

ASYLUM SEEKERS, FAMILY SEPARATION, DENATURALIZATION, and IMMIGRATION

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/8800-migrant-children-have-been-expelled-under-pandemic-border-policy-per-court-documents/>

<https://apnews.com/article/virus-outbreak-pandemics-public-health-new-york-health-4ef0c6c5263815a26f8aa17f6ea490ae>

In March the Trump administration was urging the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to use its emergency pandemic powers to close both the northern and southern US borders to asylum-seekers. A [CBS News report](#) catalogs the results of that “pandemic emergency” border closing. Previously, unaccompanied minors who arrived at the border, were housed at state-licensed Health and Human Services facilities before being placed with relatives. As of September, more than 8,800 unaccompanied minors seeking asylum have been denied asylum hearings and expelled from the U.S. The numbers, provided by the Trump administration in a petition seeking to continue parts of its immigration policy, show that in addition 7,600 members of families with children were peremptorily expelled during that period as part of a total of 159,000 asylum-seekers who were not admitted to the U.S.

More recent [reporting by the Associated Press](#) (AP) spells out the process by which that pandemic emergency closure was put in place. Originally, Dr. Martin Cetron, who leads the CDC’s Division of Migration and Quarantine, refused to issue such an order because there was no valid health reason for closure. Following this refusal, administration figures—particularly Trump aide Stephen Miller and Vice-President Pence looked for ways to accomplish this goal by working around the Division of Migration and Quarantine. The ultimate result, reports AP, was that a Health and Human Services (HHS) lawyer wrote the order the administration wanted and that order was subsequently sent directly to CDC Director Robert Redfield, who signed it in mid-March, closing our borders to asylum seekers.

When the order was first issued, many physicians, medical organizations, and public health organizations objected. AP shared an excerpt from a letter written by Dr. Anthony So of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health to Redfield arguing that “The decision to halt asylum processes ‘to protect the public health’ is not based on evidence or science. This order directly endangers tens of thousands of lives and threatens to amplify dangerous anti-immigrant sentiment and xenophobia.”

JOIN in objecting to the ‘pandemic emergency’ border closings that as of September had resulted in 159,000 asylum seekers being denied the due process they sought when fleeing violence to come to the U.S.

- **Mike Pence**, The White House, Office of the Vice President, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC 20500, (202) 456-1111

- **Dr. Robert R. Redfield**, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1600 Clifton Road, Atlanta, GA 30329, (800) 232-4636

DEMAND that Congress institute a COVID-safe asylum process that ends the preemptory denial of the rights of asylum-seekers

- **Find your Senators here:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fWPKEeiBUwv0vaiTGYGKO37TWU4aSULWvi5sgOo5YS4/edit>

- **Find your Representative here:**

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tNhdclADPMfFL2c1V6iF_NDxATh0A_WLxzMt2Tlwm0/edit

ELECTIONS

<https://joebiden.com/centralamerica/>

Since the mainstream press continues to favor soundbites and Trumpian tantrums over political reporting that looks carefully at the policy proposals of the two presidential candidates, we're continuing to look each week at a particular aspect of Biden's policy proposals. For the most part, Trump's Central American policy has been combative: tighten our borders to keep "them" out, portray asylum seekers as criminals, and create inhumane asylum processes that rely on the use of punitive detention facilities and the abrogation of the rights of asylum-seekers. The ["Biden Plan to Build Security and Prosperity in Partnership with the People of Central America"](#) contains elements that won't sit well with many (including this writer) such as continuing support of police to fight corruption, which one could argue can actually serve authoritarian regimes. But many of Biden's proposals compare positively with current initiatives like "build the wall," "zero tolerance," and a "pandemic emergency plan" that essentially ends all access to the asylum process.

Biden proposes a retargeting of Department of Homeland Security funds to mobilize private investment in Central America through programs developed in cooperation with multi-lateral development banks (such as the Inter-American Development Bank); to bolster microfinance, prioritizing programs that empower women; and to modernize shipping, transportation, and power infrastructure.

