

Spring 2020 U.S. Immigration Alert!

A Newsletter from National Immigrant Solidarity Network
Spring 2020 Issue, Volume 70
No Immigrant Bashing! Support Immigrant Rights!

<http://www.ImmigrantSolidarity.org>

\$3.00/Copy



From Conovirus Racist Sinophobia to Militarized ICE, The True Face of U.S. Racism

In This Issue:

Border Patrol Will Deploy Elite Tactical Agent to Sanctuary Cities (Pg 1) | ICE's NY Office Uses a Rigged Algorithm to Keep Virtually All Arrestees in Detention (Pg 3) | APALA Releases Guidance on How to Protect AAPI Workers in light of COVID-19 (Pg 5) | Please Support and Sign Our China Coronavirus Petition!(Pg 6) | Kobe, Impeachment and the Coronavirus: A Study on the Dangers of White Liberal Fragility (Pg 6) | A Northeastern University student from Iran was removed from the US despite an emergency stay (Pg 9) | Trump pressured Pentagon to give \$400 million border wall contract to his favorite Fox News guest (Pg 10) | After Landmark Surveillance Lawsuit New Jersey Muslims Meet with NYPD (Pg 11) | Please Support NISN! Subscribe the Newsletter! (Pg 12)

Please Support National Immigrant Solidarity Network! All Donations Are Tax Deductible!

Make check payable to NISN/AFGJ and it will be tax deductible! Send your check to:
National Immigrant Solidarity Network
P.O. Box 751, South Pasadena, CA 91031-0751

_____ \$100.00 _____ \$ 50.00 _____ \$ 35.00 _____ Other Amount \$ _____
(\$35 or more will receive 1 year free subscriptions of the Immigration Alert! Newsletter)

2/14: Border Patrol Will Deploy Elite Tactical Agents to Sanctuary Cities

Agents from a special tactical team that normally confronts smugglers on the border are being sent to sanctuary cities across the country.

Caitlin Dickerson and Zolan Kanno-Youngs – New York Times

The Trump administration is deploying law enforcement tactical units from the southern border as part of a supercharged arrest operation in sanctuary cities across the country, an escalation in the president's battle against localities that refuse to participate in immigration enforcement.

The specially trained officers are being sent to cities including Chicago and New York to boost the enforcement power of local ICE officers, according to two officials who are familiar with the secret operation. Additional agents are expected to be sent to San Francisco, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Houston, Boston, New Orleans, Detroit and Newark, N.J.

The move reflects President Trump's persistence in cracking down on sanctuary cities, localities that have refused to cooperate in handing over immigrants targeted for deportation to federal authorities. It comes soon after the Justice Department and Department of Homeland Security announced a series of measures that will affect both American citizens and immigrants living in those places.

Lawrence Payne, a spokesman for Customs and Border Protection, confirmed the agency was deploying 100 officers to work with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which conducts arrests in the interior of the country, "in order to enhance the integrity of the immigration system, protect public safety, and strengthen our national security."

The deployment of the teams will run from February through May, according to an email sent to Customs and Border Protection personnel, which was read to The New York Times by one official familiar with the planning.

Among the agents being deployed to sanctuary cities are members of the elite tactical unit known as BORTAC, which acts essentially as the SWAT team of the Border Patrol. With additional gear such as stun grenades and enhanced Special Forces-type training, including sniper certification, the officers typically conduct high-risk operations targeting individuals who are known to be violent, many of them with extensive criminal records.

The unit's work often takes place in the most rugged and swelteringly hot areas of the border. It can involve breaking into stash houses maintained by smuggling operations that are known to be filled with drugs and weapons.

In sanctuary cities, the BORTAC agents will be asked to support interior officers in run-of-the-mill immigration arrests, the officials said. Their presence could spark new fear in immigrant communities that have been on high alert under the stepped-up deportation and detention policies adopted after Mr. Trump took office.

In a statement, ICE's acting director, Matthew T. Albence, said the deployment comes in response to policies adopted by sanctuary cities, which have made it harder for immigration agents to do their jobs.

"As we have noted for years, in jurisdictions where we are not allowed to assume custody of aliens from jails, our officers are forced to make at-large arrests of criminal aliens who have been released into communities," he said. "When sanctuary cities release these criminals back to the street, it increases the occurrence of preventable crimes, and more importantly, preventable victims."

But Gil Kerlikowske, the former commissioner of C.B.P., which oversees tactical units along the border, said sending the officers to conduct immigration enforcement within cities, where they are not trained to work, could escalate situations that are already volatile. He called the move a "significant mistake."

"If you were a police chief and you were going to make an apprehension for a relatively minor offense, you don't send the SWAT team. And BORTAC is the SWAT team," said Mr. Kerlikowske, who is the former chief of police in Seattle. "They're trained for much more hazardous missions than this."

The Border Patrol squads will be charged with backing up ICE agents during deportation operations and standing by as a show of force, the officials said.

ICE agents typically seek out people with criminal convictions or multiple immigration violations as their primary targets for deportation, but family members and friends are often swept up in the enforcement net in what are known as "collateral" arrests, and many such people could now be caught up in any enhanced operations.

