DEPORTATION AND FAMILY IMPACT

Trump Administration Enforcement Efforts in Context

BY SUE WEISHAR, PH.D.

Less than one week after Donald Trump's inauguration his administration laid out new immigration enforcement policies that expanded "enforcement priorities" so broadly that virtually any undocumented immigrant, regardless of time in U.S., close family ties to U.S. citizens, or lack of entanglement with law enforcement, has become a priority for deportation ("removal"). Predictably, the result has been a surge in ICE arrests, detentions, and in several ICE districts, removals.

RECENT DATA ON ARRESTS AND REMOVALS

The chart below lists the number of ERO administrative arrests (both total arrests and arrests of persons with no criminal history[1]) by ICE districts in the five Gulf South States and the percent change in these categories from the prior fiscal year for FY 2016, FY 2017, and FY 2018. Total ERO arrests were up 30 percent nation-wide in FY 2017[2] and another 10.5 percent in FY 2018.[3] Non-criminal arrests more than doubled in FY 2017 but fortunately decreased by 45.77 percent in FY 2018. Still non-criminal arrests were still higher in FY 2018 than FY 2016.[4]

ICE removals overall were slightly down in FY 2017 due to decreased attempts to cross the border without authorization,[5] but removals increased in FY 2018 by 17 percent.[6] It is important to note that enhanced immigration enforcement is happening at a time when attempts to cross the border without authorization remain at historic lows not seen since the 1970's.[7] Moreover, the total undocumented population in the U.S. peaked eleven years ago at 12.2 million, and has been holding steady at about 11.1 million (3.5% of U.S. population) since the end of the Great Recession.[8]

These arrest and removal data fail to reflect the heartache and misery that the deportation of an immigrant family member brings to the spouses and children who remain. Perhaps if there were charts to count the number of times children cried themselves to sleep, failed tests, or were held back a grade because their fathers and mothers had been torn from their lives, Americans would have a more accurate picture of the impact of deportation on our social fabric.

Chart 1: ERO* Administrative ARRESTS and Percent Change Prior Year in Gulf South States and US FY 16, FY 17, & FY 18 by ICE District Area of Responsibility and Criminal History**

	TOTAL Arrests, Including Arrests of Immigrants with Criminal History					Non-Criminal (NC) Arrest Only				
	FY 2016	FY 2017	% Change	FY 2018	% Change	FY 2016	FY 2017	% Change	FY 2018	% Change
Dallas	9,634	16,520	71.4	17,644	6.80	1,070	2,736	155.8	587	-78.55
El Paso	1,611	1,892	17.4	2,159	14.11	392	621	58.4	414	-33.33
Houston	12,896	13,565	5.2	14,333	5.66	828	2,272	174.4	829	-63.51
Miami	3,524	6,192	75.7	8,474	36.85	468	1,850	295.3	1,070	-42.16
New Orleans	5,174	7,968	54	10,270	28.89	827	2,909	251.8	1,201	-58.71
San Antonio	8,425	8,510	1	10,749	26.31	1,896	2,854	50.5	1,429	-49.93
All U.S. Districts	**110,104**	**143,470**	**30.3**	**158,581**	**10.53**	**15,353**	**37,734**	**145.8**	**20,464**	**-45.77**

** ERO (Enforcement and Removal) is a division within Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.*

*** **Dallas** ICE District Area of Responsibility: North Texas, Oklahoma; **El Paso** ICE District Area of Responsibility: West Texas, New Mexico; **Houston** ICE District Area of Responsibility: Southeast Texas; **Miami** ICE District Area of Responsibility: Florida, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands; **New Orleans** ICE District Area of Responsibility: Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee; **San Antonio** ICE District Area of Responsibility: Central South Texas.*

Chart 2: ICE Removals Percent Change Prior Year in Gulf South States and US FY 16, FY 17, & FY 18 by ICE District Area of Responsibility and Criminal History**

