FROM § EACH

FIRST YEAR · SATURDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2026 — THE MORNING EDITION · FREE, FOREVER — EVERY CLAIM LINKED

THE WORD

§63 — 16 OCTOBER 2026

On the worst of the worst

DEMOCRAT | REPUBLICAN





70.6 PERCENT | *THE WORST OF THE WORST*

"I read the phrase in three places. The press secretary: "a focus on the worst of the worst criminals." The department, on the anniversary: ICE "unleashed" on "the worst of the worst." Then I went to the clearinghouse that counts the detention population, just to meet a few of them. July: sixty-five thousand seven hundred sixty-five people in detention. Forty-six thousand four hundred thirty-six with no criminal conviction. Seventy point six percent. Excuse me — I'm going — one question. If the worst of the worst are thirty percent of the beds, who's in the other seventy?" — Lou

... Continued on Page W63

NFL activates its exempt list for a second arrest this season, with punishment from the first still pending.

PHOTO: NEW YORK POST

BY GUS
The Sports Desk

HOT MIC MOMENT

Mic's still live. The commissioner's exempt list has now processed two players this season carrying a felony charge and a strangulation arrest between them, and in both cases the league produced a roster transaction before it produced a finding. That is sequencing: the paperwork that returns a man to the field is moving faster than the paperwork that would ever keep him off it. A private commissioner's office is now outpacing the court system in both cases, and outpacing its own personal conduct policy too. Somebody on the assignment desk should be asking why league security can clear a roster spot before a court clears a docket. Get me the political desk.

... Continued on Page S18

Housing nonprofit backed by LA mayoral candidate can't account for $87 million in housing money

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

Eighty-seven million dollars is the size of the gap Los Angeles City Attorney Hydee Feldstein Soto wants closed. The gap sits inside a nonprofit called LAFLA, a group backed by mayoral candidate Nithya Raman. The money came from the city's "Mansion Tax" and was meant to build housing. The audit demand, reported October 16, does not say where the money went. It says the city does not know.

Start with the number itself. That qualifier is the first entry in the ledger: the city is not disputing a specific sum, it is disputing a ceiling.

... Continued on Page F120

FROM THE CORNER

Dutch

Congress passed the Russia sanctions law, the President signed it last month, and he hung Lindsey Graham's name on it, the senator who died writing it in July. That is not a sanctions law, it is a nameplate rented out until the day Moscow's oil needed the room. Because the waiver signed Friday lifts the tariffs on the largest buyers of Russian oil, Moscow's revenue keeps moving, and because sanctions were the lever Brussels was counting on to shrink the gap, the seventy billion euros Zelensky asked the summit for a day earlier now carries no American half, landing on the next foreign-aid line with the reader's own name typed on the tax return that funds it.

On Trump signs Russia sanctions law named for Lindsey Graham, then waives it the day before it takes effect. *— the column, by The Lodgers*

THE SHORT VERSION

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The NFL activated a Broncos player off its commissioner's exempt list this week while a felony charge and three misdemeanors remain open.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. The league's own conduct process is the check that slips — it has cleared one player to return and parked another on leave without finishing either case.

WHAT'S NEXT. Nothing is scheduled yet. The other player on the list, Josh Jacobs, has waited since August 30 with no ruling; Cooper's case now joins that same queue with no hearing date set.

On NFL activates its exempt list for a second arrest this season, with punishment from the first still pending. — the column, by Gus. The whole front, short, and the precedents, on E6

DOJ threatens California clerks with prison over a noncitizen list missing the information needed to use it

PHOTO: THE GUARDIAN

BY MITCH
Investigations

Last edition we were chasing one word — abandoned — through a story about the unit built to investigate threats against election workers, dismantled October 1st, its leftover mail somehow still finding Republican offices. This edition the word is

... Continued on Page B42

Senators demand answers on throttled soldiers' Starlink; Musk answers with a flying car.

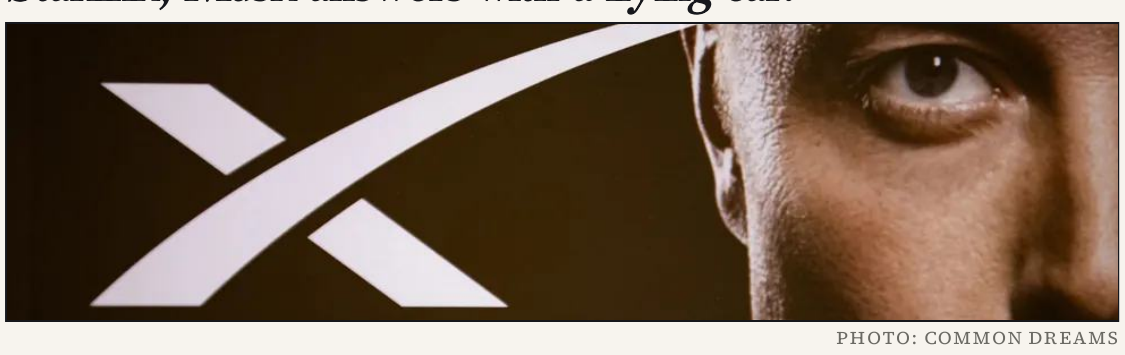

PHOTO: COMMON DREAMS

BY THE WRECKING CREW
The Remedy Desk

The chief walks into the shop with a count, not a feeling: one company throttled a war zone's internet, and its sister company answered the resulting uproar with a flying car.

On Thursday, in Texas, Elon Musk's Tesla rolled the Roadster onto a runway, strapped it with the same high-pressure air thrusters

... Continued on Page A215

Administration axes election-threat unit, Republican senators start receiving the threats it no longer tracks.

BY LOU
One More Question

I went to the post office to mail the renewal for my car registration — the form with the box that wants a return address — and I didn't have a label, so I stood at the counter trying to remember my own zip code like a man accused of something. I got the stamp. On the way out, the rack by the door had this morning's paper folded open to a page that had nothing to do with my car.

That page, from the New York Post, today, said a congressman from California got an envelope mailed from New York with a return address linked to something called the

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THE DRAGNET

DHS calls case against Omar 'strong': a childhood form, a sister's phone, trash pulled before any warrant.

BY LOU
One More Question

I called the Department of Motor Vehicles this morning because the sticker on my plate expired, and forty minutes later I still didn't have one, I had two disconnected numbers and a very patient woman named Carol who informed me I'd reached Records three times running when what I wanted was Permits. I wrote her name down. Force of habit. I write names down even when nobody's going to ask me for them later.

And while I was on hold waiting for Carol to transfer me a fourth time, something else came back to me that I'd been meaning to ask somebody about all week, and since I've got you now, I'll ask you instead of her.

On the 12th, CBS reported that federal agents had searched Representative Omar's home here in Washington, and that what they were looking for traced back to immigration paperwork — filled out by her father, when she was a child. I wrote the date down. A childhood form. That's the bottom of the file, as I understand it.

... Continued on Page T28

THE WAIVER

Trump signs Russia sanctions law named for Lindsey Graham, then waives it the day before it takes effect.

BY THE LODGERS
The Euro Desk

Today we are making a sanctions waiver, which is not a dish you can get over here, so I shall go slowly. You will need a law Congress already passed, a signature already on it, and a second signature, later, taking the first one back.

Clive *Two signatures. I am drafting a reply myself, one line that promises and the next that quietly withdraws it. I think we know who does that best at this table.*

The law is the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act, signed the

... Continued on Page A215

> *Don't let anybody tell you that people running Congress right now are looking out for the rich. Actually, I think we should do a little more for them"*
>
> — REP. GLENN GROTHMAN (R-WI), AUGUST 2026

FASTEST FIRED

Press secretary fired after five days, replacing the Scaramucci as American politics' base unit of time

BY THE LODGERS
The Euro Desk

Today we are making a press secretary, which does not keep. You will need five days: Katie Zacharia was picked on the ninth of October and fired on Friday, five days after she took the job, which a White House official told the Guardian before anyone had announced it formally.

For the rest you will need a conservative commentator who had been a communications adviser at Trump Media and Technology Group; the vacancy left by Karoline Leavitt, who went in August; a law degree from

... Continued on Page A215

> *Get them out quick. Open those beds up for more detainees."*
>
> — BORDER CZAR TOM HOMAN, CNN STATE OF THE UNION, 30 AUGUST 2026

> *Shut down Delaney Hall, free them all!"*
>
> — PROTESTORS OUTSIDE THE DELANEY HALL ICE FACILITY, NEWARK

ASK VIVIAN

"I loved the explanation of the national debt, but who is collecting the interest?" She answers on E5.

— this paper

"Nothing up there is a conspiracy. That's the part that should worry you — it's all on the record, filed, stamped, and in a couple of cases notarized."

