

US government begins deportation of longtime US residents to Ukraine war zone

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On Monday, the Trump administration began deporting over 80 people to Ukraine, where they face conscription and martial law under the US-backed Zelensky regime. Many of those facing deportation have lived in the United States since they were children.

Since the 2022 Russian invasion, casualties have mounted on both sides as drone warfare and industrial-scale artillery bombardments grow more lethal. While the Ukrainian government refuses to give an accurate accounting of the dead, US intelligence agencies estimate that roughly 100,000 Ukrainian soldiers have been killed, with several hundred thousand more injured.

To replenish units, or in some cases reconstitute those that have been annihilated, the Zelensky government has expanded draft eligibility, imposed harsher fines for evasion and blocked men from leaving the country. It has also intensified home raids, street sweeps and random checkpoints to seize draft-age men. These press-gang methods have become routine as the government attempts to stabilize its collapsing military position.

Monday's deportation flight directly serves this effort. An anonymous adviser to Zelensky confirmed that the government is prepared to accept as many immigrants as the United States can deport in service of the imperialist war. "The US can deport as many as they want. We will find good use for them."

The deportations are flagrantly illegal under international law. In 1951, after the horrors of the Second World War and the refusal of capitalist governments to protect Jewish refugees and other victims of fascism, the United Nations adopted the Refugee Convention to establish rights and protections for refugees.

The core principle agreed to in the convention was

that a refugee should not be returned to a country where they face "serious threats to their life or freedom." It also outlined basic standards for refugees, including the right to "housing, work and education." There is no question that those facing deportation to Ukraine will face "serious threats to their life."

A flight carrying the immigrants landed in Baltimore on Monday before continuing to Poland. Once the plane arrives, the deportees will be driven to the Ukraine-Poland border. From there, some will be conscripted into the Ukrainian military, which includes openly neo-Nazi and fascist battalions, and sent to the front lines.

One of the longtime US residents facing deportation is Roman Surovtsev, father to two US citizen daughters and husband to Samantha, also a US citizen. Surovtsev fled with his mother and two siblings from the USSR in 1988 after his father, a Chernobyl nuclear power plant worker, died of radiation poisoning. Upon arrival in the United States, the family members forfeited their USSR citizenship and lived in poverty in California. As a child, Surovtsev helped his mother clean offices as they attempted to rebuild their lives.

In 2003, at the age of 19, Surovtsev began serving a 13-year prison sentence after he and some friends participated in the armed carjacking of a motorcycle. In 2014, he was released from prison for "good behavior." Upon release, a judge ordered him to be deported and voided his residency (green) card. Lawyers for Surovtsev have since vacated his prior conviction, wiping it from the record.

Unable to deport him to Russia or Ukraine and recognizing that he had no citizenship, the US government eventually released Surovtsev from ICE custody and issued him a work permit. He has complied with every requirement placed upon him and

never violated the terms of his supervision.

Surovtsev met his future wife Samantha in 2017. They have two daughters, ages three and five. Since August, neither child has seen their father after ICE detained him during a routine check-in.

In a statement on X, Surovtsev's attorneys Eric Lee and Chris Godshall-Bennett stated that "Ukraine is a police state" and that the "army is desperate for bodies." Lee posted photographs of Surovtsev and his family along with excerpts from a CNN report on the pending deportation.

The Department of Homeland Security, enraged that CNN had highlighted its criminal actions, responded by accusing the network of running "cover" for "VIOLENT FELONS." Ignoring that Surovtsev served his sentence, has stayed out of trouble and is a devoted husband and father, the agency wrote, "Under President Trump and Secretary Noem, if you break the law, you will face the consequences. Criminal illegal aliens are not welcome in the US." DHS operative Tricia McLaughlin echoed the slander on X.

Similarly, DHS propagandist McLaughlin retweeted a post from Lee and attacked Surovtsev as a "criminal illegal alien."

As the Trump administration carries out this illegal and reactionary operation, the Democrats have said nothing in defense of those facing deportation to a war zone.

Not a single politician has spoken out against the deportations. This includes the "democratic socialists": Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and the Mayor-elect of New York City Zohran Mamdani. The Democrats, a party of the CIA and Wall Street, have supported war against Russia long before the 2022 invasion and throughout Biden's presidency. Last year, Ocasio-Cortez declared in Congress that "US military assistance" to Ukraine "should be one of our top geopolitical priorities."

The silence of these phony socialists underscores that the fight to defend democratic rights and end imperialist war must be waged outside of, and in opposition to, the parties of big business and war. If longtime US residents can be deported to a war zone, it will not be long before any and all workers, regardless of citizenship status, are rounded up and sent into the meat grinder to generate profits for the warmongers and banks.

As Leon Trotsky warned on the eve of World War II and the Holocaust, capitalism has transformed the entire world into a "foul prison," where the ruling class treats human beings as raw material for exploitation and slaughter. The struggle against these crimes requires the independent mobilization of the international working class, armed with a socialist program and directed against the capitalist system itself.



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