

ICE thugs kidnap over 10,000 immigrants in five days as White House orders worksite raids

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US immigration police have kidnapped more than 10,000 people in just five days as part of a “major surge” ordered by the Trump White House, according to figures reported this week. The operation marks a further escalation in the administration’s mass deportation campaign, the spearhead of its drive toward dictatorship.

Agents with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) have seized immigrants at scheduled check-ins, outside courthouses and detention centers, during worksite operations, and in ambushes on residential streets. The purpose is not the removal of “criminals,” the lie repeated endlessly by the administration and the media, but the terrorizing of the entire immigrant population and, through it, the working class as a whole.

The White House directive, first reported by the *New York Times*, calls for ICE to maintain a pace of roughly 2,000 arrests a day. This is below the 3,000-a-day quota demanded last year by Trump adviser Stephen Miller, but it is still an enormous dragnet. The vast majority of those targeted have committed no crime. Many are people legally complying with the immigration system, including those attending required check-ins with federal authorities.

The *Times*, citing US officials, said many agents were working seven days a week and that supervisors were expected to work “closely” on ongoing operations in order to meet the kidnapping quota.

The increase in operations follows the Supreme Court rulings last week effectively ending Temporary Protected Status for over a million people, including Haitians and Venezuelans, along with a ruling allowing the president to deny those seeking asylum at the

border the ability to file claims. Venezuelan immigrants are facing threats of deportation to a country that has suffered the most devastating earthquake in the Western Hemisphere since the 2010 earthquake in Haiti.

The *Times* falsely claimed the surge of arrests under Department of Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin “has occurred without the fanfare of highly visible operations last year.” There has been no shortage of social opposition to the kidnapping operations in cities and outside detention centers throughout the country. What has changed is not opposition to the ongoing brutality, but the effort of the ruling class and the corporate media to normalize it.

That immigrants and protesters have not been killed in recent weeks is a matter of luck, not restraint. In Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, ICE agents were filmed on July 1 firing at a fleeing vehicle in broad daylight in a residential neighborhood. Local reports identified the targeted man as Clemente Lara-Hernandez, a Mexican national sought by federal authorities.

In a surveillance video, one ICE vehicle partially blocks the front of a white SUV while several agents rush the vehicle from behind. An agent orders the driver to turn off the car, then pulls out an expandable metal baton and threatens, “I will shatter this f*cking window!” Another agent shouts, “Get out of the car now or we are going to break the window!”

Roughly 26 seconds after the first command, and without presenting a warrant or explaining what crime the driver was accused of committing, an agent smashes the window. The driver, apparently terrified and showered with broken glass, accelerates forward, steering around the ICE vehicle rather than into it. As

the SUV passes the agents and moves away, the same agent who smashed the window draws his pistol and fires at the vehicle, despite the fact that it no longer posed any immediate threat.

As with virtually every utterance from DHS, the video exposes the agency's official account as a lie. In a statement issued by ICE following the attempted murder, the agency claimed Lara-Hernandez had "weaponized" his vehicle and rammed a law enforcement car. The footage shows the opposite: he attempted to evade the agents and their vehicles, yet was still fired upon in a residential neighborhood.

As a massive heat dome engulfs much of the United States, threatening the lives of millions of workers and their families, some 63,000 people continue to languish in hellish conditions in immigrant concentration camps throughout the country.

On Wednesday, a protest was held outside the federal immigration office in Miramar, Florida, in Broward County. The facility has seen an influx of detainees following the recent closure of the grotesque "Alligator Alcatraz," a more than \$1 billion immigrant concentration camp erected on an abandoned airport tarmac in the middle of the Florida Everglades.

Those detained at the now shuttered facility reported horrendous treatment, including abusive guards, inedible food and lack of access to attorneys and medical care. In an interview with WLRN, Arianne Betancourt, an immigrant rights activist whose father was interned at "Alligator Alcatraz," said she was protesting outside the ICE-ERO Center Miramar because she was receiving reports that conditions inside Miramar are even worse.

"Alligator Alcatraz was a facility set up to hold people, and we the people shut it down because of the cruelty and inhumanity inside of those tents. What makes you believe that this facility that is an office space is set up to house people for days and weeks at a time?" Betancourt told the station.

Commenting on kidnapping operations in New York on Wednesday, Mullin said, "We're seeing our arrest numbers come up. We're seeing our deportation numbers continue to increase. Right now, we're deporting on average over 3,000 individuals—actually, the average has been, for several weeks now, over 3,200 individuals a day."

He said operations would continue "regardless of

whether you live in a red state or a blue state." In order to meet the ongoing quota set by the fascists in the White House, CNN reported on Thursday that the Trump administration is calling to increase "worksite immigration enforcement operations."

An unnamed administration official told the network, "The reality is worksite enforcement isn't happening and without that the numbers won't hit the needed levels."

Nothing more clearly reveals the class character of the mass deportation operation than this declaration. The administration is not targeting "criminals." It is targeting workers. Immigrants are being used as the Trojan horse for a broader assault on the working class, regardless of citizenship or immigration status.

Among those swept up in the kidnapping campaign was Sister Leticia "Letty" Ugboaja, a Texas nun and registered nurse, who was detained by ICE while walking to mass in McAllen. Ugboaja, originally from Nigeria, has lived in the United States for years and works at South Texas Health System. She was released only after public outrage and intervention by members of Congress. DHS and ICE have refused to explain why she was seized.

The surge follows the passage of a multi-year appropriations bill providing nearly \$70 billion for ICE and Customs and Border Protection through the end of Trump's term. The measure was made possible by the Democratic Party, which voted to fund the rest of Trump's fascistic and thoroughly corrupt government, allowing Republicans to pass the immigration funding with a simple majority. The mass deportation campaign is not an aberration, but the product of the bipartisan buildup of the police-state apparatus, now being turned ever more openly against immigrants and the entire working class.



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