

Why Students Must Fight Back

"... all empires do fall, that the oppressed have shown resilience and perseverance beyond what we can even imagine ... we are certainly capable of tearing down imperialism itself with our very bare hands."

- Ziyan, local Kashmiri Muslim organizer who went into political exile following her F-1 student visa revocation.

For the last six months, the Dare to Struggle - Austin crew has been working to create a campaign that not only stops ICE but destroys the whole system of deportations. In our work we've spoke with immigrants and their families but eventually the work lead us to students, college or high school. Across the nation we witnessed student walkouts and spontaneous protests make waves amongst the youth and so we came to the conclusion that for our efforts to really create change we needed to connect ourselves to students and their fights.

In the last month of the semester we started to form more connections with college students, it was clear that they were fed up with the disheartening and liberal state of organizing in central Texas and as the summer set in we were hit with sobering news: our fight against ICE, or in fact Texas' fight against ICE, holds no real substance. In the wake of student visas being revoked University of Texas international student Ziyan, who was amongst those arrested at last years UT protests, released a statement declaring that if she were to be kidnapped by ICE she had no confidence in the people of Austin to actually fight back for her. Ultimately her only option was to flee, stating "...the conditions are not sufficient for me to stay and fight back because of a complete and utter lack of supportive organizing infrastructure."

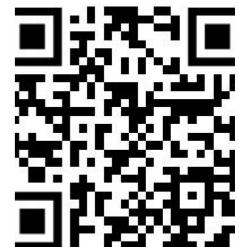
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and speaking in a designated area under campus rules is not protesting. To protest you must make a real disruption in day to day activities so people and the state understand you won't let injustice just pass by. Sure, maybe you'll miss an important class or exam if you perform a walk-out, or if you really cause a righteous ruckus you could even be expelled, but why is it that you are more deserving of a diploma than a Palestinian student across the globe whose had all their schools blown to rubble?

In the fight against ICE, students have a opportunity to create real change not only for themselves but for immigrants who might not hold the same privileges. To do that successfully students will need to commit themselves to creating ties with the immigrants outside of campus, our priorities should include learning Spanish and consistently meeting with immigrants. As we become a more cohesive network of people who are ready and trained to face ICE and can perhaps stop someone's kidnapping, we also need to be looking ahead to our bigger goal of smashing the deportation machine as a whole. We must not forget that rural towns face similar or worse oppression as people's cases are swept under the rug, if we focus all our efforts into some sort of city-wide Migra Watch that never ends, we will have failed them.

IT IS RIGHT TO REBEL!

To all young students, we urge you to seize your time as people who are capable of taking a stand against ICE. The fight you can take up now can have long lasting effects not only for the people of Austin, but for the very land we live on. It is of great necessity that students educate themselves on the attacks by the state and put up a real offensive against them. If you are a student who has been failed by the education system, or perhaps your school's superintendent gave up your district to ICE like many have, reach out to us so we can get talking about getting your classmates to stand up and fight back in the new semester. **We must show our teeth and sink the bite, we cannot allow the state to continue stripping us of our humanity.**



So why is it that our fight holds no substance? Why is it that the left is able to gather people in the thousands for ineffective procession protests, but struggles to mobilize even 50 people for a material action? To figure that out, we can look back on our direct confrontation with ICE at the beginning of April where a mother's three children were kidnapped and we were able to stop the ICE vans for only twenty minutes. Those twenty minutes were the result of hours dealing with lies coming from ICE pigs while the family's lawyer tried to negotiate with them, this delay in action can be seen reflected in people as they get caught up on legalities instead of actually taking things into their own hands.

"... does legality prevent undocumented communities from being brutalized? Does legality defend undocumented migrants from rape by ICE agents? Lastly, how long will legality last in the decaying rot of America before it is too late for us to realize that the only thing we can rely on is each other?" - Ziyah

We must relinquish any idea that the law is there to help us, it just puts us in a trap of condemning our poor and working class neighbors who didn't have the privilege to migrate or even just exist "legally." If ICE doesn't respect the law and clearly no one in power is doing anything to stop them, then it is our responsibility to stand and fight back in the face of this injustice. If we remain silent or continue to feed into actions that lead no where we will stay under the foot of repression.

IF YOU DON'T STAND FOR SOMETHING, YOU'LL FALL FOR ANYTHING.

