

THE EPOCH TIMES SPECIAL REPORT

EPOCH INSIGHT

THE **BORDER** **CRISIS** AND AMERICA'S FATE

The impact of 5 million illegal
aliens and record amounts of
drugs in less than 2 years

**SPECIAL
REPORT**

**BORDER
IN
CRISIS**

WEEK 38, 2022

Border in Crisis

DEAR READER,
Over the past 20 months, an estimated 5 million people have illegally crossed the southern border.
That’s more than the combined total populations of Wyoming, Alaska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Delaware, and Rhode Island.
The crisis on the border briefly received national attention this month when Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis flew 50 illegal immigrants to Martha’s Vineyard.

The reality on the border, however, is grueling—and nonstop.
Ranchers who live on the border frequently find dead bodies on their properties, and their families live in fear.
High-speed pursuits of smugglers’ vehicles through border towns pose significant safety risks for communities.
Tons of fentanyl smuggled over the border kill tens of thousands of Americans across the nation each year.
Those who are smuggled into the country often end up in a new form of slavery, beholden to the cartels as they try to pay off their debts. Meanwhile, some politicians continue to push for illegal aliens to receive amnesty and voting rights.
The border crisis affects the whole nation, in all areas of life.
In this special report by The Epoch Times, you will learn about the realities of living on the border and the human cost of unfettered illegal immigration.



ON THE COVER

In this special report, read about the reality of the border crisis and how it’s affecting the entire nation.

ED JONES/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

EPOCH INSIGHT

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EPOCH INSIGHT

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Ranchers are assaulted, their dogs beaten, and their land littered with bodies.



Horses trot on a ranch, with the U.S.–Mexico border wall on the horizon, in Esperanza, Texas, on Jan. 15, 2019. | Joe Raedle/Getty Images

