

# Fall 2017 U.S. Immigration Alert!

A Newsletter from National Immigrant Solidarity Network

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## Charlottesville, The Returns of Racist KKK Nazi Violence, and More Trump's Anti-Immigrant Horror, FIGHT BACK!

### In This Issue:

America's pro-Nazi president defends Charlottesville rampage (Pg 1) | Racists Fascist Slander Post Against Activist Organizations for the Charlottesville's White Racist/Fascist Violence (Pg 2) | Trump continues far-right agitation in Phoenix speech (Pg 3) | In memo, Trump administration weighs expanding the expedited deportation powers of DHS (Pg 4) | Trudeau vows immigration crackdown as thousands of Haitians flee to Canada (Pg 6) | Massachusetts cannot hold immigrants so U.S. can detain them: state top court (Pg 8) | After truck tragedy, state lawmakers call on Congress to recommit to immigration reform (Pg 9) | ICE Locks Down Immigrant Detention Facility After Interfaith Group Holds Prayer Circle (Pg 9) | 15 Protesters Arrested After Demonstration Defending DACA at Texas Capitol (Pg 11) | Please Support NISN! Subscribe the Newsletter! (Pg 11) Please Join Our 2017 US Activists Delegation to China! (Pg 12)

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## 8/16: America's pro-Nazi president defends Charlottesville rampage

Barry Grey - WSWS

In an event without precedent in American history, the president of the United States on Tuesday openly defended the neo-Nazi demonstrators who went on a violent and deadly rampage last weekend in Charlottesville, Virginia, while lashing out against anti-fascist counter-protesters.

"I think there's blame on both sides," Donald Trump repeated more than once in the course of an impromptu press conference at Trump Tower in Manhattan. Going further, he said there were "very fine people" among the fascists and that "not all of those people" at the rally were neo-Nazis or white supremacists "by any stretch."

Trump's comments Tuesday went beyond his statement Saturday, in which he blamed "many sides" for the violence that left 19 wounded and one anti-fascist protester, 32-year-old Heather Heyer, dead.

In response to shouted questions from reporters about his initial response to the fascist rampage, Trump repeatedly accused both sides of violence. "You had a group on one side that was bad and you had a group on the other side that was also very violent," he said. "No one wants to say that, but I'll say it right now: You had a group on the other side that came charging in without a permit and they were very, very violent."

As the exchanges continued, Trump's bias in favor of the fascists became more explicit. He twice cited Friday night's KKK-like torch parade through the campus as proof that many if not most of the "Unite the Right" demonstrators were simply seeking to peacefully protest the removal of a statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee. In fact, they were shouting slogans such as "Jews will not replace us!"

By the end of the press conference, Trump was suggesting that the counter-protesters, whom he called the "alt-left," were the aggressors, because, unlike the fascists, they did not have a permit. "But you had a lot of people in that group that were there to innocently protest and very legally protest," he said. "Because I don't know if you know, they had a permit. The other group didn't have a permit."

While Trump's comments were criticized by both Democratic and Republican politicians, they prompted lavish praise from former KKK leader David Duke, who tweeted: "Thank you President Trump for your honesty & courage to tell the truth about Charlottesville & condemn the leftist terrorists in BLM/Antifa [Black Lives Matter and anti-fascist anarchist groups]."

Trump's tirade on Tuesday has thrown the political system into deep crisis. The fact that the president is a Nazi and white supremacist sympathizer shatters the entire framework of the international political authority of the United States.

It will also have immense consequences for domestic stability. There is not a mass constituency for fascism and white supremacism in the United States. The Nazis and "alt-right" groups mobilized only a few hundred people as part of a national mobilization in Charlottesville. This compares to the protests of hundreds of thousands of people that followed Trump's inauguration.

The nervous response to Trump's press conference from the political elite, both Democrats and Republicans, is motivated primarily by fear of an explosion of opposition within the United States and internationally. Trump's critics within the ruling class have spent the past seven months covering over the social and political character of the administration, focusing all their efforts on appealing to the intelligence agencies and the military based on a demand for a more aggressive policy against Russia.

Under conditions of mounting geo-political contradictions and intensifying economic crisis, the White House is facing multiple probes and possible indictments for alleged collusion with Russia and obstruction of justice. It is seeking to exploit political disorientation to build a far-right constituency outside of the established constitutional framework. Trump has brought fascists such as former Breitbart News head Stephen Bannon into the White House to direct this effort.

Even as Trump was supposedly bowing to demands for a condemnation of the KKK and neo-Nazis, he was continuing to appeal to the most right-wing, backward and disoriented social forces.

