

US Supreme Court puts Trump travel ban into effect

Eric London and Norisa Diaz
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The United States Supreme Court handed Donald Trump a major political victory yesterday by ordering the administration's immigration and travel ban to take effect immediately. The orders reverse lower court decisions halting implementation of the revised ban, which bars citizens of Somalia, Libya, Iran, Yemen, Syria, North Korea and many Venezuelans from traveling to the US. The ban will now stay in effect pending litigation at the Fourth and Ninth Circuit Courts of Appeals.

The practical results of the Supreme Court's orders are devastating. An estimated one hundred million people are now barred from traveling or immigrating to the United States. An untold number of immigrants will die stranded in their crisis-ridden or war-torn countries, unable to acquire visas to fly to the US by plane. Many more will drown in the Mediterranean attempting to cross to Europe. Refugee women will be raped and sexually assaulted on the dangerous, thousand-mile trek they will now be forced to make. Thousands more will be denied the right to vacation, study, work, or join their families in the US.

The court voted 7-2 in favor of implementing the ban, including Obama nominee Elena Kagan, Clinton nominee Stephen Breyer, and all five justices nominated by Republican presidents. Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Sonia Sotomayor voted against.

Kagan and Breyer's votes expose the Democratic Party's fundamental support for Trump's most reactionary policies. One should not forget that in July Kagan and Sotomayor were part of the unanimous Supreme Court ruling to allow portions of the travel ban to take effect, exposing the true nature of the Democratic party and its fundamental bipartisan agreement on anti-immigrant legislation.

The Democrats have yielded as Trump passes

massive tax cuts for the rich, eviscerates environmental and work safety regulations, surreptitiously builds up US troop levels in Africa and the Middle East, plots to eliminate net neutrality, and deports thousands of immigrants at schools, hospitals and courthouses across America.

While carrying out no real opposition to these policies, the Democrats exhaust their political capital denouncing Trump as "Putin's agent" as part of a campaign that will only intensify xenophobic sentiment and lay the basis for war with Russia.

The order now in effect—Trump's third travel ban—is even more expansive than the prior two. After its first January order was subject to widespread lawsuits on the grounds that it blatantly discriminated against Muslims, the Trump administration redrafted the order in March, removing permanent residents from the ban and removing Iraq from the original list of seven countries subject to it.

In June, the Supreme Court unanimously upheld Trump's second, revised travel ban, ruling only that the ban cannot apply to those with close family or work connections to the United States.

Yesterday's order eliminates even that limitation, since it is based on a challenge to the third Trump travel ban, implemented in September. The third ban expanded the list of countries to include Chad, Venezuela and North Korea. The third ban, now in effect, is permanent, unlike the previous two temporary versions.

The ban is part of a larger move to give legal cover to the anti-Muslim and xenophobic sentiments that were the basis of Trump's campaign. In 2016, Trump promised to impose "a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States."

The administration is seeking to whip up nationalism

and xenophobia as part of its preparations for nuclear war with North Korea, China, Iran and Russia, against the backdrop of declining living standards and life expectancy in the American working class.

The extreme right responded with elation to yesterday's decision. Stephen Bannon's *Breitbart News* ran the Supreme Court's order as its main headline last night, quoting Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who called the order a "substantial victory."

"The Constitution gives the President the responsibility and power to protect this country from all threats foreign and domestic," Sessions added, "and this order remains vital to accomplishing those goals." The Nazi *Daily Stormer* called the order "good news" and "a signal to the world that the American people are fed up with all the subhuman garbage that's been coming in."

The ten months since the Trump administration attempted to implement its first travel ban bear important lessons for workers and youth looking to oppose Trump's policies.

In January, when Trump announced his ban, widespread protests involving tens of thousands of people broke out at airports and other points of entry across the United States, as immigration agents refused entry to hundreds of immigrants and legal permanent residents. These protests came one week after Trump's inauguration, which saw the largest demonstrations in US history.

At the time, numerous Democrats, including Charles Schumer, Nancy Pelosi and Bernie Sanders, appeared at protests and mouthed denunciations of Trump's xenophobic policies. Aside from the fact that these Democratic figures uncritically supported President Barack Obama when he deported 2.7 million people during his presidency, their verbal opposition to Trump has now been revealed as a total sham. Pelosi and Schumer have promised to work with Trump to secure "added border security" while the deportations and travel bans continue unabated. With hardly a peep from leading Democrats, Trump's ban is now in effect.



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