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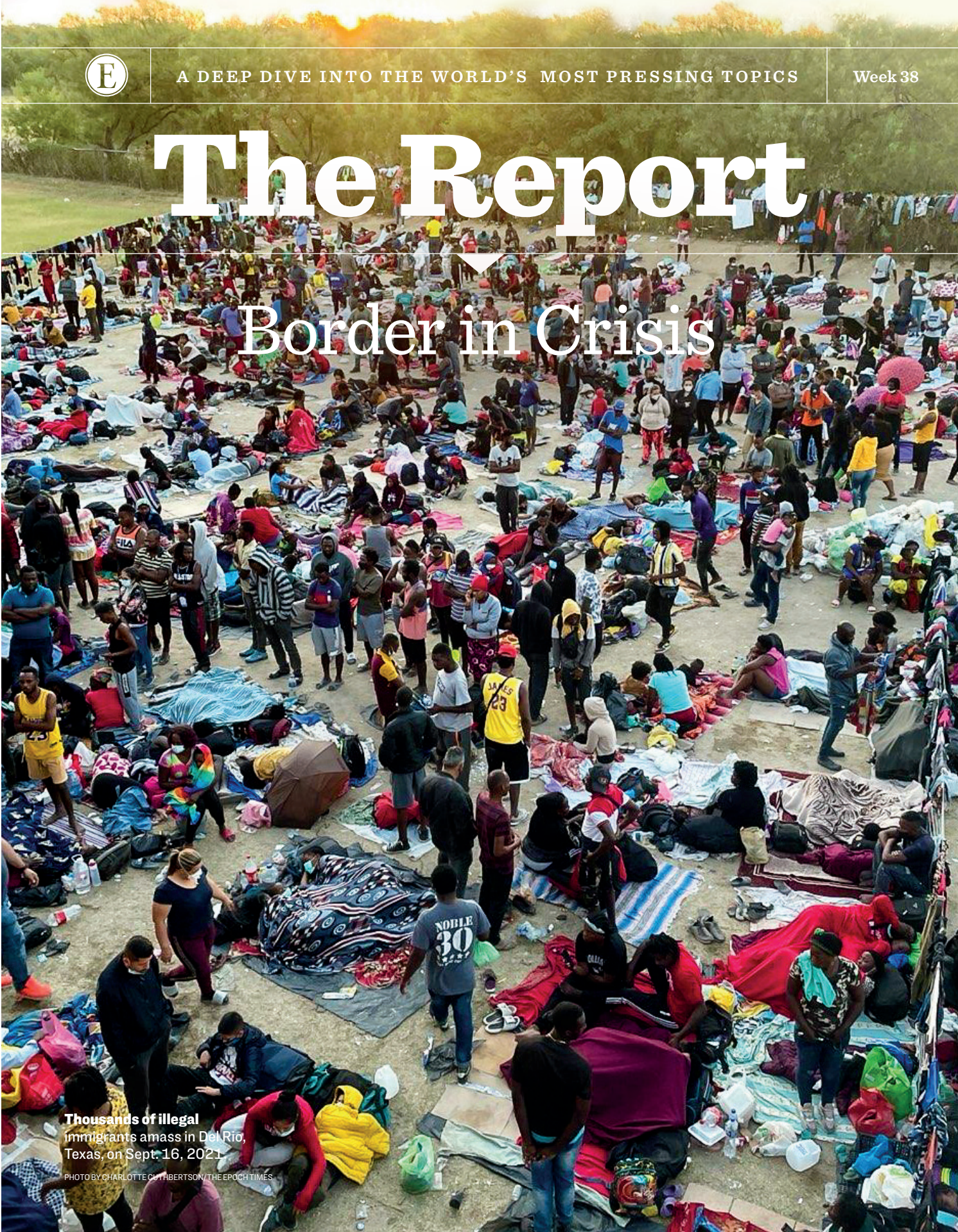
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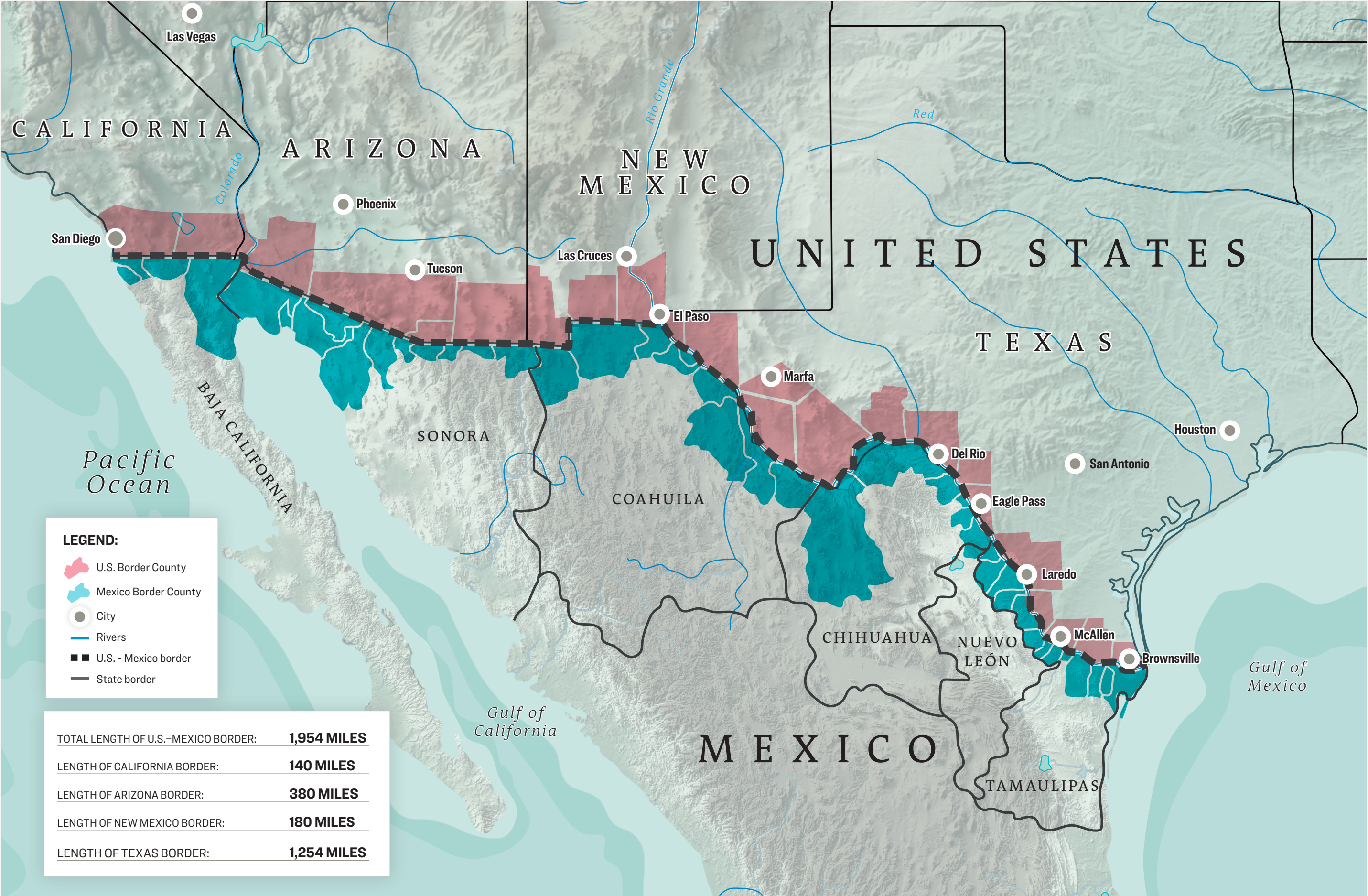


The Report

Border in Crisis

Thousands of illegal immigrants amass in Del Rio, Texas, on Sept. 16, 2021.