— *Sal*

FOR SALE Chest freezer, never opened. Bought during the egg thing. *Eggs came down. My planning did not.* — **Classifieds**

PERSONALS Devoted professional, DC. Seeks nothing — the position is filled. "You are all that matters to me." *Brings her own printer. Signed, with all my heart.* — **Classifieds**

WANTED Local election officials brave enough to count ballots using a Justice Department noncitizen list missing addresses, jurisdictions, and basic identifying information. *Prosecution guaranteed; accurate paperwork sold separately.* — **Classifieds**

"Nothing here is a scandal. A scandal requires surprise, and I can assure you nobody involved was surprised."

— *Chip*

The hens, a man counts in spring. The fox counted in winter.

ENOCH · THE OWNERSHIP DESK

Housing nonprofit backed by LA mayoral candidate can't account for $87 million in housing money

By RUTH
THE MONEY DESK

"LA's $87M taxpayer money mystery deepens as nonprofit backed by mayoral hopeful Nithya Raman faces spending scrutiny", 16 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA NEW YORK POST — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Los Angeles's city attorney demanded an audit of a housing nonprofit backed by mayoral candidate Nithya Raman.

WHO GETS PAID. The nonprofit, backed by Raman's campaign, keeps the mansion-tax money with no public accounting produced yet of where it went.

WHAT SLIPS. Voters who approved the mansion tax for housing cannot yet see how up to $87 million of it was spent.

WHAT'S NEXT. If the audit goes forward, expect the verified total to land far below any headline figure; that is what Washington got after 26 February 2025, when a $65 billion savings claim turned out to have only $9.6 billion itemized.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Eighty-seven million dollars is the size of the gap Los Angeles City Attorney Hydee Feldstein Soto wants closed. The gap sits inside a nonprofit called LAFLA, a group backed by mayoral candidate Nithya Raman. The money came from the city's "Mansion Tax" and was meant to build housing. The audit demand, reported October 16, does not say where the money went. It says the city does not know.

Start with the number itself. That qualifier is the first entry in the ledger: the city is not disputing a specific sum, it is disputing a ceiling. Eighty-seven million is the most the gap could be, which means the actual figure, whatever it turns out to be, has not been produced by anyone yet. An audit exists to find that number. As of this filing, no audit has finished....

...(cont) Second entry: who asked. The request came from the city attorney's office, dated October 16 and 17. Nothing in that request makes Feldstein Soto a candidate for mayor, and nothing here calls her one. What the request does establish is narrower and harder to argue with: in a mayoral race where Raman's campaign has built part of its case on housing policy, the only math anyone has put on paper about this particular $87 million came from outside the campaign, from an office whose job is demanding paper.

Compare the proof required elsewhere. On September 28, lawmakers from both parties criticized a taxpayer-funded television commercial for the president titled "Love Me." The commercial needed no audit to be established as a fact. It was airing. People with televisions saw it, and lawmakers objected in the same news cycle. The nonprofit's $87 million needed three weeks and a formal audit demand before anyone could even state the size of the gap, because unlike a commercial, the money does not run on a schedule anyone outside City Hall can watch.

That is the reconciliation, hon. One column shows a nonprofit Raman backs, a tax built for housing, and a figure that tops out at $87 million unaccounted. The other column shows an audit demand with two dates on it and no total yet. Until those columns match, the only number in this race anyone has actually filed is the city attorney's, and it is a ceiling, not an answer.

"Eighty-seven million dollars of mansion-tax money went into a nonprofit for housing, and the only person asking where it went works in the city attorney's office, not the campaign. That's the trick with these housing nonprofits — the tax passes, the press conference happens, and the paperwork gets quieter every year after. You can smell rent going up around here; you can't smell where this money went, and neither can the city, apparently."
— Sal

"Look, an audit request isn't an accusation, it's a routine good-government step, that's — that's literally what audits are for, nothing to see here. And "up to $87 million" could mean the real number is way smaller, could be practically nothing, we don't know, which is exactly my point, so why is everyone treating a ceiling like a total? Did I just defend not knowing the number as the defense? That doesn't sound like me."
— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

~~LA's $87M taxpayer money mystery deepens as nonprofit backed by mayoral hopeful Nithya Raman faces spending scrutiny~~

LA nonprofit backed by mayoral candidate Raman can't account for $87 million in housing funds, city attorney says

New York Post RIGHT § *19:33 EDT*

LA City Attorney Hydee Feldstein Soto demands an audit of nonprofit LAFLA, citing up to $87 million in unaccounted taxpayer housing funds.

Nithya Raman must explain why she sent 'Mansion Tax' cash to dodgy foundation

New York Post RIGHT § *21:35 EDT*

How can Nithya Raman run the city of LA if one of her pet projects is missing $87 million? That's a question voters will be asking after the city attorney's latest bombshell report.

· Lawmakers on both sides push back on taxpayer dollars spent on Trump "Love Me" commercial *from the morgue, 28 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

Senators demand answers on throttled soldiers' Starlink; Musk answers with a flying car.

By THE WRECKING CREW
THE REMEDY DESK



"Humans First": Bernie Sanders Responds to Elon Musk Concern for AI 'Feelings'", 14 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA COMMON DREAMS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

The chief walks into the shop with a count, not a feeling: one company throttled a war zone's internet, and its sister company answered the resulting uproar with a flying car.

On Thursday, in Texas, Elon Musk's Tesla rolled the Roadster onto a runway, strapped it with the same high-pressure air thrusters SpaceX puts on its rockets, and had it flip and hover for a cheering crowd. CBS News filmed the acrobatics and then asked the follow-up the stage left out: who regulates this thing, on the road or off it? CBS put the question to the Department of Transportation that same afternoon. The outlet could only publish the question itself — no fuller answer has turned up since....

...(cont) The day before, in Washington, a harder question was already sitting unanswered. Ukraine's access to Starshield, the military-grade branch of SpaceX's Starlink network, had been throttled, and President Zelenskyy said the slowdown disrupted drone operations and put lives at risk. The Hill reported that same day that a bipartisan group of senators — four Republicans standing with their Democratic colleagues — had written the Pentagon demanding to know which official gave the order. By Thursday, ABC News was reporting the same bipartisan demand, unanswered still. Two days earlier, Common Dreams had already named the deeper problem: a government that leans this hard on one man's satellites has no strong position left when his satellites misbehave.

The planner points out that the government is not actually out of position — it has simply not used the position it holds. The administration can summon Musk for an honor one week and claim it cannot summon an answer from him the next; the Pentagon is Starshield's buyer, and a buyer's unused leverage is still leverage.

The tinkerer's assembly needs no new statute. Part one: the Department of Transportation puts its jurisdiction, or the lack of it, on the record before the next thruster-car livestream, not after. Part two: the Pentagon spends the leverage it already owns as the customer and gets a written answer from its own satellite contractor about who ordered the throttling. Both parts were sitting in the shop before Thursday's unveiling. The muscle just has to swing the tool already on the bench, and the pilot flies the answer back to the senators still waiting for one.

"Here's the con: one Musk company decides how fast Ukrainian soldiers get their drone feed, and when the Senate asks who made that call, his other company answers by flipping a car through the air on live television. The Pentagon pays this guy's invoices every month and still can't get him on the phone, and the Department of Transportation finds out about the new vehicle the same way the rest of us do — from a livestream. Somebody's holding the leverage here; they just keep choosing not to use it."

— Sal

"Look, the Pentagon has processes, it has channels, and when those channels produce an answer the senators will have it — that's not a cover-up, that's a bureaucracy functioning exactly as slowly as it's supposed to. And the flying car? That's innovation outpacing regulation, which is what innovation does, that's the whole point of innovation — wait, did I just defend an unregulated flying thing because it was exciting? That tracks, actually. Never mind."

— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

~~'Humans First': Bernie Sanders Responds to Elon Musk Concern for AI 'Feelings'~~

Sanders: Musk wants millions of robots to replace workers, worries about hurting AI's feelings

Common Dreams · *21:35 EDT*

US Sen. Bernie Sanders responded Tuesday to Elon Musk's apparent concern for artificial intelligence's potential feelings by arguing for a human-centered approach to the rapidly advancing technology. Musk, the CEO of Tesla and SpaceX who also runs the AI company xAI, recently endorsed rival Anthropic's recent decision to ban employees...

Throttling of Ukraine's Starlink Access Heightens Concerns Over Government Reliance on Elon Musk

Common Dreams · *10:53 EDT*

The Ukrainian government on Tuesday night said that its access to the SpaceX-owned Starlink satellite internet service was throttled, prompting critics to question the wisdom of depending on any company owned by far-right billionaire Elon Musk. According to a Wednesday report in The New York Times, Ukrainian officials suspect that orders...

But: The Pentagon has failed its audit eight years running - the only major federal agency never to pass one *Military Times, 19 December 2025*

Bipartisan senators ask Pentagon to answer for Ukraine Starlink restrictions

The Hill | MAINSTREAM · *18:20 EDT*

{beacon} Technology Technology The Big Story GOP senators press Pentagon over Starlink restrictions in Ukraine Four Republican senators joined their Democratic colleagues in pressing the Trump administration for information about whether Pentagon officials ordered restrictions on Ukraine's access to the satellite-based Starshield...

