

Trump administration welcomes Afrikaner “refugees” from South Africa

Fred Mazelis
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A planeload of white South Africans who were given expedited refugee status to enter the US was welcomed at the Washington D.C.-area Dulles Airport on Monday morning by Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau and Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security Troy Edgar. The VIP greetings were an extraordinary display of the openly racist policies of the Trump administration.

The South African Afrikaners are part of the white minority that ruled South Africa in the apartheid era when the black majority of more than 90 percent was denied all political rights. They were admitted to the country under an executive order signed by Donald Trump on February 7. The administration claimed that the Afrikaner farmers are the victims of racial discrimination, and even that the Afrikaners face “genocide”! The 59 “refugees” who have just arrived are only the first of thousands whom Trump is planning on welcoming in the future.

This same government has, via an executive order signed on Trump’s first day in office, halted at least temporarily the actual refugee resettlement program for thousands of Afghans, Congolese and other migrants, people who have waited months and in many cases years for entry.

Moreover, while welcoming the Afrikaners, the Trump administration has begun mass deportations, with the president promising that up to a million undocumented immigrants—workers and their families who in many cases have worked and built their lives in the country over a period of years—will be expelled without due process in the next year. And the ICE Gestapo of the Trump regime has also begun abducting and “disappearing” students with valid visas as punishment, not for the violation of any law, but for exercising their First Amendment rights to denounce the genocide in Gaza.

The claim by Trump to be fighting “racial discrimination” in South Africa while barring entry to genuine refugees was so brazen that the fascist president was questioned about it at a brief exchange with reporters on Monday. “It’s a genocide that’s taking place that you people don’t want to write about,” said Trump in response. “It’s a terrible thing that’s

taking place. And farmers are being killed. They happen to be white, but whether they’re white or Black makes no difference to me, but white farmers are being brutally killed, and their land is being confiscated in South Africa.”

There is absolutely no evidence to back up Trump’s blatant lies. South Africa continues to face a high level of violent crime, but the actual data completely refute the claim of genocide. While white South Africans are about 8 percent of the total population of more than 63 million, only 2 percent of murder victims are white. The robberies of white-owned farms have led to about 50 murders of white farmers, according to statistics covering the year 2023, but an even greater number of black workers have lost their lives in these attacks, and the farm casualties compare to a total number of murders in South Africa of 23,000 a year.

It must also be added that Trump, while inventing claims of genocide for political reasons, is one of the biggest cheerleaders of the actual genocide taking place in Gaza for the last 19 months, with up to 70,000 killed, and women and children making up the majority of victims. A few months ago, Trump told his fellow fascist Benjamin Netanyahu to “finish the job,” and also floated the proposal that his government would carry out the expulsion of the two million Palestinians from the Gaza Strip and its conversion into an American-owned luxury resort.

On the claim of discrimination, the facts are that, more than 30 years after the dismantling of apartheid, whites own more than 70 percent of the private land. The governments led by the ANC have done little or nothing to deal with the unprecedented inequality and provide a path out of poverty for the vast majority. The Trump administration points to a recently enacted *Expropriation Act*, an extremely modest measure that provides for expropriations without compensation in some cases, and only after court review.

Fascist advisor Stephen Miller, who is increasingly prominent, especially on immigration issues, arrogantly defended the expedited admission of the Afrikaners, telling reporters that it was only the beginning of a “much larger-scale” relocation effort. “What’s happening in South Africa

fits the textbook definition of why the refugee program was created,” said Miller. “This is persecution based on a protected characteristic, in this case, race.”

Deputy Secretary of State Landau spoke briefly to the press after greeting the Afrikaners at Dulles Airport. His answer to a question on why the Afrikaners had been admitted, while the Refugee Resettlement Program had been halted for many thousands from all over the world, was also revealing.

Defending the “pause” in the refugee programs, Landau went on to say, “That pause, of course, was subject from the very beginning to exceptions where it was determined that this would be in the interest of the United States. One of—some of the criteria are making sure that refugees did not pose any challenge to our national security and that they could be assimilated easily into our country.”

The reference to “assimilation” is a euphemism for the Great Replacement Theory, the claim by fascists and white supremacists that the influx of migrants from the so-called “Third World” is part of a conspiracy to “weaken” the white population. This is the language of blood and soil, of racial purity. Trump is signaling support for the outright fascists among his backers.

Trump’s open racism has been well known for many decades, although as a brazen conman he sometimes disguises it behind demagogic appeals for votes from “my black people.” At the time of the notorious Central Park rape case in New York in 1989, when five innocent black and Hispanic youth who made up the Central Park Five were being railroaded to convictions which would land them in prison for years before they were exonerated, Trump paid up to \$85,000 for full page ads about the case in four of the city’s papers. The headline screamed, “Bring Back the Death Penalty! Bring Back Our Police!” He has never retracted his role in this case, of course, and his language then clearly echoes his claims of “genocide” against South African Afrikaners today.

During Trump’s first term, at the time of the 2017 rally of fascists in Charlottesville, Virginia, during which one anti-fascist protester was killed, Trump spoke of the white supremacists including “very fine people.” A bit later on in his term of office, he was quoted as calling Haiti and a large group of African nations “shithole countries.” The immigration door is almost completely shut for the long-suffering victims of imperialist oppression, especially but not entirely from Africa, the Middle East and Latin America, while it is wide open for those whom the administration deems “easily assimilated.”

There is another connection to Trump’s selective sympathy for the Afrikaners, and that is the prominent role in and around his administration of figures who were raised

in South Africa under apartheid. These include billionaires Peter Thiel and David Sacks, but most prominent is the world’s richest man. Elon Musk’s Nazi salutes at a celebratory event following Trump’s inauguration in January provoked worldwide outrage and disgust. Musk’s grandfather was an active pro-Nazi Canadian before he emigrated to South Africa in 1950, just as the apartheid system was becoming more entrenched.

The February 7 executive order allowing for the Afrikaner resettlement also alludes to foreign policy considerations. “The United States cannot support the government of South Africa’s commission of rights violations in its country or its undermining United States foreign policy, which poses national security threats to our Nation, our allies, our African partners, and our interests,” the order declared. It made specific mention of the case brought before the International Court of Justice by South Africa and other countries, charging Israel with war crimes and genocide.

The MAGA “program,” such as it is, is sometimes falsely referred to as isolationist. This was never the case, despite whatever Trump may have said. He has already shown, in his first months of his second term, that his policy is a desperate attempt to counter the economic and social decline of US capitalism by undertaking a far more ruthless war against the international working class.

It would be false to see the flagrant racism of the Trump administration as simply the product of his personality. It is in fact the other way around. Trump’s “personality” became useful to large sections of the US ruling class, who fear an inevitable and massive movement of the working class. The nonstop provocations and appeals to racism and every other form of social backwardness are motivated by fear of the working class. The fascist stench emanating from the White House is a symptom of deepening capitalist crisis and class struggle, and poses the urgent need to unite the working class in the fight for socialism.



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