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# **VOICE OF REVOLUTION**

**Publication of the U.S. Marxist-Leninist Organization**

September 8, 2017

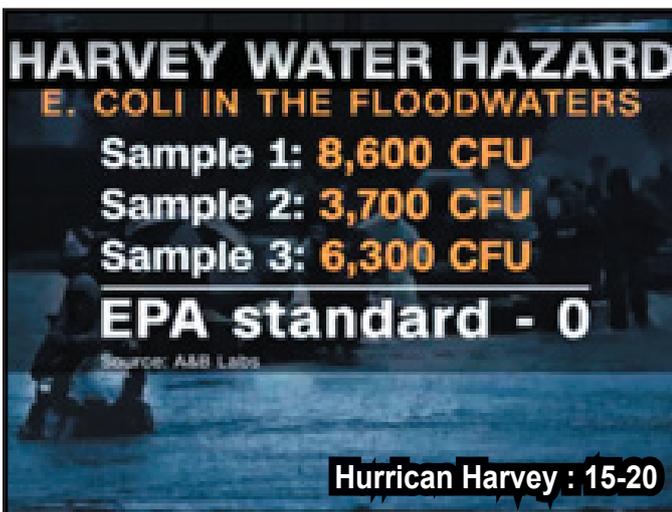
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**No Human Being is Illegal : 3-14**



**Hurrican Harvey : 15-20**



## NO HUMAN BEING IS ILLEGAL

### **Defend the Rights of Immigrants, Legalization for All Now!**

President Trump has continued Obama's broad attacks on immigrants, which includes deportations, detentions of families and now elimination of the policy giving temporary status to undocumented youth

and students, known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). The policy, currently impacting more than 700,000 undocumented youth and students — all guilty of

**Defend Immigrant Rights • 3**

## HURRICANES HARVEY AND IRMA

### **Salute First Responders and Condemn Government Failure to Ensure Safety and Fund Recovery**

*Voice of Revolution* extends its salute to the many first responders, volunteers and all those joining in assisting in the recovery in Houston after Hurricane Harvey. Our

hearts are with those whose lives and families were devastated by Harvey, and those who are now battling Irma in the Caribbean, including the

**Hurrican Harvey • 16**

## STATE-ORGANIZED RACIST ATTACK IN CHARLOTTESVILLE

### **To Strengthen Resistance, Target the Racist U.S. State**

Charlottesville, Virginia witnessed a state organized racist attack, as Nazis and the KKK — both known to be funded and armed by state agencies like the FBI — rallied. The few hundred brought in from

around the country were met by many hundreds of demonstrators opposing racism and fascism. That the state was directly involved was evident by police actions, with police

**Strengthen Resistance • 21**

**OUR SECURITY LIES IN OUR FIGHT FOR THE RIGHTS OF ALL**

# September edition of ***Voice of Revolution***

## ***Editorials & Statements***

- *Defend the Rights of Immigrants, Legalization for All Now!*..... 1
- *Salute First Responders and Condemn Government Failure  
to Ensure Safety and Fund Recovery* ..... 1
- *To Strengthen Resistance, Target the Racist U.S. State*..... 1

## ***Defend Rights of Immigrants***

- *No DACA, No Fear/Sin DACA, Sin Miedo* ..... 4
- *Family Detention Must End Immediately* ..... 5
- *Build a Strong Movement to Defend Undocumented Youth*..... 5
- *Native American Resistance to Criminalization and U.S. Border Patrol* .. 6
- *University of California Sues Trump Administration  
on Unlawful Repeal of DACA Program* ..... 7
- *New York Attorney General Files Lawsuit To Preserve DACA* ..... 7
- *Hundreds of Top CEOs Urge Trump to Save DACA* ..... 9
- *ICE Deporting Undocumented Immigrants By Branding Them  
as Gang Members* ..... 9
- *Trump Plans Massive Raids on Immigrant Communities  
Starting Mid-September*..... 10
- *Pardon the Immigrants Arpaio Criminalized, Not the Racist Sheriff* ..... 11
- *Criminal Racist Practices of Maricopa County Sheriff’s Office*..... 12
- *Trump’s Arpaio Pardon Demonstrates Disdain for Rule of Law* ..... 13

## ***Hurricane Harvey***

- *Recovery After Hurricane Harvey: Will There Be Justice for All?*..... 15
- *Harvey First Responders Sue After Explosion at Arkema Plant*..... 16
- *Older Victims of Hurricane Harvey May Need Special Attention  
as Texas Recovers*..... 17
- *Hurricanes May Delay ICE’s Plan to Deport ‘Historic’ Number  
of Immigrants*..... 19
- *The Pentagon is Poisoning Your Drinking Water* ..... 19

## ***Charlottesville: Target the Racist U.S. State***

- *Trump Unable to Unite Military Bureaucracy —  
Growing Conflicts Among Rulers Increase Civil War Danger* ..... 22
- *Diversion — Twin Brother of U.S. Policy of Divide and Rule*..... 23

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## I • Defend Immigrant Rights

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no crime and submitting to government demands and security clearances. Having provided full information about themselves, they can now easily be identified and targeted by the government for detention and/or deportation.

Obama put the policy in place through an executive order. It is now being rescinded through an executive order by Trump. The process of imposing deportation for many will not take place for another 6 months. However, some young workers and student organizers are already being targeted, with the government branding them as “gang members” or a “threat.” All of these young people, many with children of their own, and their parents and siblings, are being forced into an uncertain and difficult situation. The government has told them to prepare to leave the country.

The youth have responded, “We are here to stay. We are undocumented and unafraid!” Many demonstrations were organized the day the Trump administration announced the decision, September 5, including large actions at the White House, in Chicago, Los Angeles and elsewhere. Numerous organizations took immediate action to organize broadly, among immigrants and workers in general. They rightly declared that they would not be used as a bargaining chip for negotiations between Trump and Congress on immigration legislation.

Trump officials have said they will restore DACA in exchange for legislation funding the border wall and even more enforcement measures. These include establishing the E-Verify Identification method for *all* workers, utilizing a federally issued biometric ID. Past proposals for such an ID, from current minority leader of the Senate, New York Senator Schumer, have included not only providing biometric identifiers, like eye-scans, but also passing an FBI and national security check. These are potentially a means to target organizers among workers, as is already occurring among immigrant workers, and create a pool

of workers who are denied ID and forced into slave labor camps, to be used as needed by the oligopolies. It is not an accident that detention camps are being expanded, not eliminated.

The attack on immigrant workers is a means to undermine organizing among all workers and to block development of the united political movement necessary to defend the rights of all.

Trump’s attacks on immigrants, coupled with his pardon of known anti-immigrant and racist Sheriff Arpaio of Arizona (see p.11), are also further indicators of the government of police powers now in place. Arpaio worked directly with the federal government to brutally attack immigrants, openly using racial profiling and detentions without cause. He systematically attempted to humiliate workers and terrorize whole communities, including targeting women. Despite a federal investigation confirming all of this (see p. 12) he was not charged with these crimes but simply with a contempt of court charge for his refusal to submit to a court order to end the racist government profiling. He was found guilty but not jailed, with his sentencing planned for October. Trump’s pardon August 25 sanctions the use of arbitrary police powers by police agencies. It also shows that the courts will not block such police powers and the Office of the President will support those that are loyal to the executive. The situation also shows conflicts between and among the federal and state governments, and their armed agencies are increasing, as many states rejected Trump’s action.

As the many now organizing for rights bring out, “We cannot put our hope in politicians and need to continue taking bold action,” to defend immigrant rights. Strengthening the independent politics of the working class by affirming *No Human Being is Illegal* and defending the rights of all is needed. This includes rejecting the divide and rule efforts and many diversions of the rulers and focusing instead on raising the level of political discussion on rights and political empowerment.

# No DACA, No Fear/Sin DACA, Sin Miedo

*SinDACA Sinmiedo.Com*

Trump has ended Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), but we refuse to go back into the shadows. It is time to fight for the entire immigrant community. Join our Resistance. We won DACA because we took action. We organized, we marched, we sat in. We came out of the shadows. Now, with the repeal of DACA, we are being called to take action again. We must show the public that we are ready to fight for the entire immigrant community. We are #SinDACA SinMiedo! (No DACA, No Fear). Cosecha is calling on DACA youth to mobilize. We will not go back into the shadows — we will support each other, we will march, and we will take action.

The White House has announced the end of DACA. With this attack on our community, the Trump administration is pushing Congress to use us as bargaining chips to fund the border wall and strengthen his deportation force. This is a grave injustice to the immigrant community. Trump wants to make us desperate enough to accept bad immigration bills, but we will continue holding the line, regardless of how many times they continue to attack us.

We will not stop fighting until we have won permanent protection, dignity and respect for our parents, our friends, and all 11 million undocumented immigrants in the United States.

For five years, DACA allowed us to provide for our families, to explore new work opportunities, to become nurses, teachers, and doctors, to drive without fear, to travel and finally pay our respects to those we lost. Now we come together in our city halls, community spaces, churches and campuses to hold each other in community and process the pain, the anger, and the sorrow we feel. Take a moment to feel the outrage for all the young undocumented immigrants that have not turned 16 yet and were waiting to apply for DACA. Feel the anger for all the DACA parents that will lose the jobs that supported their children. Feel the sorrow for all the plans that DACA recipients envisioned but now seem impossible.

We know losing DACA means we will lose our ability to work, drive, and travel but it also means that those we provide for (our parents, siblings and children) will also feel the impact of this loss. This repeal will result in the largest government sponsored lay off since the Great Depression. 75 percent of all DACA recipients will lose their jobs in a period of two years



and the economic consequences will be felt throughout the country.

While over 700,000 of us enjoyed many privileges with DACA, the 11 million undocumented immigrants in this country never did. The undocumented community has been under attack by this and previous administrations through raids, mass detention, and mass deportation. The fear and pain has not gone away and we must remind our families and friends that all undocumented immigrants need dignity, respect, and permanent protection. DACA recipients are part of the 11 million and this fight is for everyone.

As we stand with each other, we will send a message to President Trump: the loss of DACA does not take away our strength and resilience. We are not defined by a work permit or a driver's license. We will lead this fight on our terms for all undocumented immigrants in this country.

This will also be a moment to remind ourselves that we will not be used as bargaining chips to harm

our communities. We know that the current political weather will make it very hard to see any bills that are not attached to enforcement — which will hurt the rest of the undocumented community. We cannot put our hope in politicians and need to continue taking bold action to change the political weather. We will continue holding the line, regardless of how many times they continue to attack us. We will not take the bait.

The repeal of DACA will affect our entire immigrant community, and we know we will not be able to get through this crisis alone. All of us who are undocumented and have been undocumented have been through enormous struggles in this country, and we have held each other up throughout all of these challenges. We will fight today and continue fighting. We will come together to support one another, and affirm collectively that we are still undocumented and unafraid.

Cosecha is fighting for the permanent protection for all people in this country without documents. This moment is proving to us more than ever that we cannot count on politicians to give us protection. DACA was never permanent, and we feel the pain of that today. The new proposals for the DREAM Act just use us as pawns to further enforce the border. What we need is permanent protection, respect, and dignity, and we will win that. Our plan is to boycott and strike to win.

# Family Detention Must End Immediately

*Detention Watch Network*

The unjust policy of locking up immigrant mothers with their children must end immediately. Families fleeing extreme violence in Central America are migrating to the United States in search of refuge. Rather than providing protection, the United States detains women and children seeking asylum in family detention centers.

