



CLAIM NO FALSE VICTORIES:

A Report Back From a (Failed) Deportation Defense

Written April 2025 by an anarchist on occupied Wampanoag and
Narragansett land, so-called “providence, rhode island”

I was one of a number of Providence community members who showed up to a mobilization called on Thursday, April 24 in response to ICE kidnapping a community member and tasing him. The tip came into AMOR's ice hotline (+1 (401) 675-1414, add it to your contacts now and call with any suspected ICE activity!) and they and the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) mobilized outside of the emergency department of Rhode Island hospital, where our neighbor was being held after being tased. Let me be clear: we lost that Thursday. We were unable to respond before our neighbor was in custody, before he got tased, we were unable to get him access to his attorney, and were subsequently unable to liberate him from ICE custody. We failed, and because of that, a community member is being held in the Wyatt. This is a loss worth feeling.

But you wouldn't know that from the organizers. Instead of taking a moment to acknowledge the loss of another person to the horrors of the Wyatt or whichever concentration camp our neighbor now resides in, they celebrated that ICE had to sneak him out. You can confirm this for yourself; they proudly posted it to their instagram, their organizer speaking as if rallying us while trying to obfuscate their failure of organizing, followed, as always, by the next demo they wanted us at. This is not the behavior of an organization interested in winning, in keeping people out of ICE custody, in taking revolutionary action to protect our people. How did we get here?

First, there was no world where PSL's tactics could have liberated our neighbor from that hospital. We

were across the street, chanting while hospital vehicles drove by and police waited in their cruisers around the corners. I'll give them this: the chants were good, and there was water, but I was the only medic and there was no jail support. The lack of contingency planning is unacceptable in moments where we need to be practicing and building capacity in order to build militancy. People have medical emergencies at the calmest of protests; police snatch people for doing nothing as frequently as they do for allegedly breaking the law. Creating and practicing these supports allow us to a.) protect our people now and b.) know what to do when more militant action is necessary.

On Thursday, as that crowd cheered as we received the news that we'd "won", I couldn't help but think about who claiming this victory benefited. It wasn't our neighbor, sitting in an ICE van or concentration camp without access to his lawyer, without his community, with stories of due process disappearing hanging over his head, his body bandaged from the wounds the state had already inflicted on him that day. It wasn't the organizational structures we're working to build; refusing to admit defeat means we can't learn from our mistakes. It is not a moral failing to try an ineffective tactic, it's a strategic one. It is, however, deeply reflective of the character and motivations of an organization to continue to select the same tactics again and again when there is no progress towards meeting our goals.

PSL has continued to prioritize forms of resistance that can be easily turned into social media posts that

continue to build their notoriety and their membership. They post pictures of their meetings with people's faces out, ready to be identified. They don't wear masks at demonstrations (which would protect themselves from surveillance and their comrades from covid). They put information out quickly, sometimes before those on the ground outside of their leadership structure know it. Worse than this, they prioritize tactics that police the levels of risk participants are willing to take. How many stories have we heard of yellow-vested "marshals" (read: protest police) harassing and even occasionally assaulting the more militant elements of demonstration? How many more must we hear before we realize that they do not have our back and start treating them the same way we treat the pigs?

PSL treats protests like human petitions and opportunities to recruit; the tactic seems to be that by appealing to the lowest common denominator and doing the police's job for them they can amass large numbers and let the will of the people be seen while bringing in new people. On thursday, I spoke with a member of PSL's team after we were informed that ICE had removed our neighbor from the hospital. I asked him why we hadn't tried to enter the hospital, why we had blocked any infrastructure. He responded that he and I might be down for risking or taking arrests to stop a deportation but we couldn't be sure of everyone's risk level. When asked how we win with the tactics being used, he responded that we had already won. A pit deepened in my stomach.

What use is demonstrating the will of the people when it is already known? When our opponents are not only ignoring us, they welcome our actions as long as we don't get rowdy enough to actually threaten whatever it is they're up to? I am not advocating that people don't show up to these deportation defenses or to PSL's demonstrations; rather, show up ready and knowing that you need to handle your own jail support, bring your own medics, and know your own risk tolerance and capacity. Fuck a marshall. Fuck a permit. Fuck human petition tactics. If we want to stop deportations, citizens need to be willing to put our bodies on the line to do so. See y'all next time.

Further Reading on the PSL:

PSL is a high-control group with an ineffective strategy
rosegardendsa.substack.com/p/psl-is-a-high-control-group-with

Red Flags: Before You Join That Org

unsalted.noblogs.org/files/2024/06/RedFlagsWeb1.pdf

PSL Link Consolidation doc

docs.google.com/document/d/14wF1Ti5GT2w5GZmwqvvhvk6uH4zUssa-B2GZ9NZE74

Why I Left the PSL ... or the DSA or Socialist Alternative or whatever

theanarchistlibrary.org/library/a-filler-kid-why-i-left-the-psl-or-the-dsa-or-socialist-alternative-or-whatever

All these and more available at linktr.ee/pslflags

Want to do more than chant? Start here:

**Defend the Territory: Tactics and Techniques for Counter-
ing Police Assaults on Indigenous Communities**

warriorpublications.wordpress.com/defend-the-territory/

De-Arrest Primer

haters.noblogs.org/files/2024/04/DArr.pdf

Blockade, Occupy, Strike Back

dn790005.ca.archive.org/o/items/BlockadeOccupyStrikeBack/Blockade-Occupy-Strike-Back.pdf

10 Steps for Setting Up a Blockade

disruptnow.org/tactics-of-disruption/10-steps-for-setting-up-a-blockade-anonymous-n-d

Health and Safety at Militant Actions

files.sproutdistro.com/health_and_safety_militant_actions.pdf

We Are All Very Anxious

crimethinc.com/zines/we-are-all-very-anxious