PHOTO BY CHARLOTTE CHILBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES



SOUTH TEXAS

LIFE FOR BORDER RANCHERS

ASSAULTED, DOGS BEATEN, FENCES DESTROYED, DEAD BODIES

By Charlotte Cuthbertson 🇲🇽

A ranch owner walks toward a portion of the unfinished border wall that former President Donald Trump tried to build, near Roma, Texas, on March 28, 2021.

PHOTO BY ED JONES/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

EAGLE PASS, TEXAS—RANCHERS along the south Texas border are having their livelihoods crushed by the volume of illegal aliens trampling through their properties, assaulting and threatening them, beating their dogs, cutting fences, destroying water lines, and breaking into their homes.

Some have moved their families off the property for safety, and ranch managers are quitting their jobs.

One rancher has found 17 dead bodies on his property this year, and on three occasions, he had his young children with him.

“How am I supposed to explain to a young child what a dead body is doing there, rotting, just lying there?” rancher and wildlife biologist Ben Binnion told the Texas Senate Committee on Border Security in Eagle Pass, Texas, on Aug. 10.

“My kids shouldn’t have to see that, especially on private property.”

Binnion manages about 150,000 acres of ranchland, which is mainly used for recreational hunting, 10 miles from the U.S.–Mexico border.

Nine years ago, when he first moved to the Maverick County ranch, he said Border Patrol apprehended 37 illegal aliens on his property during the year. Right now, he sees an average of 200 illegal aliens per night on the cameras he’s personally set up.

“They’re absolutely trashing our fences,” Binnion said. “I had to hire a full-time employee who spends 40 hours a week fixing fences and picking up trash. And that’s literally all he does.”

He said he’s added security cameras and installed hurricane shutters on the ranch houses to prevent break-ins.

“The houses that are not secure, we have to leave unlocked because they break the windows to get in. Those houses are broken into at least once a week,” he said.

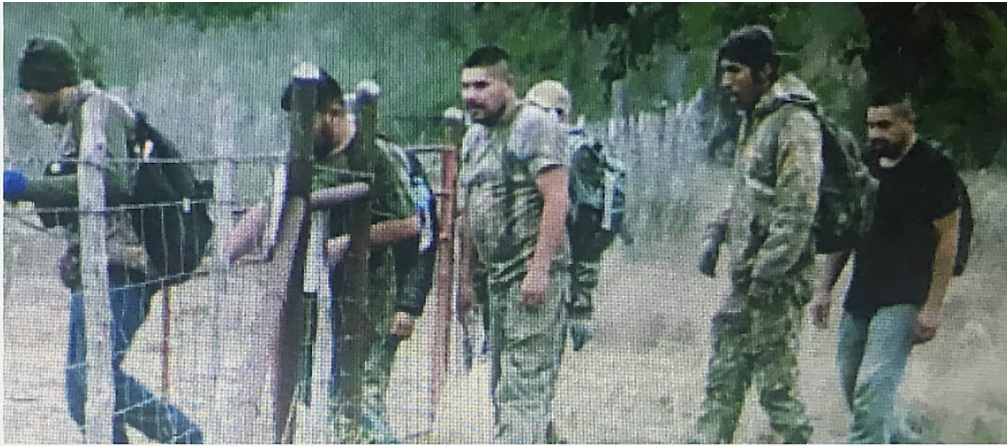
“I’ve actually moved my wife and kids off the ranch due to safety reasons. I don’t want to put them in that danger.”

Binnion said the financial loss is tough to estimate, but he’s looking at about \$300,000 so far this year from patching the damage being done.

“And that is simply putting a bandaid on a bullet hole. That has nothing to do with replacing anything. If we were to replace everything it’d be \$800,000 plus,” he said.

“We’re actually looking at hiring additional security for hunting season so our guests feel safer.”

Maverick County shares 88 miles of international border with Mexico, which is divided by the winding Rio Grande. It has one of the highest



Trail camera photos of illegal aliens provided by ranchers in Kinney County, Texas, in 2021.

rates of “gotaways”—up to 10,000 per month—of all 31 counties that border Mexico. Gotaways are recorded by Border Patrol as having been detected, but not apprehended.

The illegal alien gotaways traversing this region are trying to evade law enforcement because they are either criminals, previously deported, or they know they won’t gain legal entry.

Such was the case with a Colombian man being smuggled in a vehicle headed to San Antonio after he entered through Maverick County. The man, along with five other illegal aliens were stopped in Kinney County and apprehended. Once Border Patrol took the six into custody, agents discovered the Colombian is wanted for child sex offenses in the United States.

“My kids shouldn’t have to see [dead bodies], especially on private property.”

Ben Binnion, rancher and wildlife biologist

COURTESY OF RANCHERS

‘Completely Insane’

The border ranchers rarely call Border Patrol for help anymore. Agents are usually too tied up processing large groups of illegal aliens to respond. The ranchers’ main lifeline now is Texas state troopers, who Gov. Greg Abbott has deployed to border areas to provide some relief from the unending streams of traffic surging across the border.

