

# Fall 2024 U.S. Immigration Alert!

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## RNC and DNC: Two versions of anti-migrant policies

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## 9/5 RNC and DNC: Two versions of anti-migrant policies

Otis Grotewohl – Workers World

The Republican National Convention, held in Milwaukee in July, was a blatant display of white supremacy and fascist demagoguery regarding migrants. The Democratic National Convention, held in Chicago in August with a more inclusive and “progressive” façade, nevertheless presented a program that restricted the rights of migrants.

RNC and DNC: Two versions of anti-migrant policies

Regarding foreign policy, both parties supported jingoism and war-mongering, including backing Israel's genocidal war against Palestine. This article, however, will focus on the two big imperialist parties' rhetoric and program regarding migrants.

Despite the serious differences in their messaging rhetoric, both capitalist parties treated migrant families and undocumented workers as scapegoats, blaming them for the economic crisis and the difficulties faced by workers in the United States.

As in the prior two RNC gatherings, many speakers spewed hateful and fearmongering rhetoric against oppressed people, particularly immigrants and other non-U.S. citizens. RNC attendees waved signs that read, “Mass Deportations Now!”

Vitriolic bigotry was embedded in the RNC from beginning to end. For instance, the first two items of the preamble of its official 2024 program declare, “Seal the border and stop the migrant invasion,” and “Carry out the largest deportation operation in American history.” (MSNBC, July 19)

The RNC has historically espoused anti-immigrant slanders, and former President Donald Trump raised the pitch of those hateful views when he became the Republican Party's 2016 presidential nominee. Trump repeatedly insulted undocumented workers with false charges. His campaign emboldened vicious reactionaries and encouraged violent attacks against migrant workers.

As the Republican Party's 2024 presidential candidate, Trump is once again campaigning on a xenophobic and viciously anti-immigrant platform. Much like his 2016 and 2020 presidential runs, Trump is fixated on completing a racist “wall” at the U.S.-

Mexico border. Unlike their Democratic Party counterparts, the Trump-led RNC has never even pretended public empathy towards migrants or refugees.

Democrats move to the right on immigration

In contrast to the RNC, the Democratic Party delegates and participants repeatedly tried to distance themselves from the blatant bigotry and toxic misogyny that was rampant throughout the RNC. Nearly every DNC speaker critically called out Trump by name.

While DNC speakers were less reactionary than RNC speakers, especially regarding domestic issues, there was a right-wing turn among the Democrats regarding immigration that even the corporate media noticed.

An Aug. 21 Newsweek article was entitled, "Democrats Show Rightward Shift on Immigration at the DNC." The Los Angeles Times article that same day had this headline: "On Immigration, Democrats shift message to combat GOP attacks."

The DNC featured several anti-migrant speakers who bragged about working with Congressional Republicans on a strict bipartisan "border security bill," and they all blamed Trump for its failure to pass. At times, some DNC speakers sounded more like racist vigilantes and border agents than liberals rallying for an election victory.

One such speaker was Javier Salazar, the presiding sheriff of Bexar County, Texas. Dressed in his uniform and brandishing a badge on his chest, Salazar promised the DNC crowd that a Kamala Harris administration would be "tougher" on migration than another Trump administration. Salazar told the crowd, "Harris has been fighting border crime for years." (San Antonio Report, Aug. 21)

One DNC keynote speaker who evoked anti-immigrant rhetoric was New York Congress Member Tom Souzzi. In fact, Souzzi flipped many Republican voters in his historically conservative Long Island district by campaigning against "sanctuary cities" and demonizing migrant families. He told the DNC delegates: "The border is broken. But this year, when Democrats and Republicans worked together to finally write new border laws, we were blocked." (CBS News, Aug. 21)

Connecticut Senator Chris Murphy was another presenter who echoed similar statements as Salazar and Souzzi, blaming Trump for "killing" their "bipartisan border bill. Murphy said, "It would have had unanimous support if it weren't for Donald Trump." (Forbes, Aug. 23)

Desperate attempts to "one-up" Trump

Several corporate media outlets called attention to the stark difference in the DNC's messaging on immigration compared with the 2020 convention. As an Aug. 21 CBS News article noted: "The 2020 platform did not reference any restrictions on asylum. On the contrary, Democrats promised to 'protect and expand the existing asylum system and other humanitarian protections' and 'end Trump Administration policies that deny protected entry to asylum seekers.'"

In contrast, "The party platform adopted at the DNC this week ... embraced limits on asylum, a marked departure from its more progressive immigration stances in 2020. ... The (DNC) 2024 platform says Democrats support quickly deporting economic migrants and calls on Congress to 'strengthen requirements' for asylum claims."

