

Trump's \$1.776 billion slush fund includes side deal blocking tax probes into president and family

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An addendum to the Trump administration's unprecedented \$1.776 billion "Anti-Weaponization Fund" settlement with the Internal Revenue Service, made public May 19, reveals that the agreement is not only a mechanism for funneling taxpayer money to Trump's fascist political allies, but an attempt to shield the president, his family and business empire from future federal claims, investigations and enforcement actions.

The one-page addendum, signed by Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche, declares that the United States "RELEASES, WAIVES, ACQUITS, and FOREVER DISCHARGES" Trump, Donald Trump Jr., Eric Trump, the Trump Organization and related individuals or entities from claims that "have been or could have been asserted" by federal defendants or "other agencies or departments." It specifically includes "any matters currently pending or that could be pending," including tax returns filed before the settlement's effective date.

In plain English, Trump's own Justice Department has signed a side agreement purporting to bar the federal government from pursuing claims arising out of his taxes, business operations and earlier criminal conduct. Blanche, nominally the acting attorney general, signed the document not as the nation's chief law enforcement officer, but as Trump's consigliere.

The reference to Trump's past tax returns is particularly significant given the long record of documented fraud and financial manipulation by Trump, his family and the Trump Organization. In 2024, Manhattan Supreme Court Justice Arthur Engoron ordered Trump, Donald Trump Jr., Eric Trump and several family businesses to pay \$355 million in penalties after finding that they fraudulently inflated Trump's wealth and property values to obtain more favorable loans. The ruling followed evidence that Trump had submitted "blatantly false financial data" in order to secure fraudulent financial statements.

This was only one episode in a far longer history. A 2018

New York Times investigation, reviewed by the WSWS at the time, found that Trump and his siblings benefited from tax fraud totaling at least half a billion dollars. The report detailed the use of shell companies, artificial markups and systematic undervaluation of assets to transfer more than \$1 billion from Fred Trump to his children while paying a fraction of the estate and gift taxes owed.

The same gangster methods were described in 2019 by Trump's former attorney and fixer Michael Cohen, who testified that Trump and his associates inflated property values when seeking bank loans while deflating the same properties for tax purposes. Cohen described a family business operation built on intimidation, fraud and the use of lawyers, accountants and fixers to conceal criminality.

The settlement and addendum are blatantly unconstitutional. Section 4 of the 14th Amendment states that neither the United States nor any state may "assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States," and that such debts, obligations and claims "shall be held illegal and void."

Many of those Trump has pardoned, defended and now refuses to rule out compensating were convicted for their role in the January 6, 2021 attack on Congress, an attempt to overturn the 2020 election by force and prevent the certification of electoral votes. Leaders and members of the Oath Keepers and Proud Boys were convicted of seditious conspiracy, the gravest charge brought in the January 6 prosecutions.

According to the US Attorney's Office, more people were convicted of seditious conspiracy in connection with January 6 than in any other criminal event since the statute was enacted during the Civil War. Former Proud Boys chairman and "prolific" FBI informant Henry "Enrique" Tarrío was sentenced to 22 years, while Oath Keepers founder Stewart Rhodes was sentenced to 18 years.

In the days since the announcement of the slush fund, top Trump administration officials have refused to put limits on

who would be eligible for compensation. Asked about the fund and the addendum on Wednesday by reporters at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland, Trump unconvincingly claimed he was not involved. “I could have been involved, but I choose not to be,” he said.

Justifying multimillion-dollar taxpayer-funded payouts to white supremacists, insurrectionists and militia members, Trump claimed the “weaponization”—that is, the minimal prosecution by the Biden administration of low-level fascists who participated in the failed coup—was “the most violent thing I have ever seen in politics what they did.”

He continued: “Yet if I say, ‘Look at this one,’ or ‘look at that one,’ they say ‘weaponization, weaponization.’ What they did in terms of weaponization will never be allowed to happen to this country again.”

Referring to the money for his fascists, Trump added, “You are talking about peanuts compared to the value.”

At a Senate Appropriations hearing on May 19, Blanche refused to rule out payments to January 6 rioters who assaulted police, saying that anyone who believes they were a victim of “weaponization” could apply. Blanche also acknowledged that the settlement bars the IRS from investigating Trump’s past tax filings.

Pressed by Senator Chris Van Hollen on whether the fund could benefit Andrew Paul Johnson, a pardoned January 6 rioter later sentenced to life in prison for child molestation, Blanche refused to give a direct answer and instead accused Van Hollen of lying because the fund did not formally exist when Johnson boasted of a future payout.

Johnson was pardoned by Trump in January 2025. Less than six months later, he was arrested on multiple charges related to child molestation, and this past March he was convicted and sentenced to life in prison. According to a police report, in order to buy the silence of one of his child victims, Johnson told the victim that since he had been “pardoned for storming the Capitol on January 6, 2021,” he was “being awarded \$10,000,000 as a result of being a ‘jan 6’er.”

While the fund did not formally exist when Johnson attempted to bribe his child victim, the Justice Department, then under Attorney General Pam Bondi, was already awarding payments to the families of January 6 fascists. In May 2025, the Justice Department approved a nearly \$5 million settlement for the family of Ashli Babbitt, the Air Force veteran and QAnon fanatic who was shot and killed by a Capitol Police officer as she attempted to climb through a shattered window into the Speaker’s Lobby, where dozens of lawmakers and their staff were sheltered from the multi-thousand-person mob of militia members, neo-Nazis and white supremacists.

At a press conference from the White House Tuesday,

Vice President JD Vance likewise refused to rule out payments to those convicted or accused of crimes, saying claims would be evaluated “case by case.” He specifically cited Tina Peters, the former Mesa County, Colorado clerk convicted over a breach of voting equipment, as an example of someone who might qualify.

“This innocent grandmother was going to spend 10 years in prison, completely disproportionate to any misdemeanor trespassing that I have ever seen. Was that fair? No. Is it reasonable to get some compensation for the fact that she was treated unfairly? I think the answer was yes,” Vance said.

Peters facilitated the breach in 2021 as part of her attempts to bolster Trump’s bogus “stolen election” lies centered on Dominion Voting Systems. In order to hide evidence of her criminality, she disabled security cameras before allowing the breach of the machines, then refused to comply with subpoenas and directives from the Colorado Secretary of State. Images of the voting system’s equipment and passwords were later published online.

Peters was prosecuted by a Republican and convicted by a jury of multiple crimes. She was sentenced to nine years in prison. Yet, in another example of the Democratic Party proving that it is not a genuine opposition party, but rather a collaborator with the effort of Trump and the whole Republican Party to establish a dictatorship, Colorado Governor Jared Polis, a Democrat, commuted her sentence last Friday.

Polis’ commutation is part of a broader pattern. At every stage of Trump’s drive toward dictatorship, the Democratic Party has sought, not to mobilize mass opposition, but to suppress it. The Democrats covered up the full scope of the January 6 conspiracy. They refused to hold Trump and his co-conspirators accountable when they controlled Congress and the White House, and have repeatedly appealed to the very institutions now being transformed into instruments of presidential rule.



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