Over the past several days, he released a campaign ad for the 2020 election that denounces the media and the Democrats as Trump's "enemies" and features photos of individual reporters and news anchors; he told Fox News he was seriously considering pardoning former Arizona Sheriff Joe Arpaio, convicted of contempt of court for refusing to obey an order to stop illegally arresting Hispanics on suspicion of being "illegal" immigrants; and on Tuesday—three days after a fascist protester used his car as a weapon to kill an anti-fascist demonstrator—he tweeted and then deleted a post of a train labeled "Trump" plowing into a cartoon figure bearing the CNN logo.

Trump also broke off his golf vacation at his New Jersey resort to return to Washington for a day in order to stage the signing of a trade war measure against China—part of his "America First" promotion of economic nationalism.

All of this is aimed at creating a social and political framework for a violent attack on working-class opposition to the policies of the financial aristocracy of war and social counterrevolution.

## **8/16: Racists Fascist Slander Post Against Activist Organizations for the Charlottesville's White Racist/Fascist Violence**

**Lee Siu Hin - National Immigrant Solidarity Network**

Since early this year and after last weekend's Charlottesville, VA white racist/Fascists riots, there's been far-right/Fascist blogger spreading anti-Semitic and anti-left rumors around the country.

They claims Antifa, and it's fiscal sponsorship organization Alliance for Global Justice (AFGJ), was funded by George Soros, hired "tugs" pretend to be the Fascists, organized the last weekend's violence in Charlottesville: "Soros tax forms show support for Antifa, provoking Charlottesville-like events."

It's very shocked, not only because I know AFGJ has been the well known activists organization, supporting the cause for over 110 originations (we're also the fiscal sponsorship of AFGJ), also between the line they're seems to want to threat a violence against Antifa, AFGJ, and could be also my organization.

The blogger, name "Ralph Lopez" has been spreading the slanders from right-wing to left-wing email lists.

Furthermore, Thump is refusing to full condemn right-wing groups, but accusing "both-sides" were the blame for Chancellorsville violence, and ordering DOJ to demand social networking sites such as Facebook to turn over their activist groups' profile. They could easily accuse AFGJ and it's 110 supported groups for investigation, even right-wing groups can threat us with violence.

Please be aware all these are false, and take clear actions to blog these rumors from spreading slanders further away. Enclosed you the responds from Chuck Kauffman at the AFGJ:

*" ..... This is warmed over Breitbart lies from February when they were accusing AfGJ of being funded by Soros and paying the demonstrators at Trump's inauguration and in Berkeley when that Milo guy was stopped from speaking. The moderators of this listserv should certainly know that Tides Foundation was funding radical groups long before Soros made his fortune crashing Asian Tiger economies by manipulating their currencies. Tides was Nicaragua Network's fiscal sponsor in 1987 when I joined the staff. New World Foundation, I understand, is a Soros foundation and it has apparently given money to one or more of our fiscally sponsored groups -- before there even was an antifa! Today AfGJ, Nicaragua Network's descendant, acts as fiscal sponsor for 110 groups that don't have their own 501(c)(3) status. That includes Movement for Black Lives, Courage to Resist, Free Mumia, Refuse Fascism, and lots of other groups that you are also slandering by allowing this trash to be posted on your listserv.*

*On behalf of the board and staff of Alliance for Global Justice, I demand that the original slanderous post be removed from the listserv and the archives and that the moderators develop a plan to keep white nationalist, fascist, and racist posts off the listserv....."*

## **8/24: Trump continues far-right agitation in Phoenix speech**

**Barry Grey - WSWS**

President Donald Trump delivered a right-wing tirade to supporters in Phoenix, Arizona on Tuesday night. The speech followed last week's firing of chief strategist Stephen Bannon and a Monday night address in which Trump bowed to pressure from the military to announce an open-ended escalation in Afghanistan.

Trump once again attacked the Republican as well as the Democratic Party establishments and defended his pro-fascist statements following the neo-Nazi rampage in Charlottesville, Virginia. The rambling 77-minute speech made clear that the removal of Bannon and consolidation of Pentagon and Wall Street control over the administration will not halt Trump's efforts to build an extra-parliamentary, fascistic base of support.

Trump went ahead with the rally, which attracted thousands to the Phoenix Convention Center as well as thousands of anti-Trump demonstrators, despite pleas from the Democratic mayor to postpone the event. The rally was boycotted by Republican Governor Doug Ducey as well as the state's two Republican senators, John McCain and Jeff Flake.

