

Summer 2024 U.S. Immigration Alert!

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U.S. Against Anti-War Activists, Attacks on Palestinian-Americans!

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5/3 A federally-subsidized crackdown on antiwar protests

Stephen Semler - Substack

Fully aware of the increasingly violent crackdowns on students and teachers protesting his enabling of Israel's genocide against Palestinians, Biden greenlit an even harsher police response this week. On Tuesday, Biden smeared the campus protests as antisemitic, violent, and unlawful. For university administrators on the fence about escalating the use of force against their own students and faculty, Biden's comments could have only nudged them one way.

The number and intensity of police crackdowns appears to have escalated dramatically after Biden's comments. Later on Tuesday, riot police stormed dozens of schools across the country, including at Columbia University. Here's Adam Tooze:

There was no riot last night at Columbia any more than there has been at any other point. The violence came from the police side and it came at the invitation and request of the University administration.

Police aren't there to ensure public safety. Look at the video footage from Dartmouth, for example. Or consider what happened at UCLA: On Tuesday, university officials declared the student protests as unlawful. Tuesday night, police officers in riot gear stood by for at least an hour as a mob attacked the antiwar protesters, injuring more than 100 of them. This morning, riot police stormed the protesters' encampment and arrested over 200 people.

Yesterday, Trump praised the police crackdowns at a campaign rally. Today, Biden again slandered the protests as violent and unlawful. Bipartisanship is back.

Greenlighting violence through budgets

Biden had already given police the greenlight to behave violently through his budgets. The 2020 protests against police brutality were met with rampant police brutality, but after entering office in 2021, Biden dramatically scaled up federal

subsidies to police through regular appropriations legislation (for fiscal years 2022 through 2024), and the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. The chart below visualizes this surge in federal subsidies to police.

Biden supported all these bills and signed them into law, but some people will still tell me that the chart title should attribute blame to Congress and not Biden, and that I should Learn How Government Works. Please know that I'm fully aware that Biden didn't enact federal subsidies for police unilaterally. If he had, the numbers would be much higher.

Congress constantly reins Biden in when it comes to funding the police. It's apparent when you compare the amount requested versus enacted for Department of Justice (DOJ) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) police grants.

For example, Biden requested \$601 million for the State Homeland Security Grant Program for FY2024, but Congress enacted \$468 million, shaving \$133 million off Biden's proposal. For the Urban Area Security Initiative, Congress shaved \$158 million off Biden's \$711 million request.

These two DHS programs have a record of contributing to militarized police responses to protests, expanding surveillance and targeting of protesters, and being totally useless at preventing terrorist attacks.¹ They incentivize police to treat protests as an inherent danger; a hotbed for domestic extremism that involves "driving lawful protests to incite violence."² They fund "fusion centers" which are joint federal and state/local police operations invented after 9/11 for counterterrorism purposes, but in reality, they focus disproportionately on protests and domestic movements.³ Ultimately, these grants reinforce the practice of police violently cracking down on protests under the (often unfounded) suspicion that they may turn violent or damage public property.

1 A Senate investigation in 2012 found that fusion centers had "yielded little, if any, benefit to federal counterterrorism intelligence efforts."

2 So what's Biden also saying when he claims that the antiwar protests are violent?

3 One fusion center report depicted routine advocacy by Muslim civil rights groups as support for terrorism. A fusion center in Chicago sent DHS and FBI false information about people who appeared to be "Arabic" or "Middle Eastern." A Boston-area fusion center targeted activists by scanning social media posts with #BlackLivesMatter and #MuslimLivesMatter and commonplace Arabic words. Other centers have targeted abortion and environmental activists.

4/1: Why Is the Stop Asian Hate Movement Following the Lead of Zionists and Police?

Two groups affiliated with Stop Asian Hate raise questions about its affinities for carceral state power and Zionism.

