

ICE officials break into home in San Diego to detain immigrant worker in front of his five children

Kevin Martinez and Genevieve Leigh
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A horrific scene unfolded Tuesday afternoon in National City, San Diego as a team of heavily armed Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers used what appeared to be a crowbar to pry open the back door of the Alonzo family's home. They then forcibly detained Alberto Alonzo Hernandez in front of his 5 children.

The scene, captured on camera by one of his daughters, shows ICE officers at a metal screen door working to break it open while the mother holds the lock shut. A child's voice shouts, "we want to see a warrant!" to which one ICE officer chuckles and responds, "You're watching too much movies. We'll show you the warrant when we are done."

When the door is finally broken open the officers storm inside the house with a riot shield and their guns drawn and pointed at the children as they yell, "Let me see your hands! Drop the phone! Turn around and don't move." The children are heard screaming and crying in the background before the hand of an officer comes across the screen and the video goes black.

The WSWs spoke with the Alonzo family later in the day. One of Mr. Alonzo's children, Jocelyn, who is 11, recounted the day: "My dad was going outside to go to work when ICE came. He started running upstairs, and we were waiting with him for three hours. We filmed them until they got a warrant."

"They sent someone to get a warrant, which means they lied when they said they had a warrant in the beginning. They got in without showing anything, and they pointed a gun at the three of us, my grandma and my sister."

"They eventually cut the power and turned off the lights while we were calling our lawyers. They hurt me

by grabbing my hand to get my phone, and they deleted a photo, but I was still able to send a recording online. They have no right to touch me, I'm a kid."

Outside of the house dozens of neighbours and community members gathered around the fence and filmed the scene on their phones. Residents can be heard shouting at the officers in the background throughout the twenty minute video, "What if this was your family?" "There's nothing different from you and us. Just Mexican blood," and "You guys ruined a family today." Some school children who had left school when they heard about the raid, shouted to an officer, "I bet your children are at school, learning," and later, "We aren't scared of you."

Brianna Alonzo, the wife of Alberto Alonzo Hernandez, also spoke to the WSWs. "I told my daughter to record even though she didn't want to," she said. "When they got in they took the phone, they pointed their guns, and I was in total shock, I don't even remember when they took my husband."

As the unmarked ICE vehicles pulled away from the house, the residents decided to stop one from leaving by blocking the exit with their bodies. With the car surrounded they demanded that the ICE officers restore power to the house, which the officers had apparently turned off during the raid. The action required nothing more than flipping a few switches in an outdoor fuse box, but the crowd defiantly stood their ground, making clear they would not leave until the officer returned the power himself. After about ten minutes of protest, one officer got out of his car to carry out the task. The residents sarcastically shout, "Officer of the year!"

Jocelyn told the WSWs, "This happened from 6:30 to 10:30 in the morning. They tried to enter the second

floor with a ladder. There were at least 10 police in the front yard, and four in the alley. There were 11 people in my house, and my grandma is disabled and had to go to the bathroom in a bucket to not be seen by the police.”

“Once they left with my dad, we tried to turn the lights on but couldn’t. More than 20 people from the community were outside demanding the cops turn the power back on. I asked them to turn the lights back on and opened one of their car doors and they got really mad. The cop cars didn’t even have license plates on them, and they didn’t even say ICE on them.”

The WSWs asked Jocelyn what she wanted people to know about her father. She responded, “My dad’s a painter. Even though he was an immigrant he worked hard to put food on our table. In this neighbourhood there were seven killings recently and the cops haven’t arrested anyone for that, but they sent ICE to get my dad and made us wait three hours to get a warrant.”

Jocelyn mentioned the role of the community in defending her family. “My neighbors were very supportive, people from 7-11 and Metro PCS stores across the street came over to record on their phones,” she said.

Brianna—Alberto’s wife—said, “I was ready to go take my kids this morning at 7:15, but they were here and I couldn’t leave my kids. I asked my husband, ‘Why are they turning off the power?’ and he said, ‘They want it to be hot, so we open the windows.’ They didn’t care that I had kids in the house. There were two people killed across the street over the weekend, so I don’t open my door to just anyone, and they tell me, ‘You watch too many movies.’”

“A lot of people are here without papers, and they were scared after what happened and didn’t go to work. I’m the kind of person who wouldn’t say anything when this kind of thing happens, but I thought, ‘Why not record? I’m tired of living like this!’”

Brianna was asked what she wanted people to know about her husband. “He was a great man, a great husband,” she said. “He was the person who waited for all of us to eat first, and he would eat leftovers. He’s not a criminal, he’s not a bad person, his only problem is that he’s Mexican.”

“I want to tell people don’t open the door to ICE, be careful, record everything. I didn’t expect this to happen to me. He worked two shifts a day. He was just

here to work and raise a family. If I had the money, we wouldn’t be here in this situation.”

“Imagine if I moved my hand or did something when they came in, they would’ve shot me, an innocent civilian, and they would’ve said, ‘We had to shoot her.’”

“I have five kids I have to raise now by myself.”

The attack on Mr. Alonzo is just the latest expression of the cruelty and havoc carried out by ICE on a daily basis against immigrant families all over the country; all done at the behest of the Trump administration and with the silent complicity of the Democratic Party.

Over the last two weeks, under direct orders from President Donald Trump, US immigration officials have delayed acceptance of the asylum applications of nearly 200 refugees escaping violence, war and poverty in Central America, forcing them to set up encampments on the San Diego-Tijuana border.

Last week, the Trump administration announced that it will end temporary protected status (TPS) for 86,000 Hondurans who have lived in the United States for nearly 20 years. And on Monday, the Trump administration unveiled an unprecedented escalation of its persecution of immigrant families, mandating that family groups caught crossing the U.S. border without authorization be immediately broken up.

The brutal assault on immigrants must be understood as an attack on the entire working class. These tools of repression, the methods of apprehension and detainment, will soon be turned against all those who oppose the policies of the ruling class. The response of the community in National City is a testament to the courage and fight that exists in the working class. However, this energy must be organized as a political movement directed against the capitalist system which creates and maintains arbitrary borders between countries in the interest of the ruling elites.



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