

# Heavily militarized ICE Gestapo raid popular Southern California street market

Jacob Crosse  
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This past Saturday, as millions across the United States protested against the fascistic Trump regime and its mass deportation program—including over 25,000 in downtown Los Angeles—roughly 20 miles away, heavily militarized Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raided the Santa Fe Springs Swap Meet.

The Santa Fe Springs Swap Meet is a popular open-air market located in the predominantly Latino, working class and immigrant community of Santa Fe Springs. In addition to hosting vendors, the venue typically features live music concerts on the weekends. The raid took place Saturday afternoon as families were shopping, eating and preparing to enjoy the concert scheduled for later that evening.

Instead of enjoying their weekend, families and young children looked on in horror as dozens of heavily armed ICE and FBI agents marched through the market, as captured in videos posted on social media. The government agents were accompanied by a black helicopter that hovered menacingly over the market during the raid.

A Department of Homeland Security spokesperson told KTLA5 that only two people were detained in the raid. However, local reports and eyewitnesses confirm that at least four individuals were taken into custody, with some accounts claiming as many as 50 were detained.

Vendors and customers reported being harassed and interrogated by federal agents. A witness to the raid told ABC7 that agents were questioning people about where they were from and demanding to see their identification. “I told them I was from the United States, and then they proceeded to walk away, and they took a picture of me with a specialized cellphone camera,” he said. The man added, “I took it as a

personal threat. I have an uncle who served in World War II.”

One witness told the *Los Angeles Times* that the Gestapo appeared to be going after people who “looked Hispanic in any way.”

Aracely Lopez, who has been coming to the Swap Meet for years with her family, told KTLA4, “They were dragging people out of the bathrooms. They went into all the spaces asking for everyone’s identification.”

In a separate interview with ABC7, Lopez added that it was a “very chaotic scene, so many years of working here, we would have never imagined ICE would show up here.”

She said she first noticed ICE vehicles parked nearby at around 9:00 a.m., about six hours before the raid began.

In a statement released on social media after the raid, Santa Fe Springs Swap Meet confirmed that “Federal Immigration Authorities were present at the Santa Fe Springs Swap Meet last night and detained an unknown number of persons.”

The statement went on to claim: “We were given no notice of their arrival and at no point did our team consent to their enforcement on site. To be clear, the Santa Fe Springs Swap Meet, and its personnel did not coordinate with ICE or participate in any preplanning of immigration enforcement with federal officials. These actions were completely out of our control.”

However, this is contradicted by witness statements and several videos taken at the scene. Lopez’s boyfriend, Leo Carranza, also witnessed ICE vehicles outside the market at approximately 9:00 a.m. Together, the couple attempted to warn fellow vendors and customers.

Carranza told ABC7, “I go in there running, I let all

the vendors know, ‘Hey, ICE is here, ICE is here.’ I made two families leave on the spot.” Carranza added that after that, “Basically, the manager stopped me at one of the vendors I was at and tried to silence me, she said I wasn’t able to go around telling people that ICE was outside.”

The couple left shortly after, and roughly six hours later, the raids took place. Several videos posted on TikTok appear to confirm that management was cooperating with the police. The general manager of the swap meet, Chris Woodson, is identified in social media profiles as a Trump supporter. Videos taken during the raid show him walking alongside the Gestapo as vendors and customers confront him for allowing government agents into the venue.

Santa Fe Springs, along with Downey, Norwalk, Bellflower, South Gate, Paramount, Lynwood, Bell, Commerce, Cerritos, and other cities between Los Angeles and Orange County, are commonly referred to as the “Gateway Cities.” They have historically served as a “gateway” between the two counties, both geographically and economically.

Roughly 2 million people live in the Gateway Cities, with hundreds of thousands of workers laboring in the logistics industry, anchored by the Port of Long Beach. In the city of Cerritos, UPS is one of the top employers with around 3,000 workers.

The targeting of the Santa Fe Springs Swap Meet underscores the thoroughly anti-working class character of the Trump administration. Trump and the masked army of thugs he commands are not going after “criminals” but workers and their families struggling to survive, including US citizens.

Two days before the raid on the Santa Fe Springs Swap Meet, on Thursday, June 12, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents racially profiled US citizens Jason Brian Gavidia and Javier Ramirez while they were working at a car body shop managed by Gavidia. In video captured by witnesses, Gavidia is heard telling CBP agents that he is an American citizen as they twist his arm and shove him against a fence.

The agent, refusing to believe that Gavidia—who was born and raised in East Los Angeles—was a US citizen, repeatedly demanded to know “what hospital” he was born at.

While Gavidia was eventually released, Ramirez—his

co-worker and fellow US citizen—was forced to the ground and taken away in a CBP van to a federal detention facility. Tomas De Jesus, Ramirez’s lawyer, told the *Times* that officials at the detention center refused to allow him to speak with his client.

“There’s constitutional violations being done left and right,” De Jesus told the newspaper. “They did not show any warrant. They did not provide any reason as to why they were there. It seemed to me that they were just like, ‘Hey, you look brown, you look Mexican enough that maybe you’re undocumented.’”



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