Family detention is the inhumane and unjust policy of jailing immigrant mothers with their children – including babies, sometimes for years. Upon arrival in the U.S., families are locked up in remote and punitive detention centers, with little access to legal and social services, often experiencing widespread human and civil rights violations.

The government expanded the use of family detention in 2014 in an attempt to stem the flow of asylum seeking women and children coming to the U.S. from Central America and deter further migration. This policy was implemented despite the U.S. having a direct hand in creating the violent and unstable conditions prevailing in Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador that are causing many to flee.

Currently there are three immigration jails holding families: Berks Family Residential Center in Berks County, Pennsylvania

(Berks), Karnes Residential Center in Karnes City, Texas (Karnes) and South Texas Family Residential Center in Dilley, Texas (Dilley). Prior to 2014, the Obama administration had ended large-scale family detention in Texas, with Berks being the only family detention center in operation. By the end of 2014 Karnes and Dilley had opened while a fourth facility, the Artesia Family Residential Center in New Mexico, had both opened and been forced to closed amongst a firestorm of criticism.

The alarming rise of family detention has been met with the increasing demand for an end to the policy. In 2015 a federal court ruling called on the government to release children with their mothers from family detention. Judge Gee's ruling found the current practice in violation of the *Flores Settlement*, an agreement that set the standard for the detention and treatment of immigrant children in the U.S. since 1997.

Family detention is on the wrong side of history. The current family detention program is the largest since the internment of Japanese Americans in the 1940s. The government's policy of locking up women and children is inhumane and unjust. Family detention must end immediately.

## Build a Strong Movement to Defend Undocumented Youth

*Presente.org*

The fears of many in our Latinx (and beyond) communities were realized August 25, as Attorney General (AG) Jeff Sessions, acting on behalf of Donald Trump, announced that the administration will be phasing out the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program — won through organizing during the Obama Administration — which gave temporary legal status protection to nearly 800,000 undocumented immigrants who came to the country as children.

This legislation was a light in the darkness for many of our most vulnerable family and friends, and now that light is in danger of being extinguished.

Take action: Trump and Sessions' decision today is unacceptable and represents a deep failure of values and moral judgment.

AG Sessions, a white supremacist who has a racist legislative record a mile long, announced that the phase out will take place over the course of the next 6 months, in an attempt to force Congress to enact some form of official legislation.

Meanwhile, youth currently protected by DACA will have until October 5, 2018, to apply for a 2-year renewal of their permits. Applications for new DACA enrollments will no longer be accepted unless this decision is reversed in Congress or the courts.

Based on a committed and fierce community of conscience across the country, we will continue to #DefendDACA and work for the dignity and full human rights of all immigrants and refugees, regardless of their immigration status. Sessions' announcement is both

a cruel betrayal of promises made by this country to immigrants, as well as a cynical ploy on behalf of the Trump administration attempting to duck responsibility.

Youth currently enrolled in the DACA program, who were brought over as children, have committed to a legal path towards citizenship. But now they have been given only six months to get all of their affairs in order, with no guarantee that they will not still face deportation. Meanwhile, anyone under the age of 16 is left without any recourse.

The policy of the Trump administration, which is trying to bill itself as a sympathetic compromise, will result in the breaking up of families and the widespread destruction of people's lives. And the idea that this historically inept Congress will be able to enact lasting immigration reform rings hollow, while the bottomless cruelty and pettiness shown by the Trump administration in all of their doings make the likelihood of comprehensive and humane reform all but impossible if left up to them.

And while this Congress argues over half-measures in regards to immigration reform, the Trump administration will also likely use the time to figure out how to ransom status of DACA youth for funding for his impossible border wall.

We will not allow the lives of our young people and their families to be used as bargaining chips. Support for DACA is a unifying issue that can bring a mass base of people together — unifying anyone opposed to Trump and his racist agenda. [...]

# Native American Resistance to Criminalization and U.S. Border Patrol

*An interview with O’Odham Nation member Ophelia Rivas by Neil Howard*

My name is Ophelia Rivas, but my family knows me as Ilya. The place where I come from is beautiful land. We have lived there for centuries and we have a way of life that we have followed for all those years. We continue parts of it right now, but the political effects that are imposed on our people because of these borders are greatly impacting our people.

After 9/11 the world discovered that there was the O’Odham nation, which is the second largest reservation in the United States after the Navajo. These reservations are considered concentration camps of the indigenous people in the United States. Our traditional lands are divided into different political boundaries. About one-third of our lands are now cordoned off, like a concentration camp.

We have three main roads that exit our reservation. Each of those exits has a border patrol checkpoint. We have to declare what citizens we are, on our own lands — whether we are U.S. citizens or Mexican citizens. I have resisted throughout my life, so I always say I am O’Odham, and we are on O’Odham land. I receive different responses to that. Sometimes I am pulled into a secondary checkpoint and held there for hours, and have a drug-sniffing dog put into my car. [...]

One of the things that happened to me was when they held a gun to my head and asked me to say whether I was a U.S. citizen or Mexican citizen in front of my daughter and my grandson. It had a traumatic effect on my grandson for many years. There are different extreme acts of violence and extreme aggression that have happened to not just me, but to every single person on the reservation where I come from.

My father’s community is 15 miles south of that arbitrary border. Throughout my life, I have crossed that border back and forth to my father’s community and my mother’s community for different reasons: a ceremony, like a birthing ceremony, or a woman’s coming out ceremony. These are the things that are important to our way of life.

**Neil Howard:** To what extent is the way the border patrol works in Native American lands representative of how they work along the entire border?

**Ophelia Rivas:** I only know about the conditions where I live. We don’t have the resources to travel to the other places to interact with the other groups of people that are along the border. But I do know they exist and I do know that they are probably facing the same problems. It is the government’s system to divide us from each other, to prevent us from connecting and building solidarity against these kinds of invasions.

We are looked at as undocumented people. We are always suspected of being drug traffickers or human traffickers. Whenever we move out of our yards, or down the road if we have a vehicle, we are stopped and interrogated by the border patrol. There are so many degrees of invasion of our rights as citizens.

Many organizations have attempted to document abuses, but it seems the government does not really want to engage with that. Because we are just Indians.

Before we were invaded they declared us to be sub-human. They removed skulls from graves, so they could measure our skulls to see what kind of humans we were. We were not the supreme humans, whatever that is. There’s so much disregard and disrespect to the people. Absolutely no acknowledgement of our rights. Even if we wanted to say we are US citizens, we do not have any rights.

We live on the border and we are treated like undocumented people. And we have to show proof of our U.S. citizenship if we walk out into our yards. There is an old woman and her daughter that pick Samara fruit, and that happens every year, and the border patrol came and sat on top of their truck. They watched them through their binoculars, and through the scopes on their weapons. They watched them as they walked all the way, and when they were just about to get into their yard they were stopped and asked for documents. That is what happens to us. Even if we are just out on the land, we are stopped and asked for documents.

When we cross the border for ceremonial reasons, we can easily cross into Mexico without a problem. We go to our ceremony site, which happens to be in Mexico. But when we cross back, we have medicine bundles that are only handled by ceremony men. But they are handled by the customs. They are taken apart and they are handled, which kind of defeats the purpose of the ceremony. It is a sacred ceremony, and those sacred items are renewed and blessed every year, and to be handled by the border patrol is not good for the entire people.

One time they held the ceremony leaders in detention with the bundle, until a tribal government official came to verify that they were tribal members. That happens to us all the time. It has a great number of effects and causes a lot of trauma of the people. [...]

At 12 years old I was sent to a Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding school. I do not know how far Nevada is from Arizona, but that is how far I was sent to go to high school. That kind of forced assimilation by the system is something the United States government has been involved in long term. They send us to boarding school to indoctrinate us into the American way of life. Some people have really followed that way, and some people, like myself, have resisted. I resist with my language, all the time talking my language and not conforming to the American way of life.

After all of these atrocities that have happened to our people we are still strong, we are still continuing our ceremonies. Some of us still know the songs to the mountains that bring us energies and empower our people on our land to continue that way. All people are impacted in different ways, but we will all survive as original peoples.

# University of California Sues Trump Administration on Unlawful Repeal of DACA Program

*UC Office of the President, September 8, 2017*

The University of California today (September 8) filed suit in federal court against the Trump administration for wrongly and unconstitutionally violating the rights of the University and its students by rescinding the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program on “nothing more than unreasoned executive whim.”

The lawsuit filed in the Northern District of California against the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and its acting secretary, Elaine Duke, is the first to be filed by a university seeking to stop the Trump administration’s recently announced decision to end the DACA program, which has allowed nearly 800,000 undocumented young people to legally live, work and study in the United States.

UC President Janet Napolitano, who was secretary of DHS from 2009 to 2013, created the DACA program in 2012, setting in place a rigorous application and security review process. Applicants for DACA were only approved if they were in or had graduated from high school or college, or were in the military, or an honorably discharged veteran. They cannot have been convicted of a felony or major misdemeanor or otherwise pose a threat to national security or public safety.

“Neither I, nor the University of California, take the step of suing the federal government lightly, especially not the very agency that I led,” Napolitano said. “It is imperative, however, that we stand up for these vital members of the UC community. They represent the best of who we are — hard working, resilient and motivated high achievers. To arbitrarily and capriciously end the DACA program, which benefits our country as a whole, is not only unlawful, it is contrary to our national values and bad policy.”

The lawsuit asks the court to set aside the Trump administration’s rescission of DACA because it is “unconstitutional, unjust, and unlawful.”

“As a result of the Defendants’ actions, the Dreamers face expulsion from the only country that they call home, based on

nothing more than unreasoned executive whim,” the complaint reads.

“The University faces the loss of vital members of its community, students and employees. It is hard to imagine a decision less reasoned, more damaging, or undertaken with less care. ... Defendants’ capricious rescission

of the DACA program violates both the procedural and substantive requirements of the APA (Administrative Procedure Act), as well as the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment.”

UC has approximately 4,000 undocumented students, a substantial number of whom have DACA, as well as teachers, researchers and health care providers who are DACA recipients. The university is committed to using all available resources to support the thousands of Dreamers who are currently enrolled at UC campuses, as well as other undocumented students. Those resources and services include:

- Continuing to allow California residents who are Dreamers to pay in-state tuition;
- Maintaining the DREAM loan program for financial aid;
- Offering legal services to our undocumented students;
- Supporting campus-based student service centers; and
- Directing campus police not to contact, detain, question or arrest individuals based on suspected undocumented status, or to enter agreements to undertake joint efforts to make arrests for federal immigration law violations.



## 16 STATE AGS JOIN SUIT

# New York Attorney General Files Lawsuit To Preserve DACA

*NY Attorney General Schneiderman*

Today, September 6, New York Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman led a coalition of 16 Attorneys General in filing suit to protect Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) grantees. The lawsuit, which was filed this afternoon in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York, details how the Trump administration has violated the Equal Protection clause of the Constitution by discriminating against

DREAMers of Mexican origin, who make up 78 percent of DACA recipients; violated Due Process rights; and harmed States’ residents, institutions, and economies.

“Immigration is the lifeblood of New York State. The Trump administration’s decision to end DACA is cruel, inhumane, and devastating to the 42,000 New Yorkers who have been able to come out of the shadows and live a full life as a result of

the program,” said Attorney General Schneiderman. “These DREAMers play by the rules. They work hard and pay taxes. America is the only home they have ever known – and they deserve to stay here and keep contributing to our state and our nation.