Dylan Rodríguez – TRUTHOUT

The emergence of the United States-based Stop Asian Hate movement since 2021 has catalyzed various forms of organization and grassroots mobilization that pivot on demands for increased policing, enhanced hate crimes legislation and other forms of state-centered grievance. Stop Asian Hate's militant, public-facing liberalism has momentarily overshadowed numerous radical projects and networks formed by Asian and Pacific Islander activists in and beyond the U.S., including those engaged in autonomous mutual aid, anti-racist organizing, Black and anti-colonial/Palestine solidarity, prisoner support, sex worker solidarity, queer and trans self-determination and abolitionist community-building. Grassroots organizations like Asian American Feminist Collective, Freedom, Inc., Asian American Pacific Islander Women Lead, Lavender Phoenix and Butterfly Asian and Migrant Sex Workers Support Network predate the rise of anti-Asian/anti-Chinese animus during the COVID-19 pandemic and the gendered racist terror of the 2021 Atlanta spa shootings, engaging in popular education, community care and direct safety-based intervention in ways that expose and challenge carceral state violence rather than rely on it.

By contrast, Stop Asian Hate's state-focused liberal social justice orientations hinge on a redemptive political fantasy: a reformed U.S. nation-building project in which police power, criminal jurisprudence, public policy and earnest carceral state actors (including elected officials and prosecutors) strengthen and expand the state's obligation to protect people of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) descent from "hate," "hate crimes," "hate incidents," and other forms of racial animus.

As with every large-scale social movement I've ever studied or directly engaged, this fantasy matters. It guides practical decision-making, organizational strategy and tactical choices. The alliances, internal protocols and political priorities guiding the formation of Stop Asian Hate's two most prominent organizations — national coalition Stop AAPI Hate and The Asian

American Foundation — raise urgent questions about the stakes and consequences of the movement’s public-facing claims, demands and organizing activities.

Stop AAPI Hate as Carceral Entrepreneurship

Founded on March 19, 2020, in “response to the alarming escalation in xenophobia and bigotry resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic,” Stop AAPI Hate immediately garnered corporate media and philanthropic attention as a public-facing coalition between two well established California-based nonprofit organizations (AAPI Equity Alliance and Chinese for Affirmative Action) and the San Francisco State University Department of Asian American Studies.

Developed to compile and analyze data reflecting “incidents of hate, violence, harassment, discrimination, shunning, and child bullying,” Stop AAPI Hate’s data collection framework relies on the terms and methods of criminology, atomizing “anti-Asian hate” by conceptualizing — and thus narrating — such violence as a matter of discrete events and interpersonal encounters. The coalition gathered almost 2,000 “incident reports” of “coronavirus discrimination” during its first two months of research, and continues to generate research studies utilizing a framework that defines anti-Asian hate through a taxonomy of “hate acts,” “hate crimes,” “hate incidents” and “civil rights violations.”

By generating an original national dataset, Stop AAPI Hate attracts significant financial and political support from foundations, police and elected state officials, well-funded Asian American nonprofits, and Asian American celebrities, academics, industry executives and cultural/social media influencers. Signaling this entrepreneurial intent, two of Stop AAPI Hate’s administrative leaders published a USA Today opinion piece for Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month calling for “policymakers, government agencies and others” to invest in “partnerships between government civil rights agencies and trusted community-based organizations” while strengthening “existing protections and enforcement and [passing] new civil rights laws.”

Notably, Stop AAPI Hate foregrounds “narrative change” as a primary area of concentration, specifically mentioning the organization’s participation in “hundreds of speaking engagements” with audiences ranging from members of Congress, the Commission on Civil Rights, the United Nations and the World Bank to a range of “policymakers, students and educators, as well as business, entertainment, and nonprofit leaders.” The unspoken assumption in this work is that bureaucratic, administrative, industry and state elites should be the primary audiences and actors for such change.

Confoundingly, the organization asserts that it’s “grounded in the belief that we must confront racism at its root with comprehensive, non-carceral solutions to effectively prevent and respond to anti-AAPI hate.” Directly contradicting this stated ambition, Stop AAPI Hate’s state-focused advocacy and data curation reproduces rather than disrupts carceral notions of violence, justice and criminal deterrence. Even as the organization reinforces a liberal dependence on state-based institutions and actors to address, prevent and punish “hate,” it also claims to engage in community-centered education and restorative justice projects. The latter efforts, however, do not decenter the criminological paradigm that drives Stop AAPI Hate’s public- and state-facing campaigns for “justice” and “equity.”

