Trump adopts ethnic cleansing as US policy in Gaza

Andre Damon
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On Saturday, US President Donald Trump called for Israel to "clean" Gaza of its Arab inhabitants, in an open call for ethnic cleansing. "You're talking about probably a million and a half people, and we just clean out that whole thing," Trump told reporters on Air Force One.

"Over the centuries, that's many, many conflicts, that site," Trump said, implying that peace in the Middle East would be achieved by the removal or destruction of the Palestinian population.

Trump's statement is an open and public embrace on the part of the American state of the actual policy of the Netanyahu government, which is the systematic extermination and removal of the Palestinian population from Gaza, as part of the effort to annex all of the Palestinian territories and construct a "greater Israel" to dominate the Middle East.

While the Biden administration funded, armed and politically defended Israel's genocide in Gaza, which has killed at least 70,000 people, his administration upheld the fiction that it was seeking a "two-state solution" and a homeland for the Palestinian people.

In a sense, Trump has only openly stated the essential content of the Biden administration's genocidal policy in Gaza. But words have meaning. An American president has publicly adopted ethnic cleansing as state policy.

The forcible transfer of a population is a war crime and a crime against humanity, and Trump's active and conscious facilitation of the ethnic cleansing of Gaza makes him a war criminal.

His call for Israel to "clean" Gaza of its Arab population was not an offhand phrase. In fact, it was only the latest, and most explicit, of multiple calls by White House officials for the ethnic cleansing of Palestine.

In congressional testimony last week, Elise Stefanik, President Trump's nominee to be the US ambassador to the United Nations, declared that Israel has a "biblical right" to the entire West Bank. This followed a statement by a Trump administration official to NBC News last weekend that the White House is discussing the relocation of the Palestinian people from Gaza.

Trump's open embrace of ethnic cleansing in Gaza followed the announcement by the Pentagon that it would send more 2,000-pound bombs to Israel, which the IDF has used to demolish entire city blocks. Despite a nominal "ceasefire" in Gaza and Lebanon, Israel is continuing its rampage throughout the Middle East, killing 22 people in South Lebanon on Sunday and launching an ongoing raid in the West Bank's Jenin that has killed at least 16 people.

Trump's use of the word "clean" to refer to a population of human beings is a deliberate adoption of the phraseology of German dictator Adolf Hitler and his Nazi movement, which perpetrated the Holocaust of 6 million European Jews between 1941 and 1945.

Donald Trump is, as General Mark Milley explained to journalist Bob Woodward, a "fascist to the core." Trump's ex-wife, Ivana Trump, told her lawyer, according to *Vanity Fair*, that the current president "reads a book of Hitler's collected speeches, *My New Order*, which he keeps in a cabinet by his bed."

Trump's proposal to "clean" an entire ethnic group comes straight from Hitler's lips. In a 1938 speech from the collection Trump allegedly keeps by his bedside, Hitler said that the "eternal values of blood and soil" required him to "cleanse the German nation, our race and our culture" of the Jewish people.

During the Holocaust, areas from which the Jewish population had been expelled were declared *Judenrein*,

or "cleansed of Jews." Within this context, Trump's words imply that "cleaning" the Arabs from Palestine would be the "final solution" of the Palestinian problem.

Eighty years after the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp, the leader of the American state has not only publicly embraced the Nazi ideology of "social hygiene" through mass murder but is actively enabling it.

Trump's proposal to "clean" the people of Palestine from their homeland is a milestone in the normalization of imperialist barbarism, whose highest historical expression was the Nazi regime.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the ideological defenders of capitalism claimed that the crimes of Nazi Germany represented a sort of historical accident, never to be repeated. Hitler and the movement he led represented a deviation from the fundamental tendency of development of capitalism, which was towards democracy, peace and harmonious global economic development.

By contrast, the Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky and the Trotskyist movement explained that fascism expressed the deepest and most essential characteristics of capitalism, which erupted to the surface in periods of crisis.

Just as Hitler represented the most concentrated expression of the barbarism unleashed by the imperialist powers in their drive to carve up the globe into subjugated colonies, so too Trump exemplifies the normalization of social barbarism carried out by global capitalism over decades.

The launching of the "war on terror" by the George W. Bush administration saw the "shock and awe" bombing campaign against Iraq, the horrors of the dungeons of Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay and the state-sponsored assassination of thousands of people.

With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the capitalist ruling classes openly embraced deliberate mass death, as in the words of then-UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson, "nature's way of dealing with old people." Capitalism's response to the pandemic, as expressed by Johnson, was "let the bodies pile high."

The return of Trump to the White House is the product of capitalism's normalization of war, torture, annexation and mass murder, as the oligarchy, fearful of any inroads on its wealth and privileges, goes to any length to defend its domination of society. Trump, whose leading fundraiser, Elon Musk, greeted his electoral victory with a Nazi salute, is making clear his intent to repeat the crimes of Nazi Germany.

Trump's predecessors in the Biden administration have demonstrated that their support for the Gaza genocide is a component part of Washington's efforts to reorganize the Middle East in line with the drive to dominate Iran, Russia and China. Trump represents a redoubling of these efforts, with an even greater level of brutality. His casual reference to the "cleaning" of 1.5 million people is a testament to the vast scale of death and destruction that American imperialism is prepared to unleash in its drive to reorganize the world under its domination.

The escalation of the genocide in Gaza, and the broader imperialist war of which it is a part, will provoke mass opposition. Over the past 15 months, millions of people have taken part in mass protests all over the world in opposition to the genocide. The fight against the genocide must be expanded into a broader struggle against imperialism and united with the working class's fight to defend its social and economic rights against the dictatorship of the financial oligarchy and the capitalist system.

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