“That’s why we’re taking the Trump administration to court to protect DREAMers and the New York employers who rely on them. It’s clear that President Trump’s DACA repeal would cause huge economic harm to New York – and that it’s driven by President Trump’s personal anti-Mexican bias. Attorneys General have not hesitated to act to protect those we serve, and I’m committed to continuing to use every tool to protect New Yorkers,” Attorney General Schneiderman concluded.

“This cruel move to rescind DACA feeds the beast of bigotry and undermines the values that built this state and this nation. Ending this policy will upend the lives of hundreds of thousands of young people who have only ever called America their home. This action is antithetical to everything we believe as New Yorkers and we cannot sit on the sidelines and watch the lives of these young people ruined. As we made clear before this decision, New York will sue to protect the ‘dreamers’ and the state’s sovereign interest in the fair and equal application of the law,” said Governor Cuomo.

The lawsuit was led by New York Attorney General Schneiderman, Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey, and Washington Attorney General Bob Ferguson, and filed by a total of 16 Attorneys General: New York, Massachusetts, Washington, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Virginia.

New York is home to nearly 42,000 DACA grantees. There are approximately 800,000 DACA recipients across the country. According to the Center for American Progress, 97 percent of DACA grantees are employed or go to school; they pay \$140 million annually in state and local taxes in New York, as the Institute of Taxation and Economic Policy has detailed.

The lawsuit also includes a number of declarations from businesses, academic institutions, local governments, DACA grantees, and others impacted by the Trump administration’s decision to end DACA.

As the lawsuit states, “Since 2012, DACA has allowed hundreds of thousands of young people to live, study, and work in the United States, and to become stable and even more productive members of their communities, without fear that they could be arrested and placed in deportation proceedings at any moment. Throughout the country, DACA grantees are employed by various companies and State and municipal agencies, which benefit from their skills and productivity. DACA grantees also contribute significantly to State and local revenues and tax bases. Yet, as a result of the DHS Memorandum, approximately 1,400 DACA grantees will lose their work authorization and risk termination of employment each day as their terms begin to expire. DACA recipients will lose their eligibility for public and employer-based health insurance programs that reduce the states’ health expenditures and promote public



health. They also will lose their right to enroll in higher education institutions with in-state admissions preferences and tuition; thus, public universities will be deprived of a means by which they enrich the experience of all students and faculty through diversity and new perspectives.

“...More than 78 percent of DACA grantees are of Mexican origin, which is more than double the percentage of people of Mexican origin that comprise the overall foreign-born population (29 percent) of the United States. Ending DACA, whose participants are mostly of Mexican origin, is a culmination of President’s Trump’s oft-stated commitments — whether personally held, stated to appease some portion of his constituency, or some combination thereof — to punish and disparage people with Mexican roots.

“The consequence of the President’s animus-driven decision is that approximately 800,000 persons who have availed themselves of the program will ultimately lose its protections, and will be exposed to removal when their authorizations expire and they cannot seek renewal. The individuals who have relied on DACA are now more vulnerable to removal than before the program was initiated, as they turned over sensitive information to the federal government in their applications. Despite the federal government’s repeated promises that it would not use such information to conduct enforcement measures, the Memorandum does not explain how the government will keep that information secure, nor does it provide any assurances that immigration enforcement agents will not use such information to find and remove those who applied for DACA.

“Rescinding DACA will cause harm to hundreds of thousands of the States’ residents, injure State-run colleges and universities, upset the States’ workplaces, damage the States’ economies, hurt State-based companies, and disrupt the States’ statutory and regulatory interests.

“The Attorney General is empowered to advance New York’s strong and important public policy against unlawful discrimination. New York’s Constitution guarantees all persons the right to equal treatment under the law and forbids discrimination based on race, color, creed or religion. And New York’s statutes reiterate the State’s strong interest in combating discrimination and prejudice.” [...]

# Hundreds of Top CEOs Urge Trump to Save DACA

*Prior to President Trump's decision to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, nearly 400 U.S. executives, including Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg, Amazon's Jeff Bezos, Apple's Tim Cook, Cisco's Chuck Robbins, Microsoft's Satya Nadella, Visa's Alfred Kelly and GM's Mary Barra urged Trump to retain protections for young immigrants brought to the U.S. as children. Their companies are among the 30 that make up the Dow Jones industrial average. The letter said the U.S. economy would lose hundreds of billions of dollars if workers and students currently protected by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program were deported.*

## Open Letter from Leaders of American Industry August 31, 2017

To: President Donald J. Trump  
To: Speaker Paul Ryan; Leader Nancy Pelosi; Leader Mitch McConnell; and Leader Charles E. Schumer

As entrepreneurs and business leaders, we are concerned about new developments in immigration policy that threaten the future of young undocumented immigrants brought to America as children. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which allows nearly 800,000 Dreamers the basic

opportunity to work and study without the threat of deportation, is in jeopardy.

All DACA recipients grew up in America, registered with our government, submitted to extensive background checks, and are diligently giving back to our communities and paying income taxes. More than 97 percent are in school or in the workforce, 5 percent started their own business, 65 percent have purchased a vehicle, and 16 percent have purchased their first home. At least 72 percent of the top 25 Fortune 500 companies count DACA recipients among their employees.

Unless we act now to preserve the DACA program, all 780,000 hardworking young people will lose their ability to work legally in this country, and every one of them will be at immediate risk of deportation. Our economy would lose \$460.3 billion from the national GDP and \$24.6 billion in Social Security and Medicare tax contributions.

Dreamers are vital to the future of our companies and our economy. With them, we grow and create jobs. They are part of why we will continue to have a global competitive advantage.

We call on President Trump to preserve the DACA program. We call on Congress to pass the bipartisan DREAM Act or legislation that provides these young people raised in our country the permanent solution they deserve.

# ICE Deporting Undocumented Immigrants By Branding Them as Gang Members

One of the ways the government is using to unjustly brand immigrants, especially youth as criminals, is to say they are in a gang or have gang affiliations. This then is considered a "threat," and justification for deportation, even though no crime has been committed. And often, no evidence presented to the court about the alleged affiliation, simply an assertion by government officials. At present, the many youth who had been approved through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program are being targeted, or detained as part of raids targeting their parents.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has broad criteria for identifying gang members, which dates from George W. Bush's presidency and has been used to deport thousands of individuals — including DACA recipients — over the past decade. The guidelines are part of a policy known as "ICEGangs Database: Data Entry and Use," issued on August 4, 2006. They codify the criteria for documenting individuals as gang-affiliated, which makes them a higher priority for deportation.

According to the directive, gang affiliation is determined by a federal gang crime conviction, or a civil ruling (such as a gang injunction) at state or federal level that deals with gang activity or association. Individuals can also be classified as gang members if they admit to gang ties during "any questioning by law enforcement," whether during a street stop or during a jail

classification interview.

Also included is a list of ten additional criteria, of which only two are required for entering an individual into the ICEGangs database. The list itself indicates the arbitrary nature of the classification:

- "Subject has tattoos identifying a specific gang."
- "Subject frequents an area notorious for gangs and/or associates with known gang members."
- "Subject been seen displaying gang signs/symbols."
- "Subject has been identified as a gang member through a reliable source."
- "Subject has been identified as a gang member through an untested informant."
- "Subject has been arrested in the company of other gang members on two or more occasions."
- "Subject has been identified as a gang member by a jail or prison."
- "Subject has been identified as a gang member through seized or otherwise obtained written or electronic correspondence."
- "Subject has been seen wearing distinctive gang style clothing or has been found in possession of other gang indicia."
- "Subject has been identified as a gang member through documented reasonable suspicion."

It is well known that people in prison are labeled as gang members if they refuse to become informants and often then subject to solitary confinement. The designation is an arbitrary one and often used by prison officials as retaliation for political organizing. For youth facing deportation, a civil proceeding, the designation is even more difficult to disprove, as unlike a criminal proceeding, they cannot compel the government to present the evidence against them and also are not entitled to a lawyer. Even with a lawyer, ICE often presents no evidence, just their claims.

It is also well-known that the government makes deals to get testimony from dubious sources like those listed in the guidelines, such as “untested informants,” and ICE agents themselves arbitrarily claim “reasonable suspicion,” which itself is the lowest legal standard for law enforcement to stop and question

someone.

A report on gang documentation issued last year by the Immigrant Rights Clinic at University of California–Irvine’s School of Law highlighted how difficult it is to legally challenge questionable evidence of gang involvement, and the immigration consequences of gang classification.

“Allegations of gang membership are particularly problematic for undocumented immigrants who would otherwise have a strong case for prosecutorial discretion,” the report reads, pointing to the possible denial of immigration relief under DACA, crime victim visas, or unaccompanied minor petitions.

Sean Garcia-Leys, an attorney with the Urban Peace Institute in Los Angeles who helped research and write the UC-Irvine study, said, “Gang allegations should never be used to determine government action.”

## Trump Plans Massive Raids on Immigrant Communities Starting Mid-September

*National Immigrant Justice Center, September 7, 2017*

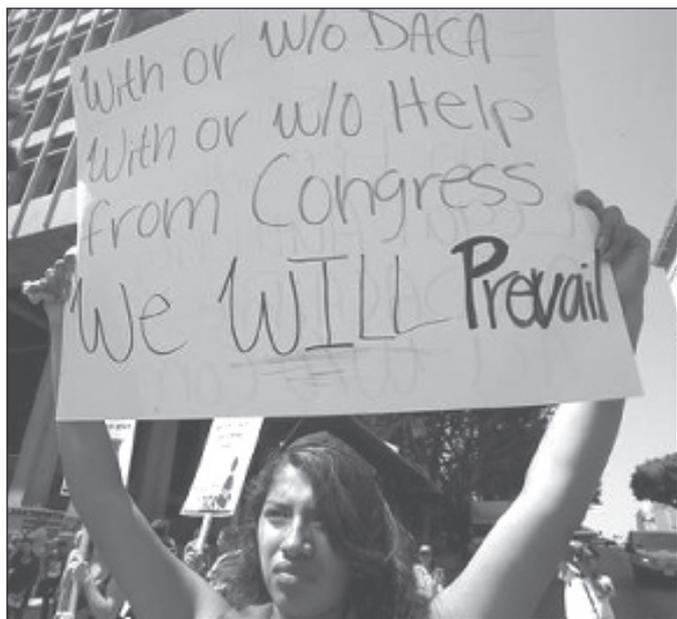
Detention Watch Network (DWN), the National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC), National Immigration Law Center, United We Dream (UWD) and the Women’s Refugee Commission (WRC) condemn Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s (ICE) plan to conduct a nationwide immigration enforcement operation from mid- to late-September. Multiple sources within and close to ICE have shared information with advocates about the operation, which ICE is calling “Operation Mega.”

In addition to apprehending targeted individuals prioritized in the president’s January 25 Executive Order, ICE agents will apprehend undocumented or otherwise removable individuals encountered during the operation, per ICE policy under the Trump administration. These raids are intended to be historic in size, targeting between 6,000 and 10,000 immigrants.

Operation Mega is part of a wholesale and escalating attack on all immigrants. In the wake of the end of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) program on September 5, it is clear that this administration will not exercise restraint in enacting an anti-immigrant agenda. In fact, earlier this year, Trump’s top immigration agent declared, “no population is off the table.”