Bipartisan group of senators want answers on Starlink disruptions in Ukraine

ABC News | MAINSTREAM · *20:00 EDT*

The lawmakers say American personnel were endangered in attacks on Ukraine.

Who would oversee a flying car? We asked the DOT.

CBS News | MAINSTREAM · *20:05 EDT*

Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk unveiled Tesla's new Roadster Rocket, which he called a "flying car" equipped with "ultra high-pressure air tanks."

Elon Musk unveils flying Tesla prototype to cheering Texas crowd

CBS News | MAINSTREAM · *20:02 EDT*

Elon Musk unveiled a Tesla prototype equipped with thrusters that can perform air acrobatics. But the vehicle is not yet approved for sale or use on the road.

Tesla shows off new flying car concept

CBS News | MAINSTREAM · *20:02 EDT*

Elon Musk unveiled the new Tesla Roadster on Thursday, demonstrating the car's ability to flip and fly using the same kind of thrusters used on SpaceX rockets. Edmunds editor Chris Rosales, who was at the event, joins CBS News to recount what he saw.

~~Growing dispute over Starlink disruptions in Ukraine~~

Starlink's restricted speeds disrupted Ukraine's drone operations, Zelenskyy says it risked lives.

CBS News | MAINSTREAM · *19:56 EDT*

There are growing questions over who gave the order to restrict Starlink internet speeds in Ukraine, which disrupted drone operations and, according to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, put lives at risk. CBS News international reporter Aidan Stretch has the details.

With Tesla Roadster debut, Elon Musk shows 'flying cars are real'

CBS News | MAINSTREAM · *20:07 EDT*

Elon Musk unveiled Tesla's new Roadster, which uses high-pressure air thrusters to leave the road entirely during a livestreamed event at his SpaceX facility in Texas.

· Trump to award National Medal of Science to Elon Musk *from the morgue, 8 Oct 2026*

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DOJ threatens California clerks with prison over a noncitizen list missing the information needed to use it

By MITCH
INVESTIGATIONS

"Trump administration threatens to prosecute local California election workers", 17 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA ABC NEWS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Last edition we were chasing one word — abandoned — through a story about the unit built to investigate threats against election workers, dismantled October 1st, its leftover mail somehow still finding Republican offices. This edition the word is likely, and it is doing even more work.

Start October 14th. The Justice Department sent California's secretary of state and the Los Angeles County registrar a letter: a list of "likely noncitizens" who had received mail ballots, with instructions to review it. The Washington Examiner, NBC and Fox all described the identical demand, which made it, for about forty-eight hours, the only uncontested fact in the story....

...(cont) Then October 16th. The department didn't wait on the review. The same day, the Post ran a separate item on mail ballots reported stolen elsewhere in the state, number not yet determined, which is a sentence that will reappear.

October 17th is the long beat. The letter that made every paper — ABC, the Guardian, the Post, the Examiner — went to the same local officials, about the same ballots, with the same warning: knowingly tabulate a noncitizen's ballot, face prosecution. The president posted that the sentences would be long. All together now — the list underneath the letter. The same day, California's own officials told the Times what was actually on it: thousands of names "lacking key identifying information," and, separately, names paired with addresses that sat in jurisdictions the receiving official had no authority over.

That is the document the prosecution threat rests on. In September, the governor had already signed new felony penalties for law enforcement seizing ballots or election records near polling places — written for a different threat than a list with its fields half filled in, and now sitting one courtroom away from the clerks reading this one.

Georgia's own election board, meanwhile, asked this same Justice Department to come inspect its own voting machines. That request came with no letter about jail.

♥ FROM THE CORNER ♥

DUTCH

THE FEDERAL LIST NAMING CALIFORNIA'S "LIKELY NONCITIZENS" ARRIVED WITH NAMES TAGGED TO ADDRESSES IN COUNTIES THAT HAVE NO POWER TO CHECK THEM, AND THE STATE'S own officials said so in writing the same day the prosecution letter landed. That isn't a voter-fraud dragnet, it's a jurisdiction trap built so the only safe move for a county clerk is to stop certifying ballots altogether. A clerk who can't verify the list stalls the count, a stalled count means fewer ballots get certified on time, and the ballot that doesn't get certified on time is the one with your name on the envelope, sitting in a drawer past the deadline because the county official holding it was told the address on the federal sheet wasn't even his to check.

"They sent a list with half the fields blank and told the clerk reading it he could go to prison for guessing wrong — that's not law enforcement, that's a loaded gun with the safety mislabeled. Notice who gets the felony charge and who gets the apology later when the jurisdiction turns out to be the wrong county: never the guy who made the spreadsheet. This is how you turn an election into a hostage situation and call the ransom note an audit."
— Sal

"Look, a list is a list, the state had the letter, they had the names, what more do people want — did I say 'what more do people want,' that's — the addresses are wrong, okay, I heard that part too. But the point is noncitizens voting is the actual crisis here, the clerical stuff is a distraction the state's own lawyers are leaning on. I'm not saying don't fix the addresses. I'm saying fix them fast and also go to jail if you don't."
— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Administration axes election-threat unit, Republican senators start receiving the threats it no longer tracks.* By Lou · the morning edition, 17 October 2026
- *Federal officials dismantle election-threat unit, learn Republican offices are also on the mailing list* By Lou · the afternoon edition, 16 October 2026
- *Federal officials disband election-threat unit, then investigate powdery letters sent to election offices* By Lou · the evening edition, 16 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

But: The DOJ disbanded its crypto enforcement team in April 2025 and ordered inconsistent investigations closed - while the president's family runs a crypto business *CNBC, 8 April 2025 (Blanche memo)*
Trump administration threatens to prosecute local California election workers
ABC News | MAINSTREAM | *00:09 EDT*
The DOJ sued over claims the state hasn't purge noncitizens from voter rolls.

DOJ threatens legal action against California over alleged noncitizen voters
NBC News | MAINSTREAM | *14:37 EDT*
The DOJ demanded election officials review a list of possible noncitizens within 48 hours and "segregate" any mail ballots they sent in.

But: Republicans' reconciliation package puts $70 billion into ICE's department *NBC News, May 2026*
California Says D.O.J. System for Identifying Noncitizens Is Sloppy
The New York Times | MAINSTREAM | *20:45 EDT*
State and local officials said that they received thousands of names lacking key identifying information, and that many of the names were paired with addresses over which they had no jurisdiction.

But: The DOJ disbanded its crypto enforcement team in April 2025 and ordered inconsistent investigations closed - while the president's family runs a crypto business *CNBC, 8 April 2025 (Blanche memo)*
Trump DOJ issues stark warning to California ballot counters after suing state over 20K suspected noncitizen voters
New York Post | RIGHT | *20:15 EDT*
The Trump administration has fired a warning shot at California election officials, threatening possible criminal prosecution for counting ballots cast by suspected noncitizens as a bitter voting showdown escalates just weeks before Election Day. In a blistering letter sent Friday, the Justice Department warned that election workers who...

But: Trump promised to settle the Ukraine war within 24 hours - CNN counted 53 separate occasions he made that promise *CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)*
Trump vows jail time for California election officials counting ballots from noncitizens
Washington Examiner | RIGHT | *22:05 EDT*
President Donald Trump promised there will be severe punishment for California election officials who intentionally count ballots cast by alleged noncitizens in the midterm elections. "They will all go to jail for a long period of time," Trump wrote in a Truth Social post on Friday.

DOJ demands California review list of 'likely noncitizens' who received mail-in ballots
Washington Examiner | RIGHT | *15:37 EDT*
The Department of Justice sent letters to California officials requesting they review a list of "likely noncitizens" who were sent mail-in ballots to vote in the Nov. 3 election.

But: The DOJ disbanded its crypto enforcement team in April 2025 and ordered inconsistent investigations closed - while the president's family runs a crypto business *CNBC, 8 April 2025 (Blanche memo)*
Trump administration threatens California officials if noncitizens vote in midterms
The Guardian | MAINSTREAM | *21:24 EDT*
Justice department warns election officials of prosecution if they 'knowingly tabulate ballots' cast by noncitizens The Trump administration is escalating its fight with California ahead of next month's midterm elections , warning that local officials who process and tabulate ballots submitted by suspected noncitizen voters are putting...

But: The DOJ disbanded its crypto enforcement team in April 2025 and ordered inconsistent investigations closed - while the president's family runs a crypto business *CNBC, 8 April 2025 (Blanche memo)*
DOJ threatens emergency legal action against California over suspected noncitizen voters
Fox News | RIGHT | *18:33 EDT*
The Justice Department threatens emergency legal action against California over suspected noncitizens on voter rolls ahead of midterm elections.

Election fraud fears as more mail-in ballots stolen in California
New York Post | RIGHT | *19:05 EDT*
The number of ballots potentially affected has not yet been determined.

- Newsom signs bills to prevent Trump from 'dictatorial control' over California elections *from the morgue, 19 Sep 2026*
- Alarm as GOP-Led Election Board Asks Trump Administration to Probe Georgia Voting Systems *from the morgue, 2 Oct 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

Administration axes election-threat unit, Republican senators start receiving the threats it no longer tracks.

