

whose people have been continuously robbed since its subordination to French and US colonial interests.

The so-called “migrant crisis” is an imperialist crisis, where the rich rob the poor across the world and blame the poor for trying to seek safer conditions from the permanent reactionary violence imposed on them. The criminals are not at the border; the criminals are the ones who have forced people to leave their homes to come to the border in the first place. The threat to workers is not from the migrants, but from the imperialists who exploit and oppress migrants, the same imperialists who exploit and oppress the entire working class. Deporting or barring migrants from entering the US won’t improve conditions for workers in the US because the imperialist class and working class are both international classes that transcend borders. Attacks on the conditions of workers in one part of the world will necessarily impact workers across the world; likewise, an offensive of workers and oppressed people against the imperialists serves the interests of the working class as a whole.

For the working class, its strength comes from its numbers and its organization; in the face of increased assaults on the democratic and economic interests of migrants and workers, increased unity across national backgrounds is necessary to counter the trend of reactionization. The imperialists are responsible for their own crises; workers and migrants should not be the ones to bear its burden.

There is No “Border Crisis” or “Migrant Crisis,” Only Imperialist Crisis

Breaking Down Biden’s Executive Order

Editorial Board of *The Worker* Newspaper

June 17, 2024



TheWorker.news

On June 4th, Biden signed an executive order that effectively shut down the US-Mexico border in an escalation of Trump's border and immigration policies. The regulation went into effect immediately, closing the border to anyone without an appointment whenever the number of arrests goes over 2,500 in a single day and remains closed until two weeks after the number of arrests is below a daily average of 1,500 for a week. The policy is designed to effectively keep the border closed through election day, as such numbers have not been reached since the early months of the pandemic when migration was at an all-time low. In recent weeks, there have been roughly 3,000 border crossings per day, while back in December there were about 10,000 per day.

Typically, migrants cross the border and surrender to US border agents in order to apply for asylum. From there, border agents arrest them and hold them in extremely poor conditions until their applications are processed, which could take up to a few years. The new policy prevents migrants from surrendering to border agents and makes it much harder to gain asylum for those that do.

In an interview with Democracy Now!, one migrant described the policy as a "trap" and that border officials "can always say that they have already exceeded 2,500, and then everyone goes back."

The executive order rests on a law known as 212(f) that allows the president to prevent the entry of foreigners they deem are "detrimental to the interests" of the country. Trump used this law to ban immigration from seven predominantly-Muslim countries and suspend migration through the southern border, the latter of which Biden is now re-implementing.

In his speech on the order, Biden stated that he is taking "actions to bar migrants who cross our southern border unlawfully from receiving asylum." However, according to both US and international law, migrants are allowed to apply for asylum regardless of how they enter the country. Trump's use of the law was eventually blocked by a federal court for being unconstitutional by violating this right, and Biden's order is also being challenged by the ACLU for the same reason.

conditions, and at the same time pits US-born workers against foreign-born workers. This takes the form of domestic policies and tendencies such as stagnant wages, attacks on child labor laws and workers' rights, and low regulations on industries particularly where migrant workers are concentrated, such as agriculture.

Both Biden and Trump—and their respectively aligned media outlets—have portrayed migrants as a national security risk and refer to the surge in migration as a "migrant crisis" or a "border crisis" in order to shift the blame from the imperialists to the migrants themselves. The real crisis is an economic one of the capitalists' making, reflected in a developing political crisis that is on full display as the electoral farce—the contest between the two decrepit deporters—unfolds. The imperialists and their policies have for over a century caused a great amount of impoverishment, reactionary violence and instability throughout the world, reaping superprofits from the intense exploitation of these populations and concentrating the wealth they produced in the US.

Calling it a "worldwide migrant crisis," as Biden does, obscures what lies at the basis of it. While there is a record 120 million people in the world currently displaced—the 12th consecutive annual increase—there is simultaneously a record number of armed conflicts in the world today since WW2. These reflect the deepening crisis of imperialism as well as the masses' increasing willingness to resort to force of arms to overcome the oppression and exploitation they face.

Where are the migrants at the US-Mexico border coming from? Among the top countries are Mexico, which is increasingly impoverished by US megaprojects, trade deals,⁸ and cartels that collaborate with US imperialists and the Mexican government; Venezuela, where US sanctions largely contributed to its economic collapse⁹ Guatemala, where the US imposed a series of military dictators for decades with the help of agriculture monopoly Chiquita (also recently found responsible in US court for death squads in Colombia); and Haiti, the former US colony and now semi-colony in the midst of a deep crisis supervised by the US,

⁸<https://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2013/11/24/what-weve-learned-from-nafta/under-nafta-mexico-suffered-and-the-united-states-felt-its-pain>

⁹<https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-21-239.pdf>

For the political circus of US elections, the lives of asylum-seekers are tools for Biden to appeal to Trump’s voter base and donors, giving his own liberal voting base only a slight difference in rhetoric.