ICE leadership requested the help in sanctuary jurisdictions because agents there often struggle to track down undocumented immigrants without the help of the police and other state and local agencies. Law enforcement officers in areas that refuse to cooperate with ICE and the Border Patrol — which include both liberal and conservative parts of the country — often argue that doing so pushes undocumented people further into the shadows, ultimately making cities less safe because that segment of the population becomes less likely to report crimes or cooperate with investigations.

The goal of the new joint operation, one of the officials said, was to increase arrests in the sanctuary jurisdictions by at least 35 percent.

The operation reflects an increasingly hawkish approach to immigration enforcement, following the firings and resignations of leaders who have been viewed in the White House as unwilling to take the harsh steps Mr. Trump and his advisers view as necessary to slow illegal immigration.

Other recent attempts at aggressive enforcement by ICE have faltered, such as a series of raids targeting more than 2,000 migrant families that were planned during the summer of 2019. Mr. Trump's advance warnings on Twitter led many of those who were targeted to refuse to open their front doors, and ultimately, only 35 of those who had been targeted were arrested in the operation's first several weeks.

Even with the added show of force from BORTAC, agents will be limited in their abilities compared to the police or sheriff's deputies. Unlike operations on the border, where BORTAC agents may engage in armed confrontations with drug smuggling suspects using armored vehicles, immigration agents in cities are enforcing civil, rather than criminal infractions. They are not allowed to forcibly enter properties in order to make arrests, and the presence of BORTAC agents, while helpful in boosting the number of agents on the ground, may prove most useful for the visual message it sends.

The agents will not be busting down doors or engaging in shootouts, said one official with direct knowledge of the operation, who like the other official would not be identified because he was not authorized to discuss it.

Many ICE agents say their jobs have become increasingly difficult, three years into Mr. Trump's presidency, because of robust campaigns by immigrant advocacy organizations seeking to safeguard undocumented immigrants by educating them on the legal limitations that ICE officers face. As a result, in many communities where undocumented immigrants live, when ICE agents are spotted, people now turn immediately to their phones to alert neighbors that they should stay inside.

Mr. Trump campaigned on a promise to crack down on sanctuary cities. Within a few months of taking office, the Justice Department moved to withhold certain federal funds from the jurisdictions. Last week, the Justice Department filed suit against state and local governments in California, New Jersey and Washington over sanctuary policies there. Also this month, the Department of Homeland Security announced it would ban New Yorkers from enrolling in programs that allow travelers to speed through customs checkpoints in airports and at the border as a result of the state's decision to offer drivers licenses to undocumented immigrants and bar Homeland Security agencies from accessing the state's motor vehicle database.

The president again highlighted the issue in his State of the Union address, arguing that sanctuary cities "release dangerous criminal aliens to prey upon the public."

In January, a New York City Council member wrote an open letter for his fellow councilors expressing concern about increasing ICE activity in the region, including collateral arrests. Last week, an acquaintance of a man in New York who was being arrested by ICE was shot in an incident that the agency later blamed on sanctuary policies.

The aggressive immigration enforcement tactics being implemented around the country are not limited to any one agency. In a widely circulated video recorded in El Paso, Texas, on Tuesday night, Border Patrol agents are shown subduing and using a Taser to apprehend a man in a Burger King restaurant.

The video shows the man pleading repeatedly with the agents while shouting that he had done nothing wrong. A female bystander asks the agents to leave the restaurant, as she cries while witnessing the episode. While the man was writhing in pain on the floor after being stunned repeatedly, another woman in the video approached the agents and asked, "Why are you still hitting him?"

A Border Patrol spokesman said in a statement that the apprehended man was a "suspected alien smuggler," without offering any evidence to support that assertion. The spokesman did not respond to a request for the man's name and nationality.

"The man refused to cooperate with the verbal instructions and attempted to avoid being handcuffed and a struggle ensued," the Border Patrol spokesman said.

In the same statement, the spokesman said that a "citizen" had notified law enforcement of a suspicious vehicle parked on his property. The Border Patrol said the man apprehended by the agents on Tuesday was the driver of the vehicle and that "record checks indicated that the man was in the country illegally and had a positive criminal history."

An ICE spokesman declined to comment on the specifics of the latest effort in sanctuary cities, citing the agency's policy against sharing information about enforcement operations before they have taken place. However, the spokesman added that the agency had "made it abundantly clear for years that, in jurisdictions where we are not allowed to assume custody of aliens from jails, our officers would be redirected to make at-large arrests."

3/2: ICE's New York Office Uses a Rigged Algorithm to Keep Virtually All Arrestees in Detention

The ACLU Says It's Unconstitutional

Sam Biddle - The Intercept

IN 2013, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement quietly began using a software tool to recommend whether people arrested over immigration violations should be let go after 48 hours or detained. The software's algorithm supposedly pored over a variety of risk factors before outputting a decision.

A new lawsuit, however, filed by the New York Civil Liberties Union and Bronx Defenders, alleges that the algorithm doesn't really make a decision, at least not one that can result in a detainee being released. Instead, the groups said, it's an unconstitutional cudgel that's been rigged to detain virtually everyone ICE's New York Field Office brings in, even when the government itself believes they present a minimal threat to public safety.