Trump spent nearly half of his remarks defending his response to the August 12 fascist riot in Charlottesville and attacking the media, which he accused of misrepresenting his statements regarding those events. The rest of the speech was a compendium of the ultra-nationalist, militarist and far-right themes, combined with demagogic appeals to social anger over the destruction of jobs and living standards, which were at the center of his election campaign and have dominated his period in office.

He set the tone at the beginning of his remarks, declaring: "We love our country. We celebrate our troops. We embrace our freedom. We respect our flag. We are proud of our history. We cherish our Constitution, including, by the way, the Second Amendment. We fully protect religious liberty. We believe in law and order. And we support the incredible men of law enforcement. And we pledge our allegiance to one nation under God."

On immigration, Trump praised former Maricopa County, Arizona Sheriff Joe Arpaio, who was convicted last month of criminal contempt for ignoring a federal judge's order to stop detaining people on mere suspicion of their being undocumented immigrants. The White House press office had announced earlier on Tuesday that Trump would not, as he had threatened, announce a pardon for Arpaio, who is awaiting sentencing. Instead, Trump made clear that Arpaio had

nothing to fear and that he was prepared to pardon the fascistic ex-sheriff, even though he was holding off from an official announcement.

The president declared, “We are cracking down on these sanctuary cities that shield criminal aliens,” and reiterated his plans to build a border wall separating the US from Mexico. He threatened to veto a federal funding bill for the new fiscal year, which begins October 1, shutting down the government, if the Democrats blocked money for construction of the wall.

On economic protectionism, Trump hailed his pullout from the Trans-Pacific Partnership and cited the opening of negotiations with Canada and Mexico on revising the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), saying he expected the talks would fail and he would scrap the treaty altogether.

He repeated the previous night’s paeon to the military as the model of American patriotism and the central force for holding the country together, and boasted of passing a major increase in military spending.

Without naming names, he once again attacked senators McCain and Flake, both of whom have criticized Trump for his response to Charlottesville and his reluctance to escalate the confrontation with Russia. Trump blamed McCain for blocking the repeal of Obamacare and broadly hinted that he might support a challenge to Flake’s re-election next year from ultra-right former state lawmaker Kelli Ward.

As for the Democrats, who have largely attacked Trump from the right for his supposed “softness” toward Russia and led the praise for the generals who have virtually taken over the administration, Trump made the absurd charge that they were promoting socialism “and maybe, frankly, a step beyond socialism...”

This was combined with empty claims that he was heading up a revival of American manufacturing and restoring the jobs and wages of workers, supposedly ravaged by foreign countries and foreign workers.

Media criticism of the speech centered on its “divisiveness,” which was counterposed to the “unifying” tone Trump was said to have struck in his Afghanistan policy speech the previous night. Reflecting fears within the ruling class of the potential for social and political upheavals, former Director of National Intelligence James Clapper told CNN after the Phoenix event that Trump’s speech was “downright scary and disturbing.” He questioned Trump’s fitness to rule.

The counter-protests continued throughout the day without incident, until police carried out unprovoked gas canister attacks on demonstrators after the Trump rally had ended. Four anti-Trump protesters were arrested, and two have been charged with assaulting a police officer.

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## **7/14: In memo, Trump administration weighs expanding the expedited deportation powers of DHS**

**Abigail Hauslohner and David Nakamura – Washington Post**

The Trump administration is weighing a new policy to dramatically expand the Department of Homeland Security’s powers to expedite the deportations of some illegal immigrants.

Since 2004, the agency has been authorized to bypass immigration courts only for immigrants who had been living in the country illegally for less than two weeks and were apprehended within 100 miles of the border.

Under the proposal, the agency would be empowered to seek the expedited removal of illegal immigrants apprehended anywhere in the United States who cannot prove they have lived in the country continuously for more than 90 days, according to a 13-page internal agency memo obtained by The Washington Post.

The new guidelines, if enacted, would represent a major expansion of the agency’s authority to speed up deportations under President Trump, who has made border security a top priority.

Two administration officials confirmed that the proposed new policy, which would not require congressional approval, is under review. The memo was circulated at the White House in May, and DHS is reviewing comments on the document from the Office of Management and Budget, according to one administration official familiar with the process who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Joanne F. Talbot, a DHS spokeswoman, said she had not seen the memo. She described it as a draft and emphasized that no final decisions have been made by Homeland Security Secretary John F. Kelly.

“The potential changes would allow DHS to more efficiently use resources to remove persons who have been illegally present for relatively brief periods of time while still observing due-process requirements,” Talbot said.

Immigrant rights advocates denounced the proposed expansion of the expedited deportation authority, warning that the policy would strip more immigrants of due-process rights to seek asylum or other legal protections that would allow them to remain in the country.