By LOU
ONE MORE QUESTION

"GOP Sens. Ted Cruz, Susan Collins join growing list of targets of suspicious 'white powder' mailings", 17 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA NEW YORK POST — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The federal unit built to investigate election-threat mailings was dismantled; the mailings have since reached senators of both parties.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. Oversight of threats against election offices and lawmakers now sits with three agencies and no lead, after the dedicated unit was shut down.

WHAT'S NEXT. The FBI, the Postal Inspection Service and Capitol Police are still investigating the letters, with no lead agency named in the reporting so far.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

I went to the post office to mail the renewal for my car registration — the form with the box that wants a return address — and I didn't have a label, so I stood at the counter trying to remember my own zip code like a man accused of something. I got the stamp. On the way out, the rack by the door had this morning's paper folded open to a page that had nothing to do with my car.

That page, from the New York Post, today, said a congressman from California got an envelope mailed from New York with a return address linked to something called the DSA, and powder inside, the kind the FBI is now checking alongside the Postal Inspection Service and Capitol Police. A return address linked to a group isn't the same as one belonging to it. The paper didn't say the group sent it. It said the address was linked, and I'd rather leave that word where the paper left it....

...(cont) I have to go back a little for the order. On October 1st, the Guardian reported the administration had let go of the bodies built to look into direct threats to U.S. elections from foreign actors and from people already here — the paper's language, not mine. That's on the record; I won't retype it.

Today the list runs longer. The Post has Senator Cruz and Senator Collins both getting the powder — joining a growing list, their phrase, not CBS's; CBS, the same day, said only that federal investigators are looking into letters with unknown substances sent to state election officials and to congressional offices, no adjective on the word investigation at all. The Hill's fuller count: Senator Klobuchar, Senator Rounds, Senator Ricketts, Senator Smith, Senator Cruz, and more than fifteen House members, offices hit Friday. The Collins letter carries no day in the paper that has it. I'm not saying it wasn't Friday. I'm saying the sheet in my hand doesn't tell me that.

On the way home I sat through the toll plaza that lost its cash lane two summers back. Six lanes narrow to two ramps now, electronic, and the light changes on its own clock whether or not the car ahead has a transponder. Nobody's posted at that gate. The gate goes up anyway. I came home and read a wire story with three agency names in the same sentence — FBI, Postal Inspection Service, Capitol Police — and not one of them listed ahead of the others.

This shape isn't new. In October 2018, the Secret Service caught two packages addressed to a former president and a former secretary of state before they went anywhere; a third turned up at a cable news building and cleared the floor; a fourth carried a sitting congresswoman's name on the return label of a package meant for someone else, wrong address and all. A directory did the whole job then.

So was the office let go on October 1st built for this shape of letter, or a different threat with a different shape — foreign, the paper said, and domestic terrorism — with nothing in what I read naming a county clerk's office or a senator's desk? I don't have that answer.

I was almost out the post office door a second time today — stamps, this trip — when the clerk called after me. Excuse me, she said, you'll want your receipt. I said I meant to ask something first: the letters on the news — who's running that, the FBI, the Post Office, or the Capitol Police? She said she just works the counter. I told her so does everybody else in this story, far as I can tell.

"They tore down the shop built to watch election mail for threats and called it savings, and the savings landed on their own senators' desks — Ted Cruz and Susan Collins opening envelopes same as any county clerk would. Three agencies get named in this case and not one of them is listed in charge, and that's what it looks like when the watching stops and doesn't get put back on its own."

— Sal

"Three agencies on this — the FBI, the Postal Inspection Service, Capitol Police — that's not neglect, that's coverage, more than one specialized office ever had. Did we deprioritize the election-threat unit? We reallocated toward the fraud concerns people actually raised. The fact that a Republican senator's now opening mail with a letter opener and a prayer — that's, well, that part doesn't sound like the win I was describing, does it, no, never mind, the system's working, basically."

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Federal officials dismantle election-threat unit, learn Republican offices are also on the mailing list* By Lou · the afternoon edition, 16 October 2026
- *Federal officials disband election-threat unit, then investigate powdery letters sent to election offices* By Lou · the evening edition, 16 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

GOP Sens. Ted Cruz, Susan Collins join growing list of targets of suspicious 'white powder' mailings
New York Post RIGHT § *23:41 EDT*
The FBI, US Postal Inspection Service and Capitol Police are investigating letters, some of which have been intercepted before reaching their destination.

Feds probing suspicious letters to election officials, lawmakers
CBS News MAINSTREAM § *20:09 EDT*
Federal investigators said they are looking into suspicious letters containing unknown substances that were mailed to state election officials and congressional offices.

More lawmakers report suspicious packages at offices
The Hill MAINSTREAM § *20:06 EDT*
Several lawmakers said Friday their offices across the country had received suspicious mailings following reports earlier this week of letters containing unknown substances at U.S. election offices. Sens.

California congressman mailed envelope with 'suspicious powder' as FBI probes letters with DSA-linked address
New York Post RIGHT § *21:55 EDT*
The envelope was sent from New York and appeared similar to other letters being investigated by federal authorities.

· Trump officials abandon effort to investigate election threats, experts warn *from the morgue, 1 Oct 2026*

· The United States Secret Service intercepts two suspicious packages described as "potential explosive devices" addressed to former President Barack Obama and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. *from the morgue, 24 Oct 2018*

· Five arrested on explosives and terrorism offences in RAF Fairford operation *from the morgue, 27 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

THE DRAGNET

DHS calls case against Omar 'strong': a childhood form, a sister's phone, trash pulled before any warrant.

By LOU
ONE MORE QUESTION

“Ilhan Omar’s phone seized and relatives subpoenaed in criminal inquiry, source says”, 14 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA THE GUARDIAN — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Federal agents searched Omar's trash and seized her sister's phone before any warrant existed.

WHO GETS PAID. DHS gains a marquee case against a sitting opposition lawmaker ahead of her election.

WHAT SLIPS. The warrant check that should come before a search slips: her trash and sister's phone were taken first.

WHAT'S NEXT. If the predicate holds, that is what Castle Hills, Texas got after a 2019 arrest over a council petition: the charge dropped, a Supreme Court win, and a $500,000 settlement by 15 October 2025.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

I called the Department of Motor Vehicles this morning because the sticker on my plate expired, and forty minutes later I still didn't have one, I had two disconnected numbers and a very patient woman named Carol who informed me I'd reached Records three times running when what I wanted was Permits. I wrote her name down. Force of habit. I write names down even when nobody's going to ask me for them later.

And while I was on hold waiting for Carol to transfer me a fourth time, something else came back to me that I'd been meaning to ask somebody about all week, and since I've got you now, I'll ask you instead of her....

...(cont) On the 12th, CBS reported that federal agents had searched Representative Omar's home here in Washington, and that what they were looking for traced back to immigration paperwork — filled out by her father, when she was a child. I wrote the date down. A childhood form. That's the bottom of the file, as I understand it.

Two days later, on the 14th, the Guardian reported her phone had been seized and more than a dozen grand jury subpoenas had gone out, some of them to relatives. How many of that dozen went to relatives, I couldn't tell you from here. I'm asking, not guessing.

On the 16th, Secretary Mullin called the whole thing a "strong case" — strong enough, he said, to take to a grand jury. I wrote that word down too. Strong. Right under the date.

Then the next morning — today, the same morning as my sticker, as it happens — two more things landed. The Times reported that a phone belonging to Omar's sister had already been gone through, text messages and all, before agents ever searched the house. And the Hill reported that agents had been through her trash looking for DNA — "dumpster diving," they called it, which I guess really is the term, because I checked — before any search warrant existed to search anything.

Here's where I get stuck, and maybe you can set me straight, because I don't do this for a living. At the toll plaza by my house, the gate doesn't lift until the scanner reads the transponder — charge first, then the arm goes up, in that order, because that's how the machine's built. The registration sticker I was chasing this morning goes in the glovebox after the car passes inspection, not before, because the sticker is supposed to mean something already happened. I don't design these systems. I just drive the car, which needs a new fan belt, which is a separate phone call I still haven't made.

So when somebody's trash gets gone through before the warrant that's supposed to authorize going through it, what drawer does that belong in. I don't have an answer. I'm asking the way I'd ask Carol.

Speaking of — she's finally got me transferred to the right office, and before the new person can even say hello, I hear myself ask her something I hadn't planned to ask: out where she works, does the form that lets you search a thing exist before the search, or does it come after? She says before. Obviously before, she says. That one's not hard for her.

It's not hard for me either. I just want to know which came first — the Secretary calling it strong, or the trash that got searched before anybody had the paper saying they could.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

DHS agents went through Ilhan Omar's trash for DNA and had already pulled her sister's phone before any warrant existed for either, and the Homeland Security Secretary is now calling the file that resulted a "strong case" headed to a grand jury. That isn't a warrant justifying a search, that's a search writing its own warrant after the fact, with DHS holding the pen. Because that worked on a sitting member of Congress with a staff and a press office, it moves faster on a house with neither, so the next time you roll your bin to the curb on collection day, understand DHS does not need your permission to go through what's inside it, only your trash day.

