

ICE tears apart immigrant families in Wisconsin

Jacob Crosse
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Ricardo Fierro, a resident of Racine, Wisconsin for over 20 years, was kidnapped outside his home and imprisoned on July 24 by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers. Fierro, 39, a father of 7 and local political activist, has drawn support from his family and the community, outraged at his detention. A prayer vigil was held at Monument Square in Racine on Wednesday where approximately 100 people demanded his freedom from the Dodge County Detention Facility.

Fierro's attorney, Kevin Layde, told reporters at a news conference on Tuesday that Ricardo had entered the United States when he was 16 with his parents. Ricardo was detained and deported when he was 20 years old after attempting to reenter the country from Mexico. Ricardo had returned to Mexico seeking medicine the family couldn't afford for his sick brother.

Fierro is a member of the Racine Interfaith Coalition (RIC), where he chaired the Immigration Task Force, according to RIC President Linda Boyle. RIC coordinates closely with churches advocating for immigration reform.

Fierro has drawn vocal support from local Democrats including State Representative Greta Neubauer, and Racine Mayor Cory Mason. Neubauer inherited her seat in a January 2018 special election after interning for then-Representative Mason.

Neubauer met Fierro through RIC and the Immigration Task Force. She issued a public letter stating it was a "travesty to separate Ricardo from his family," adding, "This does not feel like the values we believe in."

But Neubauer is a member of the party that has expanded the powers of the American Gestapo deportation force since the agency's inception in March 2003. The Democratic Party continues to

support closed borders and is responsible for passing the statutes leading to the detention of immigrant families.

Neubauer's Twitter timeline proudly retweets Randy Bryce, the frontrunner in the Democratic primary to replace Republican Speaker of the House Paul Ryan in Wisconsin's 1st Congressional district. Bryce touts his commitment to "Abolish ICE" but merely proposes replacing it with a new agency to crack down on immigrants. He calls for congress to "explore which existing agency could best house immigration and customs enforcement."

This is an effort by the Democratic Party to brand itself as "left" while continuing the very policies that have led to the deportation of millions of people in recent years.

Sixty-six miles west of Racine, in Janesville, the same day Ricardo was kidnapped, María Portugal held a press conference with immigration rights group, Voces de la Frontera. During the press conference she detailed the intimidating threats ICE has been issuing her, including threatening to separate her from her five children if she did not aid ICE in their efforts to deport her ex-husband.

María, a survivor of domestic violence, has been estranged from her ex-husband for over a year. María has applied for U Visa, which is intended to protect victims of crime from deportation as long as they cooperate with law enforcement.

In a prepared statement, Portugal, stated, "Nobody knows where my ex-husband is. I'm worried if they deport me, they'll take my daughter away from me, and that's what I'm afraid of." Portugal's fears are well founded.

The mass kidnapping of children from their parents meets the definition of a war crime, as reports of sexual

and physical assault against the detained children continue to mount and hundreds of children remain separated from their families as a result of the Trump administration's "zero-tolerance" policy.

In Waukesha County, four children have been without their father, Franco D. Ferreyra, 29, since he was arrested on June 11 by ICE, pending deportation. An immigrant from Argentina, Ferreyra was brought to the United States by his parents in 2001. He graduated from South Waukesha High School in 2006 and worked as waiter in Waukesha.

Ferreyra's lawyer, Matthew Luening, stated neither he nor his client were given any indication of the impending arrest and that Ferreyra was not given an opportunity to say goodbye to his children.

Waukesha County is currently the only county in Wisconsin that participates in the 287(g) program.

"The 287(g) program, one of ICE's top partnership initiatives, allows a state or local law enforcement entity to enter into a partnership with ICE, under a joint Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), in order to receive delegated authority for immigration enforcement within their jurisdictions."

However, Dane County Sheriff Dave Mahoney recently informed local reporters that ICE had contacted his department in the hopes of expanding the program in the Madison area. While Sheriff Mahoney stated that his department won't be participating, this temporary setback won't stop the continued assault on immigrant communities throughout the state.

As Democrats continue to feign shock and outrage at the deportation machine they helped create, the Socialist Equality Party demands the abolition of ICE, Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) and open borders for all. Workers have a right to live and work in the country of their choosing, without fear of deportation or separation.



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