The suit, which asks that ICE's "Risk Classification Assessment" tool be ruled illegal and the affected detainees reassessed by humans, includes damning new data obtained by the NYCLU through a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit. The data illuminates the extent to which the so-called algorithm has been perverted. Between 2013 and 2017, the FOIA data shows, the algorithm recommended detention without bond for "low risk" individuals 53 percent of the time, according an analysis by the NYCLU and Bronx Defenders. But from June 2017 — shortly after President Donald Trump took office — to September 2019, that number exploded to 97 percent.

"This dramatic drop in the release rate comes at a time when exponentially more people are being arrested in the New York City area and immigration officials have expanded arrests of those not convicted of criminal offenses," says the groups' lawsuit. "The federal government's sweeping detention dragnet means that people who pose no flight or safety risk are being jailed as a matter of course—in an unlawful trend that is getting worse."

Individuals detained under what the lawsuit calls a "no-release policy" will remain jailed until they can be seen by an immigration judge. People arrested by ICE had no access to information about how they were classified by the algorithm — that's why the FOIAs were necessary — and most don't have access to lawyers at the time of their detention, Thomas Scott-Railton, a fellow at the Bronx Defenders told The Intercept. "The result," he said, "is that people are detained for weeks, even months, without having been given the actual justification for their detention and without a real chance to challenge it."

THE LAWSUIT ALLEGES that this algorithmic rubber stamp violates both the constitutional guarantee to due process and federal immigration law that calls for "individualized determinations" about release, rather than blanket denials with a computerized imprimatur. Reached by email, ICE New York spokesperson Rachael Yong Yow told The Intercept, "I am not familiar with the lawsuit you reference, but I am not inclined to comment on pending litigation."

The risk assessment algorithm is supposed to provide a recommendation to ICE officers who are then meant to make the final decision, but the agency's New York Field Office diverged from the algorithm's ruling less than 1 percent of the time since 2017. When detainees are finally seen by a human, non-algorithmic immigration judge, the lawsuit says, "approximately 40% of people detained by ICE are granted release on bond."

The Trump administration's stepped-up immigration arrests of people without criminal convictions lay bare the perversity of the rigged no-release policy. "If the New York Field Office were actually conducting individualized determinations pursuant to its stated criteria," the lawsuit says, "the percentage of people released should have actually increased since 2017 because more people arrested qualified for release."

The technical reasons for this drastic change are clear. Algorithms are essentially problem-solving formulas that can operate at superhuman speed. ICE's risk assessment algorithm originally functioned by automatically reviewing an immigration detainee's personal history, weighing factors like their flight risk and threat to public safety, then spitting out one of four options: detention without bond, detention with the possibility of a release on bond, outright release, or a referral to a human ICE supervisor.

In 2018, Reuters reported that Trump's inauguration brought a critical change to the risk assessment tool where the software was edited to simply remove the possibility of a "release" output. The NYCLU's FOIA data also shows that the option for bond was removed in 2015. In other words, this ostensible problem-solving software was rigged to provide only one solution: detention.

BASED ON THE government's own data, the decision-making tool functionally makes decisions about as well as a stopped clock would tell time. Rather than functioning as a tool that even attempts to aid human decision-making, FOIA data shows the opposite. The "Risk Classification Assessment" tool serves as a funnel to fast-track action in line with the Trump administration's brutal immigration agenda. For years, exactly how the ICE algorithm reached its ultimate decisions has been kept secret. "ICE has been anything but transparent about both the RCA's algorithm and how the tool is used by officials in the field," explained NYCLU attorney Amy Belsher. "And yet, these determinations have profound and severe impacts on the lives of the thousands of people ICE arrests every year."

Unlike much of the secret code used in government or business, however, this secret algorithm was exposed because ICE rigged it: We now know exactly how it doesn't work. The risk-assessment tool has almost ceased to be an algorithm altogether, rather serving only to give the impression of algorithmic justice. "Given what we now know about the manipulations to the tool," added Belsher, "it appears the main function of the RCA is to provide a veneer of objectivity and fairness to a process that lacks it entirely." In this computer-enabled vacuum of accountability, ICE's New York personnel can point to the oracular algorithm to justify increased detentions, which in turn points to nothing but itself. For New Yorkers handed an algorithm-sanctioned detention, the lawsuit says, the consequences can be immediate and crushing:

Once denied release under the new policy, people remain unnecessarily incarcerated in local jails for weeks or even months before they have a meaningful opportunity to seek release in a hearing before an Immigration Judge. While waiting for those hearings, those detained suffer under harsh conditions of confinement akin to criminal incarceration. While incarcerated, they are separated from families, friends, and communities, and they risk losing their children, their jobs, and their homes. Because of inadequate medical care and conditions in the jails, unmet medical and mental-health needs often lead to serious and at times irreversible consequences.

At no point have detainees ensnared by the ICE algorithm had any chance at recourse, explained Belsher, describing a legal process as opaque as the risk-assessment tool. "People are not able to meaningfully participate in ICE's initial custody determination process, they are not given access to counsel and cannot submit evidence," Belsher said. "ICE's decision is administratively final; there is no process within the agency for people to challenge either the RCA's recommendation or ICE's custody determination. In fact, ICE does not even provide the person with the RCA's determination of their flight or danger risk level or any other recommendation generated by the tool. People are given a basic form stating only that ICE has decided to detain them."