	TOTAl Removals, Including Removals with Criminal History					Non-Criminal (NC) Removals Only				
	FY 2016	FY 2017	% Change	FY 2018	% Change	FY 2016	FY 2017	% Change	FY 2018	% Change
Dallas	12,154	14,028	15.4	14,818	5.6	1,381	1,727	25.1	794	-54.0
El Paso	43,590	21,420	-50.8	21,149	-1.3	13,935	8,425	-39.5	4,431	-47.4
Houston	14,681	13,598	-7.4	15,899	16.9	3,607	4,139	14.75	3,905	-5.7
Miami	5,562	7,082	27.3	8,091	14.2	2,600	3,654	40.54	2,491	-31.8
New Orleans	4,778	9,471	98.2	10,763	13.6	1,612	3,322	106.1	2,070	-37.7
San Antonio	72,597	55,313	-23.8	62,363	12.7	44,522	35,407	-20.5	34,357	-3.0
All U.S. Districts	**240,255**	**226,119**	**-5.9**	**265,085**	**17.2**	**101,586**	**98,420**	**-3.1**	**88,027**	**-10.6**

Source of Arrest and Removal data: FY 2016, FY 2017, and FY 2018 ERO Administrative Arrests and ICE Removals.[9] Analyses by author.

RESEARCH ON IMPACT OF DEPORTATION ON FAMILIES

The wide-scale arrest and deportation of noncitizens from the interior of the U.S. is a relatively new phenomenon, a result of immigration enforcement strategies initiated in the mid-1990's that involve state and local law enforcement agencies working closely with ICE agents. Therefore, research on the impact of parental detention and deportation on families is still in its early stages.[10] However, a review of the literature in 2015 by the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) and the Urban Institute (UI), as well as the 2018 Catholic Removal Impact Survey in Society study, point to significant and long-lasting harm to children's well-being as a consequence of a parent's deportation, which in 90% of cases involves the deportation of the father. Effects include psychological trauma, material hardship, residential instability, greater reliance on public benefit programs, and family dissolution.[11, 12]

I saw a friend—a U.S. citizen originally from Central America--and her family experience several similar negative outcomes when her husband was suddenly arrested and deported in 2010 after having lived in the New Orleans area for ten years—peacefully raising a family and working in post-hurricane reconstruction. The family had to go on public assistance and Irma (not her real name) was forced to take a second job that left her little time to see her children. Her formerly straight-A third grader began to do poorly in school and her toddler began calling random Latino men he saw "papi." Irma fought unsuccessfully with immigration officials for two years to grant her husband an immigrant visa. Three years after her husband's deportation the marriage ended.

In a follow-up report examining the involvement of families of a deported parent with health and social services, MPI and UI researchers found that promising sources of support included schools that are seen as safe places for immigrant children and community and faith-based organizations that immigrants trust, including small organizations that have created support groups and informal networks to help families cope with economic hardship, manage depression, and overcome isolation.[13] One such group recently took root in New Orleans.

MUJERES LUCHADORAS

For 14 months Tania Acosta had to negotiate complex immigration policies and long distances to visit her husband in a north Louisiana immigration detention center. After her husband's deportation, Tania and her close friend MariLo Martinez-Rivera realized they could put what they had learned through Tania's ordeal to good use by helping other families in similar situations. In May 2016 they founded a small, grass-roots organization, Mujeres Luchadoras (Women Fighters), to assist women and their families living in the New Orleans area who have lost loved ones to deportation. Through diaper drives and the sale of meals, the group assists with the urgent material needs of families thrown into immigration-related crises. Members share information on jobs, immigration legal services, and mental health resources via a text group chat or at monthly meetings, where donated supplies are distributed and bonds of friendship and support nurtured. As of November 2018 Mujeres Luchadoras had formed a network of 25 families from across the metro area. Future plans include obtaining non-profit status, developing a website with information and resources in Spanish, and training members to provide information and referrals to other immigrant families in crisis.[14]

CONCLUSION

The family holds a central place in Catholic Social Teaching. It is in the family where young people form their consciences, learn moral virtues, and develop their identities. The family is the most intimate sphere in which people cooperate, live, and grow.[15] Americans were slow to acknowledge the devastating long-term impacts on families caused by slavery and mass incarceration. We must now recognize that ripping loving parents away from their children through deportation also does incalculable harm to families and tears at our social fabric. Church doctrine teaches that the well-being of society absolutely depends on the well-being of families. Therefore President Trump's immigration enforcement agenda must be roundly condemned by Catholics and other people of faith and good will.

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TAXES - ENDNOTES —Continued from page 2

1 The Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. (2018, October). *Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All 50 States.* Sixth Edition. Unless otherwise noted, the report shows the impact of permanent tax laws on non-elderly taxpayers, including the impact of all tax changes enacted through September 10, 2018, at 2015 income levels.

