

ICE kidnaps record number of immigrants amid growing popular opposition

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The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced on Wednesday, September 2 that it had set a record for the number of arrests of immigrants for the third straight month. The department, which includes Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP), claimed it kidnapped 50,925 people in August, exceeding the nearly 50,000 the month before and the 49,000 in June.

“For the third straight month, ICE set a new record for the highest number of illegal aliens arrested in a single month, nearly 51,000,” Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin gloated in a DHS press release.

DHS claims over 3 million people have left the country since Trump returned to the White House. This includes those who were deported, illegally renditioned to a third country, or, under threat of being kidnapped and held in a for-profit concentration camp, “voluntarily” left the country.

While the Trump administration scapegoats immigrants for all the problems created by the capitalist system—from rising home prices and stagnant wages to every form of criminality—ICE arrest data analyzed by Cato Institute immigration analyst David Bier showed that 79 percent of those arrested had no criminal conviction. Fifty-five percent had neither a conviction nor a pending criminal charge, while only 4 percent had been convicted of a violent offense. Bier testified before the House Judiciary Committee last week.

The assault on immigrants is part of a broader attack by the ruling class directed against the entire working class. Under conditions where the national debt has soared past \$40 trillion and workers and young people are increasingly interested in socialist politics, the US government is criminalizing opposition and making people “illegal” who had lived legally in the country for years.

In July, the Trump administration terminated Temporary Protected Status for some 350,000 Haitian immigrants, and TPS protection is scheduled to end for roughly 170,000 Salvadorans on September 9.

In Springfield, Ohio, some Haitian immigrants have gone underground while more than 100 have been fitted with GPS trackers, typically reserved for violent felons under criminal supervision. ICE has imposed restrictions on many Haitians as to where they can travel or if they can leave the state.

One of the Haitians fitted with the equivalent of a modern-day yellow star, Wright State University college student Pierre Damas Bel, died August 31 in what his family calls a suicide, when he was struck by a tractor trailer on Interstate 70 near Springfield.

“After my son was outfitted with an ankle monitor, he felt like he was treated like an animal,” his father, Pierre Ronal Bel, said in a written statement. “He took two trips to Cincinnati and Westerville to

plead with the officers to remove the bracelet since he’s a soccer player and he felt embarrassed and humiliated. When he’s among his classmates at the university—he’s a student at Wright State—he was bullied a lot with a lot of people telling him he’s a criminal.”

In a July 30 Instagram carousel post, Pierre Damas Bel highlighted his accomplishments and spoke in defense of immigrants and Haitians.

“I came to this country to pursue my education. I didn’t come here to commit a crime or hurt anyone,” he wrote.

Yet now I’m walking through the streets of the United States with a GPS monitor on my leg, carrying a feeling of shame and humiliation that I never imagined I would experience. I came here to study, to build my future and to live a better [life], not to be treated like a criminal. So now, how am I supposed to play college sports with a GPS monitor on my leg?

On Thursday, the Trump administration carried out its third consecutive weekly deportation flight to Haiti since TPS ended, and at least the 11th flight this year. The flight originated in Alexandria, Louisiana and landed in Cap-Haïtien with 101 deportees aboard, according to a Haitian Foreign Affairs Ministry official.

In a fascistic post celebrating the deportation, DHS Secretary Mullin shared an image on X featuring black men in chains, with the caption, “Good morning, America. Today’s deportation destination: HAITI.”

Haiti remains under a State Department Level 4 “Do Not Travel” advisory due to “crime, kidnapping, terrorism, unrest and limited healthcare.” As the *World Socialist Web Site* previously reported, war criminal and Trump ally Erik Prince’s private military company Vectus Global is carrying out an undeclared drone war with Haitian government forces against the population, which has resulted in over 1,000 deaths.

As ICE is increasing its kidnapping operations, resistance is growing among workers, students and community members throughout the country.

Last Wednesday, September 2, more than 1,000 people protested against ICE kidnapping operations in Danbury, Connecticut. In the week prior, *Connecticut Mirror* reported that ICE had taken over 100 people in the state, a majority from Danbury. The town is located about 50 miles north of New York City and is home to just under 90,000 people.

Residents report that ICE thugs have been going after immigrants at

work, while shopping for groceries and even while dropping off their kids at school bus stops. Juliana Soares, a lead organizer of the group “Danbury Unites for Immigrants,” told NBC that at least 65 families in the community had been impacted by ICE operations.

