

Immigrant shot by ICE agents two weeks ago detained in lawyer's parking lot in Nashville, Tennessee

By Casey Gold
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On Tuesday, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents in Nashville, Tennessee, violently arrested 39-year-old Jose Fernando Andrade-Sanchez as he was leaving his attorney's office. He was consulting a lawyer after having been shot and injured by ICE Enforcement and Removal agents just two weeks ago. Andrade-Sanchez is a Mexican national who has been living in the Nashville area; he now faces deportation and up to two years in prison.

The abhorrent treatment of Andrade-Sanchez by ICE agents, which has taken place in open, public spaces, is indicative of the hastening deterioration of democratic rights and the growing threat of violence toward the entire working class carried out by the Trump administration in its ongoing war on immigrants.

The September 5 incident involved two ICE agents approaching Andrade-Sanchez in his truck, which was parked in a grocery store parking lot in Antioch, Tennessee, after a traffic stop. When the agents requested that Andrade-Sanchez exit his truck, he instead drove forward. This was the impetus for one of the agents to shoot Andrade-Sanchez twice, putting him in the hospital. The agent who put Andrade-Sanchez in the hospital has not been charged or reprimanded in any way.

On September 11, a federal grand jury indicted Andrade-Sanchez for "illegal reentry." The indictment was unsealed on Tuesday, resulting in Andrade-Sanchez's arrest this week. ICE agents surrounded Ozment Law Firm, an immigration firm Andrade-Sanchez sought to retain for his immigration case, with guns drawn, waiting for Andrade-Sanchez to exit the office.

Aaron Dendy, an attorney at Ozment Law Firm,

reported that ICE agents forced Andrade-Sanchez to the ground, despite attempts by Andrade-Sanchez himself and attorneys to inform the agents that he was still injured from ICE's previous attack.

ICE responded to local reporters' request for information about the treatment of Andrade-Sanchez in a short, but revealing statement, "The agents acted in accordance with federal law and policy during [Tuesday's] arrest."

The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Tennessee, where Andrade-Sanchez will be tried and sentenced to deportation, if not time in prison, issued a press release about the arrest on Tuesday. This statement details Andrade-Sanchez's past offenses and how Andrade-Sanchez "elud[ed] apprehension," simply noting that an agent shot and wounded Andrade-Sanchez. Ironically, the statement concludes with the statement that, "[Andrade-Sanchez] is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law."

The corporate, compliant media has completely accepted the government's version of the story, with not one condemnation of ICE's appalling behavior. Instead, most outlets have focused on Andrade-Sanchez's past and the technical "illegality" of his entry to the US.

Federal prosecutors have requested that Andrade-Sanchez be held in jail while his charges pend, citing Andrade-Sanchez's "criminal history." This refers to the fact that Andrade-Sanchez had been deported to Mexico on four previous occasions, pleaded guilty to domestic assault in 2009, and pleaded guilty to a charge of "criminal impersonation," for giving a fake name to a Nashville police officer, in

2013.

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Andrade-Sanchez is unfortunately one of the latest but not the last victim of the state's turn to violence in response to growing social inequality. It is no coincidence that Andrade-Sanchez faced such brutal treatment while the Trump administration and leading Democrats decry "weak borders" and stoke fear about "illegal aliens." In fact, the treatment of Andrade-Sanchez is exactly what was called for at a Trump rally in Florida earlier this year, where Trump laughed in response to an audience member's call to "shoot" immigrants crossing the US-Mexico border.

In a just society, there would be no restrictions on human movement, and the ICE agent who shot and wounded Andrade-Sanchez would be the one facing punishment. The US Attorney's Office's pathetic attempt to keep up its "democratic" veneer with a hollow reference to Andrade-Sanchez's "presumed innocence" illustrates the role such institutions play as the ruling class becomes increasingly brutal towards workers, youth, and students.

Only a mass movement of youth, students, and the working class on an international, socialist basis can defend democratic rights and ensure the safety of the most vulnerable layers of the working class.

Less than two months ago, residents in the working-class Hermitage neighborhood in Nashville physically stopped ICE agents from arresting an immigrant father. There, the father and his son refused to exit their van, which neighbors then surrounded to prevent the arrest. It is safe to say that had there been no intervention by neighbors in that situation, the ICE agents there would not have refrained from exerting violent force against the man and his child.

ICE agents, as well as police officers and other "enforcement" arms of the state, will continue to unleash atrocities on the working class, regardless of race, nationality, gender, or any other identity. In response, the working class, youths, and students must themselves intervene and defend democratic and social rights.

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