Vice President Harris's acceptance speech was also in lockstep with other DNC speakers who blamed Trump for blocking the bipartisan border bill. She said: "Donald Trump believes a border deal would hurt his campaign ... So, he ordered his allies in Congress to kill the deal." She promised to "bring back the bipartisan border security bill." (Forbes, Aug. 23) Remember that this bill would severely limit asylum.

Undocumented workers and migrant families are often forced to flee countries around the globe because of unbearable conditions brought on by world imperialism and in the Western Hemisphere, mainly by U.S. imperialism. The U.S. exports unemployment and imposes sanctions and military coups that drive people to leave their homelands.

Although this was rarely mentioned at the conventions, undocumented workers contribute billions of dollars into federal, state and local taxes annually. Yet, because they lack legal status, they receive little, if any, of the benefits due them. Meanwhile, on farms, in construction and in many cities, they perform much of the work that was recognized in the early months of the Covid-19 pandemic as being essential to the functioning of society.

Big bosses aim to divide and exploit all workers

The ruling capitalist class knows it needs the labor of undocumented workers and is happy to superexploit them. But it is more important to the capitalists'

overall class interests to maintain divisions within the working class. The bosses rely on the strategy of divide and conquer, which means supporting propaganda that keeps workers pitted against one another – and especially on keeping workers who are citizens believing that the enemy is the migrant worker and not the boss.

Both U.S. capitalist political parties are fanning the flames of anti-immigrant frenzy to divide working-class voters and pander to backward segments of the electorate. The RNC platform explicitly dehumanizes migrants and has very little to say about permitting “legal” migration. While slightly less vile in their attacks on migrants, the DNC program sent a clear message that they are campaigning on a much more restrictive approach towards immigration than they did just four years ago.

Neither U.S. capitalist party represents the interests of the working class and oppressed peoples. While the Republican Party outright associates with fascist union busters like the Heritage Foundation, the Democratic Party presents itself as being more “pro-union” and at the same time puts forth an agenda that calls for the separation of migrant families and criminalization of undocumented workers.

Class-conscious revolutionaries understand that an injury to one worker is an injury to all working people. And this means regardless of possessing citizenship or the legal right to remain and work. Marxists know it is important to educate workers about the necessity of uniting with everyone in the working class and to reject the racist, anti-immigrant propaganda spewed by both capitalist parties that only serves the material interests of the employer class.

The late Russian revolutionary leader Vladimir Lenin wrote compassionately about the significance of internationalist, working-class unity. In conclusion of his 1913 essay “Capitalism and Workers Immigration,” he wrote: “The bourgeoisie incites the workers of one nation against those of another in the endeavor to keep them disunited. Class-conscious workers, realizing that the break-down of all national barriers by capitalism is inevitable and progressive, are trying to help to enlighten and organize their fellow-workers.” (Pravda, Oct. 29, 1913)

Lenin’s approach, building working-class solidarity, is the way to confront the vicious xenophobic rhetoric of the RNC and the softer anti-migrant program of the DNC.

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## **9/30: Migrant crossings at the US’ southern border drop again amid campaign year scrutiny**

**Priscilla Alvarez - CNN**

Migrant crossings at the US-Mexico border remain at their lowest levels since 2020, according to new federal data obtained by CNN, as Republicans and Democrats spar over border security.

Immigration remains among the top issues for voters and former President Donald Trump has made it a cornerstone of his campaign, pinning blame on Vice President Kamala Harris over the handling of the US-Mexico border and frequently turning to the issue on the campaign trail.

Harris’ visit to the US-Mexico border Friday was the clearest example yet of the campaign doubling down on border security by embracing strict rules that have been condemned by some corners of the Democratic party. The Democratic nominee tried to cast herself as the solutions-oriented candidate when addressing the US southern border, taking on a tougher stance while also pursuing broader immigration reform, in remarks Friday – an attempt at trying to close the gap with Trump on the issue.

But numbers have fallen drastically following executive action taken by the Biden administration over the summer. And the administration took new steps Monday to cement those restrictions and keep them in place for the foreseeable future.

In September, US Border Patrol recorded around 54,000 encounters along the US southern border, according to federal data — marking an overall decline since the executive action went into effect.

It’s a notable shift from only months ago when Homeland Security officials wrestled with record numbers of border crossers and comes at a heated moment in the election cycle where border security has featured prominently.

Administration officials cite the executive action that President Joe Biden announced in June, which largely bars migrants from seeking asylum at the US southern border and levies harsh consequences on those illegally crossing, for the dramatic decline in crossings.

Migrants are still allowed to apply to legally migrate through other avenues, including a mobile app known as CBP One. US Customs and Border Protection processes 1,450 appointments daily.

“When you’ve seen previous things like this, they have been only enforcement at the border, and you have to have enforcement at the border, plus international collaboration, plus affirmative pathways for people to be able to come the right way,” a senior CBP official told CNN.