The no-release policy is particularly tough on people with disabilities or health problems. "This practice of widespread detention is both cruel and needless," Scott-Railton, of the Bronx Defenders, said in a press release, "and has particularly devastating consequences for people with physical or psychological disabilities who must fight their immigration cases while being held in inhumane conditions and without access to the health services they need."

3/5: APALA Releases Guidance on How to Protect AAPI Workers in light of COVID-19

National Organization of Asian American and Pacific Islander Working People Releases Guidance on How to Protect AAPI Workers in light of COVID-19

Washington, DC - In light of the outbreak of COVID-19 (also known as coronavirus) cases emerging in the United States, Asian American workers are speaking up on how xenophobia and racism interact with America's inadequate healthcare system and outdated labor laws to endanger workers and hinder disease prevention. Over 2 million AAPIs work in healthcare, transportation and service industries--these workers are facing xenophobic and racial discrimination in the workplace in addition to increased exposure to communicable diseases. Without federal policies guaranteeing paid sick leave and adequate health insurance coverage for all workers, many working people are effectively prevented from following the CDC's guidance to stay home when they are sick.

APALA National Executive Board Member and Association of Flight Attendants - CWA Local 29011 member Stan Kiino states, "As flight attendants, we are well trained with regard to health and safety protocols because we have been on the frontlines of deadly viruses such as SARS, Ebola, swine flu (H1N1) and avian flu (H5N1). We face higher risks of exposure to illnesses through travelers' coughing and sneezing in enclosed spaces. As we escalate precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, we must prioritize protecting workers by informing them with facts, providing protective gear, and creating contingency plans as our workplaces are closed or scaled back; cancelled flights impact our ability to pay bills."

APALA National Executive Board Member Ligaya Domingo and SEIU 1199NW Education Director, "Healthcare workers are the ones who care for us when we are sick, but as workers on the frontlines they face an increased exposure to illness. That is why we need to ensure that hospitals and healthcare facilities have sufficient staffing levels, well informed workers, personal protective equipment for all workers, and screening protocols that are based on likely exposure to the virus, not anyone's language, skin color, or country of origin. COVID-19 is preventable and treatable, but only if we ensure working people are informed and protected."

APALA National Executive Board and UTLA/ AFT/NEA member Arlene Inouye states, "As a proud product of California's public education system and as Secretary for UTLA, the second largest teachers' local in the country, I know very well how educators are often left to figure out how to support sick students who come to school because their parents are not able to take a day off work. During times of heightened xenophobia and racialized discrimination, we are also left responsible for protecting all students and creating safe environments for them to learn and thrive. Right now, with widespread misinformation related to COVID-19, we are ready to protect our Asian American students, who already face some of the highest rates of bullying in this nation."

Employers must include a protocol against racial discrimination in their responses to COVID-19. APALA issues the following guidance to protect Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) workers.

Please Support and Sign Our China Coronavirus Petition!

Please sign-in our China Coronavirus, demand: **Fight the Disease, Not People! No to the Racist Attacks on China and Chinese Americans!**

To endorse the petition, Sign On-line: <https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/china-coronavirus-petition-fight-the-disease>

or email your name and organization to: activistweb@gmail.com

Lee Siu Hin 李小軒

China Coronavirus Petition

Fight the Disease, Not People! No to the Racist Attacks on China and Chinese Americans!

2/20/2020

The recent novel (new) coronavirus (2019-nCoV) outbreak in Wuhan, China is an international health crisis, infecting tens of thousands of people. Two thousand have died from the disease, as of February 20, 2020.

China's rapid response and mass medical mobilization has helped reduce the impact of this new disease. International health communities, as well as top scientists, have praised China's efforts across the globe.

This 2019-cCoV virus started in China. The 2009 Swine Flu (H1N1 influenza virus) started in the U.S., then spread across the world. It killed 284,500 people (CDC estimate). A new virus can happen anywhere around the world. People of the world should unite against the virus.

We are deeply alarmed and angered by some U.S. government officials, right-wing politicians and media using the coronavirus for China bashing and spreading false rumors. The insults include: "China Virus", "Real Sick Man of Asia", falsely spreading China bioweapon conspiracy rumors and that Chinese are spreading the disease around the world. The new "red scare" has spread across the country, with racist anti-China and anti-Chinese-American attacks.

We, as community activists, condemn the racism against China and Chinese Americans. It is no different than the continuation of U.S.'s China-bashing and racists labeling of Chinese American culture as "Chinese high-tech spies" following the China-US Trade War.

We Demand:

- 1) Stop labeling coronavirus (2019-nCoV) as "China Virus"; Fight the Disease, Not People!
- 2) No to the U.S. politicians and media's coronavirus Sinophobia, No to the Racist Attacks on China and Chinese Americans!
- 3) More U.S. media unbiased coverage on the situation in China.
- 4) Not just only talk, the U.S. government should educate the community, and offer free medical supports to prevent the possible spread the disease; especially vaccine for the poor community to help prevent the common flu that killed far more people every year in the U.S.

2/12: Kobe, Impeachment and the Coronavirus: A Study on the Dangers of White Liberal Fragility

Danny Haiphong – Black Agenda Report

White liberalism is not a kinder, gentler form of white supremacy, or a lesser evil to the more explicit racism of Trump and his base.