Christopher Roswell’s family has owned property in Maverick County for several generations, and he’s lived there for 26 years.

“What I’ve witnessed over the last two years has been completely insane. Safety has become a major concern. My wife, my kids, our employees, and myself carry a pistol everywhere we go on the

ranch,” he said during the hearing at Eagle Pass.

“We have been cussed at, threatened, had rocks and sticks thrown at us. Our dogs have been beaten on multiple occasions by illegals. In the past, we have not had these issues.”

Roswell recently moved his family off the ranch due to safety fears.

As with many ranchers in this area of south Texas, Roswell’s main income is recreational hunting. Exotic or native game is a prized catch for some hunters and they’ll pay tens of thousands of dollars to get a shot at a home-grown trophy.

That means ranchers rely on their high game fences to keep stock on their ranch and particularly off any highways, where they’d be liable if an animal escaped and caused injury.

17
CORPSES

ONE RANCHER living along the South Texas border has found 17 dead bodies on his property this year.



Roswell said his fence by the main highway has been “completely ruined” from being cut and driven through countless times.

“Every hunting camp I have has been vandalized. Our headquarters have been broken into. Over half of our highway gates have been run through. We’ve had three electric gates destroyed. Most of my hunting blinds have been vandalized, windows and doors broken, one set on fire, several used as bathrooms,” Roswell said. All of the illegal aliens carry knives and travel in groups.

“For the first time, I’ve received phone calls asking if it’s safe to come hunt. We’ve had countless hunts ruined by illegals. Our hunters have been threatened by illegals. My livelihood is being threatened.

“It’s not just the damages that we have to deal with, it’s also the abuses of the human trafficking. In the last year, we have found six dead illegals that I’m aware of. I have helped women and men

▲ Ranchers from south Texas testify during a Texas Senate field hearing on border security in Eagle Pass, Texas, on Aug. 10.

A map of the south Texas border region highlighting Maverick and Kinney counties, which share an international boundary with Mexico.



10,000
MAVERICK COUNTY has one of the highest rates of “gotaways”—up to 10,000 per month—of all 31 counties that border Mexico.

who have been beaten, raped, and abandoned by their groups.

“This past winter, we found a little girl, she was 8 years old. She had been lost for three days all by herself because her group left her.”

Roswell urges people to think about the same thing happening to their own property and their own backyards and gardens.

“And then imagine your kids or your grandkids playing in those yards. Because that’s what we’re living through every single week,” he said.

“We’ve had our ranch truck stolen. The amount of trash on the property is completely disgusting. We have tons and tons of backpacks and bottles and trash bags. Probably about 200,000 gallons of fresh water has just been wasted and poured out onto the ground.

“All of these damages in two years’ time have added up to a little over \$200,000. And that’s without us building any new fence. Why should I incur this cost?”

Organics on Hold

Ruben Garibay bought some land and moved to Maverick County to start an organic farming operation. In 2019 he started clearing and preparing the land for his crops.

But at the beginning of 2021, when he was ready to get things underway, the border crisis hit and he couldn’t plant anything.

“We have yet to be able to start it because of all the trampling already in the fields. As some of you may know, in organic farming, any kind of contamination deems the crop completely useless and you’ve got to destroy it within a 10-foot radius of any footprint, animal, anything

that comes in,” he said.

“So although we have high fences—not to keep exotic game in, but to keep any kind of traffic or animals out—they’re still jumping them.”

Garibay said he tried to place ladders for illegal aliens to climb his fences without ruining them, or to direct them to walk along the equipment pathways, but to no avail.

He has no choice but to wait and hope things will change.

“It’s pretty discouraging,” he said.

‘Fear Factor’

Wayne King spends four and a half hours every day checking fences on the exotic game ranch he manages in Kinney County. Prior to January 2021, he said he checked the fences once a week or maybe once every two weeks.

“Since then, I have fixed 252 holes in my fence. I fixed water troughs, I fixed water lines. They come through our place like it’s a highway. I have been woke up at night at 11 p.m., 12 a.m., 1 o’clock in the morning with them banging all over my doors, my windows. I’ve had to use my pistol to run them off,” he said.

“It’s become a dangerous, dangerous thing to live every night of your life wondering. I sleep with pistols under my pillow, pistols in every room. Pistols on my nightstand. It’s just crazy.”

King is located 25 miles from the nearest town. “911 doesn’t help me a bit.”

He said illegal aliens have cut his fences wide enough to drive vehicles through. His gates have been destroyed and left open. He estimates he’s lost in revenue between \$150,000 and \$200,000 worth of exotic game.

“It’s just getting to the point where if it was not for ... our highway patrol agency, we might as well give up. We’re done,” he said.