Stop AAPI Hate’s Zionist and Police Problem

Perhaps the most significant 21st century development in the political economy of Asian American organizations has been the lightning-quick emergence of The Asian American Foundation (TAAF), founded in May 2021. TAAF garnered over \$1 billion in its first year of existence, including influxes from the Ford, MacArthur and Mellon foundations, Bank of America, Etsy, Coca-Cola, Citi Foundation, Merck and Zoom.

Led by a board that includes the founder and chair of Himalaya Capital, the co-CEO of Kohlberg Kravis & Roberts (a global firm managing over \$500 billion), the co-founder of Alibaba Group (also governor of the National Basketball Association’s Brooklyn Nets and Women’s National Basketball Association’s New York Liberty), the co-founder of Yahoo! and the CEO of Citadel Securities, TAAF boasts a “five-year portfolio strategy” to distribute grants to “best in class organizations working to mobilize against hate and violence, educate communities, and reclaim our narratives.”

But the presence of Anti-Defamation League (ADL) National Director and CEO Jonathan Greenblatt on TAAF’s board reflects a key political and organizational influence on the foundation’s mission. Described in one philanthropic periodical as “the only non-Asian on TAAF’s board,” Greenblatt’s presence is more than just a signal of organizational affinity: He was substantially involved in the strategic planning that led to the creation of TAAF, buttressed by the ADL’s “systems that track online hate and real-world hate crime,” which indicated a “spike in anti-Asian animus” in 2020.

Greenblatt is, by his own account, a leading organizational presence in the foundation who was “enlisted” by “a small group of individuals active in the AAPI community” to provide “guidance in creating what became TAAF.” His primary role has been to ensure that TAAF replicates the ADL’s modus operandi through an emergent Asian American analog: The ADL’s method for “[fighting] hate and extremism” defines TAAF’s funding relationships with “existing AAPI organizations ... such as Asian Americans Advancing Justice and Stop AAPI Hate.”

Since its founding in 1913, the ADL has functioned as a watchdog organization that ostensibly identifies antisemitic activities and calls on institutional leaders, state officials, corporations and media outlets to condemn, fire or otherwise disaffiliate from those it deems culpable. Crucially, the ADL endorses a definition of antisemitism closely aligned with the one adopted in 2016 by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), which has been subject to mounting scholarly, legal and activist criticism for conflating criticism of Israel and the ethno-supremacist political ideology of Zionism with antisemitism.

Criticism of the ADL's and IHRA's conflation of anti-Zionism with antisemitism has emerged from a range of scholarly, human rights, free speech, decolonial, Palestinian liberationist, radical feminist and abolitionist perspectives, and even periodically been covered by corporate media. Notably, the inaugural 2023 conference of the Institute for the Critical Study of Zionism convened a broad community of scholars, including Rabab Abdulhadi, Emmaia Gelman, Christine Hong, Jennifer Kelly, Sean Malloy, Alana Lentin and myself to develop rigorous archival, theoretical and practical responses to demystify this conflation.

Nonetheless, Stop AAPI Hate, TAAF and other Stop Asian Hate organizations not only tacitly comply with the ADL's positions, but also replicate its organizational fixation on "hate" as the primary unit of analysis, public discourse and liberal state intervention. As Stop Asian Hate replicates the ADL's methods, it's worth raising a key question: What are the consequences of these organizations' shared frameworks of "hate" victimization?

Gelman, a Jewish anti-Zionist scholar, organizer and teacher, writes in the Boston Review that, "At a time when it should be easier to see the ADL as a conservative knowledge production agency, a resurgence of concern with 'hate' has only consolidated its power." (The ADL has long defined itself as "the leading anti-hate organization in the world.") Crucially, Gelman shows how since at least the 1960s,

"The ADL [has] targeted civil rights groups from liberals to revolutionaries.... The ADL also surveilled ethnic representational groups, particularly Arab and black, and Jewish groups concerned about Israeli treatment of Palestinians.... In the present, the ADL has continued to militate against internationalist, intersectional anti-racism, and has used its status as 'the nation's premier civil rights organization' to do so."

