

White House Considers Mobilizing 100,000 National Guard Troops As Border Force



Washington, February 18 (RHC)-- U.S. President Donald Trump's administration is considering mobilizing as many as 100,000 National Guard troops to round up unauthorized immigrants, according to a draft copy of an order obtained by The Associated Press.

Although the AP on Friday reported that the memo was written by U.S. Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly, Trump's spokesman quickly denied that the report was true. White House press secretary Sean Spicer said that the story was -- in his words -- "100% false."

The Associated Press report says that an 11-page draft memo showed the Trump administration considering an unprecedented militarization of immigration enforcement as far north as Portland, Oregon, and as far east as New Orleans.

The memo, which has reportedly been circulating among Department of Homeland Security staff for two weeks, says participating troops would be authorized "to perform the functions of an immigration officer in relation to the investigation, apprehension and detention of aliens in the United States."

Eleven states would be targeted for raids, according to the memo. They include states on the U.S.-Mexico border -- Arizona, California, New Mexico and Texas -- and non-border states like Arkansas, Colorado, Louisiana, Nevada, Oklahoma, Oregon and Utah. Governors in those states would have final approval on whether troops under their control participate, according to the AP.

During the 2016 presidential campaign, Trump talked at various times about implementing a “deportation force” to conduct raids on undocumented immigrants. In August, during a high-profile speech in Arizona, he pledged to “triple the number of [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] deportation officers” and to “create a new special deportation task force focused on identifying and quickly removing” illegal immigrants.

The National Guard is not part of ICE, but the memo obtained by the AP is reminiscent of that August pledge. Federal law permits the president to call up National Guard units in the various states when he believes that “unlawful obstructions, combinations, assemblages, or rebellion against the authority of the U.S. make it impractical to enforce the laws of the U.S. in any state or territory by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings.”

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