“To live every day of your life in fear. Not accounting for the work that’s lost or the work we have to do, it’s the fear factor of being in the pasture.”

Cows on Highway

Rancher Luis Valderrama was a Border Patrol agent for 24 years and a criminal investigator with Customs and Border Protection for another 10.

“I’ve been around a long time, I’ve seen these immigration influxes up and down. This is very unique, what we’re going through right now, with the number of aliens coming through,” he said. “Border Patrol, their hands are tied.”

Valderrama said he’s grateful for the extra state troopers and National Guardsmen in the area.

The National Guard initially put some concertina wire along the riverbank to deter illegal crossings.

“The first day they put it up there. I got up on the river and I was watching a group crossing, because they cross all the time,” Valderrama said. “They just jumped over like a deer—it didn’t slow them down at all.”

The National Guard is now erecting an eight-foot-high cyclone fence topped with razor wire along the river boundary.

“We’ll see how that works. The properties next to me don’t have a fence, so I’m going to still have some traffic through it,” he said.

Valderrama’s fence along the highway boundary is even more critical as he has 50 head of cattle to contain. The fence is cut often.

“And these holes are huge. People just walk by without having to dip their heads. A cow easily gets out, and I’ve had cows get out on the highway,” he said.

The fence has been damaged so much, Valderrama got an estimate for a replacement. It came to \$70,000, and it would be cut again the next day anyway, so it doesn’t make sense to do it.

“We can’t just stand back and watch this stuff. The federal government needs to stand up and do their business. And Border Patrol can do the business; you know they do have the manpower and all that but they’re not allowed to do it,” he said.

The ranchers all said they have to be careful about giving illegal aliens water or allowing them to charge their cell phones.

“If you give them anything, you’re gonna have the world show up,” Binnion said. “Because they’ll drop a GPS pin on the smartphone map for that location and send it back to Mexico for the next group to use. And the next one after that.” ■

The border ranchers rarely call Border Patrol for help anymore as agents are usually too tied up processing large groups of illegal aliens to respond.

\$300,000
HAS BEEN SPENT by a rancher so far this year on patching the damage from illegal immigrants.

POLICIES

UNPRECEDENTED ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

Border Patrol chief says lack of consequences is driving border crisis

BY CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON

THE U.S. SOUTHERN BORDER IS IN crisis largely because of a lack of consequences being applied to most illegal aliens, U.S. Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz says.

“In my experience, we have seen increases when there are no consequences,” Ortiz said on July 28 during a deposition for a lawsuit against the federal government brought by Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody.

Ortiz also said that the border crisis creates unsafe conditions for Americans.

His comments are a departure from statements made by Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, who has repeatedly said that the border is closed and that no crisis exists.

On Aug. 29, White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said during a press briefing that people aren’t walking across the U.S.–Mexico border.

“It’s not just that people are walking across—across the border,” she said. “That’s not how it works.”

At current levels, Border Patrol agents are ♦



U.S. Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz at a community meeting in Del Rio, Texas, on June 24, 2021.

PHOTO BY CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON/
THE EPOCH TIMES



apprehending an average of 6,000 people each day who are walking across the southern border illegally, according to Customs and Border Protection (CBP) data.

Agents are on pace to apprehend more than 2 million illegal aliens during the fiscal year that ends on Sept. 30. Border Patrol agents have arrested 66 illegal aliens along the southern border who are on the U.S. government's terrorist watchlist and 9,381 convicted criminal aliens.

Ortiz said that as long as the administration isn't detaining or removing most illegal immigrants, the numbers will increase.

"There is an assumption if migrant populations are told that there's a potential that they may be released, that yes, you can see increases," he said.

He said migrants had an "unfavorable view" of Trump-era immigration policies, but since Joe Biden was elected president, unprecedented

numbers have entered the United States due to the perception that they'd be released and able to stay indefinitely.

Ortiz said that economics is a consistent driver of illegal immigration.

"I think almost every single one of the migrants that we encounter is being driven by economic opportunities that exist or the lack of economic opportunities in their home country," he said.

Catch and Release

In the first 10 months of this fiscal year, hundreds of thousands of illegal aliens have been released into the United States, pending their immigration court proceedings,

according to CBP data.

Through the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), Congress mandated that all inadmissible and illegal aliens be detained until their status is determined, after which they

**6,000
PEOPLE**

BORDER PATROL agents are apprehending an average of 6,000 illegal immigrants each day along the southern border.

A Border Patrol agent organizes a large group of illegal immigrants near Eagle Pass, Texas, on May 20.

are either deported or granted entry with a legal status.

Parole is an exception to this and, although it's not a legal status, it permits a one-year entry on "a case-by-case basis" for "urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit," according to the INA.

In the first 11 months of this fiscal year, CBP mass-released more than 282,200 illegal aliens under its new "Parole+ATD" category. ATD is an "alternatives to detention" program, which is acting as a workaround of the legal requirement to detain illegal aliens.

