

Detroit/Seattle Workers' Voice mailing list
September 28, 2024

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Haitian Immigrants and Other Americans Fight Back against Trump/Vance Slanderous Lies about Haitians Eating Pets

By Tim Hall, *Detroit Workers' Voice*

Haitian immigrants in Springfield, Ohio, and their local and state-wide supporters are fighting back spiritedly against the slanderous lies spread by Trump and Vance, who claim that the Haitians are eating the pets of their neighbors in Springfield.

Trump and Vance have been viciously spreading the scurrilous lie that Haitian immigrants who have legally entered the U.S. and have settled in this small, central-Ohio city are eating the pets of their new neighbors. Vance has recently admitted that the whole story was made up by himself. But the two low-lives campaigning for president and vice-president continue to spread this lie, in a highly publicized attempt to turn other Americans against the Haitians and other recent immigrants.(1)

But the Haitian immigrants and their supporters are vigorously fighting back.

The Haitian Bridge Alliance (HBA) yesterday filed a complaint with the Ohio Clark County Court demanding that authorities bring criminal charges against Trump and Vance for incitement and damages. The Haitians charged Trump and Vance with seven separate offenses, including disrupting public services, making false alarms, aggravated menacing, complicity and telecommunications harassment.

"Like those who falsely shout 'fire!' in a crowded theater, Trump and Vance do not color within the lines of the First Amendment. They commit criminal acts," the group said.(2)

In previous weeks, as the scandalous claims of Vance and Trump attracted outrage and disgust across the country, Springfield-area and other supporters of the Haitians showed massive support for the presence of Haitians in Springfield by patronizing the businesses Haitians have established in the small city. This effort focused on patronizing the main Haitian restaurant in Springfield, the Rose Goute Creole, and other businesses. Rose Goute Creole is a site popular with local Haitians. Since the Vance/Trump slanders began, lines of supporters have stretched out the doors of the restaurant, where the owner and Haitian volunteers labor to serve them. Supporters declared that the Haitians are welcome in Springfield, and highly complimented the cuisine.(3)

The news of this outpouring of support for the Haitians may have upset the MAGA cult. Queries as to the authenticity of articles reporting this support were filed with Snopes. Snopes verified the truth of the reports.(4)

These actions by the Haitian immigrants and their supporters gives the lie to the Trump/Vance racist agitation. It is an example of immigrants and supporters uniting and fighting back. Republican-ruled Ohio is rife with MAGA officials. In this case, the fightback was aided by a split among the Republican ranks. While Trump and Vance revile the Haitians, the Republican mayor of Springfield and even Trumpist Governor DeWine have denied the fairy tales about the local Haitians. This is because over the years 15 - 20,000 legal Haitian immigrants had been invited to Springfield to fill jobs and help revitalize the city. Having invited them in and eager to keep exploiting their labor, some MAGA bigots like DeWine try to stay aloof from this one bit of anti-immigrant hatred, while fine with the overall MAGA bigotry. But the real friendship for these immigrants came from townspeople, Haitian human rights organizations, and others, who came out en masse to show their support.

Notes

1. "JD Vance admits he is willing to 'create stories' to get media attention", by Edward Helmore, September 15, 2024, *The Guardian*, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2024/sep/15/jd-vance-lies-haitian-immigrants> . And "JD Vance Justifies Spreading Debunked Conspiracy Theory About Haitians In Ohio" by Sanjana Karanth, September 16, 2024, *Huffpost* <https://www.yahoo.com/news/jd-vance-justifies-spreading-debunked-202603304.html> .
2. "Haitian group in Ohio files criminal complaint against Trump, Vance", by Rafael Bernal, September 24, 2024, *The Guardian* <https://www.yahoo.com/news/haitian-group-ohio-files-criminal-191537627.html> .
3. "'Conquer with love': Springfield community shows support for Haitian neighbors", by Gwyneth Falloon, September 13th 2024, *Dayton24yNOW*, Dayton, Ohio, Channel 247, <https://dayton247now.com/news/local/conquer-with-love-springfield-community-shows-support-for-haitian-neighbors> . And "Ohio residents flock to Springfield's Haitian restaurants: 'They are family': Locals support and volunteer at Haitian-owned businesses to stand against Trump and Vance's anti-immigrant lies ", by Stephen Starr, September 22, 2024, *The Guardian* <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2024/sep/22/springfield-ohio-haitian-restaurants> .
4. "Photo Shows Packed Haitian Restaurant in Springfield, Ohio, Following False Claims", Alex Kasprak, Sept. 16, 2024, *Snopes*, <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/haitian-restaurant-photo/> .

