New York City to evict 3,500 migrant families from shelters in January

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New York City, at the behest of Democratic mayor Eric Adams, will evict 3,500 migrant families from city-run homeless shelters in January. Adams issued an executive order in October that limited stays for migrant families to 60 days before they must leave the shelter system and reapply, with no guarantees that a place will be found for them. Single adults are limited to a 30-day stay before they must leave and reapply for housing.

New York City is one of the few municipalities in the United States that is legally obligated to house the homeless, but that policy has effectively been ripped to shreds by the Adams administration, which claims that it is unable to accommodate those most in need of help.

This summer, migrants were subjected to the indignity of having to sleep on the sidewalk in front of the Roosevelt Hotel while they waited for space. Migrants, including families, waiting outside in the cold to apply for housing can already be seen across the city. How many of them must spend the night outside is unknown, but the number will undoubtedly rise after the expulsions from city shelters next month. About 65,000 people live in the city's shelter system.

The *New York Times* in a recent article featured interviews with educators who emphasized that the move would disrupt students who recently enrolled in the public school system because they will be forced to change school districts. The article noted, "more than two dozen principals, educators, parents and advocates said in interviews that the policy could lead to the biggest disruption since schools closed because of the coronavirus pandemic."

Since the influx of immigrant workers fleeing poverty and repressive American-supported regimes that began earlier this year, Adams has blamed nearly all of the city's social ills on immigrants, declaring in September that migrant workers will "destroy New York City."

Adams has moderated his language somewhat, but the mayor continues to insist that the hardships New Yorkers are facing, particularly the massive budget cuts to education and other essential social services, are caused by the nearly 160,000 migrants that have come to New York City this year, many of them bused to the city by fascist politicians in states that border Mexico, particularly Texas governor Greg Abbott.

Thousands of these migrants are housed in subpar conditions, such as the 1,700 at the tent city in Floyd Bennett Field, a former airport in Brooklyn. During heavy rains earlier this month the tents flooded, and many were nearly capsized by high winds. The media has reported frequent harassment by right-wingers in the area, including a bomb threat phoned into a nearby mall frequented by migrants.

Fascistic Facebook sites regularly call for the expulsion of these workers, who are legally in the United States pending appeals for asylum, and city agencies treat them with contempt. On Christmas Eve, according to *The City*, security guards at the Floyd Bennett Field encampment were filmed taking scooters away from migrant children who were playing with them, an action defended by the city. The security agency, Arrow Security, is currently being sued by the Department of Homeless Services in relation to assaults on residents.

The Adams administration is opening a 400-person migrant shelter in a building next to the highly polluted Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn. According to *The City*, "The planned shelter abuts the site where a gas manufacturing plant once stood and is across the street from two brownfield lots. All three properties have registered high levels of multiple toxins in their soil,

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some of which environmental officials believe have migrated onto adjacent plots."

In a new move to discourage the entry of immigrant workers to the city, Adams this week issued an executive order mandating bus companies that transport migrants from the US-Mexican border to give 32 hours' notice before arrival in the city. The order also limited the times of day during which migrants could be dropped off. Buses headed for Chicago, which has already implemented similar restrictions, simply drop off migrants in suburbs sometimes as much as an hour-and-a-half walk to the city.

For all his criticism of the cruelty of Texas Governor Abbott's transfer of migrants to New York and other cities, Adams has implemented an identical policy of shipping migrants out of the city as quickly as possible. Politico recently noted, "Between March and November, the city said it spent about $4.6 million to purchase more than 19,300 plane tickets for migrants seeking travel to other cities." Adams's efforts to bus migrants to smaller communities in the Hudson Valley, where they are threatened by reactionary local officials, are notorious.

The migrant crisis has caused fissures in the Democratic Party. In a press conference on Tuesday, Adams repeated his criticism of the Biden administration for refusing to provide funds to the city for migrants. "The federal government said to New York City, 'We're not going to do our job, you do our job. You take care of 4,000 people a week, Eric, you and your team.'"

On Wednesday, Adams held an online press conference with the Democratic mayors of Chicago and Denver, DSA-supported Brandon Johnson and Mike Johnston, calling not only for more federal funds from the Biden administration and a declaration of emergency, but also more effective border "control." As Mike Johnston said, "we need more federal support to be able to manage this amount of inflow."

The big-city Democratic mayors are concerned that an influx of migrant workers will rapidly exacerbate the deepening social crisis in their cities as federal pandemic funding dries up and little aid is forthcoming from the Biden administration to offset budget cuts. Real wages are declining, and the past months have seen working class unrest with a series of significant strikes and near-strikes. Now the cities are venues of spirited mass protests by young people and workers against the Israeli massacre of Palestinians.

The Biden administration, however, is in a war-spending frenzy for its proxy war against Russia in Ukraine and in backing Israel's genocide on the Palestinians in Gaza.

In a summit in Mexico City this week, Secretary of State Anthony Blinken and Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas met with Mexico's president Andrés Manuel López Obrador to implement further repressive measures in Mexico to contain migrant workers seeking to cross the border into the United States. The summit, as the *World Socialist Web Site* noted, "was an offshoot of talks to secure congressional approval of a $110 billion package that offers Republicans a greater crackdown on migrants in exchange for the bulk of the money going to escalate the war against Russia in Ukraine and the US-Israeli genocide in Gaza."

This is in line with entire anti-immigrant ruling class policy of the imperialist countries, and is a step toward the far-right policies recently adopted by the European Union that will allow refugees to "be locked up in detention centres surrounded by barbed wire, as is already the case at Europe's external borders, where they can expect to be deported at any time."

That, ultimately, despite his bloviating about the needs of migrants and their "welcome in New York" is where the policies of Eric Adams and the whole Democratic Party are headed.

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