This operation would devastate immigrant communities, separate families and endanger lives. Enforcement operations inevitably and intentionally result in detentions of community members, key community leaders, primary caregivers and many others. Expanding the number of individuals in immigration detention this quickly is a recipe for cruel conditions, deaths, and rights violations on a massive scale.

In the most recent enforcement operation for which ICE released data, approximately 70 percent of individuals arrested were what ICE calls “collateral” arrests — undocumented individuals who face arrest and detention just because ICE encountered them while they were looking for someone else. The operation is scheduled to occur as Congress decides whether to fund a massive expansion of the immigration detention system.



“Operation Mega is a cynical attempt by ICE to manipulate the congressional appropriations process. It is no coincidence that this operation is planned for the last weeks of the government’s fiscal year. ICE is intentionally elevating detention numbers before the new fiscal year to claim an ‘operational need’ for more funding and more detention beds,” said Silky Shah, executive director of Detention Watch Network. “For too long, even members of Congress who have condemned attacks against immigrant communities have voted to fund ICE to implement those same attacks. With Operation Mega, ICE has once again shown its hand. ICE’s ‘need’ for additional funding is politically manufactured.”

Greisa Martinez Rosas, advocacy director for United We Dream added, “Two days ago, Trump killed the DACA program which protected me and 800,000 immigrant youth from deporta-

tion. Today he has tried to deflect criticism by tweeting that immigrant youth had ‘nothing to worry about.’ Seriously? How can we not worry when we learn that ICE is about to launch massive raids? Congress needs to defund these agents who are armed to attack families and get to work now on passing [legislation]. The time for action is now!”

Avideh Moussavian, Senior Policy Attorney at the National Immigration Law Center, condemned the planned operation, stating, “Large scale raids operations designed to artificially manufacture the need for the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) mass detention and deportation budget are unconscionable. We remain undeterred in calling out DHS for terrorizing our communities and in calling on Congress to not allow our tax dollars to go to ICE and CBP agents separating immigrant families.”

“An operation of this massive scale would devastate immigrant communities and endanger lives. Families will be separated and children will be traumatized,” said Michelle Brané, Director for Migrant Rights and Justice at the Women’s Refugee Commission. “These actions do not make us safer. On the contrary, they undermine the rule of law by invoking fear and blatantly ignoring due process.”

Contrary to ICE’s intent to silence communities with fear, communities are instead prepared to defend themselves against these operations, which have occurred for years on a smaller scale. Groups are also encouraging local, state and federal elected officials to work with their constituents to record abuses and human rights violations committed by ICE agents in the community and in immigration detention centers. State and local elected officials should also take immediate steps to ensure that local and state

resources are not used to help implement Operation Mega or other enforcement actions.

“We encourage community members at risk to review their safety plans and tips for how they can defend their rights if they encounter ICE,” said Mary Meg McCarthy, executive director, National Immigrant Justice Center. “All people have the right to remain silent. If stopped or arrested, you do not have to answer an immigration agent’s questions. If an immigration agent knocks on your door and does not have a warrant, do not open the door.”

\* \* \*

Detention Watch Network (DWN) is a national coalition of organizations and individuals working to expose and challenge the injustices of the United States’ immigration detention and deportation system and advocate for profound change that promotes the rights and dignity of all persons. [www.detention-watchnetwork.org](http://www.detention-watchnetwork.org).

United We Dream (UWD) is one of the largest immigrant youth-led organization in the nation made up of 55 local groups in 26 states, UWD organizing for the dignity of immigrant youth and families. [www.unitedwedream.org](http://www.unitedwedream.org)

Heartland Alliance’s National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC) is a nongovernmental organization dedicated to ensuring human rights protections and access to justice for all immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. [immigrantjustice.org](http://immigrantjustice.org).

Women’s Refugee Commission (WRC) improves the lives and protects the rights of women, children, and youth displaced by conflict and crisis. [womensrefugeecommission.org](http://womensrefugeecommission.org).

National Immigration Law Center (NILC) is one of the leading organizations in the U.S. dedicated to defending and advancing the rights of immigrants with low income. [www.nilc.org](http://www.nilc.org)

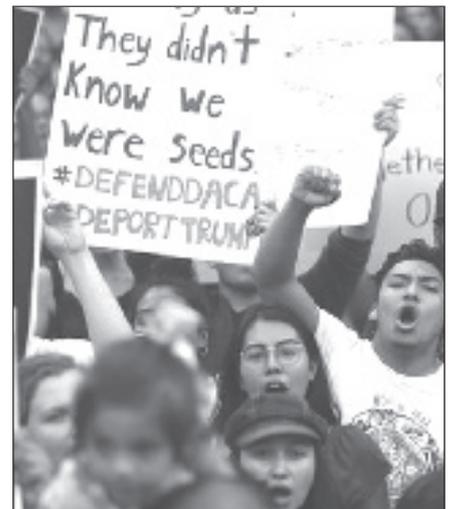
## **Pardon the Immigrants Arpaio Criminalized, Not the Racist Sheriff**

*Interview with Francisca Porchas, organizing director of Puente Arizona*

**FRANCISCA PORCHAS:** At the protest against Trump’s visit to Phoenix, August 22 there were about 3,000 to 4,000 people. Hard to tell, but at least that many. It was a really big crowd. Lots of different people of different races, multigenerational, multicultural. We protested starting at 4:00 p.m. all the way until the cops got pretty aggressive with people in the streets, tear gassing them, shooting them with rubber bullets, without any provocation.

I think one of the biggest things for us is the potential pardon of Sheriff Joe Arpaio. For us, it is a slap in the face of all of the years of organizing that it took for us to hold him accountable, including the lawsuit that came because of his racial profiling in the streets. And he did almost 90 workplace raids where he detained 700 people. The ones that should be pardoned are the people who he criminalized. That is who truly should be pardoned. For us, him saying he is going to pardon Arpaio is a very dangerous thing. We are surrounded by police. We saw them last night. Very aggressive. This is the most violent I have ever seen the Phoenix Police Department. And they are a very violent

department. But, in saying he is going to pardon somebody who has been racist and xenophobic, and violent towards immigrant people in the community overall, Trump is sending out a message to the rest of the country, and to the rest of law-enforcement in this country that it is OK to be this racist, that it is OK to be this abusive and this violent and this vile against immigrant people and people of color and all people. Because you will be pardoned. Because



you will be excused. Because you will have the most powerful person in this country say that it is OK and that you cannot be criminalized.

Sheriff Arpaio was in power for about 25 years. He was the first lawman of the first law agency in the United States to sign a federal agreement to collaborate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). So, he deputized his Sheriff's to go out and terrorize people. He would surround a six block radius in communities of color, poor people, Latino communities, and literally, with his civil posse, a bunch of racist volunteers of Sheriff Joe Arpaio, would start rounding people up. Rounding people up if they had no identification on them, putting them in their paddy wagon. He became the ICE officer, the immigration judge, and the deporting officer. Because sheriffs were giving people 20-year penalties and banning them from coming back into the country.

In 2011, there was a lawsuit by the ACLU that said you are engaging in racial profiling. He terrorized the area — he did almost 90 workplace raids where he picked up 700 people. And he claims that he has deported 80,000 immigrants. He had been terrorizing the immigrant community for 10 years. He had been persecuting them. He had targeted them. He had blatantly, intentionally been racist against an entire community here. And

so, when this lawsuit came about, a judge decided that it had to stop, that no more people driving while looking brown and looking immigrant could be stopped by him and asked for papers. And he violated this court order and has been found guilty of criminal contempt.

To us, Arpaio is a symbol of racism, a symbol of anti-immigration, a symbol of domestic terrorism. That is what Joe Arpaio is to us. And we were able to take him out of power last November. We suspected that Arpaio was going to be pardoned, but to us, again, it is a slap in the face. It is saying to us that it is OK all the terrorism, and all the racism and torture and trauma that people have been through in this county, and that it is OK for law enforcement to do this across the nation.

Responding to a news report that White House aides are counseling Trump to “strike an ambitious deal with Congress that offers dreamers protection in exchange for legislation that pays for a border wall and more detention facilities, drastically curbing legal immigration and implementing e-verify,” Francisca Porchas said: Absolutely, we see it coming. These are tactics to divide and split the movement. And we are very happy the United We Dream put out a statement that they will not be using themselves or the Dreamers as a bargaining tool or as a bargaining chip. We are not going to allow it as a movement to happen. [...]

### JOE ARPAIO PARDON

## Criminal Racist Practices of Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

*Ian Millhiser, ThinkProgress*

According to the original lawsuit filed against Sheriff Joe Arpaio and his staff, and findings by the Justice Department, Arpaio engaged in widespread, violent and demeaning mistreatment of Latino residents of Maricopa County, that included: often targeting individuals solely because of their race:

**Assaulting Pregnant Women:** “[A]n Maricopa County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) officer stopped a Latina woman — a citizen of the United States and five months pregnant at the time — as she pulled into her driveway. After she exited her car, the officer then insisted that she sit on the hood of the car. When she refused, the officer grabbed her arms, pulled them behind her back, and slammed her, stomach first, into the vehicle three times. He then dragged her to the patrol car and shoved her into the backseat. He left her in the patrol car for approximately 30 minutes without air conditioning. The MCSO officer ultimately issued a citation for failure to provide identification.”

**Stalking Latina Women:** “In another instance, during a crime suppression operation, two MCSO officers followed a Latina woman, a citizen of the United States, for a quarter of a mile to her home. The officers did not turn on their emergency lights, but insisted that the woman remain in her car when she attempted to exit the car and enter her home. The officers' stated reasons for approaching the woman was a non-functioning license plate

light. When the woman attempted to enter her home, the officers used force to take her to the ground, kned her in the back, and handcuffed her. The woman was then taken to an MCSO sub-station, cited for ‘disorderly conduct,’ and returned home. The disorderly conduct citation was subsequently dismissed.”

**Criminalizing Being A Latino:** “During raids, [Arpaio's Criminal Enforcement Squad] typically seizes all Latinos present, whether they are listed on the warrant or not. For example, in one raid CES had a search warrant for 67 people, yet 109 people were detained. Fifty-nine people were arrested and 50 held for several hours before they were released. Those detained, but not on the warrant, were seized because they were Latino and present at the time of the raid. No legal justification existed for their detention.”

**Criminalizing Living Next To The Wrong People:** “[D]uring a raid of a house suspected of containing human smugglers and their victims . . . officers went to an adjacent house, which was occupied by a Latino family. The officers entered the adjacent house and searched it, without a warrant and without the residents' knowing consent. Although they found no evidence of criminal activity, after the search was over, the officers zip-tied the residents, a Latino man, a legal permanent resident of the United States, and his 12-year-old Latino son, a citizen of the

United States, and required them to sit on the sidewalk for more than one hour, along with approximately 10 persons who had been seized from the target house, before being released.”

**Widespread Racial Profiling:** “[I]n the southwest portion of the County, the study found that Latino drivers are almost four times more likely to be stopped by MCSO officers than non-Latino drivers engaged in similar conduct... In the northwest portion of the County, the study found that Latino drivers are over seven times more likely to be stopped by MCSO officers than non-Latino drivers engaged in similar conduct. . . . Most strikingly, in the northeast portion of the County, the study found that Latino drivers are nearly nine times more likely to be stopped by MCSO officers than non-Latino drivers engaged in similar conduct.”

