

Off-duty ICE agent kills California father celebrating on New Year's Eve

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Keith Porter Jr., 43, and father of two, was shot and killed on New Year's Eve by an as-yet unidentified off-duty Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officer, in Northridge, a suburb of Los Angeles, California. He was the 13th victim of an ICE-involved shooting since the fascist Trump returned to power and began to make good on his promise to carry out the largest deportation operation in US history by deporting up to 20 million people.

According to Porter's mother, Franceola Armstrong, "From day one that he was born, I knew that he was my joy." She said, "When he came around, people looked for him. He was a joy to be around. My son, the biggest heart, sympathetic, appreciative, so much gratitude." She also said that he was hardworking, caring and uplifting to those he was around.

A friend of the family, Bishop Jack Wilson said, "He was full of life, and always smiling, it hurts me that he didn't take his last breath, but his last breath was taken from him."

Porter's cousin Jsan' Tyler condemned the goon from the ICE Gestapo, saying, "If I could say anything to the ICE agent, it's that you're a murderer. You stole my cousin from me. You stole their father from them." She continued, "You stole a Black man off the planet that God ordained to live and thrive. You stole a human life, and you need to pay for it."

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) claims, in much the same way as they did in October, that the officer was responding to an "active shooter" situation. They stated that after the agent identified himself as an ICE agent, that Porter then aimed his rifle at the agent, and that the agent then requested Porter to lay down his weapon. DHS then says that when Porter did not put down his weapon, the ICE officer shot him. DHS also claims that though Porter shot his rifle three times at

close range while aiming at the agent, that the officer was not injured in the shooting.

The shooting is now under investigation by the Los Angeles Police Department's Robbery-Homicide Division; however, it has also been widely reported that the FBI, the US Department of Justice (DOJ) and Homeland Security Investigations are also handling the case because "a federal agent was involved." Given that the agent was off duty, this explanation for involvement of federal officials in the investigation of the killing of Porter reeks of a cover-up.

There is no reason to believe anything coming from the DHS. It was only a few months ago that ICE agents shot another man in Los Angeles, claiming it was in response to an "active shooter." The brazen lawlessness under which ICE agents operate is in every case defended by DHS and the fascistic Trump administration as legitimate responses to threats of bodily harm to the agents themselves. Yet, in every case that has been investigated, it has been shown to be a lie.

The 14th victim of ICE's reign of terror across the US took place on Wednesday, when an ICE officer shot and killed Renee Nicole Good, a US citizen and mother of three. DHS Secretary Kristi Noem and other Republicans have claimed, in contradiction to video evidence, that Good had "weaponized" her vehicle. This was also the reason given in virtually all the other shootings carried out by ICE officers in the last year. In the previous "active shooter" situation in LA, TikToker Richard LA, the victim, was shown in the days immediately following the shooting not to have had a gun. That was when the claim of vehicular "weaponization" was run up the flagpole.

In response to the shooting of Porter, eyewitnesses have reported that he was outside celebrating the New

Year's Eve holiday by firing his weapon in the air, and that when the agent confronted Porter, he did not identify himself.

Given that the agent was the only one on the scene other than Porter and his friends, one is left with the assumption that the entirety of the DHS statement is taken from this one off-duty officer, who was responsible for ending the life of Keith Porter Jr.

On Sunday, about 50 people took part in a candlelight vigil to honor Porter. The vigil was organized by Black Lives Matter (BLM), of which Porter was a member. BLM said that the vigil was called not only to honor Porter, but to issue a call for an independent investigation into his death.

Melina Abdullah, co-director of BLM Grassroots, said, "We want to recognize that one of the worst imaginable injustices has been committed, and there will be time for us to protest, this is a time of grief ... we are not going to be quiet."

Protests and appeals to reason, directed either to the fascists in power, or their Democratic Party colleagues from across the aisle, will not bring justice for Keith Porter Jr., the other victims of ICE shootings, or the thousands and hundreds of thousands who are terrorized by the actions of the ICE Gestapo daily. The vilification and terrorizing of immigrants, the poorest of the poor, is a bi-partisan policy that has been continued without interruption under one administration after another.

What is needed is for immigrant workers and youth to organize with other workers into rank-and-file committees that are independent of both capitalist parties and the unions. These committees should be democratically organized and the starting point for preparations for a general strike against the ICE Gestapo, fascism, dictatorship and war.



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