

Stop Trump's mass immigrant roundups!

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The year 2025 has seen an assault on immigrants without precedent in American history. With the complicity of the Democratic Party and the trade union bureaucracy, the Trump administration has launched a nationwide dragnet for mass detention and deportation. Every day, heavily armed and often masked federal agents fan out into neighborhoods, workplaces, schools and homes.

On Sunday, the *Washington Post* reported that ICE is now carrying out roughly 2,600 “at-large” arrests per week. During Obama’s first term, weekly arrests averaged 640. Under Trump’s first term, they averaged 569. Even under Biden, who oversaw a major escalation, arrests averaged about 1,100 per week. Trump has more than doubled that figure in months and has declared his goal of deporting 1 million people this year.

The claim that the operation targets “criminals” is a lie. ICE has shifted away from jail-based arrests to mass workplace raids at car washes, construction sites and food processing plants. Immigrants are targeted whose only “crime” is seeking work.

Political opposition is also being criminalized. Yaa’kub Vijandre, a longtime Dallas resident and DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) recipient, has been detained for nearly three months and faces deportation to a country he has not lived in since childhood. His “crime” is refusing to become an FBI informant and continuing to speak out against US imperialism and the genocide in Gaza. If this is grounds for detention, it is grounds for the persecution of anyone.

Those seized are routinely denied basic constitutional rights. The recent *CBS 60 Minutes* investigation, which was pulled from airing, documented the illegal rendition of nearly 300 immigrants to El Salvador’s CECOT mega-prison under the Alien Enemies Act. They were held for months without lawyers under conditions amounting to torture. Similar conditions have been documented at detention facilities across Florida, Texas, Arizona, California, New Jersey and Louisiana.

What is being built is a nationwide deportation machine.

ICE acting director Todd Lyons has openly stated that the goal of the Trump administration is to become the “Amazon” of deportations: “Like Prime, but with human beings.”

Overcrowding and neglect have already produced a surge in detainee deaths. At least 30 immigrants have died in ICE custody this year, several under highly suspicious circumstances. Earlier this month over a 4-day span, four immigrants died in ICE for-profit prisons.

The campaign against immigrants is the spearhead of a broader drive toward dictatorship. The January 6 coup was not an aberration. It has continued in policy form under Trump’s second administration. Immigration repression is the testing ground for the dismantling of constitutional rights, including birthright citizenship and due process.

Trump’s deportation campaign serves three interconnected purposes.

First, the campaign against immigrants is aimed at dividing the working class. Immigrant workers are scapegoated for conditions created by the ruling class itself—stagnant wages, unemployment, crumbling infrastructure, and collapsing social services. By directing the anger of native-born workers against immigrants rather than against the corporations and billionaires responsible for decades of deindustrialization and austerity, the political establishment seeks to prevent the development of a unified working class movement. A divided working class cannot fight back.

Second, it serves as a diversion from political crisis and the criminality of the ruling class. New revelations tied to the Epstein network continue to implicate Trump, while the administration slashes social programs, carries out overseas military strikes and attacks workers at home.

Third, immigration repression provides the legal and political framework for expanding police state powers against the entire population. The same justifications used to deploy troops in cities and deport residents without due process will be used against striking workers and political opponents regardless of immigration status.

Perhaps the most significant political fact about this assault is the complicity of the Democratic Party. A *Washington Post* headline from December 8 captured it bluntly: “Democrats, who once lambasted Trump on immigration, have grown quiet.” The Democratic Party leadership, including Senator Chuck Schumer and Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, has refused to call for the abolition of ICE because they agree with Trump’s policies.

Bernie Sanders has gone further, praising Trump’s border policies as “an improvement over Biden” and repeating the MAGA slogan that “If you don’t have any borders, then you don’t have a nation.” Under conditions where long-time residents are being disappeared without due process, the self-styled “democratic socialist” has aligned himself with capitalist reaction.

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who once called to “Abolish ICE,” has remained silent in response to Trump’s National Security Presidential Memorandum-7 branding “anti-capitalism” and “anti-Americanism” as domestic terrorism.

The Democrats paved the way for this assault. Obama pioneered mass deportations and child separation. Biden dismantled asylum. Trump is now expanding these policies into a nationwide system of detention, rendition and repression.

The union bureaucracy is also complicit. UAW President Shawn Fain supports Trump’s tariffs and trade war policies. Teamsters President Sean O’Brien has endorsed mass deportations and has refused to defend Teamsters workers harassed by masked federal agents in Chicago. Economic nationalism is the trade union bureaucracy’s common ground with Trump.

The assault on immigrants is not unique to the United States. Across Europe, governments of every political stripe are erecting walls, militarizing borders and criminalizing refugees fleeing wars created by the same imperialist powers. “Securing the homeland” is the domestic counterpart of preparing for war abroad.

The assault on immigrants is not merely an attack on one section of the population. It is the spearhead of the drive toward a police state directed against the entire working class. The armed masked agents and National Guard on city streets will not stop once the “illegals” are out of country. The same apparatus will be turned against all workers who resist dictatorship, inequality and war.

The defense of immigrants is inseparable from the defense of democratic rights as a whole. Workers and

youth must form rank-and-file defense committees in neighborhoods and workplaces to protect all workers regardless of immigration status.

Workers must uphold the right of all people to live and work in the country of their own choosing. Sanders, parroting Trump, declares, “If you don’t have any borders, then you don’t have a nation.” To this nationalist poison, workers must declare, “The workingmen have no country” and “Workers of the world, unite!”

There is significant opposition developing to the attack on immigrants. In Chicago and other cities, there have been spontaneous efforts by workers to protect immigrants in their neighborhoods when ICE agents appear. High school students have walked out of their schools in protest against the raids.

This growing opposition, however, cannot be subordinated to the Democratic Party or the courts, which have proven themselves time and time again as instruments of the rule of the financial oligarchy. It requires the independent political mobilization of the working class.

The working class must demand an immediate halt to deportations, the release of all detainees, an end to raids and renditions, and full legal rights for all immigrant workers. This requires the building of mass movement in working class against the entire police-border-intelligence apparatus and the nation-state system they defend.

The fight to defend immigrants is a central battle in the class struggle. The same ruling class that is building the deportation machine is destroying jobs, slashing social programs and preparing new wars. The defense of democratic rights can be carried forward only through the independent political mobilization of the working class against the capitalist system itself.



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