The June measure can be turned on and off and lifted when there’s a daily average of fewer than 1,500 encounters between ports of entry, among other criteria. Daily encounters currently hover around 1,700.

But changes to that measure will make it harder for officials to lift it – a proposal that Harris floated while at the US southern border Friday, but campaign officials described it as different to what the administration has already been working on.

The administration updated Biden’s June proclamation so that lifting the measure could only occur after crossings fall below an average of 1,500 encounters per day for 28 consecutive days, broadening the window. That’s then followed by a two-week period, which remains the same.

Homeland Security officials argued the modification is to account for short-term changes, like holiday downturns or extreme weather events.

There are some exceptions to the rule, including unaccompanied migrant children. Homeland Security officials have described the change as the next step in the rulemaking process.

“It’s deeply troubling that this administration is taking steps to further cement an illegal rule that is sending credible asylum seekers back to danger. We are now left for the courts to strike it down,” said ACLU attorney Lee Gelernt, who’s leading the lawsuit against the administration’s asylum restrictions.

During her border trip, Harris described policies that would bar migrants from seeking asylum at the US southern border unless at a legal port of entry – marking a departure from decades-long protocol – and detailing harsh penalties for repeat border crossers.

“As president, I won’t only bring back the border security bill that Donald Trump tanked, I will do more to secure our border. To reduce illegal border crossings, I will take further action to keep the border closed between ports of entry,” she said. “We will pursue more severe criminal charges against repeat violators.”

“While we understand that many people are desperate to migrate to the United States, our system must be orderly and secure,” Harris added.

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## **9/4: Death of Chinese-American scientist a wake-up call for US’ extreme science policies**

### **Global Times**

As Washington increases its crackdown on China's science and technology, its ripple effect has become tragic. For many Chinese researchers, the dream of developing their careers in the US, a country supposed to be a promising land for free, open, and inclusive scientific research, is becoming increasingly elusive. But for Chinese-American neuroscientist Jane Y. Wu, a prominent researcher at an Illinois university, it is even worse - it cost her life.

The story of Wu, who took her life on July 10, was recently brought under the spotlight again by a South China Morning Post piece. Even though no official investigation results into the cause of Wu's suicide have been announced yet, the article argued that Wu, before her death, was under tremendous pressure, which may have been exacerbated by the US investigation into "researchers suspected of having undisclosed ties to Beijing."

Wu's death is a great loss to the scientific research community. Yet, what it epitomizes more is a tragedy under the US' crooked tech suppression against China and anyone or anything related to that country.

Many believe that the China-born neuroscientist is a victim of Washington's witch hunt against China-related scientists in the US. Wu's death outlines an increasingly difficult situation for those scientific and technological professionals to thrive - or even survive, to say the worst - in a country that has nurtured countless scientific authorities.

Data show that over the past six years, more than 250 researchers in the US, mostly of Asian descent, have been accused of failing to disclose their work in China that overlaps with their research funded by the US National Institutes of Health or breaking other rules and were thus put under investigation. This led to only two indictments and three convictions, showing that most of the allegations are in fact the product of groundless, reckless fabrication.

However, 112 scientists lost their jobs as a result. In general, many of those victims had their careers shattered. Some researchers have eventually regained their reputations, but have lost the prime of their career. Some were not investigated, but have been living in constant fear. To this day, the chilling effect of the witch hunt against China-related scientists in the US can still be felt.

The most notorious policy under this discriminatory witch hunt with clear targets is the "China Initiative" launched by the Donald Trump administration. It is regarded as a resurrection of McCarthyism, subjecting many Chinese researchers to unfair treatment because of their background. The "China Initiative" has fostered racial discrimination in US society and spread fear among minorities, especially the Chinese-American community. It was called off by the Joe Biden administration in 2022, but signs show that US authorities now still tacitly endorse it, or at least use a similar approach.

Wu's death should serve as a wake-up call for the US, which is constantly seeking more extreme science and technology policies against China. Washington now no longer views science and technology as a purely technical issue, but as one that can be politicized and weaponized to suppress China. The US should not go down such a wrong path, but unfortunately, judging from the growing hostility toward China among some US policymakers, it is very difficult to get the US to correct its wrong view of science and technology regarding China.

This has created numerous obstacles to China-US science and technology cooperation, another hot topic in recent days. There is no doubt that the US has given up the pursuit of a closer science and technology cooperation with China, but instead, is "digging holes and laying landmines" to wreak havoc on such cooperation. The fact that science and technology have become a tool of Washington's frenzied suppression against Beijing is a tragedy not only of the US' China policy, but also of the development of the US scientific research community.

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NISN is a coalition of community, immigrant, labor, human rights and student activist groups, founded in 2002 in response to the urgent needs for the national coalition to fight immigrant bashing, support immigrant rights, no to the sweatshops exploitation and end to the racism on the community. Please visit our website:  
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