“They went through her trash for DNA and grabbed her sister's phone before anybody signed a warrant, and then the Secretary gets on camera and calls that a "strong case," like he's bragging about the recipe instead of admitting there wasn't one yet. This isn't building a case, it's building a jacket, and they built it on a woman whose father filled out a form when she was a kid, using her own family to do it. If DHS can turn somebody's trash into a federal case before a judge signs anything, the next "strong case" doesn't need a warrant either, it just needs somebody nobody important enough to notice.”

— Sal

“Look, if the Secretary says it's a strong case headed to a grand jury, that's just the process working exactly the way it's designed to — agents doing their homework before they bring charges, nothing unusual there. Okay, technically some of that homework happened before the warrant existed, which, fine, is not the optics you'd pick if you were picking optics, but the trash thing is a well-established investigative technique, it's not like — did I just defend someone's garbage as a legal strategy? That's not where I meant to end up.”

— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Deportation case over Omar's childhood paperwork gains a witness scared of her father in 1977.* By Lou · the afternoon edition, 16 October 2026
- *Ilhan Omar's childhood paperwork draws a federal raid and the right's own concession it changes no votes.* By Lou · the morning edition, 16 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

~~Ilhan Omar’s phone seized and relatives subpoenaed in criminal inquiry, source says~~

Federal agents seized Omar’s phone and subpoenaed her relatives weeks before her reelection, sources say

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *18:22 EDT*

Federal authorities issued more than a dozen grand jury subpoenas in inquiry into potential immigration fraud US politics live – latest updates Federal authorities investigating the Minnesota representative Ilhan Omar seized the Democratic lawmaker’s phone and have issued more than a dozen grand jury subpoenas, including to some of her...

Ilhan Omar raid sparks ominous prediction from watchdog: 'They probably got the goods'

Fox News RIGHT § *04:00 EDT*

Oversight Project's Mike Howell warns Ilhan Omar's HSI raid signals deeper congressional accountability failures and predicts more revelations ahead.

Federal probe into Rep. Ilhan Omar centers on her childhood immigration paperwork, sources say

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *18:32 EDT*

Federal immigration agents searched Democratic Rep. Ilhan Omar's home in Washington, D.C., on Monday, as part of a probe that sources say centers on Omar's immigration paperwork completed by her late father when she was a child. CBS News homeland security correspondent Nicole Sganga has the details.

But: The DOJ disbanded its crypto enforcement team in April 2025 and ordered inconsistent investigations closed - while the president's family runs a crypto business *CNBC, 8 April 2025 (Blanche memo)*

DHS Secretary Mullin calls Ilhan Omar probe a "strong case"

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *18:16 EDT*

Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin offered more details Friday on the search of Democratic Rep. Ilhan Omar's home, calling it a "strong case" and saying investigators expect to present it to a grand jury.

~~Federal agents searched Omar's trash for DNA before raid. Sources~~

Agents dug through Omar’s trash for DNA because they couldn’t get a warrant: Sources

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *21:43 EDT*

Investigators have used secretive “dumpster diving” to obtain DNA when search warrants were not possible.

"Bogus": Minnesota State Senator Zaynab Mohamed on DHS Raid on Rep. Ilhan Omar's D.C. Home

Democracy Now! § *08:41 EDT*

On Monday, federal agents from the Department of Homeland Security raided the Washington, D.C., home of Congressmember Ilhan Omar. Omar has faced years of racist targeting from President Trump over her ethnicity and immigrant background. She immigrated to the United States as a refugee from Somalia when she was a child.

~~Why does #47’s vendetta vs. Rep. Ilhan Omar continue?~~

ICE got $70 billion. It used agents to search a congresswoman’s home.

Workers World § *22:49 EDT*

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which includes Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), executed a warrant to search the Washington, D.C., residence of Representative Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) on Oct. 12. According to reports, the agents were looking for “evidence of fraud and false statements in her immigration paperwork.”

But: Republicans' reconciliation package puts $70 billion into ICE's department *NBC News, May 2026*

The raid on Ilhan Omar’s house is dangerous political theater

The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *06:00 EDT*

The raid is meant to cast an air of suspicion and criminality over Democratic candidates who, like Omar, are facing the voters in a matter of weeks On Monday, federal agents from the Department of Homeland Security raided the Washington DC area home of Ilhan Omar, a Minnesota congresswoman and a progressive Democrat, in the latest...

Ilhan Omar’s Sister’s Phone Was Seized Before Search of Lawmaker’s Home

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *22:06 EDT*

A criminal investigation into the lawmaker’s immigration process advanced after federal investigators reviewed family text messages from a seized phone.

~~Omar fundraising off federal investigation~~

DHS agents raided a sitting congresswoman’s home Monday

The Hill MAINSTREAM § *09:55 EDT*

Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) released a fundraising email focused on the federal investigation for which agents raided her home on Monday. “Stand with Ilhan Omar,”

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

THE WAIVER

Trump signs Russia sanctions law named for Lindsey Graham, then waives it the day before it takes effect.

By THE LODGERS
THE EURO DESK

"Tillis: Trump's Russia deal 'is tarnishing Lindsey Graham's efforts' at sanctions", 11 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA THE HILL — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. President Trump signed an executive order waiving the Russia sanctions law he had just signed.

WHO GETS PAID. Russia's energy sector and its largest oil buyers get the sanctions and tariffs lifted before they ever take effect.

WHAT SLIPS. Congress's sanctions vote, passed by both chambers and signed into law, loses its force before it ever bites.

WHAT'S NEXT. If Congress does not force a vote to override the waiver, the sanctions stay suspended indefinitely; that is what happened after the Senate's 2019 Yemen war-powers resolution: the president vetoed it on April 16, the override failed 53 to 45, and the policy it targeted continued 21 more months.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Today we are making a sanctions waiver, which is not a dish you can get over here, so I shall go slowly. You will need a law Congress already passed, a signature already on it, and a second signature, later, taking the first one back.

Clive *Two signatures. I am drafting a reply myself, one line that promises and the next that quietly withdraws it. I think we know who does that best at this table.*

...(cont) The law is the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act, signed the nineteenth of September, named for the South Carolina senator who died in July, the New York Times notes. It authorised sanctions on Russia's energy sector and tariffs up to 100 percent on its buyers, the Washington Examiner says.

Gary *Authorised. We authorised Keith to fix the boiler in March. He has since authorised himself a jumper, and the boiler is still cold.*

The law was already bending before Friday. On the ninth of October the President lifted sanctions tied to Russian diesel exports, then two days later announced an energy ceasefire with Russia. That Sunday Senator Thom Tillis said chasing Russian oil was "tarnishing Lindsey Graham's efforts" to get the sanctions enforced.

Rob *Tarnishing. Heavy word. I said this house would tarnish the minute the meter went in March, and nobody thanked me for the lentils that got us through it.*

By Thursday the sixteenth, before Friday existed, Le Monde had Zelensky at the Brussels summit asking the allies for seventy billion more euros for 2027, weakened, in his own word, by what he called Donald Trump's "betrayal." The ask was filed before the order it is now meant to answer.

Clive *Nobody thanks me either. Mine has been unfinished three weeks, which outlasts any lentil in this house.*

Then Friday, the seventeenth. The BBC, which is what they have here, calls it waiving "many restrictions on Moscow" over "national security" concerns. NBC has the President's own phrase: the pause is "in the national interests of the United States." CBS has the waiver reaching tariffs on the largest buyers of Russian oil, timed to ease prices by tapping Russian energy; RTÉ confirms it targets Russia's energy revenues. The Examiner calls the hold indefinite; the Guardian calls it a pause.

You will be looking for the vote that undoes this. There is none; Congress passed the law in both chambers, and now watches the waiver stand.

A pause sitting next to the word indefinite does not resolve itself by Monday.

Russia's oil buyers keep the exemption Friday gave them. Brussels was already a day short of its seventy billion euros before the order existed, and is shorter now.

Keith *Short. I can move short. I know a man who will take the whole law off your hands, nameplate included, and never ask whose name was on it.*

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

Dutch

Congress passed the Russia sanctions law, the President signed it last month, and he hung Lindsey Graham's name on it, the senator who died writing it in July. That is not a sanctions law, it is a nameplate rented out until the day Moscow's oil needed the room. Because the waiver signed Friday lifts the tariffs on the largest buyers of Russian oil, Moscow's revenue keeps moving, and because sanctions were the lever Brussels was counting on to shrink the gap, the seventy billion euros Zelensky asked the summit for a day earlier now carries no American half, landing on the next foreign-aid line with the reader's own name typed on the tax return that funds it.