Under ATD, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) issues the illegal alien a trackable cell phone (or an ankle bracelet) that he or she can use to check in with the agency on a regular basis.

Under parole status, illegal immigrants don't have to provide Border Patrol with evidence of credible fear for asylum and are permitted entry without any preconditions, except a quick background check in the U.S. crime database.

The DHS's intention appears to be to provide illegal immigrants with the quickest pathway to being released into the United States.

Ortiz said a current focus of the Border Patrol is to find ways to process and release illegal aliens even more quickly using an electronic system. In some locations, the electronic system cuts processing times in half, he said.

"We are able to take biometrics in the field and determine immediately whether somebody has been apprehended previously, whether they have a criminal record, and whether they are a threat to our national security or to our officers," he said.

He said agents in Yuma, Arizona, are now using a mobile intake system 100 percent of the time. The agency's plan is to expand the practice to all U.S. land borders.

In addition, Ortiz said his agency is set to reduce its use of "expedited removal," which is an

accelerated procedure to remove illegal aliens.

ICE's detention space has been reduced in recent years from 51,379 beds in 2018 to its current count of 30,000. Biden's fiscal year 2023 budget asks for Congress to shave an additional 5,000 detention beds from ICE facilities, as well as to eliminate all 2,500 family beds.

Florida Lawsuit

The Florida lawsuit, which is set for trial in January 2023, accuses the Biden administration of violating immigration law and the Constitution. It wants the court to issue a permanent injunction compelling the administration to follow immigration law, cease using the Parole+ATD pathway, and detain illegal aliens until their cases are decided.

Over an eight-month period ending in July, nearly 40,000 illegal aliens who provided a Florida address and placed into the newly created Parole+ATD program failed to check in with ICE, Moody said in a statement.

"The federal government now has no idea of their location or activity—even though most of them are legally inadmissible," he said. ■

Two Nicaraguan nationals hold up the cellphones they received from Border Patrol before being released into the United States, in Kinney County, Texas, on April 29.



**"WE HAVE SEEN
INCREASES WHEN
THERE ARE NO
CONSEQUENCES."**

Raul Ortiz, chief, Border Patrol





EXCLUSIVE

A GLIMPSE INTO HUMAN SMUGGLING

From jail, a 17-year-old Mexican reveals
logistics of being smuggled into US

BY CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON

*Illegal immigrants attempt to
sneak across the Rio Grande
from the Mexican side to
Roma, Texas, on May 31, 2017.*

PHOTO BY THE EPOCH TIMES



GOLIAD, TEXAS—Three stash house operators, a raft guide, two walking guides, a bush hiking guide, a taxi driver, and at least three other drivers were coordinated to smuggle Martin Lazaro Bieya to Houston—his first major city after running the gauntlet through U.S. Border Patrol and law enforcement—from Reynosa, Mexico.

His final goal was Detroit, where he said an uncle had a job lined up for him.

Bieya’s trip was cut short in Goliad County, some 200 miles north of the border and 150 miles shy of Houston, after the vehicle in which he was being smuggled crashed into a culvert as the driver attempted to flee local law enforcement.

He initially fled the scene, but was picked up by the sheriff that evening after walking to a road to look for water and food.

The Epoch Times spoke with 17-year-old Bieya through a translator on June 23 as he sat in the Goliad jail.

Bieya said he’s from Veracruz in eastern Mex-

ico, where his family owns a small ranch, but he “can’t make enough money there.”

He says that in late May, he made the decision to come to the United States and called his uncle in Detroit.

“He told me he would get me to the United States,” Bieya said.

A couple of weeks later, Bieya and his father took a bus to Reynosa, a major city separated from McAllen, Texas, by the Rio Grande, which marks the international border.

In central Reynosa, the duo waited at a restaurant. They provided the uncle with their GPS location and what they were wearing, and a taxi soon arrived to take them to a stash house.

At the house, Bieya’s father bid him goodbye and got back in the taxi to return to Veracruz.

Inside the house, which Bieya said was good-looking, “not a trashy house,” four other Mexicans waited to be smuggled across the border. These weren’t the illegal crossers who turn themselves into Border Patrol for asylum, but rather, the “gotaways”—the tens of thousands

▲ *Illegal border-crossers are rescued by agents on a U.S. Customs and Border Protection boat after getting stuck halfway across the Rio Grande on Feb. 16, 2019.*

who evade capture every month because they’re unlikely to qualify for any type of legal entry.

A Mexican man in his mid-20s was running the house, Bieya said. He said that he didn’t have to pay anything for food, accommodation, or transport at any stage, but suspects that his uncle paid about \$7,000 to have him smuggled to Detroit.

“He said he paid a lot of money, but he never told me how much,” he said.

Bieya said he spent the night in the house, and around noon the next day, the five migrants were transported by car to “the end of a long road,” after which he estimates they walked about three miles to the bank of the Rio Grande.

