

FASCISM ON FULL DISPLAY

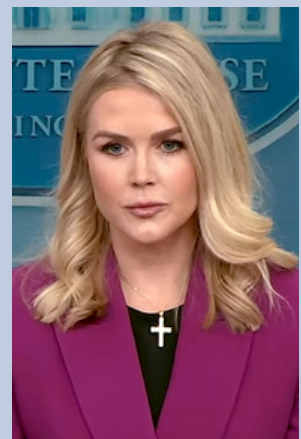
Where Does The Deportation of Hundreds Like Kilmar Ábrego García Leave Us?

Those within the Trump administration have once again displayed a gross and deliberate overreach of their bureaucratic and executive powers, this time in direct defiance of the Supreme Court's ruling to return a wrongfully deported man home.

THE RAIDS

Kilmar Ábrego García is a Salvadoran native who had lived in the United States since 2012. In 2019, he was brought before Baltimore, Maryland's immigration court by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in an attempt to have him deported. During the proceedings, García testified that his reasons for being in the U.S. were that of safety; his parents had sent him to escape the violence and threats of Barrio 18, an organized gang targeting him and his family. It was during the proceedings that García applied for a motion to withhold his removal, meaning he could not legally be deported back to El Salvador. The Court had found his testimony both "internally and externally consistent," and he was approved for the withholding.

Despite his protections, García was abducted and speedily deported by ICE on March 15th to the Terrorism Confinement Center (CECOT), a maximum security prison in El Salvador. He was taken without due process, similar to the other 237 individuals also deported by ICE in early March. The grounds for his deportation? His alleged affiliation with MS-13: a gang the president deemed as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) in an executive order which took effect in February of this year. In a conference, press secretary Karoline Leavitt can be heard referring to García as a "foreign terrorist engaging in human trafficking"; however, documents shared by the Justice Department show that he had no prior criminal record, debasing the administration's claims.



Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt



Kilmar Ábrego García



Governor Chris Van Hollen meeting
with García in El Salvador

“BRING HIM HOME.”

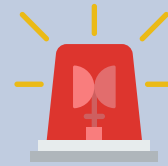
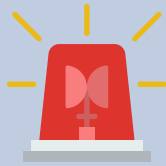
On April 4th, the United States District Court for the District of Maryland demanded García’s return by no later than April 7th, ruling that the deportation violated his withholding for removal. The motion was then upheld by the Supreme Court after the DHS applied to vacate the order. Despite these explicit judicial demands, the executive branch has taken no action to fulfill the District Court’s order,

coining the abduction simply as “an administrative error.” Media and news outlets across the country have covered García’s unlawful deportation, sparking international outrage and millions demanding he be returned home.

Maryland’s Governor Chris Van Hollen visited El Salvador earlier this week to check on García’s well-being and discuss his prompt return with the nation’s officials. However, the governor was barred from entering the confinement center upon arrival, and despite images having since been released depicting the governor with García, many seem to question the validity of the meeting. A tweet from El Salvador’s president, Nayib Bukele, stating that “[García] gets the honor of staying in El Salvador’s custody” after Van Hollen’s confirmation of his health has left many concerned, with some speculating whether the Maryland resident had left CECOT at all: if García was proven to be innocent, why would he need to remain in Salvadoran custody?

The indifference of the current administration and its refusal to return Kilmar Ábrego García home begs the question: What does this mean, not only for García’s future, but for the future of the United States? Can anyone, regardless of citizenship or status, be deported? Are our rights to due process and a fair trial in danger of being rescinded? While the answers remain unclear, there are things that we can do as individuals and as a community to defend ourselves.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST A RAID



Many are unaware of what to do in the event of an ICE raid before it's too late. Here are some steps you can take to be prepared in case it ever happens to you.

1. Know your rights

Many officers bet on you not knowing your rights, and will try to use this against you. The fact is, police can mislead you into incriminating yourself for something you didn't do. Whether you're an immigrant or a citizen, knowing what your rights is always a good idea; organizations like [CLASP](#) and the [Immigrant Legal Resource Center](#) have created toolkits with cards detailing some of these rights. Carrying these with you in your wallet or on your phone will ensure you're prepared if you're ever approached in public.

2. Don't open your door

ICE officers can't enter private areas without a warrant signed by a U.S. District Court judge. **This is important**, as sometimes officers will show other papers besides the one required for entry. The correct document will say "Search and Seizure Warrant" at the top, which allows the authorities to enter places such as a home or private office. The [ACLU](#) has detailed the differences in these documents, so you know what to look for. Remember: you do not have to open your door unless you see it's the right kind of warrant, signed by the right kind of judge.