"They slap a dead senator's name on the sanctions bill for the cameras, then the president waives the whole thing the day before it bites, and the tab for Ukraine gets handed to Brussels instead. That's not national security, that's a shell game with a flag pin on it. Seventy billion euros doesn't fall out of the sky — somebody's paying it, and it sure isn't the guy who signed both pieces of paper."
— Sal

"Look, it's a national-security waiver, full stop, the order says so right there — did I say "full stop"? I mean, the administration's been clear this is about easing energy prices for families, that's — okay, "tarnishing Lindsey Graham's efforts," that's not my line, a sitting senator from his own party said that, so maybe don't look at me."
— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- Trump calls Ukraine's strikes on the Russian refineries he just legalized buying from "a disgrace." By The Lodgers · the evening edition, 16 October 2026
- Trump's Russian diesel deal paused the war five days, longer than any Senate hopeful will defend it. By Chip · the morning edition, 15 October 2026
- Deal meant to cut pump prices promotes refineries from liabilities to goldmines By Ruth · the morning edition, 14 October 2026
- Trump's Russian diesel deal ruled too small, too late for the midterms, by his own party's newspaper. By Ruth · the evening edition, 13 October 2026
- DOJ tells judge who called it 'beyond the pale' that nearly 300 more trees are already marked. By Mort · the evening edition, 12 October 2026
- Six strikes into his energy ceasefire, Trump buys Russian diesel anyway and calls it the right choice. By Ruth · the evening edition, 12 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Tillis: Trump's Russia deal 'is tarnishing Lindsey Graham's efforts' at sanctions
The Hill | MAINSTREAM | 16:20 EDT
Sen. Thom Tillis (R-N.C.) slammed President Trump's deal with Russia for diesel Sunday amid the energy struggles the U.S. is experiencing.

~~Trump waives Russia sanctions ordered by law named for Lindsey Graham~~
Trump waived the Russia sanctions he signed into law last month
Washington Examiner | RIGHT | 23:09 EDT
President Donald Trump signed an executive order on Friday that waived the sweeping Russian sanctions and tariffs enacted by the bill championed by the late Sen. Lindsey Graham. Trump signed the Lindsey O.

Zelenskyy vows to retaliate if Russian strikes on Ukraine's power grid continue
The Guardian | MAINSTREAM | 12:10 EDT
Ukrainian leader says he was surprised by Trump's 'energy ceasefire' announcement, posted as Russian drones hit Kyiv Volodymyr Zelenskyy has vowed to respond to Russia's continuing attacks on the Ukrainian power grid as European leaders rally around Kyiv amid a feud with Donald Trump over Ukraine's strikes on oil refineries. Speaking to...

But: Trump promised to settle the war within 24 hours - CNN counted 53 separate occasions he made that promise CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)
Rebuking Ukraine Over Oil Strikes, Trump Says It Should 'Get a New President'
The New York Times | MAINSTREAM | 15:28 EDT
Hours after President Trump said the United States would buy Russian diesel, the Kremlin said there would be no immediate resumption of discussions to end the war.

~~Zelenskyy furious as Trump announces deal to buy Russian diesel~~
Trump funds Russia's war - the one he vowed to end in 24 hours, 53 times
The Guardian | MAINSTREAM | 06:09 EDT
US president says agreement needed to lower fuel prices, but move likely to create fresh crisis with Ukraine and Nato allies Donald Trump is on a fresh collision course with Volodymyr Zelenskyy and European allies after his stunning agreement to buy Russian diesel upended years of US and western pressure on the Kremlin to end its war...

~~Trump announces immediate 'energy ceasefire' between Russia and Ukraine~~
Trump demanded Ukraine replace its leader. A day later, he declared a ceasefire.
Washington Examiner | RIGHT | 10:34 EDT
President Donald Trump on Sunday announced an immediate "energy ceasefire" between Russia and Ukraine, a day after ripping Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky for targeting Russian energy infrastructure during the war and calling for a new Ukrainian leader. "Effective immediately, there is an ENERGY CEASEFIRE in the War between Russia...

But: Trump promised he'd settle the Ukraine war within 24 hours of talking to Putin and Zelenskyy - he's said some version of that 53 separate times CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)
Trump says Ukraine needs a new leader after diesel deal with Russia
The Guardian | MAINSTREAM | 16:42 EDT
US president suggests Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, has not done enough to end war Donald Trump has said Ukraine needs "a new leader", a day after making a deal with Vladimir Putin to buy large quantities of Russian diesel. The US president suggested Volodymyr Zelenskyy has not done enough to end the war with Russia and...

But: Trump promised he'd meet Putin and Zelensky and settle the war within 24 hours – 53 separate times, CNN counted CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)
Trump and Putin sign diesel deal, angering Ukraine and its allies
Le Monde | MAINSTREAM | 05:38 EDT
The US president announced Friday that Russia has committed to supplying nearly 5 million tons of diesel fuel to the United States and global markets 'within a short period of time.' The deal has sparked outrage across Europe.

But: Trump promised he'd settle the Ukraine war within 24 hours of meeting Putin and Zelensky – 53 times, CNN counted CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)
Trump waives new Russia sanctions passed by Congress, citing 'national interests'
NBC News | MAINSTREAM | 22:45 EDT
President Donald Trump waived sweeping new sanctions against Russia passed by Congress, arguing in an executive order Friday that the move "is in the national interests of the United States."

But: Trump promised 53 times he'd end the war within 24 hours CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)
Trump says Ukraine needs new president, blames Zelenskyy for diesel prices
CBS News | MAINSTREAM | 21:59 EDT
President Trump's criticism of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy comes after Russian strikes killed at least 20 people, including three children, in Ukraine.

~~Trump signs executive order waiving new Russia sanctions~~
Trump waived the Russia sanctions he signed into law last month
RTÉ | MAINSTREAM | 23:20 EDT
The sanctions would have imposed tariffs of up to 100% on all goods brought into the US from the five largest importers of Russian crude oil or gas.

But: Trump promised to settle the war within 24 hours - on 53 separate occasions, CNN counted CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)
Trump rips into Volodymyr Zelensky — insisting it's time for Ukraine to 'get a new president'
New York Post | RIGHT | 16:56 EDT
President Trump ripped into Volodymyr Zelensky on Saturday telling reporters outside the White House that it's time for Ukraine to "get a new president."

But: Trump promised to settle the Ukraine war with Putin within 24 hours - on 53 separate occasions CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)
Trump says Russia will release millions of tons of diesel to help with costs
CBS News | MAINSTREAM | 12:08 EDT
Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed to release 300,000 tons of diesel immediately and millions more over the coming months.

But: Trump promised to settle the war within 24 hours - on 53 separate occasions, CNN counted CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)
Trump says Ukraine needs 'a new leader who can make a deal'
Washington Examiner | RIGHT | 13:38 EDT
President Donald Trump on Saturday called for new leadership in Ukraine, marking a dramatic shift in the United States's relationship with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. Trump has long pushed Russia and Ukraine to make a deal ending the war between the countries, which has now stretched over four-and-a-half years and appeared to...

But: 'I'll meet with Putin. I'll meet with Zelensky... And within 24 hours, that war will be settled' - Trump, CNN town hall, 10 May 2023. CNN counted 53 separate occasions he promised it. CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)
Trump says Russia will export diesel, lifts sanctions
The Hill | MAINSTREAM | 18:23 EDT
{beacon} Energy & Environment Energy & Environment The Big Story Trump says Russia will export diesel, lifts sanctions Russia will supply the U.S. and global market with diesel, President Trump announced Friday, responding to sky-rocketing prices exacerbated by both the Russia-Ukraine and U.S.-Iran wars. © Andrew Caballero-Reynolds, AFP...

Trump Signs Order Exempting Russia From Sanctions Law
The New York Times | MAINSTREAM | 04:35 EDT
The sanctions were part of a measure that was named after Senator Lindsey Graham, the South Carolina Republican who died in July.

But: Trump promised he'd settle the Ukraine war within 24 hours of meeting Putin and Zelensky – 53 times, CNN counted CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)
Trump pauses new Russia sanctions passed by Congress amid deepening row with Ukraine
The Guardian | MAINSTREAM | 22:53 EDT
President signed the legislation championed by late senator Lindsey Graham last month but has waived the restrictions as they were due to come into effect Donald Trump has put on hold a sweeping new sanctions package targeting the Russian economy, telling Congress the pause on the legislation passed by both chambers was in the national...

But: Trump promised he'd settle the Ukraine war within 24 hours of meeting Putin and Zelensky – 53 times, CNN counted CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)
Trump waives several Russia sanctions as row with Zelensky intensifies
BBC News | MAINSTREAM | 05:42 EDT
The US president temporarily ends many restrictions on Moscow recently passed by Congress over "national security" concerns.

~~Trump rips Zelensky amid Russia diesel deal feud: 'I suggest they get a new leader'~~
The White House lifted sanctions on Russian diesel. Then it blamed Zelensky for the war.
The Hill | MAINSTREAM | 14:26 EDT
President Trump on Saturday pushed back on criticism from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to the White House's decision to lift sanctions on Russian diesel amid the Russia-Ukraine war. The president told reporters outside the White House that Zelensky "could have settled this war many times," but "chose not to."

