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People's Orgs Unite to Slam ICE as Fascist

Philosopher George Santayana famously said, "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it," and famous author and **Anti-Imperialist League** activist Mark Twain also stated, "history doesn't repeat itself, but it often rhymes."

When these quotes are taken together, the moral is that in order to protect our democracy, we must study the points in history where democracy was threatened or even destroyed. However, we must also apply this history creatively. We must understand the peculiarities of today's situations so that we do not mechanically expect an exact repeat of the past.

In 1921, the German Nazi Party developed its paramilitary wing, Stormtroopers, also known as Brownshirts, to facilitate the rise of the Nazi party to power. This paramilitary organization was primarily made up of ruined business owners, battered veterans, farmers, and permanently unemployed workers but also made up of backwards sections of the working class, was misguided and put into frenzy by the leaders of big business and finance capital.

Between its foundation and 1933, the Stormtroopers operated as a non-state terrorist apparatus attacking racial and religious minorities as well as Communist, Socialist, and other leftwing political activists. Stormtroopers appeared at strikes and meetings of political opponents to break up and instill fear. In 1923, hundreds of Brownshirts appeared in Munich, Germany from all parts of the country to overthrow the Weimar Republic in what was called the Beer Hall Putsch.

In 1933, when Hitler was **appointed (not elected)** chancellor, the role of Stormtroopers was to consolidate power into the hands of the executive branch of government, especially the chancellorship. The Brownshirts marched into cities where the last strongholds against fascism remained to beat up, kill, and terrorize the Left and minorities. Eventually, Stormtroopers even committed extreme acts of terror, such as the burning of the Reichstag (parliament) building. The result was to blame the Left and was a pretext for Hitler's enacting the Emergency Powers Act which formally banned the Communist Party, Socialist Party, and eventually dissolved the Reichstag altogether.

Today, under Donald Trump's second presidency, the **Movement for Peoples Democracy (MPD), a national coalition of progressive organizations**, clearly sees the parallels between the Brown Shirts of yesterday's Nazi Germany and today's Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Troops.

We are reminded that just as Brownshirts succeeded the Freikorps of the Weimar Republic, today's ICE combines the ICE that was formed under George W. Bush in 2003 with far right terror groups such as former Proud Boys members and rioters from the January 6th Capitol Hill Putsch in 2021.

We are reminded that before Hitler began his murder of Jews, Roma people, and others, he and his cohorts began scapegoating all minorities as "violent criminals, rapists, and murderers." Today, Trump and his cronies label Latinos and other People of Color immigrants and citizens alike as "terrorists, rapists, and murderers."

Today, Gestapo ICE troops have followed a similar pattern in the recent murders of mother and housewife Renee Good, and ICU nurse Alex Pretti.

Before being sent to concentration camps, Jews and other minorities were terrorized in the streets of Nazi Germany. Similarly, Trump's ICE Gestapo were deployed into American cities such as Los Angeles and Minneapolis to terrorize and arrest immigrant minorities.

Now, Trump threatens to institute martial law using the 1807 Insurrection Act, which is eerily reminiscent of Hitler's use of the Emergency Powers Act.

Americans are beginning to wake up and are protesting in the streets. American politicians need to follow suit. What is going on now in Washington D.C. is not business as usual. The Trump Administration acts to drown our democracy in blood.

Some politicians are calling for compromising with the Trump government over the size of the ICE occupation of American cities. The cancer of Trump is so deeply ingrained in modern day America that no bandages are going to solve the problem anymore. What we need now, is a drastic surgery to rip out the ICE tumor from the body politic.

American citizens must put pressure on their elected officials and demand that they do not "compromise" with fascism. Democrats, Republicans, and Independents alike, in all branches of government are now faced with one choice: abolish ICE or aid and abet the rise of fascism. There is no longer a "moderate" or "centrist" position. There is no room for fence sitters. Our country is at a crossroads, our future is either democracy or fascism.

Movement for Peoples Democracy,
Board of Directors.