“Racist panic over the disease has been stoked by the entire ruling class, with a special role being played by the so-called ‘liberal’ corporate media.”

White liberal America has lost its mind. Some have called this phenomenon “Trump Derangement Syndrome” but there is a better explanation for the madness which prevails among the so-called liberal section of the white American population. White liberals see Trump as an existential threat to their centuries-long privilege of accumulating the benefits of white supremacist violence without any accountability. The Black Lives Matter uprising shifted public consciousness away from the politics of color-blindness and exposed the elements of Black leadership that white liberals have relied upon to forward their ruling class agenda. Amid a political atmosphere of heightened uncertainty for the entire ruling structure of U.S. imperialism, white liberals have become increasingly fragile and unafraid to wield the tools of racism as an act of self-preservation.

Three viral news stories over the last few weeks have exemplified the violence inherent in the growing fragility of the white liberal class. Kobe Bryant’s untimely death, the proliferation of the coronavirus in China, and President Donald Trump’s impeachment trial all demonstrate in their own way that white liberalism is not a kinder, gentler form of white supremacy. In fact, white liberalism is more effective than the racism espoused by the far right. Rather than mount a direct attack, elites of the white liberal variety pose as ideological and political allies of the oppressed to achieve their aims of economic, political, and military domination. As the white liberal class becomes more desperate, the consequences of its racist endeavors become more apparent.

“Elites of the white liberal variety pose as ideological and political allies of the oppressed to achieve their aims of economic, political, and military domination.”

Kobe Bryant’s death sent a shockwave of sadness across much of Black America and those who follow the game of basketball. This should come as a surprise to no one. Kobe Bryant is considered one of the best players to ever play the sport and his NBA career is followed worldwide. In 2003, Bryant became ensnared in a rape allegation that ended in a financial settlement with the accusing party. In 2020, the case resurfaced in tweets and think-pieces directly following Bryant’s death.

Rape is a serious problem, but white liberals have exploited the issue to dehumanize Black men. Black male death is hardly a singular event in the United States. Black men have the lowest life expectancy of all racial groups and are most likely to be killed by the police or incarcerated. Deceased Black men are then scrutinized and examined for their potential criminality more than any other sector of the U.S. population. Very few of those who claim to be concerned about Bryant’s history of rape have mentioned that Black men rarely escape prison or death when accused of such a crime. Bryant’s connection to the halls of white power kept him out of prison. Even worse, none have placed someone like Jeffery Epstein under the same microscope. Before his “suicide,” Epstein ran a literal sex ring dedicated to the rape of young women that was attended by the most powerful political figures in the world .

“Bryant’s connection to the halls of white power kept him out of prison.”

In the United States, white liberal fragility has always been most dangerous for Black Americans. Black lives are placed in perpetual danger of premature death or incarceration by the false accusations of white Americans who claim to have good, even socially just intentions. White liberalism is a key pillar in the national mythology of American exceptionalism. The struggle for a stable and prosperous “American Democracy” has always been tied to the destruction and exploitation of Black life. As the era of full spectrum American dominance reaches its final hour, the white liberal class and their allies in the Black misleadership class have only empowered white nativism by championing measures of austerity, mass incarceration, and war. It is telling that white feminists and other academic elites in the white liberal class have spent more time on Kobe Bryant’s character than on any of these issues.

The fragility of white liberalism is even more apparent in the Western coverage of the novel coronavirus that originated in China. Racist panic over the disease has been stoked by the entire ruling class, with a special role being played by the so-called “liberal” corporate media. Western media outlets have filled their pages and airwaves with racist Yellow Peril tropes. Non-stop coverage of the virus has related the centuries old Western

view that China is populated with savages who dine in the most peculiar of meats. Just being Chinese has become associated with the spread of the coronavirus.

“Western media outlets have filled their pages and airwaves with racist Yellow Peril tropes.”

White liberalism has done nothing but harm to the Chinese effort to eradicate the disease. The New York Times, a bastion of white liberal fragility, has published article after article blaming the Chinese government for covering up the severity of the coronavirus. Authorities in China have been made to look negligent, yet nothing could be further from the truth. The World Health Organization (WHO) has praised China’s wide-ranging effort in controlling the spread of the virus . A national patriotic health campaign has mobilized the whole of Chinese society to research the cause of the disease, prevent its spread, and treat the infected. Two hospitals have been built in a matter of weeks solely dedicated to the coronavirus outbreak .

Of course, white American fear of China is not about the coronavirus at all. It is about China’s rise as a global superpower and what this means for U.S. hegemony. China’s response to the disease shows that its government is organized to respond to the needs of the masses first and profit later. The opposite is true of the United States. While China leads the world in things such as renewable energy ,poverty reduction , and high-speed rail , the United States leads the world in military spending , incarceration , and debt . White liberals have joined the anti-China chorus not out of concern for humanity but out of spite for it. As a form of white supremacy, white liberalism is predicated on serving a capitalist elite committed to dehumanizing and then eliminating any threat to its continued rule. The rise of China as a global superpower and the second largest economy armed with a trillion-dollar infrastructure initiative called the Belt and Road Initiative has moved white liberals into a desperate state of panic about the future of their empire.

“Authorities in China have been made to look negligent, yet nothing could be further from the truth.”