“This is a radical departure from current policy and practice, which takes one giant step towards implementing Trump’s deportation force across the nation,” said Marielena Hincapié, executive director of the National Immigration Law Center.

DHS officials disputed such characterizations, saying that the new policy would simply allow the agency to take advantage of its discretion that has been permitted under federal law for more than two decades.

In 1996, Congress authorized the use of expedited deportations for illegal immigrants apprehended anywhere in the country who could not prove they had been physically present in the country two years before their apprehension. The powers were used almost exclusively at the border, however, and in 2004 the George W. Bush administration issued guidelines stipulating that the expedited removals could be used for those apprehended within 100 miles of the border who had lived in the country fewer than 14 days.

The use of expedited removals rose substantially in the decade after the administration implemented its guidelines, spiking from about 50,000 immigrants in 2004 to 193,000 in 2013 — about 44 percent of the total number of people deported that year, according to the American Immigration Council.

In a pair of immigration executive orders signed in January, Trump sought to expand the use of expedited deportations, as one of several strategies to crack down on illegal immigration. Trump also has called for an additional 10,000 immigration agents and 5,000 border agents, penalties for sanctuary jurisdictions that refuse to cooperate with immigration agents, a “big, beautiful” wall along the U.S.-Mexico border and dozens of new immigration judges to slash the immigration court’s backlog of roughly 600,000 cases.

Trump has also lifted the Obama-era restrictions that shielded millions of undocumented immigrants from deportation if they had no criminal histories or were the parents of American-citizen children. Now, immigration agents are free to arrest anyone who is in the United States illegally.

In May, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement said it was arresting more than 400 immigrants a day. In the president’s first three months in office, ICE arrested 41,318 immigrants, up 37.6 percent over the same period last year. Most had criminal records, but the largest increase was among immigrants with no records at all.

The internal DHS memo states that the expanded authority for expedited removals “will enhance national security and public safety” by alleviating the “historic backlogs” at the nation’s immigration courts that have led to delays in hearings for more than two years. At the start of this year, there were more than 534,000 removal cases pending in immigration courts, according to the memo.

That is compared with a total of 168,000 cases in 2004, when the Bush-era guidelines were implemented. President Barack Obama’s administration maintained those guidelines.

The Trump administration’s proposed new policy would “eliminate incentives not only to enter the country unlawfully but also to attempt to quickly travel into the interior of the United States in an effort to avoid the application of expedited removal,” the memo states.

Unaccompanied minors are not currently subject to expedited deportations, nor would they be under the new guidelines that are under review, officials said.

One Trump administration official involved in the internal deliberations said the new policy would have a “deterrent effect” on immigrants who are considering entering the country illegally or overstaying their visas. This official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because no final decisions have been made, said immigrant rights groups take advantage of existing laws to try to drag out court proceedings “as long as possible.”

“Anyone who is surprised that the administration is considering lawfully expanding the use of expedited removal has not been paying attention,” Talbot said. “The expansion you describe is explicitly allowed” under federal law.

According to the DHS memo, those immigrants placed into the expedited deportation process under the new guidelines would still be afforded the opportunity to claim a credible fear of persecution or torture and to be interviewed by an asylum officer under those circumstances, who would determine whether the fear is credible. If credible fear is found, that person would be referred to an immigration judge for further consideration of their case, just as they are now, the memo states. Immigrant rights advocates said that federal authorities have abused the expedited removals process and that border authorities do not always grant apprehended immigrants their rights to seek legal protections.

An expansion of the expedited removals process would be “a recipe for disaster,” said Lee Gelernt, the deputy director of the American Civil Liberties Union’s Immigrants Rights Project.

“If you have to give people genuine due process, you can’t just move people out of the country with the snap of your fingers,” Gelernt said. “But once you start instituting summary removal processes all over the country, then you can start seeing mass deportations.”

“Right now, someone apprehended in St. Louis would be entitled to a full hearing,” he said. “With expedited removal, you pick a person up, and they could be gone immediately.”

The potential changes come as the number of immigrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border illegally has fallen sharply since Trump took office, a shift that administration officials have credited to immigrant fears of harsher Trump policies.

Yet the DHS memo cites figures from last fall, when the level of illegal border crossings was much higher, to make the case that the agency’s resources have been strained, creating “unacceptable national security and public safety vulnerabilities.”

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## **8/24: Trudeau vows immigration crackdown as thousands of Haitians flee to Canada**

**Laurent Lafrance - WSWS**

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau issued an explicit warning last weekend to the thousands of mainly Haitian refugees who are fleeing across the US-Canada border to escape the Trump administration’s brutal crackdown on immigrants.