Gelman's analytic history demystifies Greenblatt's grandstanding declaration of alliance between the ADL and Stop Asian Hate: "The Asian-American community has been under siege and now it's the Jewish community.... It's moments like this when allyship really matters." Greenblatt's projection of Jewish-Asian American alliance depicts a coalition of reaction against various notions of "siege," not limited to hate crimes/incidents. This linkage — both organizational and ideological — enacts an analogy of exceptional victimhood that tethers the figure of the violated Asian American to the ADL's Zionist notion of Jewishness.

The Stop Asian Hate movement's affinity for the anti-Palestinian, pro-Israel, Zionist, domestic policing and global militarist regimes of the U.S. state is crystallized in the bureaucratic infrastructures of both TAAF and Stop AAPI Hate. TAAF's advisory council boasts current and former high-level administrators and staffers of the U.S. global counterinsurgency apparatus, including former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Council on Foreign Relations member X. Rick Niu, three-time National Security Council appointee Farah Pandith, Hoover Institution fellow and George W. Bush administration appointee Lanhee Chen and former World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim, among others.

While it does not feature a similar group of advisers, Stop AAPI Hate quietly maintains strong ties to organizations with histories of punishing critics of Israel as well as people involved in Palestinian solidarity organizing. Stop AAPI Hate has benefitted from a significant financial and research relationship with Davis Polk, a corporate law firm that made national news in October 2023 for rescinding offers of employment to Harvard and Columbia University law school students due to their criticisms of Israel's mounting genocidal campaign against Palestinians.

A confidential source familiar with Stop AAPI Hate's internal operations, who requested anonymity due to concerns over professional retaliation, reported that Davis Polk contributed an estimated \$350,000 of pro bono legal research to support the coalition's 2023 civil rights report, with one Davis Polk attorney contributing an additional \$10,000 in private donations. Further, while Stop AAPI Hate publicly supported global calls for a ceasefire during the early weeks of genocidal Israeli military action in Gaza, the confidential source describes the organization's leadership as unresponsive to staff concerns over the organization's continued connection to Davis Polk. (According to the source, as of early January 2024, the Stop AAPI Hate-Davis Polk relationship remained intact.)

Though Stop AAPI Hate does not publicize its relationships with pro-Israel and Zionist organizations, its collaborations with such groups are readily evident to any close observer. The aforementioned source notes that weeks after issuing its public support for a ceasefire in Gaza, Stop AAPI Hate joined the ADL and TAAF as "community partners/sponsors" for a "Hate Crimes Summit" hosted by 17 separate "government partners," including the FBI, Department of Justice, the Oakland and San Jose Police Departments, six separate district attorney's offices, the U.S. Attorney's Office and the California Attorney General's Office.

Despite previous attempts by progressive Asian American groups — and some of its own staff members — to convince Stop AAPI Hate leadership to decline speaking engagements and collaborative events with the ADL due to its political targeting of Palestinian and Palestinian American, Muslim, Arab American, and other communities critical of the Israeli state, Stop AAPI Hate co-founder Cynthia Choi spoke on a panel at the event alongside an FBI special agent, the executive director of the Northern California Regional Intelligence Center and a coordinator from the California Attorney General's Office.

Such open, cooperative relationships with policing, carceral and pro-Israel entities expose the hypocrisy of Stop AAPI Hate's declared commitment to "confront racism at its root with comprehensive, non-carceral solutions" as a form of public posturing unsupported by its organizational activities, interorganizational relationships and funding apparatus.

