

Trump lays out blueprint for mass repression, beginning with immigrants

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In his first extensive broadcast interview since winning the 2024 presidential election more than a month ago, President-elect Donald Trump outlined an agenda of mass repression against immigrants and persecution of political opponents, together with an unstinting shower of tax cuts and deregulatory actions for corporate America and his fellow billionaires.

The interview, conducted by Kristen Welker of NBC News and broadcast on “Meet the Press” Sunday morning, marked a major new effort by the corporate media to “normalize” Trump’s fascist program and present him as desirous of carrying out a traditional four-year term in the White House, replete with bipartisan collaboration with the Democrats.

The actual substance of what Trump said, however, belies both the fawning tone of Welker’s questions and the deliberately low-key manner in which the ex-president spoke. He called for actions on “day one” of his administration that would flout the US Constitution, free hundreds of fascist thugs who stormed the US Capitol on January 6, 2021, and begin the mass roundup of millions of immigrant workers and their families.

In response to a direct question about whether he would have all 11 million undocumented migrants (the current estimated total) deported during his four-year term, Trump responded, “Well, I think you have to do it, and it’s a hard—it’s a very tough thing to do.” Trump was speaking about the scale of the police-military mobilization required, not about the suffering of millions of workers without legal immigration status.

Millions of US citizens, the children of these undocumented workers, would be removed from the country as well. Asked about the estimated 4 million families with mixed immigration status, Trump said cynically that they could choose, but if the children

wanted to stay with their fathers and mothers they would have to leave the country with them.

He would also sign an executive order revoking birthright citizenship for children of undocumented migrants who are born in the United States. While such an executive order would violate the US Constitution, Trump declared, “Well, we’re going to have to get it changed. We’ll maybe have to go back to the people. But we have to end it. We’re the only country that has it, you know.”

Abolishing birthright citizenship would effectively mean the repeal of the 14th Amendment—one of three “civil rights” amendments passed as a result of the Civil War of 1861-65. The Amendment’s birthright citizenship clause was aimed at permanently preventing the former slave states from denying the rights of citizenship to freed slaves. The effort to bar citizenship rights to those born in the United States would essentially mark a return to the anti-egalitarian “principles” underlying the Supreme Court’s 1857 decision *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, which denied citizenship rights to slaves.

Trump justified this assault on democracy with reactionary lies about immigrants, falsely asserting that people are “pouring into our border that come from prisons and mental institutions,” that 13,000 immigrant murderers were released onto the streets during the Biden administration, that migrant gangs have taken over American cities, and that, as a result, crime is at an all-time high (rather than a historic low, at least in the modern era).

Welker made almost no effort to stem, let alone challenge, this torrent of lies. Nor did she point out the obvious fact that the US president-elect was a seemingly delusional compulsive liar. She tried to extract promises from Trump on critical foreign policy

issues, including that the US would remain a member of NATO, and to voice the concerns of the upper-middle class, pro-Democratic Party social layer of which she is part. Thus she asked Trump directly about his promise not to seek the outlawing of mail-order abortion pills, and seemed satisfied with his agreement to maintain that pledge.

Asked about his repeated threats during the campaign to prosecute and jail his political opponents, including leading Democrats like Biden and Kamala Harris, as well as Republican former supporters like Bill Barr and Liz Cheney, Trump hid behind the pretense that such decisions would be made by his nominees to run the Justice Department and the FBI, Pam Bondi and Kash Patel.

Patel has an “enemies list” of 60 people as an appendix to a recently published book. Asked if he wanted Patel to launch investigations of these officials, Trump said, “No. I mean, he’s going to do what he thinks is right.” He added, “If they think that somebody was dishonest or crooked or a corrupt politician, I think he probably has an obligation to do it.”

While downplaying his past call for appointing a special prosecutor to investigate Biden, Trump reserved his real venom for the members of the House Select Committee that investigated his attempted coup of January 6, 2021. Asked directly if he thought Liz Cheney, the Republican co-chair of the committee, should go to jail, Trump replied that “everyone on the committee” deserved that fate “for what they did.”

At the same time, Trump said he would pardon the convicted January 6 rioters on the day he takes the oath of office, January 20, 2025.

The biggest lie in the entire interview was Trump’s declaration that Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid are off the table in terms of budget-cutting, and that there would be no reduction in benefit levels or tightening of eligibility requirements, such as raising the age of retirement. That is precisely the purpose of Trump’s appointment of billionaires Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy as an advisory “Department of Government Efficiency,” tasked to cut US federal spending by \$2 trillion a year—one-third of the budget.

With military spending to maintain the worldwide empire of American imperialism and interest payments to the Wall Street billionaires considered untouchable by both capitalist parties, the only way to make cuts on

that scale is to slash the entitlement programs as well as virtually eliminate other domestic social spending, including for education, the environment, health care and transportation.

Trump has named only one budget priority for his first 100 days—renewing the tax cuts for the wealthy he pushed through in 2017, which are set to expire next year. These cuts alone, putting trillions into the pockets of the super-rich, will require offsetting spending cuts that will devastate social programs for all sections of the working class, particularly the poorest.

Trump has already signaled this as his top priority through the very composition of his cabinet, with more than a dozen billionaires nominated for top positions and controlling every important post relating to economic policy and taxes.

These class goals are only thinly disguised by nationalist and populist sloganeering, focused particularly on the question of tariffs. Trump claimed that imposing huge new imposts on imports from Mexico, Canada and China would be lucrative. “It’s going to make us rich,” he boasted.

Referring to US trade deficits, he declared, “We’re subsidizing Canada to the tune over \$100 billion a year. We’re subsidizing Mexico for almost \$300 billion. We shouldn’t be—why are we subsidizing these countries? If we’re going to subsidize them, let them become a state.”

These comments are not just demented ravings. They express the appetite for conquest, annexation and self-enrichment that is characteristic of imperialism in its death agony, and of American imperialism in particular.

The prostration before Trump of all sections of the ruling class, including the Democratic Party and the corporate media, only confirms that it is the working class that must take up the struggle to defend democratic rights and oppose the turn by American capitalism to dictatorship and world war.



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