

Thousands of US troops to deploy to Mexico border as part of Trump's mass deportation operation

Jacob Crosse
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The Trump administration is moving quickly to erect an enormous militarized deportation apparatus that will trample on the democratic rights of all sections of the working class, undocumented immigrants, green card holders and citizens alike.

In the last 24 hours, several large corporate press outlets, including the *Washington Post* and CBS News, have reported that the Trump administration is planning to deploy 10,000 active-duty troops to the US-Mexico border.

On Wednesday, acting Secretary of Defense Robert Salesses, responding to executive orders issued by Trump, authorized the initial deployment of 1,500 troops to the border. Of these, 500 are Marines that had been on standby to assist with the ongoing Los Angeles-area fires but instead are being redirected to combat a fictitious “invasion.”

In a briefing document obtained by the *Washington Post*, the Pentagon outlined the increasingly expansive role of the US military in the coming deportation operations. Soldiers will fly military aircraft to airlift detained immigrants to countries around the world. El Salvador and Guatemala were specifically mentioned.

There is a distinct possibility that US soldiers will be detaining those swept up in deportation raids on US military bases. The *Post* reported that the “Defense Department may also utilize military bases as holding facilities, the document says.”

Soldiers will also be assisting in constructing the US-Mexico border wall, as well as bolstering “surveillance efforts,” which the *Post* reported, citing a senior military official, that “could include additional manned or unmanned aircraft.”

The briefing order calls for the soldiers to work in conjunction with US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to block all immigrants entering at the US-Mexico border, “on the grounds that they have passed through countries

where communicable diseases are present, without citing any specific health threat.”

When the COVID-19 pandemic first emerged over five years ago, the fascist senior adviser to Trump, Stephen Miller, suggested the administration use the pandemic as a pretext to block immigrants from claiming asylum in America. Miller cited an over 80-year-old provision in the Public Health Act known as Title 42, which allows the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to block migrants from certain areas if they have reason to believe they are carrying a communicable disease.

The provision had never been previously used to block *all* immigration, as Miller proposed and Trump eventually ordered. Under Trump nearly 500,000 people were turned away using Title 42. After Trump, the Biden administration continued to use Title 42 to deport another 2 million migrants, even after the CDC ruled there was no public health rationale to continue the policy.

Earlier this month, well before Biden left office, the New York Times reported that the incoming Trump administration was looking for a rationale to invoke Title 42 again. On January 9 the newspaper reported that Trump advisers had spent “months trying to identify a disease that will help them build their case for closing the border.”

The *Times* noted that his advisers were considering arguing “broadly that migrants at the border come from various countries and may carry unfamiliar disease...” Throughout his presidential campaign, Trump regularly accused immigrants of bringing in “crime” and “disease.” In a particularly Hitlerian speech in December 2023, he accused the Biden administration of allowing “15, 16 million people into country,” declaring, “They are poisoning the blood of our country.”

Despite being well aware of Trump’s plans, the Biden administration and the Democratic Party did nothing to

protect immigrants. Instead, the Democrats negotiated a \$20 billion “border security bill” with congressional Republicans, only to have it torpedoed at Trump’s orders.

The legislation contained no “pathways to citizenship” and instead allocated billions towards hiring more border agents and expanding detention facilities. Former Vice President Kamala Harris campaigned on signing the reactionary bill into law if she were elected.

The resistance to Trump’s mass deportation plans, which have been co-signed by the Democrats with the bipartisan passage of the Laken Riley Act, will come from the working class.

A public schoolteacher in Southwest Detroit told the WSWS, “It is necessary to fight the propaganda. Yesterday, TikTok was down. People were seeing what was happening in Palestine. They were telling us that China wants us to be stupid. But we have been kept stupid, and we’re waking up to what is happening in the world.

“We have to prepare and warn about the deportations. Already people are talking about hiding immigrants like Jews in Nazi Germany. We have to explain what they are planning to do with ICE in Chicago and in Detroit. We have to spread the word. When are we going to see ICE vans outside the schools?”

The neighborhood she teaches in has a large Latin American community. She said, “Already, there is a decrease in attendance; parents are worried about their kids getting picked up. A lot of parents were reluctant about taking their kids to clinics. You can see it on the faces of the students.

“More non-English students are also enrolled after the winter break. They are making it harder to get in, but that isn’t going to stop people from leaving countries where they have no hope and risking their lives to get here.”

The teacher concluded, “Staff members in Detroit remember the first Trump presidency and all the ICE activity. We have a sanctuary school district, but people don’t know what to do. They are going to keep their children home.”

As part of the further militarization of the border, the *Washington Post* reported that newly appointed Border Patrol Chief Mike Banks instructed senior staff during a Tuesday briefing to “use extraordinary emergency authority to close the border.” As part of this authority, the only people in the US government who can authorize someone to enter the US to make an asylum claim are Banks and his deputy.

Prior to taking over for outgoing Border Patrol Chief Jason Owens this week, Banks previously served as Texas

Governor Greg Abbott’s first “border czar.” In this capacity, Bank kidnapped immigrants and sent them to Democratic-led cities and states and sought to block the entry of immigrants into Texas with concertina wire and “death buoys” placed in the Rio Grande River.

In an attempt to expand the border police state without having to hire more agents, the *Wall Street Journal* reported late on Thursday that an “internal memo” had been issued by acting Department of Homeland Security Secretary Benamine Huffman which bestows “immigration-enforcement” authority to several federal agencies under the Department of Justice.

Recalling the infamous Palmer Raids of 1919-1920 in which thousands of radical and socialist workers, many of whom were immigrants, were jailed and deported in response to fears within the US ruling class of socialist revolution, police agents with the US Marshals Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) are to be granted the authority to detain and deport immigrants.

The *Journal* reported that while the memo does not explicitly deputize agents within the departments, the Trump administration is counting on the DoJ “to cooperate by sending some agents.”

Trump’s barrage of executive orders faced their first setback on Thursday after a US District Judge John Coughenour, appointed by Ronald Reagan in 1981, signed a temporary restraining order blocking Trump’s executive order overturning birthright citizenship. The Trump administration is attempting to overturn the 14th Amendment, which guarantees citizenship to all those born in the United States.

ABC News reported that an incredulous Coughenour asked Trump’s DoJ lawyers during the hearing, “In your opinion, is this executive order constitutional?”

After the Justice Department lawyer replied in the affirmative, Coughenour responded: “Frankly, I have difficulty understanding how a member of the Bar could state unequivocally that this is a constitutional order.” He concluded, “It just boggles my mind.”

While signing more executive orders in the Oval Office in front of live television crews, Trump was asked about Coughenour’s ruling. “Obviously we will appeal it,” Trump said. “There’s no surprises with that judge.”



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