AAPI Women Lead (AAPIWL), a feminist anti-violence group based in Oakland, and the San Diego organization Asian Solidarity Collective (ASC) offer concrete, real-time examples of anti-racist, abolition-oriented, Black solidarity-aligned grassroots projects that largely reject the Stop Asian Hate movement's liberal demands for recognition from the carceral state. ASC, for example, refuses siloed, multiculturalist definitions of anti-racism, framing its work as an ongoing effort to "engage Asian Americans to be liberated from anti-Black racism, model minority myths, internalized colonialism, and white supremacy." Similarly, AAPIWL emphasizes shared "histories of violence" when addressing anti-Asian racism, emphasizing that "most of us came to these lands (as guests of Indigenous cultures) because of racialized, colonial wars." Echoing ASC's mission, AAPIWL contends that "we cannot continue to use frameworks or strategies that will continue to harm any community of color. This is solidarity."

While both groups are relatively new, my substantive experiences with them as an invited collaborator and organizational participant (I recently joined the board of AAPIWL) directly contrast with Stop AAPI Hate's political dishonesty and hypocritical collaborations with police power and the state. ASC and AAPIWL demonstrate a commitment to political study, grassroots organizing, and other collective activities that nourish a politics — and collective identity — of insurgency and revolt among people whose ascribed racial and gendered identities denote passivity, docility and assimilation, as well as anti-Blackness and compliance, if not alliance, with police power.

By way of example, AAPIWL's Intergenerational Participatory Action Research project directly challenges the "hate" and "hate crime" centered framings of the Stop Asian Hate movement by conceptualizing "racial and gender violence across Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities" as simultaneously "systemic, institutional, and interpersonal." As the first national, community-driven effort of its kind, this grassroots study constructively displaces and decenters Stop AAPI Hate's criminological, police-friendly approach to understanding (and stopping) anti-Asian violence.

The Liberal Counterinsurgency of "Feelings"

Unlike ASC, AAPIWL, and other radical collectives confronting anti-Asian violence, Stop AAPI Hate, TAAF and related Stop Asian Hate organizations are actively constructing an extra-state, liberal-reactionary ensemble through their initiatives and campaigns. Such efforts reflect a key political logic structuring the Pentagon's larger strategic definition of counterinsurgency: "Political reform should be started as soon as feasible, even if the insurgency is still ongoing."

Stop Asian Hate effectively advocates a form of populist criminology that calls for an inclusive, aggressive, equity-oriented response from the domestic warmaking state. This amounts to a reformist mandate to re-legitimate anti-Black, colonial, carceral state violence in a moment of crisis. In this sense, Stop Asian Hate represents an early-21st century Asian Americanist equity grievance that looks to the state as its arbiter, protector and militarized authority figure.

Just as importantly, Stop Asian Hate fabricates and projects a canonical set of liberal reactionary feelings. Liberal feelings work to pacify, narratively rationalize and politically domesticate actual and potential forms of insurgent, insurrectionist, abolitionist and anti-state imagination and activity. More creepily, liberal feelings prepare the Asian/American subject as an ideal inheritor of a 21st century liberal multiculturalist "dream": a civilizational fantasy that solicits identification with — if not active participation in — U.S. nation-building as a legitimate, reformable, redemptive global project.

6/4: Voces de la Frontera Action Condemns Biden's New Border and Asylum Cap

Two groups affiliated with Stop Asian Hate raise questions about its affinities for carceral state power and Zionism

The Biden administration signed a series of executive actions that will effectively close the border to thousands of people seeking asylum. Under the new rule, those seeking protection at ports of entry along the U.S. southern border could be deported with no legal due process.

"We condemn Biden's decision to align with the far-right dangerous policies of Trump that provide no solutions to the causes of forced migration, violate human rights laws, and incite violence" said Christine Neumann-Ortiz, Executive Director of Voces de la Frontera Action. "

This action reinforces a cruel and xenophobic narrative and alienates his own base of Latine and immigrant voters by failing to articulate an alternative vision and values of what is needed to integrate newcomers and to recognize the humanity of new arrivals. Instead of placing blame on Trump and the MAGA right that has been blocking Congressional funds and weaponizing asylum seekers by busing them to cities to create chaos for political ends, Biden is following the lead of the far-right“

“Voces de la Frontera Action and the immigrant community call for President Biden to uphold humane and just border immigration policies that honor the rights and dignity of all individuals.” Neuman-Ortiz said. “In addition, President Biden must use executive authority to grant work permits to long term undocumented immigrant workers and mixed immigration status families, including those with U.S. Citizen spouses and U.S. citizen adult children, who have been part of the movement to get him elected. They are angry to not be seen or heard by this administration and the failure to pass immigration reform under a second Democratic trifecta.”

