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## ARTICLE

Thousands Are Being Trained To Disrupt: Anti-ICE Activism Takes A Dangerous Turn



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BY PNW STAFF JANUARY 20, 2026

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What began as political protest has crossed into something far more dangerous: organized intimidation, public harassment, and the deliberate targeting of ordinary Americans based on suspicion alone. Across the country, anti-ICE activism is no longer confined to rallies or policy debate. It is evolving into coordinated "response teams," mass alert systems, and mob tactics that blur the line between protest and vigilantism -- with churches, restaurants, and private citizens increasingly caught in the crossfire.

This is not alarmism. It is happening in plain sight.

From New York to Washington state, thousands of activists are being trained and mobilized to confront federal immigration enforcement directly. These efforts are not spontaneous expressions of dissent. They are organized, rehearsed, and openly encouraged by political leaders and activist groups who speak the language of "unity" and "love" while normalizing confrontation, disruption, and intimidation.

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In Seattle, newly sworn-in socialist mayor Katie Wilson publicly urged residents to sign up for "Washington for All ICE Mobilization Alerts," a system designed to rapidly summon crowds to ICE sightings. The stated goal is a "unified response" to federal agents. In practice, it functions as a mass-notification system that brings emotionally charged crowds into volatile situations with law enforcement -- and increasingly, with anyone suspected of supporting ICE.

In Manhattan, the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) is going further. According to reporting from the New York Post, more than 4,000 activists are being organized into "rapid response" teams. These groups plan to confirm ICE sightings and then deploy en masse, using



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The Department of Homeland Security has confirmed that ICE deployments have more than doubled nationwide, rising from roughly 10,000 officers to 22,000. That expansion has fueled protests -- but instead of peaceful opposition or legal advocacy, what we are seeing is the normalization of mob enforcement, where accusation alone is enough to justify public confrontation.

That danger became unmistakably clear in Minneapolis.



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According to Alpha News, five Twin Cities software engineers sat down for a casual lunch at Clancey's Deli -- and within minutes found themselves surrounded by shouting activists after being falsely identified as undercover ICE agents. One of the men received a message from an anti-ICE Signal chat claiming ICE was present at the restaurant. That single, unverified alert was enough to summon dozens of agitators in less than 15 minutes.

Whistles were blown. Accusations flew. One protester shouted, "Yeah, you look like a f\*\*\*ing ICE agent." When one of the men tried to explain that he opposed ICE, the response was chillingly familiar: "If you're not with us, you're against us."

Outside the restaurant, the scene turned openly threatening. The men were screamed at, called pedophiles, and told, "I hope you die." One engineer later said his friend feared they were about to be shot.

This was not a misunderstanding. It was a system working exactly as designed -- alert, swarm, intimidate.

What makes this moment especially alarming is that these tactics are now spilling into sacred spaces. Christian churches have already been disrupted mid-service by anti-ICE mobs, their worship interrupted by political shouting and intimidation. Houses of prayer -- long protected as places of refuge -- are being treated as fair game in an ideological struggle.

And now, even clergy rhetoric is growing more dangerous.

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Other religious leaders echoed similar themes, speaking of "disrupting" with Jesus' hope and "agitating" with love.

Christians should be deeply troubled by this.

The Gospel calls believers to courage, yes -- but also to peace, order, truth, and humility. Jesus did not mobilize mobs. He did not confuse disruption with righteousness or agitation with holiness. He confronted injustice through truth, sacrifice, and restraint, not whistles, threats, and public intimidation.

When clergy language blurs the line between spiritual witness and political confrontation, it risks sanctifying chaos. It risks telling activists that fearlessness means recklessness, that love excuses intimidation, and that righteousness justifies disorder.

That is not Christian courage. That is moral confusion.

America is a nation of laws. Disagreement with immigration policy is legitimate. Advocacy and compassion for immigrants is honorable. But training civilians to confront federal agents, encouraging mass harassment based on rumor, and framing political resistance in martyrdom language is a recipe for violence -- not reform.

We have already seen where this road leads: churches silenced, diners terrorized, and citizens shouted down for the crime of being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

This moment demands clarity. Protest must not become persecution. Faith must not become a weapon. And disagreement must never justify mob rule.

If we abandon those boundaries, the damage will not be limited to one policy or one administration. It will tear at the fabric that allows a free, pluralistic society to exist at all.

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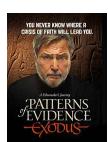
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