

Trump vows military roundups of millions of immigrants

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President-elect Donald Trump confirmed Monday that he intends to declare a national emergency and use the US military to deport millions of migrants as soon as he takes office next January 20. Trump was quoting and endorsing a posting on his Truth Social platform by Tom Fitton, head of the ultra-right group Judicial Watch.

Fitton wrote that Trump is “prepared to declare a national emergency and will use military assets to reverse the Biden invasion through a mass deportation program.” The fascist ex-president quoted this post with a one-word endorsement: “TRUE!!”

Since this declaration was posted at 4:03 a.m. Monday morning, there has been a barrage of media reports citing unnamed Trump aides on the extensive planning that is already going on to prepare an unprecedented dictatorial attack on migrant workers and their families.

This includes detailed discussions on the expansion of detention facilities currently run by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). These have already been filled by the mass arrests carried out under the Biden-Harris administration, particularly over the past year, as the Democrats sought to compete with Trump in carrying out repressive measures against migrants.

ICE does not have the available personnel required to run facilities on the scale suggested by Trump and his top immigration adviser, Stephen Miller. The operation of these detention camps would inevitably fall into the purview of the Pentagon. This would be in violation of the Posse Comitatus Act, which bars the US military from conducting law enforcement operations within the borders of the United States.

Previous administrations, including Trump’s, have

estimated the total number of undocumented migrants at 11 million-12 million. At least half have lived in the US for more than a decade, and have many US citizen children. In the course of his presidential campaign, Trump constantly increased the number of immigrants he would target for deportation, raising it to 15 million and then 20 million.

In effect, anyone suspected of being “illegal,” regardless of their actual status, would be swept up in the police-military dragnet, imprisoned and put on planes to take them back to countries that in many cases they have never lived in, and whose languages they don’t speak. It is a formula for racial policing of the foulest character.

The scale of the threatened mass deportation effort is staggering. The largest number of immigrants ever deported in a single year is the 430,000 deported in 2013 by the Obama administration. Trump, in his first four-year term, never matched the record set by the Democratic “deporter-in-chief.”

Trump has indicated that his first target would be the 1.2 million migrants who have final deportation orders from federal immigration judges. There would also be efforts to oust the 530,000 migrants permitted under the visa waiver provisions for refugees from countries currently targeted for US destabilization campaigns, such as Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua. Another measure would be the repeal of Temporary Protected Status for an additional 860,000, mainly from Venezuela, Haiti, El Salvador, Honduras and Ukraine.

Trump and Miller are also reportedly planning to challenge a key provision of the post-Civil War settlement, “birthright citizenship,” which is laid down in the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, which declares that any child born on US soil is automatically entitled to US citizenship.

Trump has also threatened to invoke the 1798 Alien Enemies Act, which empowers the federal government to

detain “enemy aliens” during a war, although Congress has not declared war on any foreign country since 1942, during World War II. To use this law would essentially amount to declaring war on all countries whose citizens seek to cross the US-Mexico border or overstay their visas—in effect, the entire world.

The new administration would also eliminate, as quickly as legally possible, all programs which allow visa paroles or temporary status for refugees from specified countries, including Cuba, Haiti, Venezuela and most of Central America, as well as smaller groups from Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries targeted by US invasions, where local collaborators with the US military have been allowed entry to the US.

The first large-scale effort after Trump re-enters the White House is likely to be the construction of new detention facilities, including several planned near major metropolitan areas like New York City, Chicago and Houston, where there are large populations of both legal and undocumented immigrants.

Trump lawyers are already engaged in drafting executive orders which the new president could issue as soon as he is sworn in on January 20. These would include repealing Temporary Protected Status for immigrants from several countries, including Haitians—among them the 20,000 Haitians living and working in Springfield, Ohio, who were the targets of vilification and false charges by Trump and his running mate, Ohio Senator JD Vance.

Another order would repeal all executive orders issued under President Biden reversing the anti-migrant orders by Trump during his first term in office. This would include restoring the “Remain in Mexico” policy, which violates international law by compelling asylum seekers to make their claims from detention centers in Mexico rather than from within the United States.

In pursuit of a massive expansion of detention facilities, the Trump administration is expected to provide a multi-billion-dollar bonanza for private prison companies like CoreCivic and Geo, whose stock prices have soared since the November 5 election. In an earnings call with investors, CoreCivic CEO Damon Hininger reportedly declared, “We think that the outcome of this election is probably going to be notable for ICE for a couple of different reasons. One is that we do think that there’s going to be increased need for detention capacity.”

According to NBC News, Trump’s immigration team is planning to double the number of beds approved by

Congress for operation by ICE, particularly near cities like New York, Washington and Chicago, and this could be accomplished by ICE contracting with private prison operators.

The New York Times reported:

Mr. Trump’s team said it had developed a multifaceted plan to significantly increase the number of deportations, which it thought could be accomplished without new legislation from Congress, although it anticipated legal challenges.

Other elements of the team’s plan include bolstering the ranks of ICE officers with law enforcement officials who would be temporarily reassigned from other agencies, and with state National Guardsmen and federal troops activated to enforce the law on domestic soil under the Insurrection Act.

The team also plans to expand a form of due-process-free expulsions known as expedited removal, which is currently used near the border for recent arrivals, to people living across the interior of the country who cannot prove they have been in the United States for more than two years.

And the team plans to stop issuing citizenship-affirming documents, like passports and Social Security cards, to infants born on domestic soil to undocumented migrant parents in a bid to end birthright citizenship.

The Insurrection Act is the 1807 law that Trump tried unsuccessfully to invoke in 2020 to send the Army into the streets to crush the mass protests over police violence following the public, and widely publicized, murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis.



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