

ICE Gestapo ambushes and imprisons Mississippi father at immigration hearing

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Under the second Trump administration, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is systematically transforming courthouses, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) offices, and other routine government sites into hunting grounds, deliberately shredding due process to terrorize and disenfranchise the immigrant population.

The recent ambush and arrest of Kasper Eriksen, a 42-year-old Danish-born welding foreman and long-term Mississippi resident, marks a chilling new stage in this escalating war on immigrant workers by the capitalist state. On April 15, 2025, Eriksen drove three hours with his wife to the USCIS field office in Memphis, Tennessee, for what he believed was his final interview in the naturalization process. Having received positive updates on his application, he anticipated taking the oath of allegiance.

Upon arriving at this appointment Eriksen was eventually met by several ICE agents and U.S. Marshal alongside a USCIS case manager. Despite never committing, or even being accused of a crime, Eriksen was arrested, shackled, and transported hundreds of miles to the notorious LaSalle Detention Center in Jena, Louisiana, a private prison run by the GEO Group, infamous for its inhumane conditions.

Eriksen has no criminal record and has diligently pursued legal status, contributing to his community and his family. He is married to a U.S. citizen, Savannah, and is the father of four children with her, with a fifth due in August.

The pretext for this state-sanctioned kidnapping was an alleged missed deadline for a Form I-751, dating back to 2015. Eriksen and his wife state unequivocally that they were never warned about this missing form or any issue stemming from it, despite numerous subsequent interactions with immigration officials over the years. The period in 2015 when this alleged oversight occurred was one of immense personal tragedy for the Eriksens, who were grieving the stillbirth of their first child. Under USCIS's own regulations, Form I-751 can be filed late with a reasonable explanation, and provisions for waivers exist.

For USCIS to have processed Eriksen's N-400 naturalization application to the point of scheduling a final

interview, they would have possessed his entire file and had multiple opportunities to address any alleged discrepancy. USCIS is required to issue a Request for Evidence if there is anything missing from a record which may affect the granting of an application.

This process cannot have been followed in Eriksen's case because a failure to respond or provide the requested information will result in a denial without an interview. The fact that this went fully to the interview stage raises the question: Did the government deliberately put Eriksen in a position to be arrested and detained?

Eriksen's arrest required inter-departmental coordination between several agencies. While both ICE and USCIS fall under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the involvement of U.S. Marshals and immigration courts, which are under the Department of Justice (DOJ), indicates a high level of pre-planning and collaboration.

The failure to notify Eriksen over a span of ten years about the missing form, only to ambush him at the final stage of his citizenship application in a coordinated interdepartmental operation suggests a deliberate, malicious setup. One cannot discount the possibility, in an environment of escalating geopolitical tensions, including threats by the Trump administration to annex Greenland, that Eriksen's Danish nationality played a role in this targeted action.

Eriksen will remain in detention until at least May 27, the date of his first preliminary hearing.

New policy directives created the conditions for the ambush of Eriksen and countless others. On January 20, 2025, DHS issued a new directive allowing agents to kidnap and arrest people in or near so-called "sensitive areas" including courthouses, schools and churches.

The draconian directive lowers evidentiary thresholds for arrest, permitting them based on mere "credible information" of removability, and broadens the categories of targeted individuals. It explicitly sanctions "collateral" arrests, encouraging agents conducting operations to arrest any other undocumented individuals encountered.

The Eriksen case is representative of a nationwide pattern

of ICE terrorizing courthouses and other previously respected civic spaces. In Ypsilanti, Michigan, on April 2 and again on May 1, 2025, an ICE task force, working with the FBI, detained two individuals near the local courthouse.

In Boston, Massachusetts, Wilson Martell-Lebron was detained by an ICE agent inside a courthouse mid-trial, leading to the presiding judge holding the agent in contempt for obstruction of justice. In Charlottesville, Virginia, Teodoro Dominguez-Rodriguez was arrested by ICE agents in a courthouse parking lot immediately after local charges against him were dismissed, demonstrating ICE's contempt for state judicial outcomes.

The expanded use of expedited removal, subjects immigrants to heartbreakingly oppressive treatment. ICE has recently coordinated with DHS attorneys in Seattle, Miami, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, New York City and Phoenix to swiftly drop certain pending deportation cases if an individual can be subjected to this expedited process. Under the January 2025 guidelines, these individuals are then immediately arrested and placed into the expedited system, bypassing judicial oversight. Scenes of masked plainclothes agents stalking the halls of immigration courts, pouncing on defendants as they exit courtrooms moments after hearing "You're free to go," have become common.

Judges who oppose ICE agents stalking their courtrooms have also been targeted. In April 2025 State Judge Hannah Dugan in Milwaukee, Wisconsin was arrested and is facing prosecution for allegedly obstructing ICE agents attempting to make an arrest in her courtroom, a direct attack on the independence of the judiciary.

This campaign of terror has a predictable and devastating effect. Immigrants, fearing ambush and deportation, are increasingly terrified to access courts for any reason. The Sixth Amendment right to a fair trial and effective assistance of counsel, and the Fourteenth Amendment rights to due process and equal protection under the law, are rendered meaningless when individuals fear arrest merely for appearing in court or at a government office.

The current wave of oppression is the culmination of decades of bipartisan complicity in the assault on the democratic rights of the entire working class, including immigrants. In 1996 Democratic President Bill Clinton signed the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) which dramatically expanded grounds for detention and deportation and curtailed judicial review. Barack Obama, despite rhetoric to the contrary, earned the moniker "Deporter-in-Chief" for overseeing record numbers of deportations.

The Biden administration, while posturing as more humane, continued mass deportations, expanded immigrant detention capacity, and issued superficial directives on

enforcement priorities that were easily overturned. Biden's "Circumvention of Lawful Pathways" rule effectively continued Trump's "Remain in Mexico" policy by another name, stranding tens of thousands in perilous conditions. His June 2024 "Securing the Border" executive rule was a craven act of anti-immigrant pandering.

Prior to Trump's inauguration, Democrats in the House and Senate provided the necessary votes to fast-track the anti-immigrant Laken Riley Act which further empowers the immigration Gestapo while requiring mandatory detainment for alleged petty crimes. Both parties have overseen the massive expansion of ICE detention capacity, funneling billions to private prison corporations that profit from human misery.

The Democratic Party has responded to the recent assaults on fundamental democratic rights with a characteristic blend of hollow rhetoric, ineffectual legislative gestures, and outright collaboration. This will do nothing to halt the functioning of the deportation machine or alleviate the suffering of the thousands incarcerated within it.

ICE's ambush tactics are a calculated escalation in the capitalist state's war on immigrants, a war ultimately aimed at the entire working class. By terrorizing super-exploited immigrants, the ruling elite seeks to intimidate all workers, suppress wage demands, break strikes, and preempt any unified challenge to its rule. The fight against ICE terror is not only a question of immigrant rights; it is an inseparable component of the class struggle against the capitalist system, which is the root cause of war, poverty, inequality, and the brutalization of workers and oppressed people everywhere.



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