All.Net Analyst Report and Newsletter

Welcome to our Analyst Report and Newsletter

Back of the envelope for US democracy

I have heard lots of folks describe what is happening with ICE in the US as being comparable to the Gestapo in Germany pre-World War 2 and the current administration's moves toward Greenland and Venezuela as similar to the takeover of a few of the regions of Europe at the beginning of World War 2. As a person who deals largely bottom up and with numbers, I thought it might be a good idea to do a few calculations regarding these sorts of analogies. So here I go.

The Gestapo

Before World War II, in 1937, the Gestapo had something like 6,500 employees. After annexing Austria and the Sudetenland, there were about 20,000 of them, of which about 3,000 had actual ranks.[1][2] The total population of Germany at the start of the war was about 70M and was about the same after the war when the country was split in two.[3]

The population of the United States today is something like 343M[4][5] while the number of ICE agents has gone from about 10,000 to 22,000 very recently.[6]

	Germany	Gestapo	%	US	ICE	%	Ratio
Start	70,000,000	6,500	0.00928%	343,000,000	22,000	0.00641%	1.44
End	**70,000,000**	**20,000**	**0.0285%**	343,000,000	97,755	0.0285%	Need 4.44x

Members of the Gestapo vs. ICE

Simple calculations show that the number of ICE agents today has just reached about 2/3 parity with the pre-WW2 Gestapo, and by swelling the ranks by only a factor of 4.4 to just under 100,000 ICE agents, ICE would be the equivalent size in terms of portion of the population as the Gestapo was at the end of WW2.

Germany has a land mass of about 135,000 sq. mi. (SM) The US mainland has a land mass of about 2.96M SM, almost 22 times the size of Germany, and including Alaska and Hawaii, about 3.8M SM or 28x. Covering larger areas is, of course, problematic, but forced control in Germany was largely over higher population areas, and the US has only about 1M SM of land mass in metropolitan areas, or only about 7.4x. So in terms of covering land mass, the number of agents is still in the same ballpark as Germany was pre-WW2.

When I started this, I thought the numbers would show that the US is way better off than Germany entering WW2. But as I end the numbers, I am finding the concerns I have heard from others to be more serious by the numbers. But analogies like this only go so far...

1   https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gestapo
2   https://www.britannica.com/topic/Gestapo
3   https://www.statista.com/statistics/1066918/population-germany-historical/
4   https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2024/12/population-estimates.html
5   https://www.census.gov/popclock/
6   https://www.govexec.com/workforce/2026/01/ice-more-doubled-its-workforce-2025/410461/

Distractors

In Germany, it was the Jews, Gypsies, disabled, and homosexuals that were the focus of the mass killings. But in the US, the current focus is being put on on the "immigrants". But given the bent toward pro-Nazi groups and the lack of apparent concern for increased attacks on Jews, Homosexuals, Hispanics (and other brown skinned people), as well as many other non-white (whatever that is) groups, the current situation seems more than a bit analogous. Regardless of the specific groups targeted at any given moment, it's the 'other' that is blamed for all the ills, and the 'other' gets added to as each opponent in the media or public awareness shows up.

It's not about immigration

But to be clear, this is not about immigrants. That's just the excuse. And it's still working! Trump is the son of an Immigrant, his mother. Trump's wife is an immigrant who, apparently, was in the US illegally for a time as well. Everybody not an American Indian or Hispanic dissident of them is an immigrant. Every human living in the Americas is an immigrant from 26,000 years ago or less. They are arresting and killing people who were born here.

It's not about crime

The various claims of criminal activity leading to the overwhelming force compared to previously peaceful police requirements placed in cities by ICE are inconsistent with the actual level of criminal activity. And plenty of crimes are being committed by ICE agents under the unjustified claims of emergencies and similar sorts of things. They are not going into crime-laden areas, but rather they are going into areas where there is political opposition to the current administration. After all, pardoning people who fought and harmed police and other law enforcement officers to try to keep Trump in power is not pro-police or supportive of the justice system as it was then. The new form of the justice system goes after political enemies.

It's not about Trump

Despite the fact that the President wants his name on everything and acts with a style and panache of a charismatic leader, that does not give him enough power to do what he wants, and his is not personally directing every note the orchestra plays. There are a substantial number of people required to allow and enable the actions we see today. Certainly it is in the range of 100,000+, including the majority of people in power in both houses of congress, the supreme court, and many states. And tens of millions of voters who voted for this policy set and administration after their plans for the first year were widely known and published, discussed in the media.

It is about power over populations, fear, and gaining the authorization to act

The steps we see today are building the legal frameworks, increasing the volume of people involved, testing the techniques, changing the threshold of acceptability, and marginalizing and scaring anyone that might try to stop the administration from doing whatever it wants.

Conclusions

ICE is far closer to the Gestapo that I thought when I started writing this. And the more I look, the closer they are. Illegal search, Illegal detentions in unknown places with detainees dying, and shooting people on the streets who are not even protesting. And the numbers add up.