

Detroit father deported after 19 years in the US

Tyler Van Dyke
25 April 2017

After living in Detroit, Michigan for over 19 years Mario Hernandez-Delacruz, an undocumented immigrant, was deported to Mexico on April 14.

Forced to leave his wife Estrella and three young daughters, Lucero, Matilde and Diana behind, Mario faces possible barring from the United States for anywhere from five to 20 years, with the average barring for deported immigrants being 10 years.

He is currently attempting to get a visa so he can return to his family.

Born in Chiapas, a southern state in Mexico, Hernandez-Delacruz immigrated with his wife and four-year-old daughter to Texas in 1998, later settling in Detroit.

After moving to Detroit, Hernandez-Delacruz started a carpeting business and established himself as a respectable member of the southwest Detroit community, helping to rehab a church which his family attends.

The small business run by Hernandez-Delacruz is his family's main source of income and without it his wife and daughters will be left in the lurch. Due to the lack of decent paying jobs in Detroit, their situation is bleak.

Often used as an excuse for anti-immigrant policies and support, without the financial aid of their father the Hernandez-Delacruz family may very well have to support themselves by getting government assistance.

Under supervision of government agents, Hernandez-Delacruz was dropped off at Detroit Metro Airport on April 14 by his daughter, not knowing if or when he would be able to see his family again.

"It really hasn't hit me yet," his oldest daughter Estrella said to the *Detroit Free Press*. "I feel like he's going to walk through the door again, like he's just away for work and will be back home tonight."

He will be staying with his sister. "My plan is to stay

in Cancun," he told the *Free Press*. "I don't know for how long I'm staying here. This is my family now."

"I'm feeling bad right now," he said. "I feel bad... to leave my family and children. It's not easy."

There are currently 97,000 to 126,000 undocumented immigrants in Michigan with over 11 million nationwide. Poverty rates are around 20 percent for the immigrant community as a whole meaning that families of four subsist on less than \$24,000 a year.

The recent rise in deportations is not simply the outcome of the xenophobic and fascistic policies being pursued by the Trump administration but is an escalation of the harsh immigration policies implemented by the Obama administration.

More immigrants than all other presidents in American history combined were deported under Barack Obama's watch.

Dubbed the "Deporter in Chief" by immigration advocate groups, Obama is responsible for the deportation of over 2.5 million undocumented immigrants between 2009 and 2015. This means that his administration was responsible for the deportation of almost 7,000 people per week. The numbers for 2016, Obama's final year in office, have yet to be released.

Obama, who has spent most of his time since leaving office vacationing with celebrity millionaires and billionaires, has said nothing of the disastrous effect of the Trump administration's policies on families all over the country, because it is he and his administration that laid the groundwork for the current crackdown.

Trump deported 680 undocumented immigrants in his first week in office and the *Washington Post* reported that between January and February after Trump took office there were 21,362 arrests and 54,741 deportations. Immigration arrests made by ICE under

Trump are up by over 33 percent from the same period last year.

The Democratic Party and the media would have the general population believe that these deportations have been exclusive to the Republicans and Trump administration. This is a callous and hypocritical lie that shines light on the strategic differences between sections of the ruling class. Little has been said in support of immigrants from the Democrats including from their supposed “progressive” wings.

Self-proclaimed democratic socialist Bernie Sanders voted against an immigration measure in 2007 that would have given temporary visas to 200,000 foreign workers to stay in the US for two years. The bill, opposed by the AFL-CIO and a large majority of Congress, failed, and rather than allowing the workers to work and live where they choose, many were deported.

Sanders said in a 2007 interview, “If poverty is increasing and if wages are going down, I don’t know why we need millions of people to be coming into this country as guest workers who will work for lower wages than American workers and drive wages down even lower than they are now.”



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