

Trump administration demands immigrants, including children, register with DHS in preparation for deportation

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26 February 2025

In a major attack on the democratic rights of the entire working class, on Tuesday, Trump's Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Kristi Noem announced that the agency would begin compiling a database of immigrants to "track ... and compel them to leave the country voluntary."

Noem's fascistic statement claimed the agency would be enforcing provisions contained in the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 (INA), which provides "multiple tools to track illegal aliens and compel them to leave the country voluntarily."

Seeking to whip up a pogrom-like atmosphere against any and all suspected "immigrants," the DHS announcement warned that under the INA, the US government can prosecute immigrants for failing to self-deport or failing to provide the government with their fingerprints and current home address.

The DHS said the registry is mandatory for anyone 14 or older who is not currently in the country "legally," and that parents and guardians of children under 14 are also required to register.

Making clear that the registration will be used to locate and deport, not provide a "pathway to citizenship," in an appearance on Fox News Wednesday, Secretary Noem stated bluntly, "They will be fingerprinted. They must announce that they are here. And if they do so, they can avoid criminal charges and fines, and we will help them relocate right back to their home country."

There is more than a whiff of fascism in Trump's latest attack. In February 1939, the Nazis created the Reich Association of Jews in Germany (*Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland*), which compelled the forced registration and deportation of German Jews. Those who registered with the Reichsvereinigung, which was controlled by the Gestapo, were first sent to forced labor and then to

death camps.

Historically, in the United States the forced registration of immigrants has been used as a battering ram to suppress left-wing and socialist opposition to war and inequality. Under the 1940 Alien Registration Act, also known as the "Smith Act," over 5 million immigrants were forced to register with the US government during World War II. Of those 5 million, 900,000 were categorized as "enemy aliens" and subjected to deportation.

Eighteen members of the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) were charged by the Roosevelt administration under the Smith Act for advancing a socialist internationalist perspective during the war. Leading members of the party, except FBI informant Joseph Hansen, spent 6-12 months in prison after being convicted in 1941.

The same law was used to imprison 120,000 Japanese Americans on the West Coast.

Following Noem's announcement Tuesday, CNN reported on Wednesday, citing three sources in the administration, that the Trump administration was preparing to invoke the Alien Enemies Act of 1798. The measure was passed as part of the Alien and Sedition Act, which was also used to provide the pseudo-legal justification for the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

The law was written so that if the United States was under immediate attack by a foreign government, the president could order the detention of enemy combatants captured on US soil in the course of the war. Trump, however, has repeatedly threatened to use the law as a hammer to carry out his militarized deportation operations without any interference, citing a non-existent "invasion" by immigrants.

The Trump administration, without any opposition from the Democratic Party, is rapidly constructing a vast domestic apparatus of repression. What is emerging is a militarized police state, integrating the military, intelligence agencies,

and private mercenaries into an extra-legal force aimed at crushing opposition and consolidating power in the hands of a criminal cabal.

At the center of this effort is the plan to establish mass detention centers for immigrants, using military bases to imprison and deport millions. Yesterday, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, a Trump loyalist and advocate of using the military against domestic opposition, visited Guantánamo Bay, long a symbol of imperialist lawlessness.

Guantánamo, which became infamous for torture, indefinite detention and extrajudicial imprisonment during the so-called “war on terror,” is now being used to indefinitely detain immigrants, with dozens reportedly being held there without trial. Hegseth’s visit signals that Trump intends to use Guantánamo as a model for mass internment camps inside the US, where immigrants—and ultimately political opponents—can and will be held.

The Trump administration has already begun expanding military detention facilities across the United States. Reports confirm that Fort Bliss in Texas is being transformed into a mass internment camp, capable of holding up to 10,000 detainees. Other sites under consideration include Air Force and Army bases in Utah, Colorado, Florida and New York. The intention is to use wartime military infrastructure to construct a network of domestic concentration camps, entirely outside the jurisdiction of civilian courts.

The Trump administration is also considering enlisting private mercenaries to carry out deportations and political repression. *Politico* has revealed that Erik Prince—the founder of Blackwater, infamous for its war crimes in Iraq—has assembled a group of military contractors with the aim of playing an active role in mass roundups.

Prince, along with former Blackwater COO Bill Mathews, has circulated a 26-page blueprint proposing a \$25 billion operation to deport 12 million people by 2026. The plan calls for the creation of “processing camps” on military bases, a fleet of 100 aircraft, and a private “citizen army” empowered to track down, detain and deport immigrants. According to *Politico*, the document states that deporting 12 million people

would require the government to eject nearly 500,000 illegal aliens per month. ... To keep pace with the Trump deportations, it would require a 600% increase in activity. It is unlikely that the government could swell its internal ranks to keep pace with this demand ... in order to process this enormous number of deportations, the government should enlist outside assistance.

This proposal, however, goes far beyond immigration enforcement. The plan recommends, according to *Politico*, “deputizing 10,000 private citizens, including military veterans, former law enforcement officials and retired ICE and CBP officers,” granting them federal arrest powers.

The program includes a bounty system, paying local police officers to round up undocumented immigrants. This resembles the CIA-backed death squads deployed across Latin America in the 1980s, which detained, tortured and murdered political dissidents under US-backed regimes.

Prince’s involvement in these efforts is a warning. Blackwater’s history of war crimes—including the 2007 Nisour Square Massacre, where Blackwater contractors killed 17 Iraqi civilians—shows exactly what these mercenaries are prepared to do. Trump pardoned the Blackwater operatives responsible for the massacre in 2020.

The war on immigrants, the destruction of democratic rights and the militarization of policing are domestic expressions of the same imperialist policies that have produced war and dictatorship abroad. The same state apparatus being built to track down, detain and deport migrants will be used against striking workers, protesting students and anyone who resists corporate domination.

The only force capable of stopping this assault is the working class. Workers cannot rely on the Democratic Party, which has spent decades building the mechanisms of repression now being wielded by Trump. What is needed is a mass movement of workers against war, dictatorship and the capitalist system that produces them.



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