Speaking in Montreal, the Prime Minister openly discouraged Haitian refugees from cross the border. "Entering Canada irregularly is not an advantage" he said. "There are rigorous immigration and customs rules that will be followed. Make no mistake."

Trudeau’s hardline stance towards refugees fleeing the US is bound up with his government’s determination to maintain and deepen Ottawa’s close economic and military-security partnership with Washington at all costs. It also further exposes the Trudeau government’s phony “refugee-friendly” propaganda, which it has used to give a “progressive” cover to its right-wing policies of vast hikes in military spending, the maintenance of low corporate tax rates, and the privatization of public infrastructure.

Transport Minister Marc Garneau said that Canadian consulates in the US were being “mobilized” to discourage different groups that might be considering coming to Canada by explaining to them the strict criteria needed to be accepted as a refugee. Garneau also gave an interview to the Miami Herald last Sunday to warn members of the Haitian diaspora living in Florida of the risk of being deported once in Canada.

In the first two weeks of August alone, more than 3,800 asylum seekers walked over the border to Saint-Bernard-de-Lacolle, Quebec. This is in addition to the almost 3,000 who crossed in July, which itself represented a four-fold increase compared to the month of June.

More than 1,000 people are currently crammed into military tents on the border, waiting for Canadian authorities to verify their identity. Hundreds more have been housed in the Olympic Stadium in Montreal as well as a former convent and the old Royal Victoria hospital. Other centers have since been opened on the north and south shore of Montreal and a temporary shelter was set up in Cornwall, Ontario.

The most recent influx of refugees has been triggered by the Trump administration’s announcement that it will end the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) granted to Haitians following the 2010 earthquake on the astonishing pretext that Haiti is now considered a safe country. The more than 50,000 Haitians living in the US now fear they will be caught in Trump’s

Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids, jailed in privately-run prison facilities, and then deported to conditions of poverty and misery in Haiti.

The flow of migrants coming to Canada is not restricted to Haitians, however. Since the inauguration of Trump last January, thousands of refugees of Middle Eastern, African and South American origins have fled the US for fear of persecution and deportation.

According to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) more than 10,000 asylum seekers have been intercepted in the last eight months after crossing the border “irregularly” in Quebec alone.

If refugee claimants are forced to enter Canada “irregularly” it is because the Liberal government continues to enforce the Canada-US Safe Third Country agreement, under which refugees who make an asylum application at a regular border crossing are automatically turned back to the United States. Migrants have a chance to apply for asylum only if they cross the border outside an official checkpoint, either via backroads or by crossing ditches, at considerable risk.

The refusal to abandon the agreement is bound up with the Trudeau government’s determination to deepen Ottawa’s working relationship with the Trump administration by stepping up the Canada-US military partnership and enhancing North American economic protectionism through the reshaping of the North America Free Trade Agreement.

The Liberals’ contempt for Haitian refugees is also demonstrated by the conditions in which they are kept. Customs and Immigration Union president Jean-Pierre Fortin said there were about 300 asylum seekers sleeping on an offloading wharf last week and that another 150 to 200 people were sleeping inside in “extremely harsh conditions.” The Red Cross also said that it was treating around 40 medical cases each day as there is no doctor on the spot.

While Haitians are desperately seeking protection in Canada, most of them are unaware that Canada canceled its own temporary residency program for Haitians little more than four years after the 2010 earthquake, which claimed over 200,000 lives and displaced half a million people. At the time, news reports estimated that approximately 3,200 Haitian nationals were to be deported from Canada as a result of the program ending.

The program was fully ended in August 2016 under Trudeau’s watch. Immigration experts say that many of the refugee claimants have since been sent back to Haiti. In fact, the government itself boasted that about half of Haitians seeking refugee status in Canada have been denied in the last couple of years.

The suggestion that Haiti is safe is an absurd lie. Haiti is the poorest country in the Americas and one of the poorest countries in the world. The unemployment rate is at least 30 percent and more than half the population live in poverty. The country has not yet recovered from recent natural disasters, including Hurricane Matthew last year, which destroyed 32 percent of Haiti’s wealth and exacerbated social problems.

Although Trudeau has made clear that his government intends to crack down on migrants crossing the border “irregularly” and deport them after their refugee applications have been rejected, Conservative immigration critic Michelle Rempel put the blame for the flow of refugees on the “irresponsible tweets” Trudeau made in January, when he declared that “Canada welcomes those feeling persecution, terror and war.”

She added that the Liberals had to allocate more resources to speed up the processing of refugee claims, which means accelerating the deportation process. Rempel even claimed that “No one is fleeing persecution from the United States of America.”