Speaking with Amy Goodman on “Democracy Now!,” Soares surmised that Danbury was being targeted by ICE because “Danbury is a diverse city, it’s one of the most diverse cities in the country.” Roughly one third of the city’s population is Latino, according to the US Census Bureau, including a large Brazilian population.

Describing the police terror, Soares said, “The streets were empty, kids stayed home from practice, kids stayed home from school, kids were seeing [their parents taken] from inside the bus, as agents, masked agents often, would shut down the street to just abduct people.”

In Colorado on Friday, September 4, students from more than 200 high schools throughout the state walked out of class to protest attacks on immigrants. Walkouts featuring dozens to hundreds of students occurred in Denver, the surrounding suburbs, Colorado Springs and, significantly, Greeley, where some 3,800 meatpacking workers went on strike earlier this year in the largest meatpacking struggle in decades.

A majority of the workers at the JBS plant in Greeley are immigrants, with dozens of languages spoken inside the plant. During the strike, a worker at the plant told WWSW reporters, “We represent the immigrants and all the people of color. That’s us, that’s the people that are doing these jobs.

“Without immigrants, there is no food, there is no work.”

Video from Friday’s protest in Greeley shows students marching while chanting, “Get ICE out!” Students carried handmade signs that read, “Immigrants make America great!” and “Abolish ICE.”

In an interview with the *Greeley Tribune*, Greeley Central High School student Josely Vazquez said, “People shouldn’t be scared to leave their houses.” Vazquez is originally from Mexico and moved to Greeley when she was 9.

The students marched to Lincoln Park. Along the way, drivers honked in support and flew flags from many countries, including Mexico and Palestine.

In Denver, hundreds of students rallied at La Alma-Lincoln Park to protest ICE kidnapping operations. In an interview with *ColoradoNewsline*, 15-year-old student Macy Brown said, “I think human rights are really important, and I think we all need to speak up against injustices that are happening right in front of us.”

Naya Ferguson, a 16-year-old student at Bear Creek High School in Jefferson County, said she drove to the park to attend the protest after seeing students walking out of her school. She told *ColoradoNewsLine*, “What ICE is doing is just unconstitutional, unlawful. It’s inhumane, and I just don’t want to sit back and just watch it happen. It’s not who I am.”

On Friday, on the other side of the country, in Fredrick, Maryland, ICE thugs, with police watching, bludgeoned and assaulted non-violent protesters who had formed a human chain around a house targeted by the immigration Gestapo. Residents and local reporters claim ICE began menacing residents in Fredrick on Monday, August 31, and specifically in the Taskers Chance neighborhood beginning on Wednesday.

Residents reported seeing SUVs with tinted windows and masked and armed men on street corners and parked outside houses. In response, residents began organizing shifts to observe the agents and their activities.

On Friday night, after agents had occupied a section of the neighborhood for more than 40 hours, ICE thugs lined up several vehicles and began to surround a house. Observers on the sidewalk were forced to move out of the path of the ICE vehicles, which drove onto the sidewalk, nearly striking several observers.

César Díaz, Frederick City Council president, told the *Baltimore Banner* he witnessed Katie Nash, vice president of the Frederick City Council, nearly run over by an ICE agent. “People had to move or risk getting run over,” he said, identifying Nash as a person at risk. “I had to step back to avoid from getting hit by the car.”

In front of the home, several community members and anti-ICE protesters were seated with locked arms to prevent ICE officers from entering. It is unclear if ICE agents ever presented a warrant of any kind, judicial or administrative.

With local police watching, ICE goons began attacking the nonviolent protesters in front of the house. Video taken by bystanders shows ICE agents swinging batons at people seated on the ground.

After clearing a path to the door, ICE agents entered the house but left without making any arrests.

The Trump administration is able to carry out the mass deportation operation only because of the collaboration of the Democratic Party. Last week the House, in a resounding bipartisan 370-48 vote, passed legislation to fund the federal government, including DHS, through December 11.

The bill, which was supported by Trump, had already cleared the Senate. It was signed by Trump on September 2.

The necessity of building an independent movement in the working class against both parties and the capitalist system they represent could not be any clearer. While posturing against Trump’s fascistic regime, the Democrats do everything in their power to ensure that his legislative and police state agenda moves forward.

The protests against ICE in Colorado, Maryland and throughout the country point the way forward. But protesting is not enough. The protests must become the starting point for uniting the working class, immigrant and native-born, and mobilizing its social power independently of both capitalist parties on the basis of a socialist perspective.



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