The impeachment saga has its own variant of white liberal racism. As an extension of the four-plus year Russiagate conspiracy, white liberals have made impeachment the principle goal of their “resistance” to Donald Trump’s presidency. Removal of Trump from office was never a possibility under a Republican-majority Senate. Impeachment has mostly served as a strategy to legitimize the lie that Russia interfered in the 2016 presidential election to place Trump in office. Fragile white liberals have used Russiagate to avoid accountability for the electoral failures of the Democratic Party. Even worse, white liberal fragility over Trump’s so-called connection to Russia has only further empowered the dangerous U.S. imperial strategy of fomenting war with the world’s foremost nuclear power.

Adam Schiff is the most prominent leader in the effort to impeach Donald Trump. Schiff exemplifies white liberal fragility in the flesh. His panic over Donald Trump is driven purely by self-interest. The California Representative has received luxurious fundraisers hosted by Ukrainian arms dealers. Raytheon, Boeing, Lockheed Martin, and a slew of military contractors fill Schiff’s coffers with tens of thousands worth in political donations . Adam Schiff is deeply invested in impeachment because the Trump administration’s flirtation with holding back military aid to Ukraine directly impacts his militarist donor base.

“Impeachment has mostly served as a strategy to legitimize the lie that Russia interfered in the 2016 presidential election.”

It should come as no surprise then that Schiff’s white liberal fragility manifests as imperialist bellicosity toward Russia and its people. During the impeachment trial, Schiff called the Russian government an “autocracy” and a “thugocracy.” He evoked Reagan’s framing of the United States as a “shining city upon a hill” fully equipped with a democratic political system far superior to whatever exists in Russia. U.S. military aid to Ukraine, according to a quoted witness at the impeachment inquiry cited by Schiff, makes it possible to “fight Russia over there so we don’t have to fight Russia here.” These anti-Russian talking points not only represent a dangerous example of war propaganda but also a reflection of the deep hatred that white liberals such as Schiff possess toward the Russian people.

American exceptionalism has become a potent drug for white liberals seeking to ease the pain of developments that are far more dangerous to their interests than Donald Trump’s presidency. The lies that buttress the ideology are potently racist and rely upon the demonization of an “other” to boost the white superiority complex of the

American Empire. Schiff's obsession with Russia is driven neither by good intentions nor a fight against a mythical Russia-Trump alliance. Rather, the anti-Russian hysteria of the white liberal class is the byproduct of a declining Empire. Russia's increasingly assertive role on the world stage just three decades since the Western-aided destruction of the Soviet Union decimated the lives of the Russian people indicates that a political sea change is occurring in the international arena. The Russian government's promotion of a multi-polar world and its close economic relationship with China threatens to cut the United States off from its monopolistic control over the destinies of nations across the Eurasian and African continents. With U.S. economic prowess on the decline, a militarist approach toward Russia is the last remaining means from which to maintain imperial dominance. And Schiff is the "Pentagon's man," a loyal servant of the lords of war whose white liberal fragility is easily manipulated to serve the ends of the Empire.

"The anti-Russian hysteria of the white liberal class is the byproduct of a declining Empire."

There is a long-standing assumption that white liberalism is the lesser evil to the more fascistic forces that exist in U.S. society. Trump's victory in the presidential election of 2016 has only intensified the strength of this assumption. At the same time, Trump's first term as president has exposed how the dangers of white liberal fragility are far reaching and reflect the core rot of U.S. imperialism. White liberalism and its state organ, the Democratic Party, have participated in the decades-long assault on the living standards workers and oppressed people. Thus, the material basis for fascism doesn't merely reside in the openly white nationalist segment of the U.S. population. White liberals in the establishment are fully committed to American exceptionalism; i.e., the doctrine that positions the United States and all of its whiteness as the world's enforcer of "democracy" and "human rights." The Washington Post claims that "Democracy Dies in Darkness." In reality, the United States is organized to kill democracy wherever it springs and, more often than not, it is white liberals and their allies in the oligarchy jointly pulling the trigger.

1/21: A Northeastern University student from Iran was removed from the US despite an emergency stay. CBP says it was not aware of the judge's order

Christina Maxouris, Rebekah Riess and Carma Hassan - CNN

An Iranian student planning to attend Northeastern University was flown out of the United States despite an emergency stay, and Customs and Border Protection said it was not aware a court had temporarily blocked the student's removal.

Mohammad Shahab Dehghani Hossein, 24, was refused entry to the United States on his student visa when he arrived at the Boston Logan International Airport on Sunday. While he was detained, a Massachusetts district court judge granted him an emergency stay but he was deported Monday night, said his attorney, Kerry Doyle.

Customs and Border Protection was "unaware of the issuance of any court order barring the removal of the subject from the United States" when Dehghani boarded the flight and the aircraft's doors had closed, the agency said in a statement.

The student's visa was revoked, his attorney says

According to an emergency petition filed by Doyle, the State Department issued Dehghani a student visa last week. But when Dehghani tried entering the United States on January 19, he was taken into secondary inspection and refused entry.

US Customs and Border Protection revoked Dehghani's student visa and issued him an expedited removal order, the court filing says.