“To prevail against Trump and the MAGA base and inspire Latine and immigrant voters and allies, Biden must go big and go bold before the elections to inspire his pro immigrant base of voters. If he fails to do this he will continue to damage his prospects to prevail in the November election.” she added.

5/29: Ethnic minorities in US forced to work in low-paying jobs, face challenges of forced labor, racial discrimination

Ethnic minorities in US forced to work in low-paying jobs, face challenges of forced labor, racial discrimination

Liu Xin, Xing Xiaojing and Fan Anqi - Global Times

What is the 24-hour workday system compared to its 8-hour counterpart? Ning Zishun from the Chinese Staff and Workers' Association, a community organization in New York, said that as New York is the cultural and financial hub of the US, the city's current laws have significant loophole - there is no upper limit on working hours, which means that employers can legally implement 24-hour work days seven days a week, a feature also present in many high-tech industries.

Ning told the Global Times that to take care of the sick and the elderly who are unable to care for themselves, the New York government has at least 560,000 home care workers. Many of these critically or terminally ill patients need round-the-clock care, which includes help with eating, mobility through wheelchairs, and diaper changes. Certain elderly people suffering from dementia require constant supervision to guarantee their safety.

Asian, Latin American, Caribbean, and African American women comprising the vast majority of home care workers in New York are forced to work continuously for 24, 72, and 96 hours, if not longer.

However, long work hours do not mean increased pay. Shi Yuzhi, 61, who has been working as a home care worker in New York for many years, told the Global Times that she has diligently taken care of her then 91-year-old American employer for a decade.

Despite working round the clock, she only gets paid for 13 hours of work each day. Home care providers are only entitled to 13 hours of pay per the applicable rule of the New York State government since it is "assumed" that they should have eight hours of sleep and three-hour meal breaks.

According to Shi, their duties as home care workers and their assumed meal and rest breaks are incongruous. Patients with dementia require round-the-clock care to keep them safe. Every few hours, those under their care need to be rolled over. Home care providers work day and night, which exerts a great physical and psychological toll resulting in a variety of chronic ailments and premature death.

Shi said that although the US government ignores the "24-hour work system," home care providers should typically be scheduled for a "two-shift system" or a "multi-person rotating shift system." Shi and other ethnic and racial minority individuals working under similar conditions have been fighting for their rights for the last eight years, but have not had much luck.

In order to abolish the 24-hour work system, New York City Councilman Christopher Marte proposed a bill named the "No More 24 Bill," calling for legislation to ban the 24-hour work practice. However, the bill has been pending for around two years and is still in the review stage.

Marte's parents are immigrants from the Dominican Republic. His father runs a grocery store, and his mother used to work in a garment factory before becoming a home care worker. This family background gives Marte an intimate perspective on the plight of people most affected by the 24-hour work system in the US.

He told the Global Times that for decades, ethnic minorities have faced extremely harsh working conditions in the US, especially in New York City, where they are forced to work continuously for 24 hours, sometimes three to five days a week. However, these new immigrants have no say in policymaking and are exploited by special interest groups.

This is why Marte proposed the bill in 2022, and a hearing was held for the bill in the fall of the same year. If it receives support in the City Council, the bill will be passed into law. However, the bill has been ignored for over one year. According to Marte, the speaker of the New York City Council, Adrienne Adams, is mostly to blame for the delay of the bill's review.

It is the responsibility of Adams to set the order and timeline for the proposed review. Adams is obstructing the bill's passage, defending special interest organizations, and supporting acts of racial violence, according to Marte.

Collusion between government and business

According to publicly available data, Adams received an impressive number of votes to become the speaker of the New York City Council and assumed office in 2022. Her mother has worked as a correction officer for 20 years, and her father drives a truck. Adams once declared that she will always put labor first because she is the first ever African-American speaker of the New York City Council in history. Despite this promise, Adams ignores the opinions of ethnic and racial minorities.