To give a concrete example of the real change speaking up can bring, we can look to the recent case following the brutal murder of 22-year-old Messiah Nantwi, in which a group of Correctional Officers viciously beat Nantwi to death in front of other inmates. On March 15th, Dare to Struggle - Chicago wrote letters of support and encouragement to inmates at the Midstate Correctional Facility in New York who spokeout to expose the brutality behind his death. COs regularly retaliate against prisoners who report abuses and mistreatment. Despite this, inmates chose to publicly come forward about the killing because they understood that there was no one else that would, that what was done was plain wrong, and that there needs to be real consequences for the

pigs that killed Messiah Nantwi. Here are some words from one of those inmates:

"Why is it an important risk? Because it needs to be stopped and fixed. It needs to be brought to the light how broken this corrupt system is. Anyone of us could be [Robert] Brooks or Messiah. They [Correctional Officers] think they're above the law."

A month after they spoke out, two correctional officers were charged with murder and four were charged for the cover up. So if those who are literally beat for speaking out understand that taking that risk is important, why can't we do the same? If inmates who really only have their voice to take action with got two officers charged with murder, what can we as "free" people strive for? Well we won't really know until we create the networks necessary to understand and analyze the weaknesses of ICE or the strengths of the people. In doing so, again, student walkouts were the ones to make the most waves in getting people to actually take a stand against ICE. They took over a whole highway so clearly the want to speak out is there, now the question is how does it that energy turn into a sustained movement?



More than 1,000 people protested at LAPD headquarters on June 2, 1968 to demand the release of the East LA 13.



Dare to Struggle SoCal and members of Families Demanding Justice joining the student walkouts on February 8, 2025

Taking a look into history, student organizing was popping off roughly from the 1960s-80s during the peak of Black/Chicano power and anti-war protests, such as the Civil Rights Movement and Vietnam War resistance. In 1968 many high schools in East LA staged walkouts in

protest of the academic prejudice that Chicano students faced, around 20,000 teenagers decided to take a stand and take the streets.

"It put us on the map ... It energized the community, radicalized a new generation of Chicano activists. It taught us that the only way things can change is by protesting and taking up the system." - Carlos Montes, a student at East Los Angeles College in 1968 and a member of the Brown Berets, an activist Chicano group that helped execute the walkouts.

Here in Texas, student organizing was popping off roughly from the 1960s-80s during the peak of anti-racist and anti-war protests, such as the Civil Rights Movement and Vietnam War resistance. UT students mobilized by fighting police, driving them off campus, and attacking police property. Later on, student movements became divided due to a lack of proper analysis, direction, and mobilization of the masses outside of the university itself. **So for our current movement to make real change, students must rediscover their historical role and become revolutionaries once again.**

If the actions surrounding the recent kidnappings of international student organizers are any indication of the fight people are putting up, it is clear that the left and its student organizations are far too disconnected from immigrants who have been facing this oppression for decades. The end goals of our actions shouldn't be solely focused on getting out specific individuals, but creating a sustainable and revolutionary infrastructure that can protect people from ever setting foot in any detention center, whether they are an international student or an immigrant family.

Moreover, when we went out to UT campus to ask students what they thought about student movements not a single person we talked to had a concrete idea of how student movements actually changed history. The need to educate students quickly became a necessity and as our crew got acquainted with student organizing at UT it seemed like the intentions behind their actions and the spirit of the student body were misplaced. If students and graduates claim to be scholars and people of consciousness, how then does it look when we go about our days as usual all the while people are being kidnapped by the state? Marching



Hundreds of students gather in front Venice High School where about half the 3,000-member student body left classes. The chain of the 1968 L.A. high school walkouts was the catalyst that ignited the fire of the Chicano movement, it showed people that the only way change will come is by tearing up the system. All charges against those arrested were dropped by 1970.

Name: _____

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The purpose of an outline is to help you think through your topic carefully and organize it logically before you start writing. A good outline is the most important step in writing a good paper. Check your outline to make sure the points covered flow logically from one to the other. Include an INTRODUCTION, a BODY, and a CONCLUSION.

THESIS: +

WHY STUDENTS MUST



INTRODUCTION - State your thesis and the purpose of your research paper clearly. What is the chief reason you are writing the paper? Also state how you plan to approach your topic. Briefly explain the major points you plan to cover in your paper and why readers should be interested in your topic.

I. Introduction

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

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FIGHT BACK

BODY - This is where you present your arguments to support your thesis statement. Remember to back up your points with evidence.

May 2025

Dare to Struggle - Austin

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