

US assault on immigrants continues as Democrats denounce protests against Trump officials

By Alec Andersen
28 June 2018

As the Trump administration's assault on immigrant workers continues, Trump and his top officials are escalating their fascistic denunciations of immigrants. They have been emboldened by denunciations from leading Democrats of protests against Trump officials.

On Tuesday, an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officer assaulted and detained immigration lawyer Andrea Martinez as she and another lawyer accompanied their three-year-old client to be reunited with his mother before the family was to be deported to Honduras. Martinez told the *Daily Beast* that she and another lawyer attempted to follow their client into the lobby of one of the agency's offices in Kansas City, Missouri, when an ICE agent shoved them out. He then pushed Martinez to the ground, resulting in a fractured ankle.

The officer told Martinez to come inside and locked her in an empty room, denying her medical treatment and refusing to allow her to use the phone, while providing no explanation for her confinement. After 40 minutes to an hour, she was hauled out on a stretcher and taken by ambulance to a nearby hospital. Martinez later learned that ICE had arrested her partner and started deportation proceedings against him.

This incident again highlights the flagrant disregard for democratic and human rights within the ranks of ICE and Customs and Border Protection (CBP). This is being encouraged by Trump's increasingly fascistic rhetoric and policies.

At a Monday evening rally in South Carolina, Trump launched into a tirade against undocumented immigrants and the Democrats for their supposed support for immigration, saying: "The Democrats want to protect illegals coming into this country, some of

whom are not good, some of whom cause lots of problems in the worst possible way. They want to protect illegals coming into this country much more so than they want to protect you..."

The next day at a Los Angeles event hosted by wealthy right-wing lawyers, Attorney General Jeff Sessions denounced opponents of the administration's now-suspended family separation policy as a "lunatic fringe" of "radicalized" people who live in "gated communities." He proceeded to joke about child separation, saying: "They like a little security around themselves, and if you try to scale the fence, believe me, they'll be even too happy to have you arrested and separated from your children."

This perspective found expression Wednesday morning in a Justice Department memo to the House of Representatives urging passage of a reactionary bill to end the practice of allowing family members to join relatives in the United States and a lottery visa program for immigrants from countries with few nationals in the US, while building the infamous wall along the border with Mexico.

Referring to a court order demanding the reunification of all detained immigrant families within 30 days, the memo read: "Without this action by Congress, lawlessness at the border will continue, which will only lead to predictable results: more heroin and fentanyl pushed by Mexican cartels plaguing our communities, a surge in MS-13 gang members, and an increase in the number of human trafficking prosecutions."

The legislation, which also included a largely symbolic provision to end family separations, was voted down due to the overwhelming opposition of

far-right representatives, who argued the bill was too lenient.

The Democrats, for their part, have sought to suppress and redirect public anger over the Trump administration's anti-immigrant policies, which has found expression in a number of scattered protests against top officials at restaurants and official events in recent days. When California Democratic Representative Maxine Waters said such protests should continue until Trump stops his anti-immigrant offensive, she was roundly condemned by her party's leadership.

Democratic House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi reprimanded Waters, denouncing the protests as "harassment" and urging "civility." Her counterpart in the Senate, Minority Leader Charles Schumer, derided such "harassment" as "un-American."

This cowardly effort to suppress public opposition to the administration's Gestapo-like immigration raids, family separations and construction of military concentration camps for immigrants in the name of "civility" underscores the duplicity of the Democratic Party's efforts to posture as a defender of immigrant rights.

Meanwhile, there are now some 100 shelters operating in 17 states to jail immigrant children who have been separated from the parents. At least 2,000 such children remain in detention, and the government continues to refuse media access to the facilities.

Trump responded to the Democrats' impotent appeals for civility with a tweet doubling down on his South Carolina rant, writing: "Congratulations to Maxine Waters, whose crazy rants have made her, together with Nancy Pelosi, the unhinged FACE of the Democrat Party. Together, they will Make America Weak Again! But have no fear, America is now stronger than ever before, and I'm not going anywhere!"

The Democrats and the overwhelming majority of the news media have remained silent on the Navy's planned construction of concentration camps to hold 120,000 immigrants and workers. Their complicity stands in stark contrast to the widespread public anger that has emerged in opposition to child separation and Gestapo-style roundups of undocumented immigrants.

What the Democrats fear above all is that spontaneous demonstrations will break free of their

grip, sparking a broader movement of the working class.

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