There, they crossed the river in an inflatable raft and disembarked into the United States.

Two Mexican Americans appeared and escorted them further from the river.

“They knew what they were doing. They were just there to pick us up,” Bieya said. The group walked until nightfall, then stopped for a while before resuming

at about 1 a.m. They arrived at a stash house in McAllen, Texas, in the early morning, he said.

Three other illegal immigrants were already at the stash house, bringing their group to eight.

SEVERAL HOURS LATER, the group was transported to a second stash house in McAllen, where they waited until evening before squeezing into a Ford pickup truck. By now, there were 14 people to transport, including two Honduran nationals and one female.

“There were seven of us” jammed into the truck bed under a sheet of plywood to hide them, he said. “It was tight.”

“After about an hour on the road, the truck stopped and they told us to get out.”

Bieya said he didn’t know where they were, but the timing fits with where smugglers drop off illegal immigrants so they can walk through the brush to skirt the Border Patrol highway checkpoint near Falfurrias, Texas.

It’s one of the deadliest paths for illegal immigrants, where many die from heat-related issues. Guides, or “coyotes,” leave sick or injured people to fend for themselves.

The original two coyotes were still with Bieya’s group, and at this point, a third was present to lead them in their ensuing seven-night trek.

“We walked from 4 in the afternoon until 5 in the morning,” Bieya said. At the time, the temperature in South Texas was hitting the high-90s to 100s during

the day, while the night cooled to the mid-70s.

The group carried 1-gallon jugs for water, and when they ran dry, they’d find a livestock trough to refill. They ate only once a day.

“We all talked about what we would do if we made it safe into the United States,” he said. “I wanted to work for a couple of years and hopefully get citizenship.”

Helicopters with spotlights passed over several times, and they had to scurry into the brush to hide. He said he also saw drones three times during the trek. Two rattlesnakes met their demise during the trip.

After seven nights, Bieya said the group arrived at a paved road and waited for the pickup vehicle to arrive. Within an hour, a Chevy Tahoe SUV stopped, and they all crammed in. The next stop was supposed to be Houston, but in Goliad County, Sheriff Roy Boyd spotted them and attempted to pull the vehicle over.

The driver tried to escape, but lost control and crashed

into a culvert. All of the occupants, including Bieya, fled into the brush. But he was the last one to exit the vehicle and never saw the main group again. He said members of the group had told him they planned to go to New York, Virginia, the Carolinas, and Houston.

“I didn’t know what to do because I was so hungry, so thirsty,” he said. Later that evening, he said he decided to turn himself in.

Bieya found some workers near a road and asked them for water.

“They gave me two bottles of water and a ♣️

“WE WALKED FROM 4 IN THE AFTERNOON UNTIL 5 IN THE MORNING.”

Martin Lazaro Bieya, illegal immigrant

▼ *Martin Lazaro Bieya, an illegal immigrant from Mexico, sits in the Goliad County jail after being caught in Goliad, Texas, on June 23.*





Illegal immigrants cross the Rio Grande from Mexico into Eagle Pass, Texas, on Feb. 16, 2019.

beef taco,” he said. Not long afterward, the sheriff was passing by, saw him on the side of the road, and apprehended him.

Eight other members of the group were later apprehended in a nearby county. They were turned over to Border Patrol and taken back to Mexico, but Boyd has issued warrants for their arrests, should they reappear. The warrants include felony charges for engaging in organized crime, as well as several misdemeanors, including evading arrest, Boyd said.

The Cartel

The Gulf Cartel coordinates all the logistics of the human smuggling from the eastern part of Mexico right through the Texas corridor and deep into the United States, said Boyd.

“Just think of the logistics that go into it,” Boyd said. Bieya was just one person in a system that handles thousands of illegal aliens per day.

Officials in El Paso, Texas, recently estimated there were 60,000 people across the border in Ciudad Juárez waiting to enter the United States illegally. Boyd said he’s heard estimates of a half-million waiting to cross along the 1,254-mile Mexico–Texas border.

“As you move those people, where you’re moving them to has to be vacated by the people who are already there,” he said.

“It’s almost like warfare, the logistics of feed-

ing and transporting and housing and having water and the toiletries and all of the things that are required. It’s a phenomenal task just on the logistics side.”

He said working factories and warehouses in Mexico are common locations that cartels use to stash people until they’re ready to take them across the border.

Boyd said the cartels pay the Mexican government each month for the use of the “plazas,” which are the staging and border crossing areas. The government will allow a certain volume of drugs or amount of people to flow through per month, and if it exceeds that, the cartel is taxed, or the government will raid a warehouse and sit on the commodity until the cartel pays.

“It’s how they work with the drugs, so I suspect they work the exact same way with humans,”

Boyd said.

