

Blood on their hands: Trump's immigration Gestapo drives Haitian student Pierre Damas Bel to suicide

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Twenty-year-old Haitian college student Pierre Damas Bel died Monday morning after being struck by a tractor-trailer on Interstate 70 near Springfield, Ohio, in what his family says was a suicide driven by the Trump administration's persecution of Haitian immigrants.

Bel's death came weeks after Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) forced him to wear a GPS ankle monitor following the termination of Temporary Protected Status for approximately 350,000 Haitians. Although he had committed no crime and had a pending asylum case, the aspiring doctor was shackled with an electronic device used by ICE to track immigrants it is preparing to imprison and deport.

Bel was one of more than 100 Haitian immigrants in Springfield fitted with what amounts to a modern-day yellow star: a GPS ankle monitor that brands its wearer as a criminal while allowing ICE to track every movement in preparation for kidnapping and deportation. Hundreds more have been summoned to ICE offices, where agents confiscate their passports and order them to report back every few weeks.

At 8:03 a.m. Monday, Bel called his father by video. "I'm not feeling OK mentally because of the bullying," he said. His father urged him to come home so they could talk. Roughly three hours later, police arrived at the family's door and told them their eldest son was dead.

Bel had graduated with honors from Springfield High School in May. He played varsity soccer, participated in the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps and had received a scholarship. He began classes at Wright State University in August, where he was studying neuroscience and hoped to attend medical school. Wright State described him as an active honors student who was already engaged in campus life.

Bel entered the United States through the Biden

administration's CBP (Customs and Border Protection) One program to reunite with his parents. He had TPS and an asylum application pending, with his next immigration hearing scheduled for October. None of this stopped ICE from summoning him to an office and fastening the monitor around his ankle.

His father said other students mocked and bullied him. Bel repeatedly asked immigration agents to remove the monitor, but they refused.

On July 30, Bel posted photographs of his academic awards, soccer team and the monitor. "Yet now I'm walking through the streets of the United States with a GPS monitor on my leg," he wrote, describing the "shame and humiliation" it caused. His father said the government "treated my son like an animal."

Bel's death was the direct result of the Trump administration's fascistic mass deportation operation. His blood is on the hands of Trump, Stephen Miller, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Markwayne Mullin and the ICE agents who shackled a 20-year-old honors student with a GPS monitor to humiliate him, destroy his sense of security and terrorize him into leaving the country. These methods of warrantless seizure, electronic surveillance, indefinite detention and state violence are establishing the framework for a police state directed against the entire working class, regardless of immigration status.

The campaign against Haitians has been prepared through years of racist agitation by Trump and the entire Republican Party. During the 2024 election, Trump and JD Vance spread the fascist lie that Haitian immigrants in Springfield were eating residents' pets. Trump has repeatedly denounced Haiti and African countries as "shithole countries," while portraying immigrants as criminals, animals and invaders, in an attempt to divide

the working class.

This filth is now being translated into mass arrests, electronic monitoring, concentration camps and deportation flights. On June 25, the Supreme Court's six-member right-wing majority cleared the way for the administration to terminate TPS for Haitians and Syrians. Haitian TPS formally ended July 27.

Since then, the administration has dispatched two large deportation flights to Haiti. A flight carrying 161 people landed in Cap-Haïtien on August 20. A second arrived August 27 with 57 people, including several children born in the United States and Brazil. The youngest passenger was a one-year-old US citizen effectively expelled alongside the child's parents. US authorities have warned Haitian officials to prepare for as many as two flights a week.

These expulsions are being carried out as Haiti is devastated by mass hunger, political collapse and armed violence produced by more than a century of US imperialist intervention. Nearly 200,000 people have been forcibly returned to Haiti from countries across the region during the first eight months of 2026, the majority from the Dominican Republic and other neighboring states.

Bel's death will not appear in ICE's official death totals. The agency classifies immigrants fitted with ankle monitors as part of its "non-detained docket," even though their movements are tracked continuously and the threat of imprisonment hangs over every interaction. The exclusion is aimed at concealing the full human toll of a mass deportation operation that is destroying lives inside and outside the American gulag.

The same apparatus of state terror was deployed early Sunday morning in Memphis, Tennessee, when ICE and other federal and state agents descended on El Corralón, a nightclub on Macon Road, and arrested 121 immigrants.

The raid, dubbed "Operation Corral Light" by the Department of Homeland Security, began around 1 a.m. Agents surrounded the building, zip-tied patrons and employees and transported them away in buses and vans. Witnesses described children crying in the street as their parents were taken away.

The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation had obtained search warrants connected to allegations of illegal gambling and drug activity at the business. ICE used the criminal investigation as a pretext to detain virtually everyone inside and determine their immigration status afterward. Advocates reported that several people were eventually released after proving they were legally present

in the United States.

DHS claimed that all 121 people ultimately arrested lacked legal status and said some had previous arrests or convictions. The agency did not specify how many had criminal records, identify the charges arising from the raid, or disclose where the detainees were being held.

The Memphis Police Department said it did not plan or execute the operation and that its officers arrived later to direct traffic and control the crowd. The Memphis Safe Task Force also denied that the raid was one of its operations.

That denial does not separate the raid from the military occupation imposed on Memphis. The Memphis Safe Task Force, created by Trump in September 2025, combines federal, state and local police with the Tennessee National Guard. Together, police and military elements have flooded working-class neighborhoods with armed agents conducting traffic stops, searches and arrests.

The murderous character of this operation was further exposed last week with the release of the autopsy of 20-year-old Tyrin Johnson, who was killed by Tennessee National Guard troops assigned to the task force on July 5.

Authorities initially claimed Johnson turned toward pursuing troops and pointed a handgun, forcing them to use "deadly force." The autopsy found that the bullet entered the right side of Johnson's back and exited through his upper chest. An independent forensic pathologist said the slightly upward trajectory was consistent with Johnson running away. The absence of soot or stippling indicated he was shot from more than three feet away.

Johnson's family has still not been shown video supporting the government's account. His death was classified as a homicide, but no Guard member has been charged. The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation continues to describe its inquiry as "open and ongoing."

Johnson was one of four people killed in encounters involving the Memphis Safe Task Force between May and July.



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