

# Deportation force will hurt national security

BOOKMARK FOR LATER

MY BOOKMARKS →



BY JIM GONZALEZ  
*Special to The Bee*

---

The fear spreading in immigrant communities throughout the nation is justified. Last week, the White House proposed the outlines of a federal budget that, in effect, funds a national police force of 16,000 wearing the uniforms of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

At the same, the proposal slashes security on the ocean and at airports and federal disaster response by cutting the Coast Guard budget by 14 percent, the Transportation Security Administration by 11 percent and the Federal Emergency Management Agency by 11 percent.

This budget plan also enshrines and empowers a corporate for-profit prison agenda by building and staffing new border detention camps and expanding prisons. Under the Donald Trump-Steve Bannon plan, an astounding \$1.9 billion is to be spent for these purposes. New Attorney General Jeff Sessions rescinded a Justice Department memorandum calling for ending private prisons and phasing out existing contracts. It should surprise no one that private prison stocks have doubled since Election Day.

In an especially cruel twist, the Trump administration plans to separate children from their adult parents when detained at the border. This would shatter families fleeing violence in Mexico and Central America and also provide a steady supply of adults for detention camps.

Let's break the numbers down. Under President Barack Obama, out of the \$64.8 billion Department of Homeland Security budget for FY 2016, roughly 10 percent went to Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The Obama budget provided for 5,800 deportation officers and immigration enforcement agents, and also provided for \$3.3 billion for 34,000 detention beds.

The Trump administration's detention budget represents a 57 percent increase. Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly has directed ICE to hire 10,000 officers and agents, on top of the existing 5,800. These new ICE officers will be supplemented by local law enforcement agencies, hungry for federal grants, creating a "deportation force" denying constitutional and human rights at whim under the guise of border and immigration enforcement.

The old rule "follow the money" seems to hold true on Trump and private prison corporations. USA Today reported that two of the largest each donated \$250,000 to support Trump's inaugural festivities.

Mark this warning well. President Trump, Sessions, Kelly and their for-profit prison allies will not be respectful or compassionate to undocumented mothers. The true meaning of “America First” is frankly code for mass incarceration of the most vulnerable and racial profiling for corporate profit.

---



**➔ SIGN UP**

Get on The Take. Read the influential voices on California and national politics and issues. **Sign up here.**

---

*Jim Gonzalez is a former San Francisco supervisor, author of the nation's first “sanctuary city” ordinance and chairman of the Latino Policy Coalition. He can be contacted at [jim@jimgonzalez.com](mailto:jim@jimgonzalez.com).*