

Oppose the Trump administration's drive to strip Ilhan Omar of citizenship!

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On Monday, federal agents searched the Washington home of Minnesota Representative Ilhan Omar and confiscated her phone, her personal computers, her notebooks and passport. The search, conducted by Homeland Security Investigations, the criminal investigative arm of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), is the opening move in an effort by the Trump administration to strip a sitting member of Congress of her citizenship and deport her.

The immigration Gestapo has been deployed against an elected representative over paperwork filed when she was a child three weeks before an election in which she is all but certain to win a fifth term. The first Somali elected to Congress, Omar won her last two elections with 74 percent of the vote and her August primary with 81 percent.

The Trump administration is asserting the power to overturn the election and drive a political opponent out of Congress and out of the country. This is an attack on democratic rights that must be opposed by the entire working class.

To obtain a search warrant, prosecutors must persuade a judge that there is probable cause to believe a crime was committed and that evidence of it will be found. What is this supposed crime? Investigators working for Trump claim that Omar or her late father misstated her age by one year on the paperwork through which she became a citizen in 2000, when she was 17. Her father died in 2020. The same allegation was examined in 2019 and again under the Biden administration, and both reviews found insufficient evidence to proceed.

Denaturalization cases ordinarily proceed as civil lawsuits based on the government's own records. Former immigration officials told Reuters that it is "extremely unusual for them to involve search warrants." No raid was needed to read a 26-year-old immigration file. The administration is searching for a basis to impose the punishment Trump has repeatedly demanded, deportation.

On the evening of October 12, hours after the raid, Trump took the stage at a campaign rally in Youngstown, Ohio and delivered a fascist diatribe against Omar. "She's a disaster,"

he said. "She comes in from a country without laws, without police, without military. All they do is shoot each other, and she comes into our country and she says, 'I have a constitutional right.'" The crowd answered with chants of "deport."

On the same day his administration raided her home, the president mocked the idea that a Somali-born member of Congress had constitutional rights at all.

Omar is a member of the Democratic Party, and the Socialist Equality Party has fundamental political differences with her politics. But she is being targeted for definite political reasons.

Omar came to the United States as a child refugee from the civil war in Somalia and has represented Minneapolis in Congress since 2019. She was an original member of the "Squad" of four "progressive" Democratic women first elected to Congress in 2018, including Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ayanna Pressley and Rashida Tlaib.

Omar and Tlaib are in the crosshairs of the Trump administration due to their characterization of Israel's war on Gaza as a genocide. Omar has also called Trump's war against Iran an "unlawful operation" that "must end immediately." In January, at a town hall in her district, she declared, "We must abolish ICE for good."

The persecution of Omar is also bound up with a fascistic and racist campaign against Somali immigrants. At a cabinet meeting last December, Trump called Somali immigrants "garbage," and said, "Their country stinks." That month, ICE launched Operation Metro Surge in Minneapolis, which spread across Minnesota and produced more than 3,000 ICE abductions, along with the murders of US citizens Renée Good and Alex Pretti.

The administration has ended Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Somalis and opened a review of naturalization cases from Somalia and 18 other countries for possible denaturalization. On October 8, four days before the raid on Omar's home, Trump wrote on Truth Social that Minnesota "is being taken over by Somali Immigrants," and urged, "Fight back Minnesota, fight back!"

The fusion of anti-immigrant agitation with the persecution of left-wing opposition has a long history in the United States. Between 1917 and 1921, as the United States entered the First World War and the ruling class reacted with fear to the Russian Revolution, the American state waged a war against democratic rights at home.

Victor Berger, the Socialist Party congressman from Milwaukee and himself an immigrant, was convicted under the Espionage Act for opposing the war. On November 10, 1919, the House voted 311 to 1 to bar him from his seat. His constituents elected him again, and on January 10, 1920, the House excluded him again, 330 to 6.

The anarchist Emma Goldman's citizenship derived from her marriage to Jacob Kerschner, and in 1908 the government revoked his naturalization. When it moved to deport her in 1919, officials ruled that the revocation of her husband's citizenship had annulled hers as well. On December 21, 1919, Goldman and 248 others were put aboard the Buford, the "Soviet Ark," and deported to Russia. J. Edgar Hoover, then 24, was on board to see them off.

This was part of a broader assault on all political opposition. Opponents of the war were jailed under the Espionage Act, socialist newspapers were barred from the mails, and the Immigration Act of 1918 authorized the deportation of immigrant anarchists, socialists and labor organizers. Joe Hill, singer, song writer and labor activist, was executed at the Sugar House Prison in Utah in 1915 after being framed for murder. Frank Little, like Hill a member of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), was brutally lynched by Pinkertons in Butte, Montana in 1917.

The lesson of that period is that the attack on immigrants and the attack on left-wing politics form a single operation. Opposition to war and exploitation is branded the work of foreigners, and foreign birth is made grounds for silencing it.

In the current situation, the stakes extend far beyond one Democratic Party congresswoman. Some 26 million naturalized citizens live in the United States, according to the Congressional Research Service. The Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse counted at least 105 civil denaturalization suits in the first seven months of 2026, including 50 in July alone. In the entire period from 2008 through 2025, it counted 125.

The attack on Omar is also part of a conspiracy against the elections themselves. On October 15, the Justice Department sued California to block the counting of mail ballots from more than 20,000 registered voters it claims are likely noncitizens. A similar claim of nearly 16,000 noncitizens on Nevada's rolls collapsed when the state's review did not establish a single one.

The aim is not to purge the rolls of a handful of ineligible voters. The administration is laying the basis for declaring

the results of the November 3 election fraudulent, for throwing out ballots in states it does not control, and for treating any outcome it rejects as the product of "alien" voting.

The response of the Democratic Party establishment is virtual silence. Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) Democrat and fellow "Squad" member Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez does not have so much as a press release on her congressional web site denouncing the fascistic campaign against Omar. While Ocasio-Cortez's Instagram is filled with daily updates on the congresswoman's efforts to freeze her eggs, there is nothing about ICE and the Trump administration's attempt to denaturalize and deport her colleague.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, an ardent supporter of the genocide in Gaza, has said nothing during the more than five days since Omar's home was raided.

The Democrats' sharpest attacks on Trump are reserved for his policy toward Russia, not for his assault on democratic rights. What they fear is not dictatorship, but a movement of the working class they cannot control. A party that answers the persecution of one of its own office-holders with nothing more than a mildly worded press release will not defend the rights of workers.

Trump is the personification of a financial oligarchy that confronts a deepening economic and geo-political crisis. It is waging an escalating global war and faces growing resistance from the working class at home. The unprecedented concentration of wealth in the hands of a small group of billionaires is incompatible with democratic forms of rule, and the ruling class is turning to dictatorship. As was the case a century ago, the scapegoating of immigrants serves to divide the working class and prepare repression against every form of opposition.

The defense of the democratic rights is a class question. Native-born and immigrant workers must unite in rank-and-file committees in every workplace and neighborhood to oppose the raids, deportations and denaturalizations. This fight must be connected to the struggle against war, the capitalist oligarchy and the system that give rise to them.



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