

ICE agents brutalize protesters, retaliate against Broadview, Illinois

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Earlier this month, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) under the direction of the Trump administration launched an incursion into the Chicago area it called Operation Midway Blitz, concentrating on the southwest side of the city near Midway airport. The many working class neighborhoods there are home to large, mainly Spanish-speaking immigrant populations. According to ICE, at least 500 have been detained.

The arrival of ICE was met with protest and anger that is growing, at both the Trump administration's violations of the most basic democratic and social rights and the inaction of the Democratic Party.

Protests at the suburban Broadview, Illinois ICE facility outside of Chicago are now in their third week. There immigrants are being detained as part of the Trump administration's illegal kidnappings and deportations.

On Thursday, Daniel Shouse was hospitalized after being hit by a truck driven by ICE agents at 25-30 miles per hour. Shouse told WGN about the near-fatal assault:

He had hopped up over the curb, ran right into me and that's where you see I was thrown right on the side of the road. And he took off back there, which leads back to the ICE facility. How is this allowed, and is there nothing we can do about it? There's no accountability. The officers came up to me at the hospital and asked if I'd be able to point the person out in a lineup. How can I do that when they all wear masks?

I just want to show them that you can't silence us. It doesn't matter what you do to us. It doesn't matter how many times you shoot at us, or what pain you want to put on to us, we'll

be here and we're going to keep fighting for accountability.

Broadview police said ICE denied any knowledge of an agent hitting a protester with a vehicle and reported that their officers had to leave the scene after ICE agents began firing more pepper balls.

On September 19, a number of Democratic Party officials, including Evanston Mayor Daniel Biss, were among the demonstrators when ICE assaulted several people, including religious leaders, and tear-gassed the demonstration.

Last Friday saw a marked escalation, as federal agents assaulted protesters with flash-bang grenades, chemical baton rounds, pepper balls and an extraordinary volume of tear gas. Customs and Border Patrol agents emerged from behind the fence to tackle protesters, making numerous arrests, including two journalists.

The mayor of Broadview, Katrina Thompson, sent a letter to the field office director for the Department of Homeland Security, Patrick Holt, writing:

In effect, you are making war on my community. And it has to stop.

The relentless deployment of tear gas, pepper spray, mace, and rubber bullets in the vicinity of the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement processing center in the Village of Broadview is endangering nearby village residents and harming Broadview police officers, Broadview firefighters, and American citizens exercising their 1st Amendment constitutional rights.

The demonstration grew on Saturday after Broadview village officials said in a statement that ICE agents threatened officials in Broadview with retaliation by launching enforcement throughout the west suburb on Saturday and creating, in the agency's words, "a shit show."

Throughout the week, U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commander of Operations At Large Gregory Bovino, with the backing of Trump Attorney General Pam Bondi, has made himself a conspicuous presence in Broadview and in downtown Chicago. On the weekend, Border Patrol boats conspicuously motored through a downtown stretch of the Chicago River, prompting jeers from pedestrians and protesters. On Sunday, crowds shouted, "ICE go home!" at the boats from the popular river walk area.

In a further escalation, a number of masked and heavily armed ICE agents led by Bovino marched north across the Michigan Avenue bridge on Sunday afternoon, mixing shoulder to shoulder with residents on the walkway in an intensely provocative move. An ICE-produced video of this action was picked up and broadcast without comment or criticism by news station WGN.

In carrying out its coup, the Trump administration daily counts on the cowardice and complicity of the Democratic Party. It has made no call for mass protests, nor has it issued a warning to the military that it is legally bound to refuse unconstitutional orders.

In response to ICE's march through downtown Chicago, Illinois Governor JB Pritzker merely tweeted:

The Trump administration's DHS [Department of Homeland Security] officers appear to be carrying large weapons around downtown Chicago in camouflage and masks. This is not making anybody safer — it's a show of intimidation, instilling fear in our communities and hurting our businesses. We cannot normalize militarizing American cities and suburbs. Make sure you know your rights and stay alert.

No illusions can remain in the Democratic Party or in protest politics when it comes to defending against

fascistic attacks on the working class. Warning of the unfolding conspiracy to overthrow the Constitution, the Socialist Equality Party wrote one week ago, calling for "The building of a new form of organization that can unify the working class and mobilize its vast industrial and economic power against the Trump regime."

The SEP stated:

This new form of organization proposed by the Socialist Equality Party consists of rank-and-file committees. They must be established in every factory, workplace, school and neighborhood to organize resistance to Trump's dictatorship. These committees must become centers of resistance, uniting all sections of the working class (in industry, logistics, transport, restaurants and fast food, social services, legal defense, education, arts and culture, entertainment, medicine, health care, sciences, computer technology, programming and other highly specialized professions) and student youth against Trump's fascist government, the complicity of the Democrats, and the broader assault on democratic rights and living standards.



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