

Trump administration plans to build concentration camps on US military bases

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This past Friday, the *New York Times*, citing three Trump administration officials, reported that the White House is planning to detain men, women and children on military bases across the United States, in an example of using “wartime resources to make good on the president’s promised mass deportations.”

The *Times* reported that the Trump administration will start by building a “deportation hub” at the sprawling Fort Bliss US Army base, near El Paso, Texas. Citing “three officials familiar with the plan” the *Times* reported the base is planning on imprisoning “up to 10,000” people.

This is not the first time in recent memory Fort Bliss has been used as mass migrant detention facility. In 2021, the Biden administration sent thousands of unaccompanied children to the base, where they were housed in “warehouse-sized tents with cot-style bunkbeds,” according to an Office of Inspector General report. The report noted that some children at the facility suffered panic attacks after going more than 60 days without speaking to a case manager or being released into the United States.

In contrast to the Biden administration’s use of Fort Bliss, Trump and his cabal of fascists is planning on expanding the scope and scale of internment at military bases across the country. The Trump administration envisions the Fort Bliss concentration camp as a “model” that could be exported to other military bases to hold thousands of more people, in furtherance of Trump’s pledge to carry out the largest deportation operation in US history.

While the plans to build a network of militarized internment camps are still in the initial phases, the *Times* reported that in addition to Fort Bliss, other military facilities being considered include Hill Air Force Base in northern Utah; Buckley Space Force Base in Aurora, Colorado; Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque, New Mexico; Homestead Air Force Base, located in Miami-

Dade County, Florida; Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station in Niagara Falls, New York; and Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, southeast of Trenton, New Jersey.

Eighty-three years after President Franklin Delano Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 mandating the indefinite detention of all persons of Japanese descent living on the US mainland for the duration of the war with Japan, the Trump administration is preparing to imprison tens if not hundreds of thousands of migrants and their families on US military bases.

Beginning in 1942, the US government removed over 120,000 Japanese-Americans from their homes and detained them for up to four years in a network of remote prison camps. What is currently being considered drastically expands on this historic crime and threatens the democratic rights of workers around the world.

There is no question that faced with resistance to Trump and the oligarchy’s plans for dictatorship, immigrants and citizens alike, all who are considered the financial oligarchy’s “enemy within,” are in danger of being kidnapped and imprisoned.

Following the *Times* reporting, on Monday National Public Radio, citing an internal memo from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), confirmed that the agency is requesting that the Department of Defense “stage detainees for removal from the United States.”

According to the memo seen by NPR, DHS is requesting up to 1,000 immigrants be imprisoned at Fort Bliss for a 60-day “evaluation period,” but this could increase to up to 10,000 as the base is transformed into a “central hub for deportation operations.”

DHS and its sub-agencies, such as Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP), are currently at their “maximum capacity,” incarcerating some 41,000 people at mostly private for-profit facilities.

Last month, the Trump administration resumed detaining people at the infamous Guantánamo Bay prison/torture complex in Cuba. Signaling the return of indefinite detention, Trump mused last month, “Some of them are so bad that we don’t even trust the countries to hold them because we don’t want them coming back, so we’re gonna send ‘em out to Guantánamo.”

Trump’s decision to utilize military bases for internment is further sign in the breakdown of democratic forms of rule and underscores that the American ruling class is preparing to revive and expand on the worst crimes in not only US, but all world history. In the keynote address at the Conservative Political Action Conference Saturday, Trump, to the delight of neo-Nazis and convicted January 6 insurrectionists in attendance, including Enrique Tarrio of the Proud Boys, began his speech by denouncing “radical left Marxists” and boasting that “illegal alien criminals are being sent home.”

CBS reported on Sunday, citing internal government documents, that the Trump administration plans to deport immigrants “on the grounds that they could spread diseases like tuberculosis.” The Trump administration is seeking to revive its first-term policy of using Title 42, a broad authority under the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which “would label unauthorized migrants trying to enter the US as public health risks.”

The order would empower Customs and Border Protection agents and officials to deport anyone, even those attempting to claim asylum, without a hearing.

Title 42 was first seized on by the Trump administration after the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. In March 2020, Trump’s fascistic advisor Stephen Miller urged Trump to invoke Title 42, not to ensure the safety of the American people from the deadly virus, but to provide Trump with a cudgel to enact his anti-immigrant agenda.

After the 2020 election, President Joe Biden continued the war on immigrants and used Title 42 to deny asylum claims, while at the same time ripping up any and all pandemic-related social programs and public health protections. Under both Biden and Trump over 2.5 million people were either deported or denied the right to claim asylum under Title 42, although Biden eventually ended the practice after the end of all COVID mitigation policies.

Trump’s plans to re-implement Title 42 have nothing to

do with protecting public health, as evidenced by the lack of action by Trump’s pro-pandemic Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. even as COVID-19, bird flu, RSV, influenza and other viruses run rampant.

The Trump administration’s plans to establish a network of militarized detention camps have been met with indifference or acceptance by the Democratic Party, which is far more terrified of rousing mass opposition to Trump and the capitalist system both parties defend than it is to the return of fascism.

Nominally independent Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders has said nothing about Trump’s plans to build militarized concentration camps, but has repeatedly in recent days tweeted and made speeches from the Senate floor denouncing Trump for calling Ukrainian Volodymyr Zelensky a dictator. “Putin is a dictator, not Zelensky,” Sanders tweeted on Monday.

The Democrats’ silence on Trump’s plans is not a mistake but underscores their shared class allegiance. Both the Democrats and Republicans, with their trade union adjuncts, spew nationalist poison to divide the working class and direct social discontent towards foreigners and immigrants, as opposed to the financial aristocracy which is actually exploiting the working class, the source of its wealth accumulation.

The bipartisan attacks on immigrants have already spurred mass protests in opposition across the US. These protests must be developed and expanded upon into a network of community defense committees organized on the understanding that the working class is an international class and that the capitalist system is incompatible with the defense of democratic rights of all workers, native born or immigrant.



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