Biden proposes pairing violence reduction measures with job training programs and broader access to service for victims of violence, including domestic violence—including a promise to restore domestic violence as one of the grounds on which asylum may be sought.

Biden also proposes addressing food insecurity, conditions for returning migrants, and the climate crisis through programs developed with national governments.

THANK Biden for any of these proposals you find particularly valuable, **OBJECT** to any you find problematic, and **SUGGEST** to your Congressmembers that you'd like them to work toward the similar goals, regardless of who is elected in November

- **Joe Biden** can be reached electronically via <https://go.joebiden.com/page/s/contact-us>

- **Find your Senators here:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fWPKEeiBUwv0vaiTGYGKO37TWU4aSULWvI5sgOo5YS4/edit>

- **Find your Representative here:**

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tNhdclADPMfFL2c1V6iF_NDxATh0A_WLxzMt2Tlwm0/edit

ETHICS

<https://www.aclu.org/news/immigrants-rights/cbp-wants-to-destroy-records-of-misconduct-we-cant-let-them/>

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/09/18/2020-20656/records-schedules-availability-and-request-for-comments>

<https://www.cato.org/publications/policy-analysis/border-patrol-termination-rates-discipline-performance-problems-signal>

<https://www.insider.com/aclu-files-foia-requests-trove-critical-ice-detention-records-erased-2020-2>

<https://www.aclu.org/press-releases/documents-obtained-aclu-reveal-border-patrol-agents-were-authorized-use-deadly-force>

<https://www.thenation.com/article/society/ice-propaganda-social-media/>

During Black Lives Matter protests in Portland, Oregon, and Washington DC, the administration made legally questionable use federal officers—including agents from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and agents from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP)—to pursue administration purposes that excluded local leadership and conflicted with local policy. There's more going on at DHS, ICE, and CBP that deserves close consideration and that better serves administration goals than the functions with which these agencies are charged.

➤ [ACLU News and Commentary](#) reports on its efforts, in cooperation with other organizations, to ensure that the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) maintain full records from Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to be accessed for future study. This really shouldn't be an issue. NARA maintains inactive federal agency records expressly so they can be available for legal researchers, academics, and journalists in the future. [CBP, however, has asked permission to destroy a number of records](#), rather than passing them on to NARA.

According to the ACLU, these include “records developed to track and monitor complaints that are or will be investigated by DHS Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) regarding alleged violations of civil rights and civil liberties”; “records pertaining to administrative and criminal investigations on [CBP] employees, contractors, and those in CBP custody”; and records and reports of Prison Rape Elimination Act allegations.”

In arguing again the destruction of these records, the ACLU cites a [Cato Institute study](#) of records dating from 2006 to 2016 showing that CBP's “misconduct and disciplinary infractions outstripped all other federal law enforcement” and “it is virtually impossible to assess the extent of corruption or misconduct... because most publicly available information is incomplete or inconsistent.”

The ACLU points out that [ICE has already received permission](#) for a similar destruction of its records. The destruction of these records could make it impossible to ever accurately track ICE and CBP actions—particularly those in violation of civil right and civil liberties and those against detainees—under the Trump administration.

➤ In June, George Floyd, who was killed by Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin, was buried in Pearland, Texas, a Houston suburb. After receiving records via a freedom of Information Act request, the [ACLU](#) discovered that not only mourners, but a great many others—including sixty-six paramilitary agents and six snipers provided by CBP, 100 Texas

National Guard members, DHS drone operators, and FBI surveillance plane crews—were present at Floyd’s burial. The ACLU reports that, “federal agents were given instructions to escalate use of force should there be protests against racial injustice and police brutality at the burial service. The plan included authorized use of gas munitions... against the crowd if the people went beyond “verbal aggressive language” or threw objects more dangerous than empty water bottles, and authorized ‘use of deadly force anytime under [the] Texas Penal Code’ if people went beyond throwing full water bottles or bricks.” ACLU federal immigration policy lawyer Madhuri Grewal observed that “It is not lost on us that CBP deployed snipers and federal agents to surveil and potentially use military-style force against people mourning George Floyd, who died because police officers killed him.”

