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Krea/Firefly

How We Tear Up

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“We revoked her visa,” Secretary of State Marco Rubio [told](#) a reporter asking about Rumeysa Ozturk, a Tufts University student from Turkey, detained recently by plainclothes officers of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in the process of deporting her.

“Her only known activism,” the *Associated Press* relates her friends saying, “was co-authoring an op-ed in a student newspaper that called on Tufts University to engage with student demands to cut ties with Israel.”

A federal judge is now preventing her deportation.

Citing those who “want to participate in movements that are involved in doing things like vandalizing universities, harassing students, taking over buildings, creating a ruckus,” is how Rubio [explained](#) the rationale for the ousting. “We gave you a visa to come and study

and get a degree, not to become a social activist, to tear up our university campuses.”

But there’s the rub, isn’t it?

Obviously, those who “tear up” by committing acts of violence and intimidation, breaking our laws, should be deported.

Yet, what about those merely speaking or writing words—whether you like them or loathe them, or their speaker—that tear up the university’s status quo in the minds of listeners? Or might, if allowed voice?

Any “alien” in our country legally has a First Amendment right to speak. Even our Highest Court has [so ruled](#).

The Trump administration appears to have vast legal authority to remove aliens from U.S. soil ... except perhaps the way they’re doing it. Deportation cannot be a selective punishment for speech, which is protected.

“America was built on free speech, so if we don’t have that, then what?” said Carina Kurban, a Lebanese American, at a recent rally in defense of Ozturk. “Then where do we go?”

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.