In Quebec, the head of the pro-independence Parti Québécois, Jean-François Lisée, made similar comments saying Haitians are not at risk of poverty or repression in either the US or Haiti.

The head of the right-wing populist Coalition Avenir Québec said that the province has already reach its maximum “integration capacity” and called on the provincial government to prevent new refugees from entering the province.

Quebec Liberal Premier Philippe Couillard said that “there exists no guarantee that refugee claims will be accepted, considering the strict rules that govern them.”

Earlier this month, Couillard insisted he was determined to process asylum applications as quickly as possible because the basic necessities provided to refugees such as healthcare were too “expensive.” This from a government which recently announced billions in tax cuts for businesses.

The hardline attitude from all sections of Canada’s ruling elite towards those fleeing persecution has encouraged the most reactionary political forces to rear their ugly heads.

A protest against so-called “illegal” immigration was organized in Quebec City last Sunday by an extreme right-wing, anti-immigrant group called La Meute (the “wolf pack”). Taking place only days after the neo-Nazi rampage in Charlottesville, Virginia, the protest in Quebec was a direct response to the ongoing influx of refugee claimants.

Another anti-immigrant demonstration was called in Vancouver on Saturday but it never materialized because it was countered by thousands of anti-racist protesters, far outnumbering the right-wing extremists.

The ultra-nationalist, anti-immigrant movement in Quebec, including groups like La Meute, has not emerged out of the blue. Under conditions where the ruling class across Canada is imposing anti-immigrant policies to divide the working class, such reactionary and racist elements feel increasingly free to express themselves.

The sovereigntist movement led by the PQ and the union bureaucracy has played a key role in injecting chauvinist poison into public debate and inciting racist, anti-Muslim sentiments. Significantly, the Journal de Montréal, which is owned by media mogul and former PQ leader Pierre-Karl Péladeau, ran a series of commentaries condemning the “left-wing” violence during last weekend’s protest while presenting La Meute in a favorable light.

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## **7/24: Massachusetts cannot hold immigrants so U.S. can detain them: state top court**

**Scott Malone - Reuters**

BOSTON (Reuters) - Massachusetts police do not have the authority to detain illegal immigrants solely to buy time for federal law enforcement officials to take them into custody, the state’s top court ruled on Monday.

The decision amounts to a rejection of requests by the federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency for courts and law enforcement agencies to hold illegal immigrants, who are facing civil deportation orders, in custody for up to 48 hours after their cases are resolved.

The Supreme Judicial Court ruled that doing so amounts to a fresh arrest of the person that is not authorized by state law, in the first such ruling to apply to an entire state, according to Massachusetts’ attorney general.

“Massachusetts law provides no authority for Massachusetts court officers to arrest and hold an individual solely on the basis of a Federal civil immigration detainer, beyond the time that the individual would otherwise be entitled to be released from State custody,” the court wrote in its decision.

The case focused on Sreynouon Lunn from Cambodia. Federal officials said he entered the United States as a refugee in 1985 and was ordered deported to Cambodia in 2008 after a series of criminal convictions. Cambodia declined to accept him and he was released.

Lunn was arrested in Boston last year on an unarmed robbery charge and ordered released in February after prosecutors failed to present a case.

Federal ICE officials took him into custody while he remained in his holding cell, an event that made his case moot. The court agreed to hear the case on the premise that the issue would come up again.

The U.S. Justice Department had argued that the 48-hour detainer requests reflected basic practices of cooperation between various law enforcement agencies.

Attorneys for Lunn and the state had largely agreed that Massachusetts lacked the authority.

“This decision allows local law enforcement to focus their resources on keeping people safe,” said Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey, in a statement.

U.S. President Donald Trump has made cracking down on illegal immigration a top priority of his administration.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts praised the decision.

“At a time when the Trump administration is pushing aggressive and discriminatory immigration enforcement policies, Massachusetts is leading nationwide efforts by limiting how state and local law enforcement assist,” the group’s executive director, Carol Rose, said in a statement.



ICE did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

## **7/23: After truck tragedy, state lawmakers call on Congress to recommit to immigration reform**

**David Goins - WFAA**

As of late Sunday, officials have not revealed where the overheated tractor trailer stuffed with 39 souls was headed.

Only that by the time it stopped at a Wal-Mart parking lot in southwest San Antonio early Sunday morning, nine people were dead.

It is a tragedy that has captured the attention of Texas lawmakers from both sides of the aisle.

While the special session continued Sunday at the Capitol, thoughts were mostly 80 miles to the south of Austin.

"No one should have to die to come to America," Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick said. "This needs to end and I don't know how many more times we have to see this."

