

Police-state riot outside New Jersey's Delaney Hall as 300 immigrants continue hunger and labor strike

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On Thursday night, federal immigration thugs violently attacked protesters and journalists outside the Delaney Hall detention center in Newark, New Jersey, swinging batons, deploying pepper spray and arresting at least six people in an effort to break an ongoing blockade in support of 300 immigrant detainees on hunger and labor strike inside the facility.

In video posted on social media, it is not protesters, but ICE thugs who are initiating and escalating the violence. One agent is seen kicking a protester into a moving semi-truck, with the protester's foot appearing to get caught under the wheel as they fall to the ground. Unconfirmed social media reports indicate the person suffered a major bruise.

Reporters at the scene said federal agents deliberately targeted cameras in an effort to prevent documentation of the assault. Photographer Mostafa Bassim wrote that an ICE agent struck his camera "with his baton using full force," snapping the lens in half, despite Bassim being "clearly identified as press."

Some 300 immigrants inside the facility have been participating in a hunger and labor strike since last Friday. As in US prisons, immigrants held inside detention facilities are often expected to perform labor to keep the facility operational, some for as little as a dollar a day, if that. While immigrants slave away inside Delaney Hall, the government is paying GEO Group \$1 billion to operate the facility.

In an interview with the *American Prospect*, New Jersey Democratic Senator Andy Kim, who suffered from tear gas exposure when he visited the Delaney facility earlier this week, said immigrants inside were "getting paid next to nothing" and that he had heard reports "that some people are being forced to do this

work without any compensation, either."

The vast majority of those detained in Delaney, and throughout the US for-profit immigration concentration camp system, have committed no crime. Conditions inside Delaney and the rest of the immigrant concentration camp network are deadly.

An Associated Press investigation published this week found that at least 10 detainees have died by suicide since Trump returned to office in January 2025, including seven since October, "the most for any fiscal year in the agency's history." The deaths, AP noted, far outpace the growth in ICE's detainee population and expose a system of deliberate medical neglect, isolation and psychological torment. Seven of the 10 had "no record of violent crimes" in the US, AP reported.

Faced with growing mass anger over conditions at Delaney and the mass deportation operation overall, Democratic Senator Cory Booker of New Jersey posted about the federal rampage Thursday night on social media, saying he was "deeply disturbed and outraged" and that he had "reached out to ICE for clarification."

Speaking on CNN Thursday, Booker noted that when he visited the for-profit concentration camp on Wednesday he met people as young as 18 and 19, including a person with a "thick New Jersey accent" who had graduated from a New Jersey high school. This person relayed to Booker that they had no memory of the country the Trump administration is trying to send them to.

Appearing again on the network on Friday, Booker reiterated his call for the facility to be closed, but stopped short of calling for the release of those inside. Instead, he attacked Trump for failing to go after "the worst of the worst," in the process accepting the

deportation framework established by the administration and the supposed right of the government to disappear, detain and deport those it claims have committed serious crimes.

In his social media posts and numerous television appearances, Booker made no calls for the abolition of ICE or for charges of attempted murder to be brought against the agents who kicked and shoved protesters into a moving 18-wheel truck.

As was the case in Minneapolis, Minnesota; Broadview, Illinois; and Portland, Oregon, Democratic officials have responded to sustained protests and blockades by community members by deploying local and state police to assist federal agents in quelling and moving the protests away from the immediate sites where immigrants are being held and tortured, to somewhere farther away so operations can continue.

On Friday, New Jersey Democratic Governor Mikie Sherrill deployed state police to establish vehicle checkpoints and a “designated protest zone,” measures aimed not at protecting demonstrators from ICE violence, but at moving the blockade away from the facility so deportation operations can continue. Video posted on X shows a cop telling protesters, “We are going to ask that you guys all go to a designated area... We are setting up a designated zone.” State police also set up roadblocks to prevent civilian vehicles from driving on the street to Delaney Hall in both directions, forcing protesters to park several blocks away and walk to the facility.

While Democrats work with the police to contain and shut down the protests, Teamsters-endorsed DHS Secretary Markwayne Mullin responded to the blockade at Delaney by threatening to pull Customs and Border Protection agents from international airports in Democratic-controlled cities, such as Newark, as punishment for so-called “sanctuary policies.”

Speaking to Fox News’ Brian Kilmeade on Thursday, Mullin said the administration would “prioritize” federal employees away from airports and toward detention facilities if local police did not suppress protests. “We’re going to pull out our Customs and Border Patrol officers that process these flights and put them in these facilities to help protect our employees coming out of work,” Mullin said. “And if they’re not there to process international flights, then

those individuals, when the airlines land, well, they won’t be permitted into the United States.”

Many of the nation’s largest and most heavily trafficked airports are in cities and states controlled by Democrats. The effect would be catastrophic for travelers and the airline industry as a whole, which is already under severe strain due to high oil prices triggered by the blocking of the Strait of Hormuz. High oil prices were the final straw that led to the shutdown of Spirit Airlines earlier this month and the loss of 19,000 jobs.

The fascistic character of the administration’s attacks on immigrants was underscored Thursday night with the launch of a White House website, “Aliens,” designed to look like a declassified UFO portal. The site declares, “THEY WALK AMONG US,” urges visitors to “REPORT SUSPICIOUS ALIENS ? ICE TIP LINE,” and then explains that “These ‘Aliens’ are the millions of ILLEGALS who invaded our country under the cover of darkness.”

The purpose of this filth is to dehumanize immigrants, to present workers and youth fleeing poverty, dictatorship and imperialist violence as an alien species to be hunted, abducted and “returned.” The same government that now disappears immigrants into concentration camps, assaults journalists and drives protesters away from detention sites will use the same methods against every section of the working class that resists layoffs, austerity, war and fascism.

The defense of immigrants cannot be entrusted to Booker, Sherrill or any section of the Democratic Party, which is working with the police to contain the protests while accepting the framework of detention and deportation. The fight to free those imprisoned in Delaney Hall and shut down the ICE concentration camp system requires the independent mobilization of the working class, organized through rank-and-file committees, against both capitalist parties and their police.



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