

# ICE conducts anti-immigrant raids throughout Wisconsin

By Jacob Crosse  
24 September 2018

Immigrations Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents conducted targeted raids throughout the state of Wisconsin over the weekend. As of this writing it is unclear how many have been disappeared by the American gestapo, though dozens of families have reportedly been impacted by raids on Friday and Saturday.

The raids are part of the Trump administration's war on immigrants which has seen mass workplace raids and children thrown behind bars after being torn from their families at the border earlier this year under a new "zero tolerance" policy. Nearly 13,000 children are currently being held in detention centers across the US.

Family members of the workers kidnapped have been given little information as to why their family members were detained or where ICE has taken them. While most of the raids took place in the capital city of Madison, immigration rights group *Voces De La Frontera* (VDLF) has reported that raids were also conducted in Green Bay, Milwaukee, and Wausau.

In a press conference held Friday afternoon, Madison's Democratic Mayor Paul Soglin, along with Madison Police Chief Mike Koval, expressed disappointment that ICE had not coordinated with local police agencies prior to conducting the raids. At least 9 people in Madison, including fathers and uncles, were detained on their way to work, at home or at their place of employment. Neither official could answer exactly how many had been taken or for what reason the raids were conducted. Mayor Soglin went on to state, "We are going to do our best to work with community leaders to make sure the rights of those individuals in ICE's custody are fully protected."

How Soglin plans to protect the "rights" of the workers when he doesn't know where they are being detained or why they were detained remains to be seen.

Alderman Shiva Bidar-Sielaff also spoke at the press conference with the Mayor, confusingly stating, "We are in no way or shape cooperating with this kind of enforcement," while explaining that these raids were not "targeted at locations" but instead are "specific lists" with "names" on them. Bidar-Sielaff claimed she did not know who was on the list or how a name ends up on the list.

Police Chief Koval admitted that Madison Police have been working with ICE to detain individuals wanted for "violent crimes," but that the department had not been helping with immigration enforcement. Koval lamented that "proper channels" weren't followed in regards to ICE officials coordinating with local police. Prior to this weekend's arrests, according to Koval, ICE had been supplying the department with dates, times and locations before conducting raids. This "communication breakdown" is the main concern of the police chief, not the incarceration of workers for unknown reasons.

VDLF estimates that over a dozen families have been affected by the coordinated raids.

In Milwaukee, Erick Gamboa Chay, the father of three children, ages eight, four and one, was detained inside his home while he was getting his family ready for school. Giselle Vera, Chay's niece, described the terrifying ordeal. "Agents surrounded the house...They banged on his door claiming to be police, but actually they were ICE. Now my uncle's kids keep asking when their dad is going to come back."

According to VDLF Gamboa Chay was targeted by the agency after being stopped for "driving without a license." In a cruel warning to the working class, ICE is denying Gamboa Chay bond, forcing him to stay imprisoned at an unknown facility potentially hundreds of miles away from his family. There is a severe

backlog of immigration cases, according to bipartisanpolicy.org, with over 632,261 cases waiting to be heard as of August 2017. This backlog means that Gamboa Chay could be spending over two years in a detention center before his case is brought before a judge.

Lisa, whose husband was arrested on Friday, spoke to local Madison news station WKOW, detailing the dysfunctional criminality of the agency. “They said they were coming to take my husband, that he’d missed an appointment for his visa application for his residency.” However, once Lisa was able to speak with federal immigration officials they stated they had “nothing on file...no warrants.” Lisa, added, “They don’t know why they picked him up.”

Lisa, shocked at the militaristic tactics employed by the ICE agents, contacted the FBI to report a kidnapping. “I had talked to the FBI actually because they came, they had nothing and they’re demanding a cellphone,” Lisa said. “So I’m thinking has he been kidnapped.” Lisa has been married to her husband for 17 years and they have 6 children together. She told reporters that her husband had been working his way through the labyrinthian immigration process noting that they had spent nearly \$60,000 in fees trying to obtain legal status.

Angela Betancourt told Channel 3000 that her husband of 29 years and father to their 3 children, Jesús Enciso, was detained on his way to work in Madison, along with five of his coworkers Friday morning. Angela’s son was driving at the time; he has a valid driver’s license. That did not deter ICE agents, who pulled up and surrounded the vehicle in two separate cars. The agents demanded everyone exit and show “their documents.” Angela doesn’t know why he was detained or where her husband was taken.

Phony “progressive” Democrats such as Mayor Soglin are not calling for the abolition of ICE, or even a halt to current raids. Instead, in a script followed by local Democratic Party officials across the country, Soglin has requested more “coordination” while feigning sadness and regret at the barbaric methods employed by ICE. The fight to defend the democratic rights of all workers must be taken up by the working class in opposition to the Democratic Party and their functionaries, including the Democratic Socialists of America.

To contact the WSWS and the  
Socialist Equality Party visit:

<http://www.wsws.org>