

Trump calls for “massive cities of tents” and indefinite detention of immigrants

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In a press conference yesterday afternoon, US President Donald Trump announced a series of immigration proposals that are without precedent in US history. Denouncing immigration as “an invasion,” Trump said he was planning on announcing the new measures in an executive order at the beginning of next week.

Hours before he was greeted at a Missouri campaign rally with raucous cheers of “USA! USA!” and “Build that wall,” Trump outlined his vision of massive concentration camps and border showdowns between armed soldiers and defenseless asylum seekers.

First, Trump said he had already ordered immigration officials to indefinitely detain all immigrants arrested crossing the border, as opposed to releasing immigrants while their court cases are pending.

“We are going to no longer release,” he said. “We are going to catch. We are not going to release. They are going to stay with us until the deportation hearing or the asylum hearing takes place. So we are not releasing them into the community. We have no use for people that over the years have been released into the community.”

Second, Trump proposed ending the right of immigrants crossing the US-Mexico border without documentation to apply for asylum.

“Under this plan, illegal aliens will no longer get a free pass into the country by lodging meritless claims in seeking asylum. Migrants seeking asylum will have to present themselves lawfully at a port of entry. Those who choose to break the laws and enter illegally will no longer be able to use meritless claims to gain automatic admission into our country. We will hold them for a long time, if necessary.”

Third, Trump announced he had already ordered the military to construct a network of concentration camps to house the massive expansion.

“We are putting up massive cities of tents. The military is helping us incredibly well. I want to thank the Army

Corps of Engineers, they have been so efficient, so good, so talented. We have thousands of tents, we have a lot of everything. We are going to hold them right there. We are not letting them into our country.” Later, Trump added that “you need massive facilities... we are building the facilities now, massive numbers of tents and we will hold them in tents.”

Trump openly threatened to massacre the caravan of workers and peasants escaping war and poverty in Central America.

“We have already dispatched to the border United States military, and they will do the job,” Trump said. “They are setting up right now and they are preparing. We hope nothing happens, but if it does, we are totally prepared.”

Responding to a reporter who asked how the US military deployed at the southern border would respond to members of the caravan, many of whom are women and children, throwing rocks, Trump added:

“We will consider that a firearm. We will consider that the maximum we can consider that, because they’re throwing rocks viciously and violently. We’re not going to put up with that. They want to throw rocks at our military, our military fights back. I told them to consider it a rifle. When they throw rocks, like they did at the Mexico military and police, I said, consider that a rifle.”

Trump’s fascist proposals yesterday come amid a series of dictatorial immigration measures, including proposing to repeal the 14th Amendment by executive order, eliminating the right of infants born on US soil to American citizenship, as well as deploying 15,000 soldiers to the US-Mexico border, more than the US has deployed in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria combined. The first of the 5,200 soldiers already deployed to the border began arriving yesterday.

No president—indeed, no American politician—has uttered words like these. To enforce these policies would

abrogate nearly every section of the Bill of Rights, not just for immigrants but for all people, regardless of immigration status.

Trump repeated a variant of these remarks at a campaign rally held at a hanger at the airport in Columbia, Missouri on behalf of Republican Senate candidate Josh Hawley, who is running against Democratic Senator Claire McCaskill. Trump's fascistic demagoguery has intensified significantly in the last days of the election campaign, as he fights to build an extreme-right wing movement outside the framework of the Republican and Democratic parties.

At the tarmac rally, Trump proclaimed that he is building an unprecedented and historic "movement," the strength of which derives from its ability to "bypass the media." Trump's efforts are meeting with some success. A recent poll showed more likely Republican voters identify with Trump than they do with the Republican Party.

At the Columbia rally, Trump threatened protests against his administration's policies, claiming his supporters were being "very nice," for which protestors should be grateful because Trump supporters are "very tough."

Trump has increasingly sought to mobilize his supporters in an anti-socialist and nationalist direction. In Missouri, he denounced the Democratic Party as "far-left" and "the party of socialism, open borders and crime." He said immigrants live in "nests" and said that the United States is being "overrun by masses of illegal immigrants and giant caravans" whose participants are criminals, murderers, and rapists, not "little angels."

He said that "enemies of the country" were taking advantage of birthright citizenship, proclaiming, "hundreds of thousands of illegal aliens are made automatic citizens of the US every year because of this crazy, lunatic policy that we can end."

He concluded with the following appeal: "We are one people and one family and one glorious American destiny."

The speech came less than 24 hours after Trump posted a campaign advertisement that portrayed immigrants on their desperate trek to the US as the equivalents of murderers and criminals. The ad features courtroom footage of the trial of an immigrant convicted of murder with the words "Democrats let him in... who else would Democrats let in?"

Trump's demagoguery has a deadly logic. His rhetoric has already inspired violent attacks, like the massacre of

Jewish synagogue-goers carried out by Robert Bowers in Pittsburgh last Saturday. Trump's language and his actions are aimed deliberately at creating conditions where immigrants will not only be detained, but also killed.

The Democratic Party has played a criminal role in letting Trump mobilize his fascistic base against immigrants. On Wednesday night, CNN host Chris Cuomo asked Democratic National Committee Chair Tom Perez *four times* why his party was refusing to respond to Trump's threats against immigrants.

Perez responded each time by saying that immigration was not the real issue in the election, and that Trump's threats were merely a distraction. Perez said the Democrats do not believe in open borders or amnesty for immigrants and that they also support "tough" immigration laws.

Typical was the response of former Clinton advisor and CNN contributor Paul Begala, who said in response to Trump's remarks yesterday: "My position on Trump's press conference is that a caravan of Republicans is trying to take away your health care if you have a pre-existing condition." Other Democrats, like Claire McCaskill, have been even more explicit, telling CNN: "I support the president 100 percent doing what he needs to do to secure the border."

The self-proclaimed "left wing" of the Democratic Party has ignored Trump's deadly threats. In a 1,200 word fundraising email Wednesday, Bernie Sanders refused to mention Trump's assault on immigrants.

Trump's words and deeds must be a wake-up call to workers and young people in the United States and around the world. The basic choice confronting humanity is between the horrors of the 1930s—including war, internment camps, police state round-ups and the official promotion of racism and xenophobia—and socialist revolution.



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