3. Have a travel plan

If you can, try to tell at least two people when you leave your home, where you are going, and when you return. Telling your location to someone you trust will make it much easier to find you if you've been detained. Apps like [Life360](#) have Family sharing capabilities, which allow members of a group to share their location with each other.

4. Talk with a lawyer

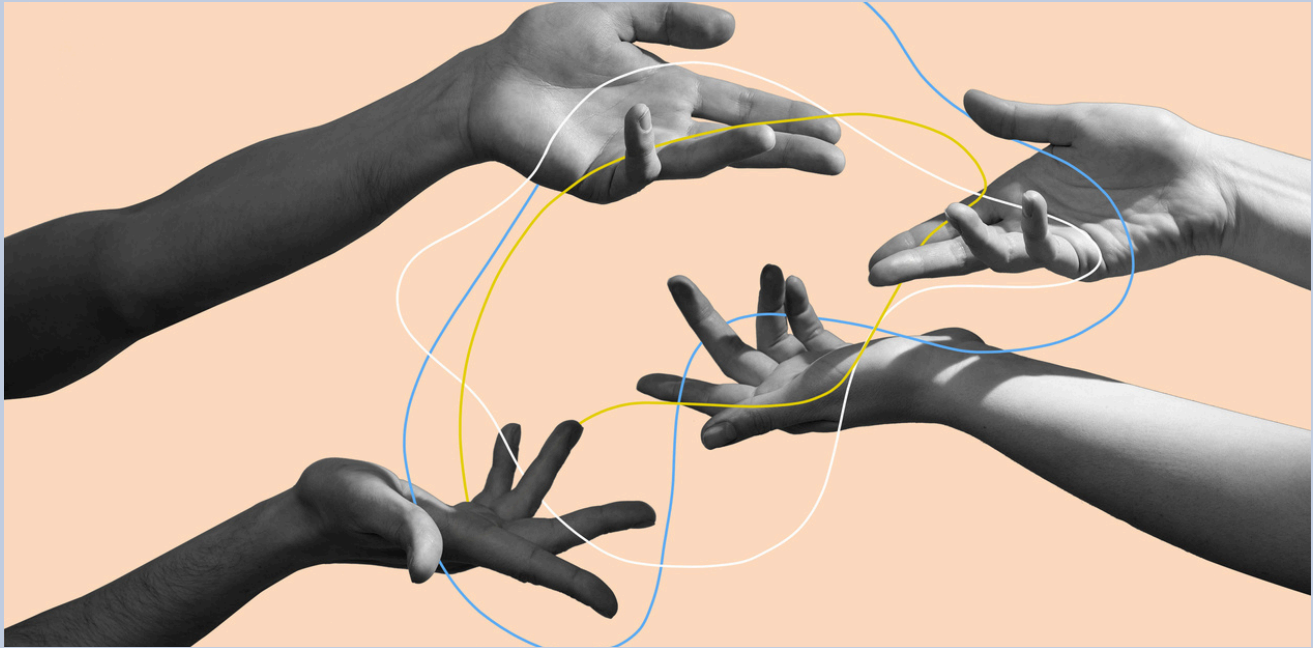
There have been reports of phishing texts and emails sent by what appears to be the Department of Homeland Security demanding people's presence at courthouses, only for ICE to show up and detain them once they get there. **Always** consult with legal representation before complying with requests for your presence, and try to have that representation with you if you must attend.

5. Record, record, record

Record the interaction if you feel safe enough to do so. This protects you by showing the details of what happened during the arrest that may not be available otherwise, and from false or fabricated statements. Try to get any information you can: vehicle plates, badge numbers, or identifiable features are a few examples of useful information to document.



WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?



In times like these, it's easy to fall prey to discouragement, fear, or numbing complacency. And who could blame us? Our society has pushed an individualistic narrative for decades, instilling “me and my own” ideologies to distract us from the horrors going on just outside our doors. We have been conditioned to turn a blind eye to the face of oppression: from the families that are being ripped apart, and the neighbors whose lives have been irreparably harmed. But now that our Government has begun to broaden its attacks, the comfort of “not me or my family” dwindles further out of reach. Just as Martin Niemöller warned during the Holocaust in 1946, if we do not speak up when they come for our neighbors,

there will be no one left to speak up when they come for us.

But hope is far from being lost; we have the capabilities and resources needed to protect ourselves. However, we won't be able to do it alone. Only through the conscious effort of staying informed, remaining diligent, and looking out for each other can we be proactive in the fight against injustice. And instead of looking up to an administration that has repeatedly demonstrated an uninterest in its civic duties, we must look to our left and right, to our neighbors and communities, to be the pillars of protection and the foundation of hope for one another.