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, one of the most conservative voices in state government, renewed his call for lawmakers in D.C. to step up and end the legal uncertainty he says creates the environment for tragedy.

"We need legal immigration reform," Patrick said. "That's up to both parties in Washington & it has been for a long time."

Congress did not pass comprehensive immigration reform under president George W. Bush in 2007 and then rejected a similar effort during the Obama administration in 2013.

San Antonio State Senator Jose Menendez on Sunday questioned if Congress will ever act.

"We don't get comprehensive immigration reform because politically it makes it better to have this boogie man - this red meat check box to run against," Menendez said.

## **6/23: ICE Locks Down Immigrant Detention Facility After Interfaith Group Holds Prayer Circle**

**Inga Sarda-Sorensen – ACLU**

On Tuesday, a group of more than 60 faith leaders and attorneys visiting an immigrant detention center in the high desert was refused entry, and the entire facility was put on lockdown shortly thereafter. Family members and lawyers who were already visiting detainees inside the Adelanto Detention Center were also forced to leave. Members of the interfaith group that planned the "pilgrimage" visit to Adelanto allege that the facility was put on lockdown in response to a short, peaceful prayer circle led by clergy members just outside the entrance to the facility.

An Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) spokesperson said in a statement that although ICE is "committed to facilitating visitation for those housed in its detention centers," ICE "reserves the right to deny visitors access or temporarily suspend visitation in the event of security concerns, as was the case at the Adelanto Detention Facility on Tuesday."

Located on a barren stretch of sunbaked road about two hours northeast of downtown Los Angeles, the Adelanto Detention Center is the largest immigrant detention center in California. Although it falls under the jurisdiction of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the privately-owned facility is run, like many other immigrant detention facilities, by GEO Group, the nation's second largest for-profit prison operator. ICE contracts with the city of Adelanto for the space, and the city of Adelanto contracts with GEO Group to run the facility. Three detainees have died over the past three months at the facility, whose population hovers just under 2,000 people.

Christina Fialho, the executive director of CIVIC, a national advocacy and watchdog group that regularly brings groups to visit detainees at Adelanto, told LAist that no pre-approval is required for family and community visits to the facility as long as they fall during regular visitation hours. "We do it all the time," Fialho told LAist, explaining that they had specific detainees they planned to visit with in small groups.

"We were going there just to listen and be present," Jaime Edwards-Acton, an episcopal priest and rector of St. Stephen's Church in Hollywood, told LAist. The interfaith group, which included Muslims, Christians and Jews, had planned the visit to commemorate World Refugee Day and chartered a bus from Los Angeles to make the trip to Adelanto. The group also planned to visit some of the individuals who had been involved in a hunger strike at Adelanto last week (the strike resumed on Thursday).

Fialho said that when the group arrived on Tuesday afternoon, the facility's warden came out and asked them what they were doing.

"We said that we were here to visit our friends and family and clients in detention," Fialho, who is also an attorney, told LAist. According to Fialho, the warden said he would have to ask ICE if the group could enter. The group was soon told that under the circumstances, they would not be allowed to visit.

"Shortly before 1 p.m., nearly 60 individuals arrived at the center unannounced by bus and sought to speak with detainees," ICE said in a statement to LAist. "The group's organizer was politely told they would not be admitted as prior approval would be required to accommodate such a large contingent. Regardless, members of the group persisted and attempted to enter the facility's west lobby. They were turned away by facility personnel and the doors to the lobbies of the center's east and west facilities were subsequently secured."

"We tried to ask why, were not provided with an answer, and went back on the bus to figure out what was happening," Fialho recalled. At that point, a group of about ten to fifteen clergy members, including priests, ministers, pastors, and a rabbi got off the bus and formed a prayer circle, according to Fialho.

Fialho said that the group held hands and prayed outside of the facility for about five minutes.

"After the prayer, they locked all the doors and I was not able to enter the facility for my attorney visits, which had been pre-approved by ICE. In fact, the Warden of the facility had confirmed that afternoon that I would be allowed to do my legal visits," she said. "But after I prayed, ICE and GEO Group locked me out. They then expelled all the people not even associated with the pilgrimage from the facility, so little kids who had driven hours with their parents [had to leave]."

The group then moved their bus off the premises to a public lot across the street while various members tried calling ICE's national office, local elected representatives and others, as they watched the number of people being forced to leave facility grow.

"We could still see that the family members and attorneys were outside of the facility hoping to get let back in," Fialho recalled, explaining how most of the family members had likely driven several hours to visit loved ones. "We said we were happy to leave at that point if we could make sure that the family members and other attorneys were let in," Fialho said.