"It is unclear why Defendants would now decide, after conducting a full visa issuance process, that Plaintiff's student visa should be revoked," the court document says.

The defendants in the filing include CBP and the Department of Homeland Security.

"Rather than being based in legitimate concerns over Plaintiff's admissibility to the United States, this revocation and expedited removal is a result of additional scrutiny targeting Iranian citizens," the filing says.

In a statement, CBP said it could not discuss individual proceedings.

"CBP officers are charged with enforcing not only immigration and customs laws, but they also enforce over 400 laws for 40 other agencies and have stopped thousands of violators of US law," the agency said in a statement.

"Applicants must demonstrate they are admissible into the US by overcoming all grounds of inadmissibility including health-related grounds, criminality, security reasons, public charge, labor certification, illegal entrants and immigration violations, documentation requirements, and miscellaneous grounds."

Northeastern University also said it has been in touch with federal officials to learn more about the case and provide Dehghani with the appropriate assistance to "facilitate a successful return to Northeastern."

Dehghani was admitted to the university's undergraduate program starting in the 2018-2019 academic year and filed for a student visa in 2018. After an in-person interview and a full State Department review, he was issued his student visa last week, his court petition says.

Protesters rallied outside the airport

Meanwhile, a crowd of people including members of the ACLU of Massachusetts and the Muslim Justice League gathered at the Boston airport to protest Dehghani's detention.

"In America, nobody is above the law -- including Customs and Border Protection officials. Given the Trump administration's xenophobic policies and CBP's troubling practice at Logan Airport of sending students with valid visas back to Iran, it is shameful that the government defied a federal court order and deported Shahab without due process," ACLU of Massachusetts Executive Director Carol Rose said in a statement.

"We are looking at all options to hold CBP accountable for wrongfully deporting Iranians and other students who hold valid visas."

The ACLU of Massachusetts says at least 10 students have been sent back to Iran upon arriving to US airports, with seven of them having flown into the Boston airport.

Democratic presidential candidate and Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts also weighed in, tweeting Monday: "Shahab Dehghani is an Iranian student with a valid F1 visa, returning to finish his education. CBP already held him overnight. His deportation must be halted, and we must fight the Trump administration's xenophobic policies."

CNN's Geneva Sands, Nicole Chavez and Holly Yan contributed to this report.

12/4: Trump pressured Pentagon to give \$400 million border wall contract to his favorite Fox News guest

Company with long history of legal trouble won wall contract, even though its bid "did not meet standards"

IGOR DERYSH - Salon

The company of a Fox News guest repeatedly praised by President Donald Trump received a \$400 million border wall construction contract from the Pentagon.

The Defense Department announced on Monday that North Dakota-based Fisher Sand and Gravel was awarded the contract to build part of the wall in the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge along the Arizona border.

The announcement came after Trump spent months pressuring the Army Corps of Engineers to pick the firm even though the pressure "concerned" officials, who told Trump that the company's bids did not meet its standards, according to The Washington Post.

Trump appears to have pushed the firm because he has been "enamored" with CEO Tommy Fisher, a regular Fox News guest.

The Post reported in May that Trump had "aggressively pushed" the Department of Homeland Security and the Army Corps to select Fisher's firm, which "alarmed" leaders. The pressure came after Fisher went on Fox News and claimed that his company could build more than 200 miles of the wall in less than a year.

“He always brings them up,” Sen. Kevin Cramer, R-N.D., a supporter of the company who has received thousands in contributions from Fisher, told The Post. Cramer said that Trump likes Fisher because “he’s been very aggressive on TV.”

“You know who else watches Fox News?” he asked in an obvious reference to the president.

The Post detailed in May how Fisher repeatedly appeared on Fox News in the spring in an effort to “reach” Trump.

“The President, if he allows our team of Fisher Industries to play, I guarantee it, no different than Tom Brady: Once we get in, we never come out,” Fisher said in a March appearance on the network. “And if we don’t perform, the President can fire us. That’s how comfortable and confident I am, is when people see what I really offer.”

Fox host Sean Hannity even brought the company up to Trump during a phone interview in April.

“I don’t know if you heard about this contractor that said he can build a whole wall for a lot cheaper than anybody else and get it done by 2020. Are you aware of that?” Hannity asked.

“Yes, we are dealing with him, actually,” Trump replied. “It’s Fisher, comes from North Dakota, recommended strongly by a great new senator as you know, Kevin Cramer. And they are real.”

Fisher has also worked with Trump allies like former Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach, who was appointed to head Trump’s ill-fated voter fraud commission, and former White House adviser Steve Bannon. Fisher was hired by Build the Wall, an activist group backed by Kobach and Bannon, to build 3.5 miles of border wall along the Rio Grande.

Fisher’s company was awarded the contract despite a history of environmental and tax violations that has cost it more than \$1 million in fines, CNN reported. In 2009, co-owner Michael Fisher was sentenced to 37 months in prison and ordered to pay \$300,000 in restitution after pleading guilty to nine counts of felony tax fraud, according to the High Plains Reader. In 2005, former company head David William Fisher pleaded guilty to child pornography charges and was sentenced to five years in prison.