**Random, Unlawful Detention Of Latinos:** “MCSO officers stopped a car carrying four Latino men, although the car was not violating any traffic laws. The MCSO officers ordered the men out of the car, zip-tied them, and made them sit on the curb for an hour before releasing all of them. The only reason given for the stop was that the men’s car ‘was a little low,’ which is not a



criminal or traffic violation.”

**Ignoring Rape:** Because of Arpaio’s obsessive focus on “low-level immigration offenses” his officers failed “to adequately respond to reports of sexual violence, including allegations of rape, sexual assault, and sexual abuse of girls.”

## **Trump’s Arpaio Pardon Demonstrates Disdain for Rule of Law**

*Marjorie Cohn, August 28, 2017*

On August 25, less than two weeks after refusing to unequivocally condemn the [KKK and Nazis] in Charlottesville, Donald Trump granted former Arizona Sheriff Joseph Arpaio a rare presidential pardon, calling the notorious racist an “American patriot.” The pardon is noteworthy for many reasons.

First, it demonstrates Trump’s utter disdain for the rule of law. U.S. District Judge Susan Bolton convicted Arpaio of criminal contempt for showing “flagrant disregard” of a 2011 court order that he cease racial profiling. Nevertheless, for 18 months, Arpaio, who called himself “America’s toughest sheriff,” continued his racist practice of detaining Latinos without reasonable suspicion. “The fact that Arpaio is quite literally convicted of being in criminal contempt of the courts is a big selling point for a president who has evinced nothing but contempt for the judicial branch since before he took office,” Dahlia Lithwick wrote at Salon.

Second, the pardon sends a clear message to Paul Manafort, Michael Flynn and anyone else that special counsel Robert Mueller subpoenas to testify in his Russia investigation. Trump could pardon them, too, if they refuse to cooperate and are held in contempt of court. No need to make a deal and testify against the president or his family members in order to receive lenient

treatment. [...]

Perhaps most significant is what the pardon says about the president. It demonstrates beyond doubt that Trump and Arpaio share the same values. Both men are racist to the core. Neither has any respect for the law. And both retaliate against those who criticize their actions. Like Trump, Arpaio attacked judges who ruled against him.

The editorial board of the *Arizona Republic* wrote, “By pardoning Arpaio, Trump made it clear that institutional racism is not just OK with him. It is a goal.” The pardon “elevates Arpaio once again to the pantheon of those who see institutional racism as something that made America great.”

### **“Pattern or Practice of Unconstitutional Policing”**

After a comprehensive investigation, the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division concluded in a 2011 report that Arpaio’s Sheriff’s Department in Maricopa County, Arizona, engaged in a “pattern or practice of unconstitutional policing.” The 22-page report documented the use of excessive force, routine punishment for detainees who did not speak English, a “wall of distrust” between officers and Latino residents, and “a chronic culture of

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disregard for basic legal and constitutional obligations.”

The report came to the following conclusions:

- Latino drivers in Maricopa County were four to nine times more likely to be stopped than similarly situated non-Latino drivers.

- Roughly one-fifth of the stops of Latino drivers were conducted without probable cause or reasonable suspicion, in violation of the Fourth Amendment’s prohibition against unreasonable searches and seizures.

- Under Arpaio’s leadership, deputy sheriffs treated Latinos “as if they [were] all undocumented, regardless of whether a legitimate factual basis [existed] to suspect” they were present in the U.S. [without documentation.]

- Arpaio’s office “engaged in a pattern or practice of retaliating against individuals for exercising their First Amendment right to free speech.” People who mounted peaceful protests against the Maricopa County Sheriff’s Office were illegally arrested.

### Cruel and Sadistic Practices

For many years, Arpaio, who served as Maricopa County Sheriff for 24 years, housed detainees in what he called his personal “concentration camp,” an outdoor jail in Phoenix. Temperatures reached 145 degrees in the camp, causing shoes to melt. In order to humiliate people incarcerated in the jail, Arpaio made them wear striped uniforms and pink underwear. They were forced to work on chain gangs.

A federal appeals court ruled that Arpaio’s deputies unlawfully withheld adequate food and maintained dangerously high temperatures. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals determined those practices violated the Eighth Amendment’s prohibition against cruel and unusual punishments.

The Justice Department report found that Arpaio’s deputy struck a Latino man with his patrol car, “pinning D.D. under the vehicle and dragging him for more than ten feet,” causing serious injury, including broken bones. Another deputy forcibly removed a Latino man from his car,



“twisting his arm, head, and neck and causing E.E. to fall and hit his face on the pavement.”

Nathan Robinson, writing for *Current Affairs*, documented the beating and tasing of a man with schizophrenia. Arpaio’s deputies “dragged Atencio’s unconscious body back to his cell, where he was stripped naked and left on the floor.” He never regained consciousness. Another man died after deputies beat and suffocated him in a “restraint chair.” The families of these men received settle-

ments of \$8 million and \$1 million, respectively.

The *Phoenix New Times* tweeted:

“Prisoners there died at an alarming rate, often without explanation.”

“One of [Arpaio’s] jailers nearly broke the neck of a paraplegic guy who had the temerity to ask for a catheter.”

“By 2015, [Arpaio’s] fondness for racial profiling had cost the county more than \$44 million [in settlements of lawsuits against the office].”

*(Marjorie Cohn is professor emerita at Thomas Jefferson School of Law, former president of the National Lawyers Guild and deputy secretary general of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers.)*



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**I • Hurricane Harvey**

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many who remain without power in Puerto Rico, and who are bracing for Irma in Florida, Georgia and South Carolina. We also condemn the federal government for its failure to fully fund all the infrastructure needed to prevent such devastating flooding, provide for the safety of the people during hurricanes and for all the rebuilding required to rapidly restore peoples' homes, schools and communities. More than 40 people died in Houston and tens of thousands were flooded out. Volunteers rescued many families.

Houston is home to 40 percent of the country's chemical and oil refineries, which add further danger to the human and natural environment — yet the government has systematically failed to enforce safety and environmental laws. The situation is such that first responders are suing one of the monopolies, Arkema, for failure to prevent a major explosion and toxic fire that injured many (see p.16). It is estimated that more than 1 million pounds of toxic pollutants leaked out from refineries and chemical facilities during Harvey, including known carcinogens benzene and 1,3-butadiene and respiratory irritants hydrogen sulfide, sulfur dioxide and xylene. Thirteen superfund areas, highly contaminated, also were flooded.

All of this could have been prevented yet no government or corporate officials are being charged and the oil and chemical monopolies are not being required to pay for all the clean up required. Instead the burden falls on the people and their public tax dollars, at the federal, state and local level. And as is always the case, the full funding required for communities hardest hit, which are those of minorities and those impoverished, is not provided. These government failures are crimes to be punished. Much of the devastation is man-made, based on government refusal to take full social responsibility for the safety and well-being of the people, before, during and after such storms.

It is also the case that the power and intensity of these hurricanes comes in part from the fact that workers do not have control over the massive productive powers they have produced, including oil and chemical refineries, production of energy in general, decisions over infrastructure, etc. and related environmental problems. Workers know well what is needed and required to prevent such devastation to both the human and natural environment. But they



Thirteen superfund sites, highly contaminated, flooded, while petrochemical facilities leaked 1 million pounds of toxic pollutants.

are not the ones with the political power to make the decisions required.

It was the workers at Arkema, for example, that told the first responders about the toxic dangers, not the monopoly or the government. It is working people in general who know well that the billions spent for war could be much better spent on providing for rights. The Pentagon is the world's single largest polluter and user of oil, yet its budget is not being utilized for recovery and elimination of pollutants. Indeed, the Pentagon is responsible for much of the toxic waste and water pollution nationally, stemming from its military bases and weapons testing (see p. 19). It should be held accountable, as should the federal government more generally. To do so requires organizing today for political empowerment, for the political power required to control the massive productive powers and humanize the natural and social environment. Steps in that direction include raising the level and quality of political discussion among workers, women and youth, extending it, and bringing the issue of decision making to the fore in organizing taking place on all fronts.

## **Recovery After Hurricane Harvey: Will There Be Justice for All?**

*Charise Johnson, Union of Concerned Scientists*

*"If certain communities are being hit harder and their cries for help have yet to be heard," asks Johnson, "is it fair to say this was an equal opportunity disaster?"*

What happens to Houston after the media coverage storm subsides, when the country has moved on from the reality that is the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey? Will the people of Houston, who will be affected by this devastation financially and emotionally for years to come, soon become just yesterday's headline? I would hope not. But recent history shows we should be concerned.

Hurricane Harvey dumped 33 trillion gallons of water (nearly double the volume of the entire Chesapeake Bay watershed) — roughly 275 trillion pounds of water, onto Houston and surrounding areas. Some media outlets called Hurricane Harvey an "equal opportunity" disaster, meaning it negatively affected both the rich and the poor. Equal opportunity — but is it? What will happen when the less financially secure, mostly minority communities try to rebuild? Will they still receive equal opportunities to recover? Will the air pollution and contaminants from hazardous facilities

have a disproportionate long-term effect on the communities of color living in closer proximity to toxic sites?

I am skeptical because I know the history. Last year I did a report looking at the disproportionate impacts of chemical risk and toxic chemical exposure in four Houston neighborhoods: Harrisburg/Manchester and Galena Park in east Houston, along the highly industrialized ship channel, and Bellaire and West Oaks/Eldridge in more affluent west Houston. The study found that 90 percent of the population in Harrisburg/Manchester and almost 40 percent of the population of Galena Park lives within one mile of an Risk Management Program (RMP) facility, compared to less than 10 and less than 15 percent of Bellaire and West Oaks/Eldridge residents. [RMP facilities are those identified as in need of special programs for preventing leaks and spills that can have devastating results and for evacuations, etc. — VOR Ed. Note]. And far more accidents have occurred at the facilities in and around the east Houston neighborhoods.

As for the health impacts: Residents of the Harrisburg/Manchester community have a 24-30% higher cancer risk and those of Galena Park have a 30-36% higher risk, when compared to Bellaire and West Oaks/Eldridge, respectively. The potential for residents to suffer from respiratory illnesses in Harrisburg/Manchester and Galena Park was 24% and 43% higher than in Bellaire and West Oaks/Eldridge, respectively. It also bears noting that 97% and 86% of the respective east Houston communities' residents are people of color, and the communities have up to ten times more poverty than the two in west Houston.

And already we are seeing evidence that Harvey's impacts might not be so equal... The unprecedented rainfall and subsequent flooding was contaminated with waste from nearby toxic (Superfund) sites, leaving people exposed to a cocktail of harmful pollutants. The havoc wrought on Houston by Harvey's winds was intensified by the leaking of more than 1 million pounds of toxic pollutants from refineries and chemical facilities, including known carcinogens benzene and 1,3-butadiene and respiratory irritants hydrogen sulfide, sulfur dioxide and xylene. Hurricane survivors spoke of harsh fumes burning their throats and eyes, making it difficult to breathe under already difficult circumstances.

## Harvey First Responders Sue After Explosion at Arkema Plant

*Eryn Taylor, September 7, 2017*

Seven first responders are suing Arkema, Inc. after they were hospitalized by toxic chemicals released during an explosion at the company's Crosby plant. At least 2 tons of highly unstable chemicals used in such products as plastics and paint exploded and burned at the site, creating smoke that reportedly stung the eyes and lungs.

