

Video shows Border Patrol vehicle fleeing after striking Native American man

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A US Border Patrol officer used his SUV to strike Paulo Remes, a 34-year-old Native American man, in front of his grandparents' home Thursday, and then quickly drove away. Video footage taken by Remes capturing the hit and run has been shared and viewed over one million times on social media, causing outrage.

In the video, Remes is seen walking toward his grandparents' home as the vehicle barrels towards him, striking him as he rolls onto the hood and hits the ground. Remes can be heard reading out the license plate number as the vehicle drives away.

Remes' mother, Juanita Remes, condemned Border Patrol for taking "human life for granted," in a statement issued Friday by the political activist organization Indivisible Tohono.

Remes is a member of the Tohono O'odham Nation, whose 62-mile reservation straddles the US-Mexico border in southern Arizona near Tucson and the Mexican state of Sonora. The tribe, which consists of about 34,000 registered members with approximately 2,000 living in Mexico, has aggressively protested Trump's proposed border wall which would divide the tribe and its lands.

Many tribal members view the hit and run as part of a long history of agents acting with total impunity on their lands, recalling the 2003 killing of a Tohono O'odham teenager, Bennett Patricio, when he was struck by the vehicle of Border Patrol agent, Cody Rouse. A federal judge cleared Rouse in 2006 of any wrongdoing in the accident.

Border Patrol claim their increasing presence on the reservation is necessary and claim the tribal lands are an important transit point for both immigrants and drug traffickers. Border Patrol even employ some tribe members to assist with tracking migrants. A team of

fifteen people, known as the "Shadow Wolves," comprise an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) tactical patrol unit.

The Tohono O'odham are seen as a stone in the shoe of Washington as its members have historically moved freely across the current international boundary for religious ceremonies, medical appointments, or visits with relatives. When the border was drawn across their lands in 1853, the Tohono O'odham were not offered the possibility of dual citizenship.

This latest incident only further points to the fascistic character of US immigration agents, who just yesterday caused the deaths of five undocumented immigrants when they pursued an SUV carrying 14 people at deadly speeds of over 100 miles per hour, causing it to crash and eject 12 people from the vehicle near Big Wells, Texas.

County Sheriff Marion Boyd defended the chase, saying it was "good police work" that started the chase. The impunity with which ICE operates is part of a deliberate and systematic strategy to terrorize those seeking a better life in the United States.

Early this year, No More Deaths (NMD), a humanitarian aid group which operates along the border, revealed that at least 3,586 gallon jugs of water had been deliberately destroyed by Border Patrol agents in at least 415 separate instances. Nine members of NMD are facing federal prosecution for providing water and medical help to keep immigrants alive in the desert. One of the defendants, Scott Warren, a faculty associate professor at Arizona State University in the School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning, recently had an early June trial date rescheduled for September.

By prosecuting NMD the Trump administration is seeking to send the message that the lives of migrants

crossing the US-Mexico border are cheap and any citizen who seeks to help them will be vindictively punished.

Last month Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen Nielsen told Congress reassuringly that “word is getting out” about the administration’s punitive “zero tolerance” policy to criminally prosecute all who cross the border without proper documentation and tear away their children. No doubt horror stories such as Sunday’s deadly crash are also viewed by the political establishment as an opportunity to instill fear and deter future immigrants.

In direct conflict and opposition to these policies is the working class, which overwhelmingly supports immigrants, their right to citizenship, and an end to deportations. A recent Gallup poll revealed that 85 percent of Americans supported granting citizenship status to all undocumented immigrants living in the US.

Only the working class can put an end to the criminal policies of the Trump administration. Workers must organize in defense of democratic rights, which includes the rights of immigrants, the majority of whom are fleeing the consequences of US-backed coups and dictatorships or military interventions in Central America.



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