What's going on in the West Bank

By Pete Brown, *Detroit Workers' Voice*

On Sept. 20 I attended a zoom meeting sponsored by Jewish Voice for Peace that included a report from the West Bank by Kim Redigan of Meta Gaza Peace Team and Freedom March. She just returned from a few weeks in the West Bank. She said the situation is "unprecedented, though not unexpected." Many homes destroyed. Airstrikes in Jenin. Full-on military police state. Criminalization of human rights workers. A new law passed by Knesset that classifies UNRWA workers as terrorists. A community of 40,000 near Jerusalem is being demolished to build a theme park there. Bedouins in Carmel have their homes demolished. In the Jordan Valley, Palestinians' sheep are poisoned. Near Bethlehem, homes and restaurants demolished. Israeli kids from a nearby juvenile detention facility are given arms and attack dogs and let loose on local Palestinians.

It's not antisemitism to defend the Ann Arbor 11

MI Attorney General Dana Nessel has accused US Rep. Rashida Tlaib of antisemitism for criticizing her for bringing charges against the Ann Arbor 11, pro-Palestinian demonstrators arrested for being at a peaceful encampment at the University of Michigan. Tlaib had said in an interview that "We've had the right to dissent, the right to protest. We've done it for climate, the immigrant rights movement, for Black lives, and even around issues of injustice among water shutoffs. But it seems that the attorney general decided if the issue was Palestine, she was going to treat it differently, and that alone speaks volumes about possible biases within the agency she runs." (1)

In reply Jewish Voice for Peace issued the following statement:

Jewish Voice for Peace Condemns MI Attorney General Dana Nessel's Allegations of Antisemitism and Pursuit of Criminal Charges Against the UMich Encampment 11 (2)

September 23, 2024

Jewish Voice for Peace - Detroit strongly condemns Attorney General Dana Nessel's baseless accusation on X that Representative Rashida Tlaib's criticism of her office's decision to charge pro-Palestine protestors constitutes antisemitism. Conflating Tlaib's calls for accountability with antisemitism undermines the struggle for justice. Michiganders are tired of racist and Islamophobic dog whistles.

We must clearly state: it is not antisemitic to protest the actions of the Israeli government, which is waging a genocidal campaign in Gaza with direct support from the United States.

Demonstrations across the country, including at the University of Michigan, have included brave Jewish students holding Passover seders and Shabbats in solidarity at encampments, creating spaces for people of many faiths and backgrounds to unite in their commitment to collective liberation and life. History has repeatedly shown us to follow the lead of young people, who have been at the forefront of movements for justice, but police violence to suppress dissent has become routine across Michigan and the country.

Nessel's commentary constitutes a callous dismissal and green light to continue targeting the movement for Palestinian liberation.

It is especially reprehensible that Nessel bypassed the local prosecutor's office to pursue felony and misdemeanor charges against eleven protestors involved in the Gaza Solidarity Encampment at the University of Michigan while failing to deliver justice to the thousands of families affected by the Flint Water Crisis. This reflects a wider pattern of weaponizing the criminal justice system against those fighting for Palestinian liberation.

We call on Attorney General Dana Nessel to retract her statement and apologize to Representative Tlaib for this false equation of political criticism with antisemitism. We further echo the University of Michigan's TAHRIR coalition in demanding that she drop the politicized charges against the protestors immediately.

(1) "Tlaib slams Nessel for targeting pro-Palestinian students at U-M: 'A dangerous precedent'", Steve Neavling, September 13, 2024, *Detroit Metro Times*, <https://www.metrotimes.com/news/tlaib-slams-nessel-for-targeting-pro-palestinian-students-at-u-m-a-dangerous-precedent-37343930> .

(2) <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=924972706331027&set=pcb.924974092997555> .

Correction

The D/SWV list for Sept. 24, 2024 carried an article supporting the Ann Arbor 11 demonstrators who were arrested for being at the pro-Palestinian encampment at the University of Michigan.

<https://www.comunistvoice.org/talk/viewtopic.php?p=3099#p3099> .

In this article, "the Larry Nessel sexual abuse case" should have been "the Larry Nassar sexual abuse case".

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Picture: Townspeople pack Haitian restaurant in Springfield, Ohio.

<https://mediaproxy.snopes.com/width/1200/https://media.snopes.com/2024/09/haitian-restaurant-photo.png>