Arkema had warned earlier in the week that an explosion of organic peroxides stored at the plant was imminent because Harvey's floodwaters engulfed the backup generators and knocked out the refrigeration necessary to keep the compounds from degrading

### **We knew better**

While we certainly cannot stop hurricanes from hurtling in uninvited, we can mitigate the severity of their consequences. For instance, the explosions and fires at the Arkema facility could have been prevented with safer alternatives, and workers and communities could have had more information and coordination with emergency responders. However, just this past January, amendments to strengthen the Risk Management Program (RMP), the oversight program designed to set safeguards on chemical facilities to protect public health and safety, were delayed until February 19, 2019. My colleagues and I delivered comments at the public hearing EPA held in April on the rule to delay amendments to the RMP. If certain communities are being hit harder and their cries for help have yet to be heard, is it fair to say this was an equal opportunity disaster?

### **Broad impacts**

It is not just Manchester that is likely to experience disparate impacts from a hurricane. Extreme weather events will continue; warming sea surface temperatures are a key ingredient in the storm recipe. Floodwaters have not completely cleared, but media coverage is already being diverted to the next big storm. In the week since Harvey descended onto Houston and surrounding areas, three more hurricanes have formed: Hurricanes Irma, Jose and Katia. Harvey's five-day-long deluge had all but ended before Caribbean islands were bracing themselves for Hurricane Irma, which struck the island of Barbuda hard on September 6. Over 90% of structures on the small, bucolic island — home to 1800 people — are said to have sustained major damage, according to the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, Gaston Browne.

Irma is currently tearing through the Caribbean, leaving many in Puerto Rico without power, and possibly hitting Florida this weekend. Puerto Rico is, like Houston, laden with RMP facilities that can spew toxic fumes into the air and with Superfund sites that could potentially flood and contaminate drinking water. [...]

*(Charise Johnson is a research associate in the Center for Science and Democracy at the Union of Concerned Scientists.)*

and catching fire.

All employees had been pulled from the plant before the blast, and up to 5,000 people living within 1.5 miles had been warned to evacuate.

Two explosions in the middle of the night blew open a trailer containing the chemicals, lighting up the sky with 30- to 40-foot flames. The Texas environmental agency called the ensuing smoke "especially acrid and irritating" and said it can impair breathing and inflame the eyes, nose and throat.

However, the first responders were never told about the dangers

of the smoke, attorneys said. “Immediately upon being exposed to the fumes from the explosion, and one by one, the police officers and first responders began to fall ill in the middle of the road. Calls from medics were made, but still no one from Arkema warned of the toxic fumes in the air.”

In all, fifteen sheriff’s deputies complained of respiratory irritation. They were examined at a hospital and released, the Associated Press reported. The plaintiffs are seeking \$1 million in relief.

### Arkema’s history

Texas A&M chemical safety expert Sam Mannan said the risk management plan that Arkema was required by state and federal law to develop did not address how it would deal with power and refrigeration failures or flooding.

A 2016 analysis he did with university colleagues ranked the Crosby plant among the 70 or so facilities with the biggest potential to cause harm in greater Houston, based on such factors as the type and amount of chemicals and the population density.

Rachel Moreno, a spokeswoman for the fire marshal of Harris County, which encompasses Houston, would not discuss details of the risk management plan, such as how high the plant’s backup generators were placed.

Arkema officials did not directly notify local emergency managers of the generator failure, Moreno said. It came, instead, by way of the plant’s workers, who told the Crosby Volunteer Fire Department about it when they were rescued during the hurricane, she said.

State and federal regulators have cited Arkema for safety and environmental violations at the Crosby plant dating back more than a decade, records show.

Texas’ environmental commission penalized the company at least three times for a total of about \$27,000, some of which was deferred pending corrective actions. Arkema denied the allegations.

During the last five years of compliance monitoring at the plant, state officials found five Clean Air Act-related deviations and two deviations from federal requirements on waste management, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency records show.

In June 2006, the company had failed to prevent unauthorized emissions during a two-hour warehouse fire. Records show a pal-

let of organic peroxide was poorly stored, resulting in the blaze, and more than a ton of volatile organic compounds were discharged.

The biggest penalty, about \$20,000, came in December 2011 after the commission found Arkema had failed to keep thermal oxidizers, used to decompose hazardous gases, at high enough temperatures over the course of several months.

More recently, the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration in February fined Arkema nearly \$110,000 — later reduced to just over \$90,000 — over 10 serious safety violations found during an inspection.

Records obtained by the AP show Arkema had kept using some equipment even when safety systems weren’t working properly, and did not inspect or test it as recommended. In one unit, the company also did not ensure equipment there was safe or keep employees up to date on their training.

Arkema is also embroiled in a series of lawsuits stemming from a deadly accident involving one of its contracts at a rail yard in New Orleans.

Arkema is defending itself in federal court after one worker died and two others were seriously injured after they were assigned to clean the inside of a rail car tank that had been filled with a harmful chemical. The men, who were working for a contractor with a long history of safety problems, were not wearing respirators and collapsed almost immediately, according to lawsuits filed by the survivors and the family of the man who died.

In court documents, Arkema denied responsibility for the accident, saying it had trusted its contractor to run the operation safely.



## Older Victims of Hurricane Harvey May Need Special Attention as Texas Recovers

*Sue Anne Bell, The Conversation*

News and social media reports from coastal Texas have shown many striking images of Hurricane Harvey flood victims, but few were as arresting as a photo of older women in a Dickinson nursing home, sitting in waist-high water in their wheelchairs. Although the women were moved to safety, the picture highlighted how vulnerable older adults can be during and after major disasters.

My work focuses on answering pressing questions about the health of older adults after events such as Hurricane Harvey. While age alone does not make people more vulnerable to disasters, many health issues that are common with aging do, including frailness, memory impairment, limited mobility and chronic illness. Sixty

percent of Hurricane Katrina deaths were age 65 and older, and more older adults died after Hurricane Katrina and in the year after than any other age group.

In a study published earlier this year, we showed that older adults are affected by disasters well after storms or other threats have passed. But disaster response planning for communities and health care systems focuses on the immediate surge after the event, which varies with every disaster but typically lasts hours to days.

As flood waters in Texas peak and recede, public officials and health care providers should begin to plan now for older adults’ long-term medical needs. Beyond getting the electricity back on

and patching up broken limbs, an adequate disaster response must understand and correct the ways in which disasters disrupt survivors' normal living patterns in the extended period after the storm.

### Learning From Past Disasters

Understanding the connection between disasters and hospital admissions among older adults, and developing strategies to minimize hospitalizations, are issues of growing importance. Climate change is increasing the number and scale of natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes and wildfires. There were three times more natural disasters globally between 2000 and 2009 than from 1980 through 1989. And with the U.S. population over age 65 expected to double by 2060, helping older people stay safe through disasters will become increasingly important.

Previous disasters have shown that older adults are particularly vulnerable, especially if they need ongoing health care. During Hurricane Sandy in 2012, over 31 nursing homes closed, leaving more than 4,500 residents in need of emergency assistance. After-action reports from Hurricane Matthew in 2016 documented multiple instances of critical communication breakdowns for special medical-needs patients. For example, patients who needed specialized care were placed in shelters with inadequate staffing.

Houston officials did not order a mandatory evacuation last week as Hurricane Harvey approached. In any case, many older adults have physical or financial constraints that can make it hard for them to evacuate. However, when they ride out a storm at home or in a shelter, they do not have ready access to health services. This places them at greater risk of immediate injury and longer-term physical decline.

Health care services along the Texas coast have been severely impacted by Harvey, which will only exacerbate the challenge of caring for the elderly. Over 21 Texas hospitals have either closed or evacuated patients. Multiple nursing homes have also been evacuated. Ben Taub Hospital, which had already upgraded its infrastructure to protect against floodwaters, now is scrambling to provide food to patients.

### Long-Lasting Effects

Experiences like this can have lasting impacts on older people. In a recent study, we examined hospitalizations among older adults after a 2011 tornado outbreak that spawned hundreds of tornadoes throughout Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee, resulting in over 300 deaths and billions of dollars in damage. Using claims data from Medicare and connecting it with geospatial data from the storm area, we compared hospital admissions among older adults in the month after the disaster to admissions during the other 11 months of the year.

Our findings showed that hospital admissions increased over the 30 days after the disaster by 4 percent among older adults who lived in a ZIP code with a tornado touchdown. This translates to hundreds of additional hospital admissions. We then removed the first three days after the disaster from our data analysis, to see whether the increase in admissions might be related to immediate injuries from the storm. But we found that hospitalizations over the rest of the month still remained higher than normal.



Finally, we conducted a similar analysis examining ZIP codes in an area in the same region, which was not affected by the storm, in order to rule out the possibility that increased admissions were related to seasonal factors such as extreme temperatures or high pollen counts. Hospital admissions did not increase in the unaffected area, which told us that the higher numbers we found appear to be related to the tornadoes.

Increased hospital admissions after disasters are only part of the story. The aging U.S. population has a rising incidence of chronic diseases requiring consistent health care, such as diabetes, hypertension and obesity. If these health needs had been met in the tornado zone after the disaster, these patients might not have had to be hospitalized, and our study would not have shown the increase in hospital admissions that we detected.

Although we did not have data on individual cases that would have shown why each person was hospitalized, it is likely that personal stress, difficulty accessing health care and an ineffective community response to the disaster all were contributing factors.

### Caring for Older Victims After Harvey

Disruptions in regular care after a disaster can worsen existing chronic conditions, leading to hospitalizations. These immediate disruptions from the disaster can have much longer-lasting impacts on health. For example, many older adults are dependent on medical equipment requiring electrical power, from refrigeration for insulin to dialysis machines. Patients with chronic conditions such as diabetes or emphysema may run out of the medications or home oxygen supplies they need to manage these conditions.

In coastal Texas, many clinics and community health centers closed as Harvey approached, and road or weather conditions may keep people from getting to care centers after they reopen. The stress of evacuating from home to a shelter can also cause fragile conditions to worsen.

For now, the key priorities are to protect and support older adults and help them return to their normal routines as soon as possible. Past research has shown that some older adults bounce back quickly from disasters, while others struggle to return to baseline. Planning needs to start now for recovery, which will last for years. It also should include preparing for future disasters, so that we can be more prepared and less reactive when the next superstorm looms.

*(Sue Anne Bell is a clinical associate professor of nursing at the University of Michigan.)*

# Hurricanes May Delay ICE's Plan to Deport 'Historic' Number of Immigrants

*Tina Vasquez, ReWire*

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was set this month to conduct "Operation Mega," a nationwide immigration enforcement operation that advocates said would be "historic in size," targeting up to 10,000 undocumented people. But it may not go as planned as hurricanes pummel the United States.

Hurricane Harvey cleanup is underway in Texas, where U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) refused to close immigration checkpoints, forcing undocumented immigrants to risk detainment and deportation for evacuating. Hurricane Irma, a category four storm, is expected to devastate Florida and is predicted to "slam into Miami" this weekend.

It is unclear if Texas and Florida would have been a focus of Operation Mega. An estimated 1.7 million undocumented immigrants resided in Texas and 850,000 in Florida as of 2014. Florida is home to thousands of Haitian Temporary Protected Status (TPS) recipients who have been ordered to prepare to leave the country by January after the Trump administration refused to extend their status beyond six months.