2 Ibid., 1-2.

3 The rest of the "terrible 10" are South Dakota, Nevada, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Oklahoma, and Wyoming. Ibid., 2.

4 Ibid., 4.

5 Adapted from charts on pp. 26-29. Ibid.

6 Ibid., see formula, p. 138, at https://itep.org/wp-content/uploads/whopays-ITEP-2018.pdf

7 National Conference of Catholic Bishops. (1986). *Economic Justice for All: Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy,* 202.

8 *Who Pays,* 13.

9 Fred Kammer, SJ. (2011, Spring). "Catholic Social Teaching and Taxes." *JustSouth Quarterly,* 3.

10 *Who Pays,* 16

DEPORTATION - ENDNOTES —Continued from page 7

1 A large proportion of arrests labeled "criminal" involve arrests of persons with prior immigration violations, such as re-entry after deportation, or traffic offenses. For FY 2016 and 2017, ICE included "pending criminal charges" as non-criminal arrests in its annual listing of arrests and removals by ICE District of Responsibility, but not for FY 2018. For consistency's sake and because a person is innocent until proven guilty, the author chose to continue including "pending criminal charges" as non-criminal arrests in her FY 2018 analysis of arrests and removals by ICE District of Responsibility.

2 U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, *Fiscal Year 2017 ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations Report* at https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Report/2017/iceEndOfYearFY2017.pdf

3 U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, *Fiscal Year 2018 ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations Report* at https://www.ice.gov/doclib/about/offices/ero/pdf/eroFY2018Report.pdf

4 Ibid, *Fiscal Year 2018 ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations Report.*

5 Ibid, *Fiscal Year 2017 ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations Report.*

6 Ibid, *Fiscal Year 2018 ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations Report.*

7 Wall Street Journal (2018, June 21). The Immigration Issue in Eight Charts. Retrieved at https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-immigration-issue-in-eight-charts-1529578800

8 Passel, J. & Cohn, D. (2016, September 20). Overall number of U.S. unauthorized immigrants holds steady since 2009. Pew Research Center. Retrieved at http://www.pewhispanic.org/2016/09/20/overall-number-of-u-s-unauthorized-immigrants-holds-steady-since-2009/

9 *FY 2017 and FY 2016 ERO Administrative Arrests and ICE Removals,* no longer available on-line; author's files. FY 2018 may be found at https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Report/2018/ero-fy18-localstatistics.pdf

10 Capps, R., Koball, H., Campetella, A., Perreira, K., Hooker, S., & Pedroza, J.M. (2015, September). *Implications of Immigration Enforcement Activities for the Well-Being of Children in Immigrant Families.* Urban Institute and Migration Policy Institute. Retrieved at https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/alfresco/publication-exhibits/2000405/2000405-Implications-of-Immigration-Enforcement-Activities-for-the-Well-Being-of-Children-in-Immigrant-Families.pdf

11 Ibid.

12 Kerwin, D., Alulema, D, & Nicholson, M. (2018). *Communities in Crisis: Interior Removals and Their Human Consequences.* Nogales, AZ, New York, NY, and Washington, D.C. Kino Border Initiative, Center for Migration Studies, and Jesuit Conference/Office of Justice and Ecology. Retrieved at https://doi.org/10.14240/rpt1118.

13 Koball, H. Capps, R., Perreira, K., Campetella, A., Hooker, S. Pedroza, J.M., Monson, W. & Huerta, S. (2015, September). *Health and Social Service Needs of US-Citizen Children with Detained or Deported Immigrant Parents. Urban Institute and Migration Policy Institute.* Retrieved at https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/71131/2000405-Health-and-Social-Service-Needs-of-US-Citizen-Children-with-Detained-or-Deported-Immigrant-Parents.pdf

14 Information on Mujeres Luchadoras based on author interviews with MariLo Martinez in October, 2018, and Clark, M. (2018, October 25) From a Kenner backyard, these women are growing a support network for families torn apart by immigration arrests. *NOLA.Com.* Retrieved at https://www.nola.com/news/2018/10/separated-but-united-new-orleans-immigrant-families-form-support-network.html

15 See Massaro, T. (2008) *Living Justice: Catholic Social Teaching in Action.* Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

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