

# Democratic candidates praise Trump's attacks on immigrants as troops arrive at the border

Eric London  
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Hundreds of armed soldiers have deployed to the US-Mexico border, setting up over 170 miles of razor wire, erecting barricades at border crossing points and staging armed military drills in full view of immigrants waiting to cross.

Speaking at a campaign rally Saturday, President Donald Trump said: "We have our military on the border. And I noticed all that beautiful barbed wire going up today. Barbed wire used properly can be a beautiful sight."

Thousands more soldiers—up to 15,000 in all—are en route to the border. The Pentagon claims 3,500 are already staging at bases near the border, including 1,000 Marines in California. They will be deployed in both uninhabited desert regions and major metropolitan areas such as San Diego, California, and El Paso, Texas.

The Democratic Party has signaled that should it take control of one or both houses of Congress in Tuesday's midterm elections, it will collaborate with Trump's crackdown against immigrants. Almost all of its Senate candidates in closely contested races have endorsed Trump's attack on immigrants.

Joe Manchin (West Virginia) said he is open to rescinding the 14th Amendment's establishment of birthright citizenship. Joe Donnelly (Indiana), who has declared his support for ending birthright citizenship, is running advertisements denouncing immigrants. Claire McCaskill (Missouri) said she supports Trump's decision to deploy troops to the border "100 percent."

Phil Bredesen (Tennessee) is also campaigning in support of Trump's anti-immigrant policies and warns that the immigrant caravan moving north from Honduras will bring "chaos." Two other candidates—Heidi Heitkamp (North Dakota) and John Tester (Montana)—won the endorsement of the fascistic union

representing border control agents.

Kyrsten Sinema (Arizona) echoed Trump when she said in August, "ICE does provide some important functions. ICE is responsible for removing dangerous criminal aliens, aliens who hurt other people by engaging in rape or murder."

The so-called "progressive" wing of the Democratic Party is downplaying Trump's troop deployment as well as his threats to shoot immigrants, abolish the 14th Amendment by executive action and ban asylum applications for immigrants crossing the southern border without documents.

The Democratic Party has explicitly abandoned the slogan to "abolish ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement)." Senators Elizabeth Warren (Massachusetts) and Kirsten Gillibrand (New York), who both called for "abolishing ICE" in the spring when Trump began separating child immigrants from their parents, have now pulled back and said they do not support abolishing the agency anymore.

NBC News reported that Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) member and Democratic Party congressional candidate, "despite making 'Abolish ICE' a major part of her campaign over the summer, has tweeted about the topic just twice since Sept. 1. A campaign spokesman told NBC News she was unavailable for comment about the issue."

In August, Ocasio-Cortez tweeted that, according to her, abolishing ICE "does not mean abolish deportation."

*Jacobin* magazine, which is closely aligned with the DSA, has published just one article on the immigration situation in recent weeks. In comparison, *Jacobin* recently published five articles on Halloween, including pieces relating to witches, ghosts and monsters.

Senator Bernie Sanders (Vermont) has maintained total

silence on Trump's fascistic moves against immigrants. Instead, he is stumping on behalf of openly pro-corporate Democrats such as Michigan gubernatorial candidate Gretchen Whitmer, Colorado gubernatorial candidate and multi-millionaire businessman Jared Polis and Wisconsin Senator Tammy Baldwin.

In a CNN interview on Friday, Sanders was asked twice whether he would defend the immigrant caravan. He responded each time by ignoring the question and pivoting instead to healthcare. Sanders has attacked immigrants in the past as threats to the wages and jobs of native-born workers and echoes the chauvinist economic nationalism of Trump and the trade union leadership.

Ocasio-Cortez, Sanders, *Jacobin* and other phony "progressives" are dutifully following the orders of the Democratic Party leadership. The *New York Times* reported that when House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi was asked about the Democratic Party's position on Trump's threat to revoke birthright citizenship, she replied, "Clearly, Republicans will do absolutely anything to divert attention away from their votes to take away Americans' healthcare."

CNN's Jake Tapper asked Democratic National Committee Chairman Tom Perez yesterday whether the Democrats think "border security"—a euphemism for mass deportations and the internment of immigrants—is important. Perez said, "Of course it is, and in 2013 Democrats and Republicans came together in the Senate around a bipartisan plan" that would have expanded ICE and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and resulted in further mass deportations.

Perez added that the Democrats support "tougher enforcement measures and a tough but fair pathway to citizenship."

These statements make clear that if the Democrats win control of the House or Senate, they will actively collaborate with Trump to facilitate further attacks on immigrants.

The Democrats are either openly or tacitly supporting measures that are placing the lives of immigrants in imminent danger. The military is preparing for a possible clash with refugees on the southern border, including thousands participating in the caravans of Central American men, women and children making their way through Mexico.

According to an internal military report on the border deployment leaked to the press, the "most dangerous" potential outcome is one in which the immigrant caravan will "grow markedly." To confront this, the military says

it is preparing for "cross border engagements," i.e., violent attacks on innocent workers asking for the right to apply for asylum.

The military report also raises the fear that protests will develop in defense of immigrants and the military may be forced to engage with demonstrators. "Previous protests in support of immigration caravans or enforcement of immigration law have occurred throughout the US," the report warns.

The *Washington Post* reports as well that hundreds of armed militiamen are en route to the border. These groups, comprised of outright fascists, are alleged to have conducted extra-legal killings of migrants in the past.

The *Post* writes: "Gun-carrying civilian groups and border vigilantes have heard a call to arms in President Trump's warnings... [They are] oiling rifles and tuning up aerial drones, with plans to form caravans of their own and trail American troops to the border."

"We'll observe and report and offer aid in any way we can," bail bondsman and Texas Minutemen president Shannon McGauley told the *Post*.

Meanwhile, the flow of desperate workers and peasants fleeing Central America continues. A third caravan from El Salvador comprised of over 1,000 people is now following two prior caravans en route to the US border.

Fourteen caravan participants recently filed a lawsuit in Mexico claiming that the Mexican government is illegally acting as Trump's puppet in enforcing migrant policy. They filed a complaint comprised of 72 pages of evidence that Mexican immigration agents are beating migrants and extorting them to discourage them on their trek north.

Over the weekend, anger among the immigrants in the leading caravan grew after Veracruz Governor Miguel Ángel Yunes rescinded a previous offer to provide buses to safely transport migrants north. Yunes then attempted to delay immigrants from moving on, telling them to stay in Veracruz until Tuesday. The caravan instead took a vote to continue walking to Mexico City.



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