Whether Operation Mega is being postponed for better weather is unknown. ICE may move forward with large-scale enforcement operations outside regions affected by hurricane weather. In its statement to Rewire, ICE said its "fugitive operations teams will continue to target and arrest criminal aliens and other individuals who are in violation of our nation's immigration laws, in non-affected areas of the country, as part of routine operations."

Detention Watch Network (DWN), the National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC), National Immigration Law Center, United We Dream (UWD) and the Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) alerted the media of ICE's operation, and condemned the federal immigration agency for its "wholesale and escalating attack on all immigrants," (see p.10)

Despite President Trump's stated plans for "mass deportations," the United States is actually deporting people more slowly under Trump than it did under Obama, who undocumented communities referred to as the "deporter-in-chief." According to data from ICE, from February 1 to June 30 ICE officials removed 84,473 people — a rate of roughly 16,900 people per month. "If deportations continue at the same clip until the fiscal year ends September 30, federal immigration officials will have removed fewer people than they did during even the slowest years of Barack Obama's presidency," Politico reported.

In anticipation of continued, large-scale immigration enforcement operations, undocumented communities are developing safety plans and attending Know Your Rights workshops. "Deportation defense cards" can be found online, and the Immigrant Defense Project has an online toolkit for protecting undocumented communities.

Advocacy groups are encouraging local, state, and federal elected officials to work with their constituents "to record abuses and human rights violations committed by ICE agents in the community and in immigration detention centers. State and local elected officials should also take immediate steps to ensure that local and state resources are not used to help implement Operation Mega or other enforcement actions," according to a statement from the organizations.

"We encourage community members at risk to review their safety plans and tips for how they can defend their rights if they encounter ICE," said Mary Meg McCarthy, executive director of the National Immigrant Justice Center. "All people have the right to remain silent. If stopped or arrested, you do not have to answer an immigration agent's questions. If an immigration agent knocks on your door and does not have a warrant, do not open the door."

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# The Pentagon is Poisoning Your Drinking Water

*Joshua Frank, CounterPunch*

The nation's biggest polluter is not a corporation. It is the Pentagon.

The Department of Defense (DoD), under a 1980 EPA exemption, is still allowed to burn weapons waste, detonate toxic explosives, and in certain cases even radioactive waste. Every year the DoD churns out more than 750,000 tons of hazardous waste — more than the top three chemical companies combined.

The military is largely exempt from compliance with most federal and state environmental laws, and the EPA continues to work hard to keep it that way, especially in the case of perchlorate as the agency debates exactly how much of the noxious stuff is safe to consume.

For the past five decades the federal government, defense contractors and the chemical industry have joined forces to block public health protections against perchlorate, a component of rocket

fuel that has been shown to affect children's growth and mental progress by disrupting the function of the thyroid gland which regulates brain development.



perchlorate has been leaking from literally hundreds of defense plants and military installations across the country. The EPA has reported that perchlorate is present in drinking and groundwater supplies in 35 states. Center for Disease Control and independent

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## HOLD GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBLE FOR RECOVERY

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studies have also overwhelmingly shown that perchlorate is existent in our food supplies, cow's milk, and human breast milk. As a result virtually every American has some level of perchlorate in their body. The higher the level the more dangerous it becomes, raising the risk of thyroid and other cancers.

Currently only two states, California and Massachusetts, have set a maximum allowable contaminant level for perchlorate in drinking water. In California perchlorate has been found, not only in groundwater supplies, but in dairy cows. The EPA, despite acknowledging the problem, won't follow these states' lead even though the Obama administration promised to regulate the toxin in 2015. It has not happened yet and likely will not any time soon with Trump at the helm.

In the Colorado River, which provides water for over 20 million people, perchlorate levels are high. The chemical is most prevalent in the Southwest and California as a result of the large number of military operations and defense contractors in the region.

In 2001 the EPA estimated that the total liability for the cleanup of toxic military sites would exceed \$350 billion, or five times the Superfund Act liability of private industry. But the federal government has been complacent and allowed perchlorate to run rampant throughout our water supplies. This negligence and lack of regulatory oversight has left the Pentagon, NASA and defense contractors free to set their own levels, trimming the high, but necessary costs of restoring groundwater quality.

While the situation has become dire in recent years, it was the Clinton administration that did not do nearly enough to begin cleaning up these sites and certainly did not keep a close eye on how the Pentagon spent the money it received. During the 1990s the Pentagon spent only \$3.5 billion a year cleaning up toxic military sites — much of that on studies, not actual remediation. In 1998, the Defense Science Review Board, a federal advisory committee set up to provide independent advice to the secretary of defense, looked at the problem and concluded that the Pentagon had no clear environmental cleanup policy, goals or program, which led lawyer Jonathan Turley, who holds the Shapiro Chair for Public Interest Law at George Washington University, to call the Pentagon the nation's "premier environmental villain."

"If they can spend \$1 million on a cruise missile, it seems kind of ridiculous they won't spend \$200,000 to see if our food is contaminated with rocket fuel," says Renee Sharp, a scientist with Environmental Working Group.

While Bush boosted overall Pentagon spending by billions, the administration simultaneously slashed its environmental remediation program. Obama failed to reverse Bush's trend and did not regulate perchlorate even though his administration knew it was polluting our nation's water supplies. The trend is unlikely to end. Trump is now slashing EPA funding by billions of dollars while promising to gut many environmental regulations. This means cleaning up our military sites will essentially come to a standstill and perchlorate will continue to poison drinking water across the country.

U.S. military sites, which total more than 50 million acres, are among the most insidious and dangerous Pentagon legacies. They are strewn with toxic bomb fragments, unexploded munitions,

buried hazardous waste, fuel dumps, open pits filled with debris, burn piles and yes, rocket fuel. An internal EPA memo from 1998 warned of the looming problem:

"As measured by acres, and probably as measured by number of sites, ranges and buried munitions represent the largest cleanup program in the United States."

When a site gets too polluted, the Pentagon has chosen simply to close it down and turn it over to another federal agency. Over the past three decades, the Pentagon has transferred more than 16 million acres, often with little or no remediation. The former bombing areas have been turned into wildlife refuges, city and state parks, golf courses, landfills, airports and shopping malls.

Serious contamination of streams, soil and groundwater is a problem at nearly every military training ground. The sites are often saturated with heavy metals and other pollutants as well as unexploded weapons. The Government Accountability Office's list of the kinds of unexploded munitions left behind on many training sites reads like a catalogue for a Middle East arms bonanza: "hand grenades, rockets, guided missiles, projectiles, mortars, rifle grenades, and bombs."

But the government has gone to great extents to cover up its deadly legacy. In 2002 the Pentagon, defense contractors and perchlorate makers persuaded the editors of a prestigious journal to rewrite an article on the chemical's health effects without the lead author's knowledge or consent. Then in 2005 the White House loaded a National Academy of Science panel, which was set up to assess the health risks of perchlorate, with paid consultants of the rocket fuel industry, which, not surprisingly, recommended that exposure levels be set many times higher than the lower doses recommended by numerous independent research studies.

"Perchlorate provides a textbook example of a corrupted health protection system, where polluters, the Pentagon, the White House and the EPA have conspired to block health protections in order to pad budgets, curry political favor, and protect corporate profits," Richard Wiles, Executive Director of the Environmental Working Group, told the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee on May 7 during a hearing held by committee Chair Barbara Boxer (D-CA) who would like to see national safety standards for perchlorate in drinking water.

"All the pieces needed to support strong health protections are in place," said Wiles. "This is a nightmare of epic proportions for the Department of Defense and its contractors, and rather than address it head-on, they have spent 50 years and millions of dollars trying to avoid it."



Mural in Philippines protests U.S. military's toxic waste

### I • Strengthen Resistance

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withdrawing as efforts by the Nazis to provoke fistfights and violence unfolded. The usual police barricades and police lines that are commonly present at anti-war and anti-KKK rallies were nowhere to be seen as a car roared into the anti-Nazi and anti-KKK demonstrators, killing one young woman and injuring many others.

The firm stand of the demonstrators despite such efforts was that Racists and Fascist Have No Right to Speak or Organize. This is the stand growing out of WWII and the resistance worldwide to defeat the Nazis and say never again to their aggressive wars, brutality and racism. It was evident throughout the 1960's and beyond, where the KKK was repeatedly confronted and shouted down. They were also always protected by the police, often escorted to their rally point in police vans. Then, when blocked from speaking by the hundreds and often thousands opposing them, escorted back out, with police then attacking the protesters. The stand taken by demonstrators was against the Nazis and KKK, and against the police, their consistent protectors.

Following the Nazi and KKK violence in Charlottesville, every effort has been made by government officials, then echoed by the monopoly media, that while Trump may not denounce racism sufficiently, the rest of the government and military does. Everyone was to focus on Trump's comments, as though he alone is the racist and the rest of the state machinery is not. Military officials publicly came forward to proclaim their opposition to racism. Numerous politicians did the same, as did both Bush the elder and younger former presidents. The Nazi and KKK forces that demonstrated are to be seen as bad individuals, certainly not as the state organized force that they are. And the state is to be seen as the innocent by-stander.

It is the U.S. government that brought Nazis to the U.S. after WWII, providing them with jobs and protecting them from the people who demanded they be treated as the criminals they were. It is the U.S. state that organized the KKK as a terrorist force to maintain the suppression of African Americans, striving to block black people from participating in the political life of the country.

This was backed up by laws and lynchings and numerous other state-organized efforts. The FBI is notorious for "infiltrating" the KKK and



being an integral part of its crimes. The military promotes racism and hatred so as to justify its brutality against the peoples, in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. They are instruments of the racist U.S. state and imbued with its racism.

In the wake of Charlottesville, this role of the state in organizing such racist attacks and provocations is to be hidden. It is supposedly not the state that is the instigator and promoter of white supremacy — a concept initiated by the rulers to justify slavery and divide the people. It is supposedly individuals that are responsible. Indeed the terminology, white supremacy, is designed to target individuals who are white, while keeping the role of the state hidden. All of the institutional racism, such as segregated housing, job discrimination, unequal schools, mass incarceration, broad social inequality — and police agencies to enforce this state racism — is to be ignored.

The many demonstrations where the Nazis and KKK are outnumbered, often 50 to 5,000, or a few hundred to a many hundreds, or 50 to 40,000 as occurred in Boston, all indicate that they would not exist without the backing of the state. Voice of Revolution salutes those taking their stand against the KKK and Nazis and shouting them down, refusing to allow them to speak. The more than 700 demonstrations that took place across the country in support of resistance in Charlottesville further indicate that the people do not accept these racist attacks and efforts to pit working people against each other. The resistance can be further strengthened by focusing on the state, its racist institutions and police agencies, alongside opposing the state's groups like the KKK and Nazis.



# Trump Unable to Unite Military Bureaucracy — Growing Conflicts Among Rulers Increase Civil War Danger

One of the jobs of the presidency is to preserve the union, which requires uniting the military bureaucracy. This bureaucracy, which has grown to massive proportions, is part of the state machinery that exists from one president to the next. It is the state and its monopoly on use of force that ensures continuity and rule by the rich, while government changes from one election to the next. In current conditions where the existing institutions for governance — Congress, political parties, elections, for example — are dysfunctional and no longer serving to resolve conflicts, this problem of preserving the union and uniting the bureaucracy becomes increasingly difficult.



