

Trump administration ordered jails to hold thousands of US citizens for deportation

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According to a recent report by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has issued a staggering number of immigration detainers against US citizens.

Every month ICE issues thousands of detainers, legal requests that law enforcement extend a person's jail time to provide federal agents time to arrive at the jail and take that person into its custody to be deported.

The ACLU revelations are based on data provided in a lawsuit filed by Garland Creedle, an 18-year-old US citizen who was wrongly detained for deportation after spending a night in a Miami-Dade jail in March 2017. Creedle has filed a lawsuit claiming his constitutional rights have been violated.

The ACLU found that in Miami-Dade County alone, records indicated that during a two-year period from February 2017 to February 2019, ICE issued 420 detainer requests to jails for US citizens. Immigration would later cancel only 83 of the erroneous requests.

The remaining 337 individuals continued to be held in jail for ICE to deport them. The report noted that "U.S. citizens have been kept in jail away from their jobs and families, and they have faced the terror of being told they would soon be deported from their only home. Many have spent time in immigration jail, and some have even been deported."

The ACLU report noted that, "Miami's numbers are not unique. In Rhode Island, over a ten-year period, ICE issued 462 detainers for people listed as U.S. citizens. And in Travis County, Texas, over a similar period, ICE targeted up to 814 U.S. citizens with detainers. Numerous other studies have documented similar patterns. These studies are evidence that, nationwide, ICE has issued detainers against thousands of U.S. citizens over the last decade and a half."

According to a Syracuse University study, ICE's data

revealed that it issued detainers against 834 US citizens between 2008 and 2012. National Public Radio reported that, "hundreds of American citizens each year" are detained by ICE—well over a thousand between 2007 and 2015.

The numbers revealed by the ACLU pertain only to a two-year period in Miami-Dade County. It is safe to say that similar figures can be reported throughout the country. A highly conservative estimate, assuming that only 400 citizens were issued detainers in each state alone during this two-year period, would put the number at 20,000.

Despite routine complaints by ICE officials that its agents face continual "uncooperative" local law enforcement, the report reveals among other things the deep integration between the agencies.

Since January 2017, Miami-Dade received about 2,500 detainer requests by immigration authorities. Over half, 1,479 individuals, were turned over to ICE by local police.

Two undocumented immigrants have filed a lawsuit against Miami-Dade County for handing them over to ICE after police pulled them over for driving without a valid license.

The revelations in Miami-Dade makes clear that the Trump administration's war on immigrants throughout the country and along the borders is an assault on the entire working class.

The attack on immigrants is at the very forefront of a wider attack on democratic rights of the entire working class. The undocumented have no legal right to due process, they can be indefinitely detained, torn from their children and families, treated like cattle to rake in profits and fill the beds of immigration prisons, only to face deportation, destitution, or death.

US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) arrested

over 66,450 individuals in the month of February alone, the highest monthly total in years.

Video and images released this past week reveal that immigrants are being detained behind fences and barbed wire underneath an overpass in El Paso, Texas. Additionally, the Trump administration announced two weeks ago its plans to hold 5,000 children at Goodfellow Air Force Base outside of San Angelo, Texas.

Almost daily, new revelations shed light on the fact that aid groups, political activists, international journalists, and legal defenders are being illegally harassed by Border Patrol and even charged with criminal activities such as the nine volunteers with No More Deaths, the Arizona humanitarian organization which leaves life-saving aid in the Sonoran Desert to prevent deaths, one of whom faces two felony charges of harboring and conspiracy.

The targeting of over 11 million undocumented immigrants is terrorizing millions more. Following the mass April 2018 raid in Tennessee, which resulted in the abduction of over 100 workers by ICE, NBC reported that over 600 children from the district missed school the next day.

When the most vulnerable section of the working class is attacked and stripped of their rights, the groundwork has been laid to take away the rights of all. The ACLU findings only further reiterate that the attacks have never been contained only to undocumented populations.



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