Edwards-Acton, the Episcopal priest from Hollywood, underscored that same point, telling LAist that the group tried to convey that although they had come to visit, "the last thing we want to do is have these folks who have driven hours to see their families have to leave. We said we'll go on our way if you let them back in."

"It was like 110 degrees out, in the sun. There's no shade," Edwards-Acton recalled. "We started handing waters out to families and kids because it was so hot. They were making everybody leave and that crowd kept growing."

When it became clear that the families were not going to be let back in, the group decided to get back off the bus and hold an impromptu vigil, according to Edwards-Acton. "We prayed and we sang and we assured one another—and hopefully, in some way, assured those inside—that we'd be back," the priest said.

Edwards-Acton described the day's events as "an awful injustice, particularly for those families who had to leave—and the [detained] people inside who had been waiting for our visit."

"Out of an abundance of caution visitation at the facility was temporarily halted. ICE regrets any inconvenience, but the agency's foremost consideration is the safety of all those at the facility, including detainees and employees," ICE said in their statement, adding that the facility resumed normal operations the next day.

"This is something that has been a pattern at this particular facility: on multiple other occasions GEO and ICE have denied access to volunteers and attorneys," Fialho told LAist.

## **7/26: 15 Protesters Arrested After Demonstration Defending DACA at Texas Capitol**

**A supportive crowd of dozens chanted “undocumented and unafraid” and “sí se puede” as the demonstrators were arrested by state troopers.**

**Gus Bova – The Texas Observer**

Fifteen immigrant rights supporters were arrested Wednesday outside the Texas Capitol after they blocked traffic in an effort to defend existing immigrant protections and demand permanent legal status.

A supportive crowd of dozens chanted “undocumented and unafraid” and “sí se puede” as the demonstrators were handcuffed and removed from a downtown Austin street on the north side of the Capitol, where they had sat for about 10 minutes. The activists were led into a nearby state building by Department of Public Safety troopers and later transported to the Travis County Jail.

“I’m doing this for my family and sisters who are undocumented and my 6 month-old-son so he can live in a world where human dignity is respected,” shouted Manuel Ramirez as a trooper escorted him. Ramirez said he’d been undocumented for 20 years but recently got permanent legal status, which was why he said he could “put [his] life on the line.”

The 15 activists are charged with obstructing a highway, a Class B misdemeanor, and range in age from 20 to 42, police said.

“After repeated requests by DPS officials to leave the roadway were ignored, the suspects were arrested without incident,” said DPS staff sergeant Victor Taylor in a statement.

The hourlong demonstration was led by so-called dreamers — recipients of Obama’s Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) — and came on the heels of Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton’s urging the Trump administration to end the program. An organizer told the Observer that four of the 15 arrested activists were DACA recipients and that their immigration status could be jeopardized by a criminal record. Others were permanent residents or citizens, she said.

“I benefited from DACA, but I knew that was always temporary and didn’t benefit everyone in our community such as my parents,” said Catalina Adorno, an activist from San Antonio, while in cuffs. “There are some serious risks [to getting arrested] but... I know that all the small victories the immigrant community has had were the result of people taking risks.”

On June 29, Paxton led a 10-state coalition in sending a letter to Attorney General Jeff Sessions demanding that the administration terminate DACA, which has provided work permits and relief from deportation to more than 750,000 young immigrants since 2012. The letter threatens that if Trump doesn’t comply by September 5, the states will sue the federal government via an existing lawsuit. Trump has repeatedly vacillated on the question of DACA, and the letter appears to be an attempt to force his hand.

Behind the Wednesday protest was Movimiento Cosecha, a two-year-old immigrant rights network that emphasizes direct action and “noncooperation” to demonstrate the nation’s “dependence on immigrants,” according to Vera Parra, a Cosecha organizer. The network has a presence in more than 20 states and is run by full-time volunteers, Parra said.

A new version of the DREAM Act was introduced last week in the U.S. Senate. The DREAM Act of 2017 would provide a path to citizenship for many childhood arrivals. Similar versions of the proposal have failed in the past decade, and the 2017 version is unlikely to pass a Republican-controlled Congress and administration. During the regular legislative session, 24 protesters were arrested after an eight-hour sit-in at Governor Greg Abbott’s office lobby in opposition to Senate Bill 4, the so-called sanctuary cities ban.

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### About National Immigrant Solidarity Network

NISN is a coalition of community, immigrant, labor, human rights and student activist groups, founded in 2002 in response to the urgent needs for the national coalition to fight immigrant bashing, support immigrant rights, no to the sweatshops exploitation and end to the racism on the community. Please visit our website: <http://www.ImmigrantSolidarity.org>

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