In the US, the government buys insurance from insurance companies, which then dispatch home caregivers through caregiving agencies. However, the wages that are not fully paid to the home caregivers are divided among stakeholders.

Marte told the Global Times that this kind of collusion between government agencies and business is quite common in the US. In order to protect the interests of certain special interest groups, government agencies often ignore the demands of workers, especially from minority ethnic groups.

In fact, Marte and 28 other lawmakers were the ones who first presented the "No More 24 Bill." Since there are only 51 members on the City Council, a law can normally be signed by the speaker of the Council provided that more than half of the members vote in favor of it. However, because the law appeared to affect vested interests, the speaker's office did not want to put it to a vote in the City Council.

Public information and media reports show that the US government, big healthcare providers, insurance providers, and other interested parties stand to gain a significant deal from the present industrial paradigm. Insurance firms and caregiver dispatch agencies may gain billions of dollars by forcing minority ethnic families into the 24-hour labor system while only compensating them for 13 hours of work.

According to Marte, the speaker's office may have phoned the lawmakers who jointly presented the bill and threatened that none of the other bills they propose would pass if they brought up the "No More 24 Bill." This might have been in response to pressure from specific special interest groups. A few private arrangements were made, such as the legislator's district receiving additional political funding on condition that the bill is not brought up again.

Donations are the simplest way for businesses and politicians to work together. For instance, insurance firms and caregiver dispatch services might provide political support to legislators running for office again. In an effort to keep their "interest delivery" connection steady, some business leaders may occasionally also back the politicians they like.

Marte bitterly noted that whenever he tries to help ethnic and racial minorities to improve their situation, his efforts are often thwarted.

Public information shows that in order to protect their legitimate rights and interests, since 2018, some ethnic minority care workers have complained to the New York State Department of Labor (DOL). In 2019, the DOL began investigating some of their complaints and informed them that the investigation results confirmed wage theft.

However, in May and June of 2023, the DOL suddenly rejected the complaints of more than 100 care workers and sent letters refusing to continue the investigation on the grounds that they could not intervene in cases that entered arbitration or union collective bargaining.

Ron Kim, who serves in the New York State Assembly, wrote a letter to New York State Department of Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon for this matter, saying that the law should be used to protect workers from exploitation and demanded that the DOL immediately resume the investigation.

Kim told the Global Times that he thought the rejection of workers' demands by the DOL and other relevant agencies is not in compliance with the law, and is completely politically motivated.

In the US, legislation, law enforcement, and following the letter of the law are all dependent on the size of one's political power. If people with political power do not wish to comply with the law, then the law is meaningless, and can therefore not be applied to protect ethnic and racial minorities, said Kim.

According to Kim, healthcare interest groups are some of the most powerful political groups in New York and can directly cooperate with the governor's office and the mayor's office. They use people of color and minority ethnic groups as free labor to reap billions of dollars in profits, using this money to win over politicians by funding their political careers. In turn, said politicians act as legislative allies, protecting the vested interests of the interest groups - this is the political ecology of the US.

Politicians listen only to those who have greater political power, and are therefore not beholden to minority ethnic groups. The unique "revolving door" mechanism in the US makes it difficult for some people to break through the inherent circles and interest groups formed between government agencies and private sector actors such as insurance companies, said Kim.

American politics is essentially "money politics," Li Haidong, a professor at the China Foreign Affairs University, told the Global Times.

Some well-funded lobby groups, companies, or unscrupulous businessmen can use the fatal loopholes in American politics to deprive the general public of their legitimate rights, while protecting their own economic interests through using their money to interfere in political processes. It is not an exaggeration to say that American politics is "dark money politics," said Li.

Modern slavery

As a Latino lawmaker, Marte admits that racial discrimination and forced labor are still very common in the US. People from ethnic and racial minority groups work in jobs that are essential to the daily running of New York City as driving cabs, operating fast-food restaurants, running childcare facilities, and delivering food. In the beginning, their goal was simply to trade labor for a decent living wage, but because of the legal loopholes, some of them are forced to work longer hours without fair compensation.