11/25: After Landmark Surveillance Lawsuit New Jersey Muslims Meet with NYPD

Plaintiffs & NJ Muslims Targeted by Discriminatory Police Surveillance Have First Face-to-Face Meeting with City and NYPD Officials

Center for Constitutional Rights

Newark, NJ — Following a historic lawsuit over the New York City Police Department’s (NYPD) blanket, discriminatory surveillance of New Jersey Muslims, Hassan v. City of New York, plaintiffs and members of the New Jersey Muslim community met face-to-face with senior City and NYPD officials on Monday to detail the harm caused to Muslim communities in New Jersey by the NYPD’s surveillance program and to demand accountability.

In 2011, Pulitzer Prize-winning AP reporting revealed that the NYPD was spying on Muslims at New York and New Jersey mosques, restaurants, schools and university student associations simply because of their faith. The NYPD’s monitoring activities included video surveillance, photographing license plates, “community mapping,” and infiltration by undercover officers. In October 2012, Muslim Advocates filed the Hassan lawsuit on behalf of Muslim individuals, businesses, and organizations affected by these practices. The Center for Constitutional Rights and the law firm of Gibbons, P.C. joined as co-counsel that December. After a historic decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit allowed the plaintiffs’ lawsuit to move forward, the NYPD initiated settlement negotiations and the parties later reached a settlement in early 2018. This landmark settlement required the NYPD, among other things, to halt suspicionless surveillance on the basis of religion or ethnicity and to pay damages to the plaintiffs for lost revenue and dignitary harms.

The settlement also required the NYPD and city officials to meet with those affected by the discriminatory surveillance to share their experiences and the harms they endured. This meeting took place today in downtown Newark. Several plaintiffs attended, including Farhaj Hassan, Imam W. Deen Shareef of the Council of Imams New Jersey, and Imam Abdul Kareem Muhammad of Masjid Al Haqq. Attorneys from Muslim Advocates, the Center for Constitutional Rights, and Gibbons, P.C. also attended. The NYPD was represented by Deputy Commissioner for Intelligence and Counterterrorism John Miller, Counsel to the Police Commissioner Ashley Waters, Assistant Commissioner for Intelligence Analysis Rebecca Weiner, Peter Farrel of the City Law Department, and Director for Intelligence Matters Alexis Leist. The Handschu Committee Civilian Representative Stephen Robinson also attended.

Below are quotes and video reactions to the meeting from plaintiffs in Hassan v. City of New York who attended Monday's meeting:

"Our message from the beginning of this case has been that Muslim Americans have the right to religious freedom and equal protection of the law," said Imam W. Deen Shareef. "We intend through our engagement and demand for accountability to see that the NYPD upholds these sacred rights, and it's duty to preserve the constitutional integrity of our shared American society."

"Hassan v. NYPD proved once and for all that active participation by the citizenry is necessary to hold those in power accountable," said Farhaj Hassan. "The value of 'equal justice for all' holds America together. That is a value American Muslims will always defend."

Please Support National Immigrant Solidarity Network!
All Donations Are Tax Deductible!

Make check payable to NISN/AFGJ and it will be tax deductible! Send your check to:
National Immigrant Solidarity Network
P.O. Box 751, South Pasadena, CA 91031-0751

____ \$100.00 ____ \$ 50.00 ____ \$ 35.00 ____ Other Amount \$ _____
(\$35 or more will receive 1 year free subscriptions of the Immigration Alert! Newsletter)

Please subscribe to our NISN Immigrants Daily-Info E-mail List!

Send e-mail to: isn-subscribe@lists.riseup.net or web: <http://lists.riseup.net/www/info/isn>

Please join our Following NISN E-mail Lists

Asian American Labor Activism Alert!

send e-mail to: api-la-subscribe@lists.riseup.net
or visit: <http://lists.riseup.net/www/info/api-la>

**New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania areas
immigrant workers information and alerts**

send e-mail to: nyc-immigrantalert-subscribe@lists.riseup.net
or visit: <http://lists.riseup.net/www/info/nyc-immigrantalert>

US-Mexico Border Information and Action Alert!

send e-mail to: Border01-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
or visit: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Border01/>

Virginia state-wide immigrant organizing E-mail list

send- e-mail to: va-immigrantrights-subscribe@lists.riseup.net
or visit: <https://lists.riseup.net/www/info/va-immigrantrights>

May Day 2017 national organizing e-mail list

send e-mail to: mayday2017-subscribe@lists.riseup.net
or visit: <https://lists.riseup.net/www/info/MayDay2017>

About National Immigrant Solidarity Network

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:
<http://www.ImmigrantSolidarity.org>

Contact Information:

E-mail: info@ImmigrantSolidarity.org
(213) 403-0131 (Los Angeles)
(202) 595-8990 (Washington D.C.)

Please donate to NISN! (All donations are tax deductible!)
Check pay to: NISN/AFGJ
Send to: National Immigrant Solidarity Network
P.O. Box 751
South Pasadena, CA 91031-0751

**Please subscribe to the U.S. Immigration Alert!
A Monthly Newsletter from National Immigrant
Solidarity Network**

1 year subscription rate (12 issues) is \$35.00

It will help us pay for the printing costs, as well as funding for the NISN projects (additional donations to the ISN is tax deductible!)

Check pay to: NISN/AFGJ

National Immigrant Solidarity Network
P.O. Box 751
South Pasadena, CA 91031-0751