

Reform UK leader Farage unveils mass migrant deportations plan

Robert Stevens
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Reform UK leader Nigel Farage pledged Tuesday to deport hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers and migrants—up to 600,000 in a first five-year Parliament—if his party wins the next general election.

Unveiling his fascistic “Operation Restoring Justice”, Farage said the plans would be carried out under an “Illegal Migration (Mass Deportations) Bill.”

Having had his plan trailed on the front page of the *Times* Saturday, which also ran a fawning interview, Farage’s policy was laid out in spreads in several newspapers Tuesday, including the *Telegraph* which also provided him with an op-Ed.

Farage’s programme requires an unprecedented assault on democratic rights. He explained that to enforce his plan required taking Britain out of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), repealing the Human Rights Act and disapplying for five years three other international treaties—the 1951 Refugee Convention, the United Nations Convention Against Torture and the Council of Europe Anti-Trafficking Convention—which he denounced as “roadblocks”.

Anyone arriving in a small boat to the UK would not be recognised or afforded any protections as an asylum seeker but would be treated as a criminal and placed under arrest. Arrest would be followed by automatic detention and forced deportation, with no right of appeal.

Farage announced that mass concentration camps—capable of holding 24,000 people—would be built on military land, at a cost of £2.5 billion, within 18 months of his taking office. Reform had earmarked £2 billion to hand to foreign governments to enter into returns agreements with Britain, including the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Addressing senior party figure and Reform’s

“efficiency tsar” Zia Yusuf, Farage asked rhetorically, “But do we realistically think Zia, that we can deport 500,000 to 600,000 people in the lifetime of the first Parliament?” Yusuf replied, “Absolutely”.

Politico noted that media reporters had been primed to “board a coach at Reform’s Westminster HQ bound for an airport hangar in Oxfordshire”, where Farage and Yusuf would address them.

Farage spoke behind a lectern with an image of a plane taking off in the arrow of Reform UK’s logo. He beamed for a photo-op in front of a mock-up of a flight information screen of “Deportation Departures” with a host of countries listed including Afghanistan, Iran, Syria, Sudan, Vietnam, Somalia, Iraq and Turkey. Next to each country were the words “291 Illegal Migrants Boarding”.

Spelling out Reform’s plan Farage said in his *Telegraph* op-Ed, “As the title says, the aim of this new legislation is mass deportations—and the Bill opens with a blunt obligation that will create a legal duty for the home secretary to remove illegal migrants. Failure to do so will mean breaking the law.

“Under these new plans, if you come to the UK illegally you will be ineligible for asylum. No ifs, no buts. This strips the Home Office, the immigration tribunals and the higher courts of any jurisdiction to consider claims.”

Farage railed that “One of the biggest roadblocks other political parties have faced in dealing with this issue has been menace of human rights lawyers and activist judges. Only my party has the courage to do what must be done and deal with this problem head on.”

Appropriating the language of Donald Trump, who Farage counts as a close friend, he declared, “Britain faces a national emergency in which uncontrolled

illegal migration undermines public order. No longer will these malign influences be allowed to frustrate deportations. The planes will take off, and plenty of them at that.”

He claimed in his Oxford Airport speech that Britain was undergoing an “invasion”, with asylum seekers a “growing threat to our national security”.

The infrastructure of mass concentration camps is being prepared for a vast round-up and deportation of immigrants, not simply those newly arrived on boats who have made the perilous trip across the Channel. Farage wrote in the *Telegraph*, “Over 180,000 illegal migrants have crossed the English Channel since 2018. The estimated population of people with no lawful right to remain in the United Kingdom now almost certainly stands above 1,000,000.”

In his *Times* interview, headlined, “This is a massive crisis. We need mass deportations,” Farage said yet more deportation would be carried out by a six-month voluntary returns scheme. This would be a “carrot and stick” approach, with migrants “able to ‘deport themselves’ using an app and be given £2,500 to leave the country. Their flights would be paid for.”

Farage threatened, “If you’re here illegally, we’re coming for you. We will remove you.”

The Reform UK leader’s warning about a breakdown in public order in fact identify the consequences of his own agitation. His party has led the way, in alliance with outright fascist thugs, in organising anti-asylum seeker mobilisations over the past year, including the weeks-long siege this summer of the Bell Hotel in Epping, Essex.

Farage is emboldened to proclaim his fascistic programme because it now has broad support in the ruling elite. A fascist constituency is being created and mobilised not just to round up and deport migrants, but to be used against the working class under conditions in which living standards and democratic rights must be eviscerated by a ruling class set on intensifying its war and austerity agenda. *Politico* noted ahead of Farage’s speech Tuesday that his programme of mass deportations was “quite the change of tune from September when he told GB News: ‘It’s a political impossibility to deport hundreds of thousands of people. We simply can’t do it.’”

The fact is that Farage has now been told by his masters in ruling circles: “Yes, it can be and must be

done. Get on with it.”

Reform can count on favourable coverage across Britain’s right-wing media, with the *Times* noting, “The Reform UK leader believes this is his ‘do or die’ moment—his one shot at No 10 [Downing Street]. Britain, he says, is ‘going downhill very, very quickly’ and there needs to be a ‘massive turnaround’. He argues he is the man to do it.”

The newspaper pointed out that with Reform 10 points ahead of Labour, “Two years ago such a statement would have been deemed fantasy. Now, with Reform having consistently led in the polls since April, it is no longer an unrealistic prospect.”

Reform UK can only be considered as a potential government due to the noxious atmosphere created over decades of Labour and Conservative governments, competing as to which was more right-wing with their scapegoating of immigrants and asylum seekers playing a leading role.

Labour’s response to Farage’s Oxfordshire event was to trumpet its own filthy record on deportations, with a spokesman saying that “over 35,000 people have been removed in the last year, including a 24 percent increase in enforced returns and a 14 per cent increase in removals of foreign national offenders. People arriving on small boats are being detained to be returned back to France in our landmark UK-France migration partnership.”

The *Telegraph* noted that senior Labour figures including Lord Blunkett, the former home secretary, and MP Graham Stringer were demanding that the government “temporarily suspend the ECHR to enable ministers to clear the backlog of more than 50,000 asylum seekers’ appeals against their removal.” The newspaper reported, “Labour sources indicated that there were no plans ‘at the moment’ to suspend the ECHR, although they said all options were being considered ‘so we can get a system that works’”.



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