According to Marte, it is easy to observe that systematic racism has had a major role in American history and is still evident in modern American culture, where people of color and ethnic minorities are mainly employed in low-paying jobs. Most of these people are in a condition of long-term oppression and find it impossible to plead for their legal rights.

The irony is not lost on Marte that in 2023, discussions about the brutal exploitation of people of color and ethnic minorities are still going on in the US, making a mockery of the claim that the US is "beacon of human rights."

These problems have existed in this country for hundreds of years. People often say that the US is the "land of freedom" and the "land of opportunity," but what is the cost of these so-called freedoms and opportunities? Are they obtained by exploiting the blood and sweat of people of color and ethnic minorities? How ironic, said Marte, noting that many new immigrants who come with the "American Dream" cannot live the life they have been dreaming of.

Li said that racism is an inherent gene in the US' own national independence and development, and can never be eliminated.

The exploitation of ethnic and racial minorities in the US is a "modern version of slavery." The practice of the top US leadership overriding the demands of the people reflects state of terminal illness of US politics, said Li.

If US government officials cannot solve issues affecting the basic rights and interests of the exploited groups in their own country or state, and instead use them as tools to further vested political agendas, it reflects the US government's incompetence and foolishness, said Li.

5/19: UT-Austin Lecturer Arrested and Fired After Confrontation With Police at Pro-Palestinian Demonstration

Annie Xia-The Texas Tribune

A University of Texas at Austin lecturer was arrested and fired this week in connection with his participation in a pro-Palestinian demonstration on campus, raising fresh concerns among faculty members and free speech advocates about academic protections in the state.

Richard Heyman, who has taught at UT for 18 years in the College of Liberal Arts, was arrested Wednesday by the Texas Department of Public Safety and charged with interfering with public duties, a Class B misdemeanor. The charge stems from Heyman's participation in an April 29 pro-Palestinian demonstration in which authorities arrested around 80 protesters who had set up an encampment on campus.

The university fired Heyman on Thursday through an email, according to his lawyer, Gerry Morris. Heyman was scheduled to teach three classes during the upcoming fall semester. According to Heyman's arrest affidavit, DPS troopers accused him of yelling expletives at law enforcement during the protest, pulling away a trooper's bike and making a motion with a water bottle "as if he were going to swing it and hit" a trooper.

Citing three video recordings of Heyman's actions, Morris disagreed with the affidavit's characterization of his client as physically disruptive.

Morris said the officer initiated physical contact and pushed Heyman, which caused Heyman to grab onto the bike's handlebar for balance. Morris said he plans to ask the Travis County Attorney's office to dismiss the case.

"This is a politically charged atmosphere that this occurred in," Morris said. "I think in a normal atmosphere, the prosecutor would look at this, drop it pretty quickly. But I'm not sure that it's going to move very quickly given what we're in the middle of."

Heyman's firing comes amid rising concern among Texas faculty groups that state legislators have passed laws that have led to increased scrutiny and insecurity regarding their jobs. Anne Lewis, an executive board member of the Texas State Employees Union, linked Heyman's firing to what she said are broader moves by the state to restrict academic freedom and First Amendment rights.

"I think it is an attack on higher education and its core values, and Richard is just one of many that is getting caught up in this attack," Lewis said. "He's the worst so far."

Last year Texas lawmakers passed Senate Bill 17, which banned diversity, equity and inclusion offices at Texas universities, and Senate Bill 18, which set out to terminate tenure at state universities but ended up only requiring schools to provide clear guidelines for how to obtain and keep tenure. Complying with SB 17 resulted in firings at universities across the state, with UT-Austin laying off dozens of employees earlier this year.

The state Legislature's Higher Education Committee will likely monitor the implementation of both laws and consider regulating faculty senates in the next legislative session, according to Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick's agenda for lawmakers during the interim period before the next legislative session. Faculty senates represent faculty members in open meetings to make recommendations on a wide variety of topics such as undergraduate degree programs and student services.

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