

Texas Governor Abbott ships 42 migrants from Rio Grande to Los Angeles by bus

Another fascistic anti-immigrant provocation by the Republican Party

Kevin Reed
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A group of 42 migrants arrived in Los Angeles by chartered bus last Wednesday, after being sent there as part of a reactionary political stunt by Texas Republican Governor Greg Abbott.

The migrants, who are from Central and South America, departed the Texas Rio Grande Valley 23 hours earlier and, after enduring the 1,600 mile trip without food, were met at Union Station in Los Angeles by immigration rights workers. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that the migrant group included eight children.

Defending his act of cruelty, which violates the fundamental rights of the migrants, Abbott wrote in a social media post, “Small Texas border towns remain overrun & overwhelmed because Biden refuses to secure the border.” He added, “LA is a city migrants seek to go to, particularly now its leaders approved its self-declared sanctuary status.”

That the governor’s actions are aimed at stirring up anti-immigrant hatred within the US population is evident is the false claim that Biden is refusing to secure the border. Coinciding with the lifting of the Title 42 expulsion rules—implemented by the Trump administration to summarily remove asylum seekers on the basis of cynical public health considerations at the start of the pandemic—the Biden White House has put into place an immigration policy at the southern border that is seeking to more effectively ban migrants from entering.

Governor Abbott said this was “the 1st bus” sent to LA, although his office did not respond immediately to requests for more information about whether more

buses would be dispatched.

After stopping at Union Station, the migrants were taken to a nearby church where they were greeted by representatives of the Coalition for Humane Immigration Rights-Los Angeles. Even though the governor did not disclose publicly until Wednesday the forced relocation of the migrants, CHIRLA had been tipped off about the buses pending arrival on Tuesday.

Jorge-Mario Cabrera, a spokesperson for CHIRLA, told the *Times* the migrants were from Venezuela, Guatemala and Honduras, as well as two of African origin. Cabrera said that at least one of the Guatemalan migrants had a court date scheduled in New York City.

He said, “That’s where the cruelty of this process is unbounded. That’s why Los Angeles made sure that we were coordinated and prepared to deal with the human beings behind this political charade.”

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass, a Democrat, said in a statement, “It is abhorrent that an American elected official is using human beings as pawns in his cheap political games.” In keeping with the position of the entire Democratic Party, Bass said nothing about the penchant of Abbott, or anyone else in the Republican Party, for openly fascist politics.

Once the migrants arrived at the church welcome center, they were able to rest, eat and speak with immigration attorneys. Cabrera said, “We know that they’re traumatized and they need a number of services.”

This is not the first time that Governor Abbott has used buses in this manner. He has reportedly sent tens of thousands of migrants to bus stations in Washington

D.C., New York City, Chicago and Philadelphia, and also dropped some off near the residence of Vice President Kamala Harris at the Naval Observatory in Washington, D.C.

In one incident, passengers on a bus bound for Philadelphia last year included a 10-year-old girl who was suffering from dehydration and a high fever and needed to be hospitalized.

Earlier this month, the government of the Republican governor of Florida, Ron DeSantis, paid to drive dozens of migrants from El Paso, Texas, to a small airport in New Mexico before flying them to Sacramento, California.

DeSantis, who is a contender for the Republican Party 2023 presidential nomination, has himself been in the forefront of the campaign to prey on the most vulnerable. Like Abbott, he advances a fascistic program of blaming migrants for the deepening economic and social crisis facing tens of millions of people in states across the country.

The Biden administration is seeking to make concessions to the extreme American nationalist agenda of the Republican Party by limiting the extension of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to 300,000 people from El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Nepal. Under the terms of the measure the migrants, who are asylum seekers, will be allowed to stay in the US only another 18 months.

The changes introduced by the Biden White House last Tuesday barred the immigrants with TPS from obtaining work permits. It also excluded migrants from Guatemala, one of the poorest and most violence-ridden countries in the region. The Department of Homeland Security said that it would halt TPS renewals after the extension.



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