Demonstration in Minneapolis supports resistance in Charlottesville

This was evident during the 2016 presidential election, when various generals and military officials, mostly retired, campaigned for Trump or Clinton. This is contrary to military standards requiring military officials to remain neutral, so as to ensure their commitment to whoever becomes Commander-in-Chief. More recently, members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff — the top commanders of the Navy, Marine Corps, Army and Air Force — made public statements about racism, in response to those made by Trump about demonstrations and violence by Nazis and the KKK in Charlottesville. The statements by military commanders were seen as an open rebuke of Trump. News reports emphasized that the statements “indicated deep unease in the Pentagon,” and a “dramatic break with precedent,” of no public statements by the military that contradicted the president.

“The Army doesn’t tolerate racism, extremism, or hatred in our ranks,” General Mark Milley, chief of staff of the Army, tweeted August 16. “It’s against our values and everything we’ve stood for since 1775.” Marine Commandant General Robert B. Neller tweeted August 15 that there is “no place for racial hatred or extremism in the Marine Corps.”

Admiral John Richardson, the Chief of Naval Operations, on August 13 posted a statement on Twitter and Facebook that called the events in Charlottesville “shameful” and “unacceptable.” He said, “The Navy will forever stand against intolerance and hatred.” General David L. Goldfein, chief of staff of the Air Force, tweeted August 16 that he stood “together with my fellow service chiefs in saying that we’re always stronger together.”

## Military Racist to the Core

The military is notorious for its brutal racism, within its ranks and towards the peoples of the world. Soldiers are routinely trained to view peoples subjected to U.S. aggression as less than human, with various racist names used as part of this. And whipping up intolerance and hatred so as to convince soldiers to slaughter

“the enemy” is also a necessary part of military training. So the aim of the comments is hardly to stand against the racism that has imbued the U.S. state and its military “since 1775,” and has been and remains integral to its genocide against Native peoples, enslaved Africans and now African Americans, and peoples targeted abroad, like those of Iraq and Afghanistan. Their comments against racism, like similar ones by Trump and numerous other politicians, are meant to hide this reality, to divert from the fact that the U.S. ruling class is imbued with racism and organizes racist attacks and funds and arms Nazis and the KKK so as to maintain their rule and preserve their union. At the same time, the statements reveal the deep disunity and conflicts within the ruling circles, which are being openly displayed by the military. This also indicates the grave danger of civil war and potentially broader imperialist war.

Aggressive war is one means past presidents have used to unite the bureaucracy. The war against Iraq, for example, was launched in part for this purpose. But there is little evidence that open invasion of Syria, or the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, or Iran, will solve the problem for the rulers.

For the U.S. the issue of uniting the military bureaucracy is particularly important, as there is not a single, unified military. Rather, there are contending branches that both collude and compete for resources and power. There are also the many armed agencies within the country, like those at the border, FBI, DEA, and many others, as well as the highly militarized police forces. These all must be kept in check and united behind the presidency, something Trump is also not succeeding on.

## Organize for a Democracy of Our Own Making

It is this issue of preserving the union and uniting the military that stands behind the various statements now being made about removing Trump and possibilities of civil war. Various politicians are talking about impeachment. One of the president’s former top advisors warned that the result of Trump’s removal would be an

“armed” and violent “insurrection.” Roger Stone, a prominent Republican operative and top advisor during last year’s presidential campaign, when asked about impeachment said “You will have a spasm of violence in this country, an insurrection like you’ve never seen.” He also warned that anyone who voted for impeachment “would be endangering their own life.”

The rulers are contending with conditions where they cannot predict the outcome — the outcome of removing Trump through some means, the outcome of invading another country, the outcome of the growing and broad resistance, demanding a different direction for the country. Every effort is being made by the rulers to preserve the union and its constitutional form, while imposing a

government of police powers, concentrated in the presidency. The façade of democracy and civilian rule is to remain, but the governing institutions for that are being eliminated, making the ability to sustain the rule increasingly difficult and unpredictable.

For the people this poses the necessity to organize for the new, for a new direction for political affairs. The problem is not choosing sides among the rulers or defending an outdated Constitution that enshrines slavery and protects property rights, not human rights. It is organizing today for a democracy of our own making, where we decide! New institutions of government, a new constitution, can be developed in the course of struggle for political empowerment of the people.

## **Diversion — Twin Brother of U.S. Policy of Divide and Rule**

*Pauline Easton, TML Weekly*

A state-organized racist attack took place in Charlottesville, Virginia on August 12 as elements calling themselves Nazis and KKK held a rally that ended with the brutal killing of a young woman and injuring of many more. More than 700 demonstrations subsequently took place across the U.S. in support of resistance in Charlottesville, as well as several in Canada. On all occasions, those calling themselves Nazis and KKK have been outnumbered, often 50 to 5,000, or a few hundred to many hundreds, or 50 to 40,000 as occurred in Boston on August 19.

In Charlottesville, the few hundred people brought in from around the country were met by many hundreds of demonstrators opposing racism and the impunity of the state. The actions of the police made the involvement of the state more than clear. The more those calling themselves Nazis and KKK provoked fistfights and the more violent they became, the more the police withdrew. The police barricades and police lines that are commonly present at anti-war and anti-KKK rallies were nowhere to be seen in Charlottesville when the car roared into the anti-Nazi and anti-KKK demonstrators, killing the young woman and injuring many others.

In the wake of Charlottesville, a massive disinformation campaign has been launched to deprive the American and world’s people of an outlook on the basis of which they can take up for solution the problems they and their societies face. State-organized racism does not merely seek to divide and rule. Divide and rule seeks to divert the people from dealing with the main problems they and their society face. To achieve this diversion requires smashing any political movement of the people that is based on their own independent politics.

The political movement of the people is smashed when so-called identity politics are pushed. First, the blame for racism is put on individuals so as to hide the role of the state in organizing such racist attacks, and then people are to divide pro and con freedom of speech, and other diversions raised to justify increased use of police powers in the name of defending the Constitution. This is why every effort has been made to portray Trump as a

rogue element who has Nazi sympathies while portraying the U.S. government itself as anti-racist, as if the roots and causes of racism in the U.S. were not embedded in the country’s political and economic structure.

This vein of disinformation focuses on Trump’s comments, as though he alone is the racist and the rest of the state machinery is not. While during the presidential election campaign former military officials intervened in favour of either Hilary Clinton or Donald Trump, this time military officials on active duty publicly came forward to proclaim their opposition to Trump despite the fact that he is their Commander-in-Chief. Numerous politicians also intervened as did both former Republican presidents, Bush senior and junior. Everything is done to hide that those who comprise the racist formations that call themselves Nazis and KKK are state-organized. It is known that in the U.S. both those calling themselves Nazis and KKK are organized by the FBI. A mystery is created about the roots and causes of state racism and terror for purposes of enacting more draconian laws, restricting human rights and justifying the takeover of civil society by police powers.

### **Diversion Aims to Deprive People of an Outlook**

A second aspect of the disinformation campaign is diversion. All over the world terrorist provocations are part of the diversionary policy of “divide and rule.” The main policy of the state, along with the policy of divide and rule, has always been diversion. Without the policy of diversion, which has the aim of depriving people of an outlook from which to view and intervene in a situation, the policy of divide and rule would amount to nothing.

Far from the assertion in the U.S. Constitution, people are not born equal. The natural abilities of one differ from the natural abilities of another. And there are divisions amongst them due to economic, religious, linguistic, ethnic, cultural and physical differences. This is why they need arrangements which permit one and all to thrive by virtue of being human and live peacefully.

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## CHARLOTTESVILLE: TARGET RACIST U.S. STATE

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Instead, the state exploits the divisions amongst the people for their own ends. It is the policy of diversion which is the lynch pin; it is essential for the success of the policy of divide and rule. When political and economic difficulties come up in any country, as in the U.S. today, the state wants to divert attention from them instead of solving them. There is no dearth of ways in this world by which people can be divided. It is the policy of diversion that is obstructing the unity of the people and stopping them from dealing with their problems.

Governments highlight divisions among the people and then provoke them to act against one another by creating violent situations through the state agencies. Terrorism, anarchy, violence and assassinations have been developed as forms of diversionary politics all over the world since the time of the Paris Commune in 1871 and then during the Russian Revolution by the czarist secret police. These were the stock in trade of the covert agencies of imperialism during the Cold War and have become the overt official policy since George W. Bush launched the “War on Terror” following the attacks in New York City on September 11, 2001.

For many years now, diversions of various types have been used to give governments the opportunity to suppress people’s protests, agitations, and demands that governments address their problems. Instead of dealing with economic and other difficulties, these governments have criminalized politics. They tolerate only those activities which help them protect their so-called national interest. The state at both central and state levels is also prone to use murders and other criminal methods to sort out the conflicts in their own ranks. It is what the criminalization of politics is all about.

The criminalization of politics in the U.S., as is also the case in Canada and other countries, is the symptom of an economic and political system that has turned against the peaceful solution of problems. Whether within one country or on the world scale, no government of the big powers has solved a single problem in a peaceful manner during the present period. On the contrary, governments have handed over the administration of their duties to hired agents, powerful financial interests and oligopolies — who they then have trouble controlling — to do their bidding both at home and abroad.

### **State Organized Racist Attacks Done to Block Development of Peoples’ Political Movement**

In the wake of Charlottesville, not only is the role of the state in organizing such racist attacks and provocations hidden, so is the fact that these racist attacks and provocations are organized as diversions, as a block to the political movement of the people that undertakes to solve the economic, social, cultural and other problems in which their society is mired. While the anarchy and violence which ensue as a result of the refusal to provide the problems with solution are independent of anyone’s will, the fact that the state pursues the policy of divide and rule to divert the people from uniting in action to build the New is a matter of state policy. No matter the cost, the reactionary state must preserve itself by averting civil war within its own ranks and



by keeping the people in check.

According to the U.S. government and the monopoly-owned media, it is not the state that is the instigator and promoter of white supremacy — a concept initiated by the U.S. ruling class to justify slavery and divide the people. It claims racist individuals are responsible for racist violence because they have extremist values, while those who oppose them are also responsible for violence because they too have extremist values. Indeed the terminology, white supremacy, is designed to target individuals who are white, especially the so-called white working class, while keeping the role of the state hidden.

So too the racist rallies organized under the slogan Freedom of Speech deliberately confound the role of speech in the development of human society. It is called a civil right to divert attention from the fact that freedom of speech is a human right, independent of whether or not civil rights are withdrawn. The criminalization of speech in the name of high ideals is far more than an indication that the rights recognized by the Constitution that created the civil society are finished. It is a re-enactment of the law of slavery whereby human beings are to be defamed and outlawed, declared outside the law.

Meanwhile, the attacks of the state against entire swaths of the U.S. population are increasing. The state is racist. Its attacks include segregated housing, job discrimination, unequal schools, mass incarceration, broad social inequality and police agencies to enforce this state racism. All this is to be ignored but, most importantly, what is to be ignored is the role of the state to deprive people of an outlook on the basis of which they can tackle the all-sided crisis with economic crisis at the base and the fact that the old forms of civil society rule no longer function, while new ones have yet to be brought into being.

The need to build the resistance movement of the working class and people of our countries must be predicated on the people’s movement for empowerment. This includes drafting new constitutions and creating institutions that vest decision-making power in the people, not those who have usurped power by force.