OBJECT to the use of CBP agents against US citizens in a role well outside their legal mandate and to the deliberate effort to erase ICE and CBP abuses from the historical record

- **Chad Wolf**, Acting Secretary, U. S. Department of Homeland Security, 245 Murray Ln. SW, Washington DC 20528

- **Mark A Morgan**, Senior Official Performing the Duties of the US Commissioner of Customs and Border Protection, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC 20229, (877) 227-5511

- **Tony H. Pham**, Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Director of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 500 12th St. SW, Washington DC 20536

CALL for legislation to limit this kind of interference in domestic affairs and **INSIST** that records be maintained so that ICE and CBP and their employees can be held responsible for their actions

- **Find your Senators here:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fWPKEeiBUwv0vaiTGYGKO37TWU4aSULWvI5sgOo5YS4/edit>

- **Find your Representative here:**

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tNhdelcADPMfFL2c1V6iF_NDxATh0A_WLxzMt2Tlwm0/edit

<https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/jasonleopold/buzzfeed-news-court-russia-investigation>

An October 6 tweet from the Tweeter-in-Chief announced “I have fully authorized the total Declassification of any & all documents pertaining to... the Russia hoax.” (Actually, he didn’t just call it the Russia hoax, he called it “the single greatest political CRIME in American history.”)

Later that night, another Trump tweet claimed “All Russia Hoax Scandal information was Declassified by me long ago. Unfortunately for our country, people have acted very slowly, especially since it is perhaps the biggest political crime in the history of our Country. Act!!!” Two days later, [Buzzfeed](#) took Trump at his word and filed an emergency motion asking a federal judge to order the declassification and release of all documents related to the investigation of Russian election interference and allegations that Trump tried to impede the investigation.

DEMAND that the Tweeter-in Chief make good on his claims and take executive action to ensure that all Russia-related documents are release immediately—unredacted

- **Donald Trump**, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC 20500, (202) 456-1111

HUMAN and CIVIL RIGHTS

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/06/us/politics/homeland-security-white-supremacists-russia.html>

Which domestic terrorists are the “most persistent and lethal threat in the homeland?” According to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), that would be white supremacists. And what nation is the primary threat to the U.S. via use of disinformation? According to DHS, that would be Russia. As reported by the [New York Times](#), a long-delayed DHS annual threat assessment has drawn these conclusions, which contrast with administration fear-mongering over groups ranging from antifa to Black Lives Matter protesters. In fact, a DHS whistleblower who worked on that assessment claims to have been pressured to downplay the threats posed by white supremacists and Russia and instead to emphasize possible dangers presented by left-wing groups and by China and Iran in order to make DHS findings align with claims made by Donald Trump. The White House has denied that any such pressures were exerted. Bottom line, the assessment has now been released, and even Chad Wolf, Acting Secretary of Homeland Security and a Trump loyalist, acknowledged in the report’s introduction, “I am particularly concerned about white supremacist violent extremists who have been exceptionally lethal in their abhorrent, targeted attacks in recent years.”

DEMAND that Congress consider legislation responding to the threat represented by white supremacists and **ASK** your Congressmembers to stop supporting and/or to criticize misleading statements by the administration downplaying the real threat of white supremacist violence

• **Find your Senators here:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fWPKEeiBUwv0vaiTGYGKO37TWU4aSULWvI5sgOo5YS4/edit>

• **Find your Representative here:**

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tNhdclADPMfFL2c1V6iF_NDxATh0A_WLxzMt2Tlwm0/edit