Biden walks with border patrol agents along the US-Mexico border in Texas. AP Photo/Andrew Harnik

Reactionization: Attacks on Migrants and the Working Class

Historically, 212(f) has been used to deny visas to individuals applying at US consulates and embassies. The increasing scope of the use of this law, especially by means of executive order, reflects the tendency of power to be increasingly concentrated in the executive branch, the reactionization of the state and the curbing of democratic rights—in this case the right to asylum, along with broad attacks on the rights of migrants and the working class in general.

Imperialist politicians and media outlets have been shifting public opinion against migrants to justify increasingly restrictive policies against them. Such policies serve US imperialist domination and the resulting superexploitation and degradation of oppressed nationalities both abroad and domestically: making their position in the country more precarious forces them to accept lower pay and more dangerous working

Biden’s order claims to have “humanitarian exceptions” by excluding unaccompanied minors and victims of sex trafficking, allowing them to surrender themselves even if the border is shutdown.

But the humanity of such exceptions is questionable. A BBC investigation¹ into conditions at a child detention center in Texas months into Biden’s presidency found “disease is rampant, food can be dangerous and there are reports of sexual abuse.”

In practice, such a policy results in family separations on the one hand and fuels the ongoing rise in child labor in the US, which has seen a 70% increase over the last few years and largely relies on migrant child labor in particular. Biden’s exception for children coincides with nationwide attacks on child labor rights² that allow children to work starting from younger ages, work longer hours, and work in more dangerous conditions such as meatpacking and construction industries. Child labor in agriculture is legal in the US, which is the deadliest and among the least regulated industries³ and is comprised of an overwhelming majority of foreign-born workers.⁴

¹<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-57561760>

²Samuel Messidor, *The Worker Newspaper*, *State Legislators Move to Loosen Child Labor Laws as Federal Violations Skyrocket*

³Helen Zivar, *The Worker Newspaper*, *Exploitation of Farm Workers in the U.S.—Government Turns a Blind Eye*

⁴Oliver Wells, *The Worker Newspaper*, *8 Farmworkers Killed in Bus Accident While Commuting to Work*



US asylum camp housing child migrants in Donna, TX. The tent facility, which was designed to hold 250 people, housed more than 4,000 migrants at its peak occupancy. Children reported unsanitary and freezing conditions, being served expired or undercooked food, and a rancid environment. They were not allowed to go outside. Reuters.

Biden Fulfills Trump's Promises

Biden wants to continue carrying out Trump's policy while giving lip-service to his liberal voting base.

He claims that he will not send the US military to deport people, as Trump has promised to do if elected again. However, Biden has not only increased funding for ICE, but he has also deported migrants at a rate more than 3 times higher than Trump. The new executive order promises to increase that number by doubling the number of migrants placed on a fast-track deportation process to over 2,000 a day.

Biden also claims that his actions are different from Trump's because he is working with the Mexican government as "equal partners." But what equality can there be between an imperialist country and its semi-colony? The US has invested in the creation of megaprojects⁵ throughout

⁵A. D. Nachalo, *The Worker Newspaper, Mayan Train and the Interoceanic Corridor Megaprojects Bring Death and Deprivation to the Poor Peasants of Mexico*

Mexico that serves to increase the impoverishment of the people and increase their dependency on US capital, all the while stripping the people of their land and poisoning it. US politicians have on the one hand called for a military invasion of Mexico under the battle cry of fighting the cartels (which have a documented history of working with US and Mexican capitalists), while on the other side of the border the Mexican senate just a few months ago voted to approve⁶ the entry of US troops into the country under the rhetoric of "joint training." What Biden means by working alongside the Mexican government is the open subjection⁷ of the Mexican government to the interests of US capital.

Biden's other claim at differentiating himself from Trump is that he would never "demonize immigrants." Yet the fact remains that he is banning migrants under a law that essentially deems them to be a national security risk. He has laid bare that the key difference between the Democrats and Republicans is their rhetoric, and even that has little difference. Underlying their lies is their faithfulness to the class interests of the imperialists.

During Biden's acceptance speech for the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination, he said, "If I'm elected president, we're going to immediately end Trump's assault on the dignity of immigrant communities. We're going to restore our moral standing in the world and our historic role as a safe haven for refugees and asylum-seekers."

Now, a "Fact Sheet" posted by the White House brags that Biden's border policy is stricter than Republicans: "Biden taking action as Congressional Republicans put partisan politics ahead of national security, twice voting against toughest reforms in decades."

Biden's immigration policies fulfill Trump's promises—record numbers of deportations and attacks on migrants and the working class to facilitate new record profits for the imperialist class they both serve.

⁶The Worker Newspaper, *Mexico: The Senate approves the entry of gringo troops into national territory – Periódico Mural*

⁷The Red Herald, *Mega-projects, drought and loot: this is what Yankee Imperialism demands from Mexico*