But: 'I'll meet with Putin. I'll meet with Zelensky... And within 24 hours, that war will be settled' - Trump, CNN town hall, 10 May 2023. CNN counted 53 separate occasions he promised it. CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)
War in Ukraine: Europe stands united behind Kyiv but must revisit how to finance its support
Le Monde | MAINSTREAM | 19:25 EDT
Invited to the European leaders' summit in Brussels on Friday, Volodymyr Zelensky, weakened by what he called the 'betrayal' of Donald Trump, asked his allies for an additional €70 billion in aid for the year 2027.

But: Trump promised he'd settle the Ukraine war within 24 hours of meeting Putin and Zelensky – 53 times, CNN counted CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)
Trump waives tariffs on largest buyers of Russian oil
CBS News | MAINSTREAM | 05:39 EDT
President Trump prevented some new sanctions on Russia and hefty tariffs on large-scale buyers of Russian oil from taking effect late Friday, as he seeks to ease prices by tapping Russian energy.

But: 'I'll meet with Putin. I'll meet with Zelensky... And within 24 hours, that war will be settled' - Trump, CNN town hall, 10 May 2023. CNN counted 53 separate occasions he promised it. CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)
Trump calls for Ukraine to replace Zelenskyy after clash over Russia diesel deal: 'Get a new president'
Fox News | RIGHT | 15:54 EDT
President Donald Trump demanded Volodymyr Zelenskyy stop striking Russian oil refineries, warning the attacks worsen global diesel and fuel supplies.

~~Trump announces deal for Russian diesel as Zelensky calls it a gift to Putin~~
Diesel prices doubled since the Iran war began. Now Trump wants Putin to fix it.
BBC News | MAINSTREAM | 10:24 EDT
Ukraine's president sharply criticised the move, calling it an "investment in war that must be ended, not prolonged".

But: Trump promised to settle the war within 24 hours - on 53 separate occasions, CNN counted CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)
'Time for Ukraine to get new president,' says Trump after Zelensky condemns diesel deal
BBC News | MAINSTREAM | 21:41 EDT
Ukraine's leader had said the deal with Russia to release diesel into the US would help Moscow fund the war.

· Trump signs Russia sanctions bill named after Lindsey Graham *from the morgue, 19 Sep 2026*

· Trump: Russia has 'lost control' of its diesel industry as prices soar *from the morgue, 21 Sep 2026*

· Trump says Ukraine and Russia have agreed to energy target ceasefire *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· Trump calls on Ukraine to halt strikes on Russian diesel fuel *from the morgue, 14 Sep 2026*

· Trump blames Ukraine for diesel fuel price spike, urges Zelensky to stop hitting Russian refineries *from the morgue, 13 Sep 2026*

· Trump calls out Zelensky over rising diesel prices *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Ukraine persists with Russian oil refinery strikes, defying Trump on fuel price warnings *from the morgue, 1 Oct 2026*

· Britain in talks with European allies over release of emergency diesel stockpiles amid Trump pressure *from the morgue, 1 Oct 2026*

· Russia's Lavrov blasts US, Western allies as "warmongers' in fiery UN tirade *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· Russia and China unite against US over Iran and Cuba in UN speeches *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

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FASTEST FIRED

Press secretary fired after five days, replacing the Scaramucci as American politics' base unit of time

By THE LODGERS
THE EURO DESK

"Scaramucci replaced by shorter unit of time - a Zacharia", 16 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA RTÉ — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Trump fired his new White House press secretary, Katie Zacharia, days after he picked her for the job.

WHO GETS PAID. The president gains: he alone picks and removes the person who answers reporters, and no one else votes on it.

WHAT SLIPS. The on-the-record briefing thins out, and the new spokesperson's main answers came in a friendly Fox News interview instead.

WHAT'S NEXT. If the podium stays thin through the election, the briefing becomes optional; Washington saw that after 18 September 2026, when the White House banned CNN, MS NOW and Politico and their reporters' passes were disabled at the gate the next day.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Today we are making a press secretary, which does not keep. You will need five days: Katie Zacharia was picked on the ninth of October and fired on Friday, five days after she took the job, which a White House official told the Guardian before anyone had announced it formally.

For the rest you will need a conservative commentator who had been a communications adviser at Trump Media and Technology Group; the vacancy left by Karoline Leavitt, who went in August; a law degree from Pepperdine, 2011, which the university confirms; and the midterm elections, less than a month off. No, you cannot substitute....

Clive *Does not keep. Nothing I write keeps either, not in this house, and I am the only one at this table producing anything at all.*

Gary *You are producing a smell of toast and a locked door. I could have that door off in an afternoon and the house would thank me for the light.*

Begin on Tuesday, with the first briefing: fourteen minutes of it, and widely panned. That one went on the floor in front of the whole room. Anthony Scaramucci, whom the president made communications director in July 2017 — Sean Spicer announced he would resign over the appointment — posted that afternoon, "The clock is running," and then, "Thus far 1/11th of a Scaramucci."

Rob *You took the shed door off in the spring and it is still leaning on the boiler. It was always going to end like this.*

Keith *There is an angle in it. Tenure sold by the unit, American, stamped on a mug — moving by Thursday, and the kitty takes its cut.*

Thursday she sat with Sean Hannity on Fox News and said she had not passed the bar exam, which is the examination that decides whether a person with a law degree may practise law at all; a graduate who has not passed it cannot. She had said before that she practised law, and the president had described her as an attorney. You will be looking for the hearing. There is none: the job is handed over by one man and taken back by the same one, and on Friday a press official said she had been "let go."

RTÉ, the Irish broadcaster, printed it as arithmetic — "Scaramucci replaced by shorter unit of time - a Zacharia." Le Monde called the stint gaffe-filled. At home the word was "let go."

Clive *A mug. I offer this house a verse and it wants crockery; I shall read it anyway, and the meter can listen.*

Serves the president, who is flying round the country boosting Republican candidates with the elections less than a month away. The briefing room pays: five days of press secretary, fourteen minutes of it at the podium.

Rob *Read it to the meter, it is the only thing here still on. They have got through theirs already, and we have not had a rota since the clocks went back.*

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

Katie Zacharia was picked on the ninth of October, gave a fourteen-minute first briefing on Tuesday, told Fox News on Thursday she had not passed the bar exam, and was let go on Friday, five days in. That is not a job with a spokesman in it; it is a podium the president lends out by the day and takes back before the announcement is even written. So the answering moves to Fox News because the briefing room has nobody standing in it, and the president flies round the country boosting candidates because the questions have nowhere left to land, and the only place left for yours is the television in your own front room, where you say it out loud on a Thursday night to nobody.

"They told us she was an attorney, she told Hannity she never passed the bar, and five days later she's gone — the job of standing up and answering for this government got filled like a shift nobody wanted. That podium is the one place a reporter gets to ask the White House something in public and get it on the record. A month out from the elections, the president's out flying round for candidates and the answering happens on Fox."
— Sal

"Look, she was let go — let go, that's not fired, there's a difference, and if you can't hear the difference that's — did I say that? That doesn't sound like me. The president acted inside a week, which is accountability, which is the thing you people say you want; and Pepperdine handed out the degree, so take the credentials question up with Pepperdine."
— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *White House declines to rule out pre-election Iran strikes; oil traders rule them in at $104.60.* By Lou · the afternoon edition, 8 October 2026
- *Washington's own statute gives it thirty days to decide what 'something meaningful' from Iran means.* By Mitch · the morning edition, 8 October 2026
- *Diesel relief rule dies by executive order; Chevron's own CEO says the backup plan would make prices worse.* By Mort · the noon edition, 7 October 2026
- *White House lifts diesel tax-exemption rule, experts say won't lower the prices it was sold to fix* By Mort · the coffee break edition, 7 October 2026
- *Fuel industry warns against red-dye diesel fraud days after Trump legalizes it* By Mort · the milkman edition, 7 October 2026
- *Trump dyes diesel exempt without Congress, then floats a gas tax cut only Congress can grant.* By Ruth · the supper edition, 6 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Scaramucci replaced by shorter unit of time - a Zacharia
RTÉ MAINSTREAM § *16:03 EDT*
A Scaramucci has often been used as a tongue-in-cheek measure of time in politics, particularly in the Trump era.

~~Who is Katie Zacharia, Trump's next White House press secretary?~~
Trump's next press secretary comes straight from his own media company
Washington Examiner RIGHT § *16:31 EDT*
President Donald Trump tapped Katie Zacharia, a conservative commentator and communications adviser for Trump Media and Technology Group, to serve as his next White House press secretary. Zacharia will succeed Karoline Leavitt, who left the White House in August. Her appointment comes less than a month before the 2026 midterm elections...

White House press secretary out after less than a week
Le Monde MAINSTREAM § *14:58 EDT*
Katie Zacharia's gaffe-filled stint came as US President Donald Trump flies around the country trying to boost Republican candidates ahead of midterm elections.

Katie Zacharia fired after five days as White House press secretary
The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *15:29 EDT*
Zacharia hosted widely panned first briefing on Tuesday and faced scrutiny after admitting she didn't pass bar exam Donald Trump's new press secretary, Katie Zacharia, was fired on Friday, just five days after she assumed the role, according to a White House official. The person was not authorized to speak publicly about the personnel...

