with ICE agents. Some police departments, especially in cities with large immigrant populations, are well aware that if they begin deporting immigrants they will be prevented from solving crimes in immigrant neighborhoods since residents will no longer speak to them.

Clarke said, "I'm telling you right now folks, you charge one mayor, one governor, one council president that adopts these laws—this stuff is going to end right away."

These fascistic threats to jail those who fail to collaborate with the deportation program expose the deep decay of democratic norms in the United States. Clarke is not a backwoods Keystone cop. He has been elevated as a leading police official nationwide. He was given a prominent speaking role at the 2016 Republican National Convention and was reportedly one of Trump's finalists to lead the Department of Homeland Security, a position currently occupied by General John Kelly.

Milwaukee's Democratic mayor, Tom Barrett, has responded to Clarke's threats by pathetically denying that Milwaukee is a sanctuary city and stating that he opposes Trump's executive order as "one of the weakest on-crime measures that you can imagine a president of the United States doing" because it will encourage the police to use their resources "not to combat violent crimes."

The police force Clarke leads is one of the most depraved and reactionary in the country. Four people died in Clarke's custody in 2016 alone. All four

Milwaukee County Jail deaths from 2016 remain open investigations. Three of the four deaths were preliminarily investigated by Clarke's in-house group.

Attorneys and the family of Terrill Thomas, who died at the age of 38 from dehydration while in solitary confinement at Milwaukee County Jail last April 29, after having had his access to water shut off for 6 days, held a press conference at 1pm Friday at the Iron Horse Hotel in Milwaukee.

Last spring, the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office ruled the death a homicide, but no charges were brought against anyone overseeing his detention. The Milwaukee County District Attorney's office filed notice last month for the convening of an inquest to be held in June this year. Reports show that officers ordered subordinates to ignore Thomas' pleas for water for almost a week.

Kristina A. Fiebrink, age 38, was found unresponsive in her cell at Milwaukee County Jail on August 28th last year. Ms. Fiebrink was a known heroin addict. She had been arrested four days earlier.

In November last year, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* reporters talked with Ms. Fiebrink's cell mate Elisha Johnson, who said that Fiebrink was screaming and hallucinating overnight due to detoxification, "claiming the devil was in her cell and trying to choke her." According to the Sheriff's Office, she was pronounced dead at about 7:30 am. Fiebrink's brother, Leon Limon, has called for an independent investigation into the cause of his sister's death. Limon told the Milwaukee press, "I just don't feel like it (the investigation) is going to be fair. They're not going to say, 'My co-worker let this girl die.'"

Michael Madden died in the Milwaukee County Jail at age 29 on October 28, 2016. Mr. Madden's mother, Gail Stockton, has also insisted on the necessity of an outside investigation of her son's death. Jail mates Robert Ellis and Ulysses Washington told Milwaukee reporters in November that Madden called to the jailers for help, stating that he could not breathe and that "his heart hurt." Mr. Madden had pre-existing and known valvular heart disease. Madden became un-responsive when medical and jail personnel arrived and was wheeled away.

Mrs. Stockton told reporters, "I think something went very wrong in there."

Ms. Shade Swayzer, age 30, was nine months

pregnant last July when her water broke while incarcerated at the county jail. She reportedly told the jailers that she was going into labor at midnight and the officers laughed and ignored her. She alleges that she gave birth at about 4am, and that she first received attention from the jailers at 6am. Her newborn son was pronounced dead later that day. Swayzer has filed a "notice of claim" against the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office in the amount of \$8.5 million for damages.

After the baby's death, the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office reported that Swayzer never asked for help or informed personnel that she was in labor. The private company contracted to perform medical care for inmates said publicly that the baby was stillborn. Ms. Swayzer reports that her child "was born alive, cried profusely and was breastfed."

A mass movement must be built to prevent hundreds of thousands or millions of immigrants from enduring the type of conditions set by Trump and his Gestapo goons like Clarke in prisons, jails and detention centers across America.



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