~~Embattled new White House Press Secretary Zacharia 'let go' from her role~~
Trump picked a press secretary who hadn't passed the bar. He fired her a week later.
France 24 MAINSTREAM § *11:57 EDT*
A White House Press official said Friday that Secretary Katie Zacharia was "let go" from her role after US President Donald Trump signaled she was on her way out, a week after he picked her for the post. Zacharia's credentials as an attorney had come under scrutiny and she admitted to not having passed the bar in an interview with Fox...

Scaramucci quips about new press secretary Zacharia's tenure: 'The clock is running'
The Hill MAINSTREAM § *11:30 EDT*
Anthony Scaramucci is weighing in on Katie Zacharia's first briefing as White House press secretary, quipping that the clock is ticking on her tenure. "The clock is running," Scaramucci wrote on X on Tuesday, shortly after Zacharia wrapped her inaugural briefing at the White House as press secretary. "Thus far 1/11th of a Scaramucci,"...

Katie Zacharia admits she never passed legal exams – video
The Guardian MAINSTREAM § *13:06 EDT*
In an interview with Fox News' Sean Hannity, the new White House press secretary, Katie Zacharia, admitted that she did not pass the bar exam, after facing scrutiny about her legal career before becoming the top spokesperson for Trump. Zacharia had previously said she practiced law before entering politics, and Trump had described her as...

· White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer announces his intention to resign as White House Press Secretary due to Donald Trump's appointment of Anthony Scaramucci as the White House Communications Direc *from the morgue, 21 Jul 2017*

· Russia's Lavrov blasts US, Western allies as "warmongers' in fiery UN tirade *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

· Russia and China unite against US over Iran and Cuba in UN speeches *from the morgue, 26 Sep 2026*

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· Trump's Top Oil Stocks Have Made Him Up to $4.4 Million Richer During Iran War: Analysis *from the morgue, 9 Sep 2026*

· 'Trump Did It!': At $5.85 a Gallon, Diesel Price Hits All-Time High in US Thanks to War on Iran *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Gas prices reach Labor Day high amid Iran war *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· Trump Hammered Over Iran War That Drove Gas Prices Above $4 Per Gallon Every Day in August for First Time Ever *from the morgue, 31 Aug 2026*

· Warsh under pressure as Fed weighs rate hike *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Inflation held at 3.4% in August in consumer price index, creating tough choice for Warsh Fed *from the morgue, 11 Sep 2026*

· Warsh indicates Fed could raise rates to cool inflation *from the morgue, 28 Aug 2026*

· Key U.S. Bond Rate Near 20-Year High as Oil Prices Keep Climbing *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· 10-year Treasury yield hits highest level since 2007, oil surges above $105 as Fed expected to hike interest rates *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Benchmark mortgage rate hits 14-month high as bond yields keep rising *from the morgue, 10 Sep 2026*

· Benchmark mortgage rate hits highest mark in over a year *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· Goldman Sachs warns oil prices could hit $120 as U.S. fuel costs surge *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· Massie Moves to Force Impeachment Vote Against Hegseth, Citing Civilian Deaths *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· GOP Rep Thomas Massie introduces 8 articles of impeachment against War Secretary Pete Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Republican Rep. Massie moves to impeach Defense Secretary Hegseth over Iran war *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Thomas Massie Forces Vote To Impeach Pete Hegseth *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

· Pete Hegseth Faces Growing Criticism as War With Iran Rolls On *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· Hegseth Quietly Extends Middle East Troop Deployments Into 2027 as Iran War Drags On *from the morgue, 3 Sep 2026*

· Costco imposes purchase limits on motor oil, hikes prices by nearly double *from the morgue, 15 Sep 2026*

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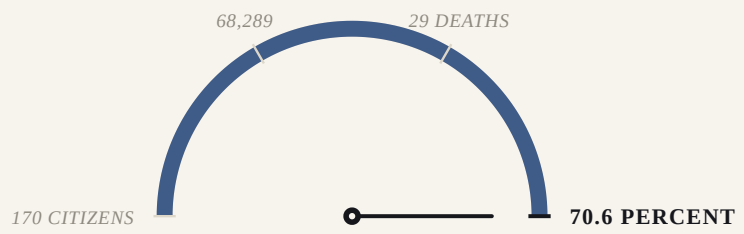
§63 — 16 OCTOBER 2026

On the worst of the worst

BY LOU
The Word

DEMOCRAT



70.6 PERCENT

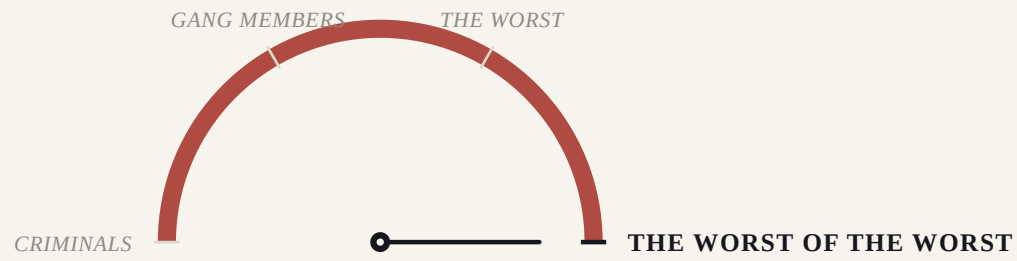
The beds. In July, TRAC counted 65,765 people in ICE detention; 46,436 of them, 70.6 percent, had no criminal conviction [1]. A year earlier the AP's count was 71.7 percent [2]. The population peaked at 68,289 in early February [3].

The people in them. NPR reported in April that 29 people had died in ICE custody since October, surpassing the previous record of 28, set in 2004 [4]; Human Rights Watch counted 52 deaths from January 20, 2025 through June 4, 2026 [5]. ProPublica documented more than 170 U.S. citizens held by immigration agents, nearly 20 of them children [6]. The phrase is the worst of the worst. The count is seven in ten with no conviction at all.

SOURCES

1. 46,436 of 65,765 in ICE detention (70.6 percent) with no criminal conviction — TRAC Immigration, 11 July 2026 ↑
2. 41,495 of 57,861 detainees (71.7 percent) with no conviction — AP, 12 July 2025 ↑
3. "At its recent high point in early February 2026, ICE held 68,289 people in detention" — TRAC, 10 April 2026 ↑
4. "Twenty-nine people have died in ICE custody since October … surpassing 2004's toll of 28" — NPR, 17 April 2026 ↑
5. 52 deaths in immigration detention from 20 January 2025 to 4 June 2026 — Human Rights Watch, 25 June 2026 ↑
6. "More Than 170 U.S. Citizens Have Been Held by Immigration Agents," nearly 20 of them children — ProPublica, 16 October 2025 ↑

REPUBLICAN



THE WORST OF THE WORST

The phrase is the administration's own, and it is repeated on purpose. The Associated Press reported the president's pledge to deport "the worst of the worst" [1]. His press secretary, in February: "The Trump administration will continue our focus on deporting all illegal aliens present in our country, with a focus on the worst of the worst criminals" [2]. The Homeland Security Department, on the anniversary of the inauguration: ICE was "unleashed" to "target the worst of the worst criminal illegal aliens" [3].

And there are real people behind the phrase. The same detention data that measures the whole population also counts about 19,000 people held in July who do have criminal convictions [4]. Removing people convicted of crimes is a job every administration claims, and this one names it first. How much of the detention system that job fills is on the other side.

SOURCES

1. Trump "has pledged to deport 'the worst of the worst'" — AP, 12 July 2025 ↑
2. "With a focus on the worst of the worst criminals" — White House press secretary — Fox News, 12 February 2026 ↑
3. "He unleashed ICE to target the worst of the worst criminal illegal aliens" — Department of Homeland Security, 20 January 2026 ↑
4. 65,765 people in ICE detention, of whom 46,436 had no criminal conviction — TRAC Immigration, quick facts, 11 July 2026 ↑

"I read the phrase in three places. The press secretary: "a focus on the worst of the worst criminals." The department, on the anniversary: ICE "unleashed" on "the worst of the worst." Then I went to the clearinghouse that counts the detention population, just to meet a few of them. July: sixty-five thousand seven hundred sixty-five people in detention. Forty-six thousand four hundred thirty-six with no criminal conviction. Seventy point six percent. Excuse me — I'm going — one question. If the worst of the worst are thirty percent of the beds, who's in the other seventy?" — Lou



""The worst of the worst." Beautiful phrase. It's on the podium, it's in the press releases, it's the first thing out of the briefing room. Then the research clearinghouse that counts detention looks at who's actually in the beds: seventy point six percent with no criminal conviction. That's not the worst of the worst. That's the most of the most. And more than a hundred seventy of the people they've held were American citizens."

— Sal



"A person without a conviction is simply a person who hasn't been convicted yet, and the administration is being proactive, which is the worst of the worst thing you can say about an administration that is doing its job."

— Chip

The Word today — 👍 👎