If too many people get stacked up waiting to cross, it causes a cash flow issue for the cartels, he said, “because now, the cartels have got to pay extra manpower, they’ve got to pay for water, they’ve got to pay for food, they’ve got to pay for toilet paper, they’ve got to pay for medicine—they’ve got to pay for all the things because it’s in the cartel’s interest to keep these people alive.”

“What these people don’t know at this point is that that payment to get across to Texas is not

A warning sign to cartels at the Goliad County boundary line, written in Spanish.

A map shows Goliad County in relation to the U.S.–Mexico border and Houston.

the final payment. The final payment gets told to them when they get to Houston,” he said.

Inside Texas, and beyond, the Gulf Cartel has an extensive network, with Atlanta being the next major hub beyond Houston.

“The cartel owns car dealerships, restaurants, various businesses, and it helps them launder their money, move their slaves, and maintain



CLOCKWISE FROM L: CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES. COURTESY OF GOLIAD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, THE EPOCH TIMES

a foothold within the communities,” Boyd said. “That’s how it functions, and it’s very complex, but it ensures the cartel’s total control of their operational area within the United States.”

The smuggler drivers are now often recruited via social media such as TikTok, WhatsApp, and Facebook, Boyd said.

“They were targeting Hispanic teenagers from the metropolitan areas like Houston, San Antonio, and Dallas,” he said.

“They show wads of money. And so you have a teenager who sees somebody with \$10,000, and they’re told, ‘You can drive down to Falfurrias, pick up eight people, drive up here, and you get this amount of money.’ It’s quick, easy money.”

On the deadly paths that illegal immigrants travel, guides leave sick or injured people to fend for themselves.

Boyd said there’s a large Hispanic community in Houston, of which a portion “sympathizes with Mexico and works for the cartel—and so they’re the operatives that get hired to go back and forth.”

Boyd’s goal is to deter the cartel from entering Goliad County. Within the 852 square miles of the county, he monitors 16 cartel sites that are currently dormant, but tactics change quickly.

“We can’t stop it. The federal government wants it. The federal government encourages it through their policies and procedures,” he said.

“All I can do is try to make it as uninviting as possible for them to come into Goliad. And that’s what we’ve been trying to do.”

Boyd started putting up large billboards on the county line last year.

“Warning! Drug and human traffickers: Turn around, do not enter Goliad County,” the signs read. “Go around. Or we will hunt you down and put you in Goliad County jail.”

He said they worked—when the signs were up, cartel activity decreased, and when the Texas Department of Transportation (DOT) removed the signs, cartel activity picked up again.

Boyd had to stop putting up the signs after an attorney general opinion came back saying a county isn’t authorized to place signs without approval from the DOT.

“We have a whole list of rules, we have a Constitution, we have laws,” Boyd said.

“The cartel only has one: to make money. So it makes them very quickly adaptable to whatever situation they find themselves in. They’re constantly morphing.” ■

NONGOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

UNITED NATIONS CASH HANDOUTS



A Honduran migrant woman's United Nations-issued cash card, which provides 2,500 pesos per month for four people, in Tapachula, Mexico, on Jan. 17.

UN ramping up use of 'humanitarian cash' for migrants heading to US border

By Charlotte Cuthbertson

DEL RIO, TEXAS—U.S. TAXPAYERS are increasingly funding the passage of a constant flow of migrants who ultimately cross illegally into the United States, according to new reports.

A United Nations “cash-based interventions” program provides migrants heading to the U.S. border with debit cards, help with housing, transport, and medical assistance. ♦



Some of the hundreds of Central Americans who are staying in an old factory in Piedras Negras, Mexico, on Feb. 15, 2019.

The assistance is accessible in cities on the well-traveled routes from Latin America through Mexico.

Thousands of migrants converge in southern Mexico where they apply for asylum—which gives them unfettered travel in Mexico—then most head directly to the U.S. border, where they cross illegally and claim asylum again.

Migrants there are issued debit cards that reload each month, according to Todd Bensman, who reported from the city of Tapachula at Mexico's southern border with Guatemala. Bensman is the senior national security fellow at the Center for Immigration Studies.

In Tapachula on Jan. 14, a Haitian man was waiting for his 3,600 pesos owed (about \$170), Bensman said. A Honduran woman said her cash card provided 2,500 pesos per month for four people.

In the northern Mexico border city of Reynosa, families were receiving the equivalent of \$400 every 15 days, he said.

“The United Nations began ramping up CBI [cash-based interventions] in 2019, spending \$60 million on 29,000 migrants in Latin America, and then doubling the outlays in 2020, with plans to vastly increase its use in the Americas during 2022 and beyond,” Bensman said.

In fiscal year 2021, the United States contributed nearly \$1.9 billion in humanitarian assistance to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), according to the State Department.

The United States funds about 20 percent of the total United Nations budget, which comprises 193 nations, and 40 percent of UNHCR's revenue, according to a report by the Council

“U.S. taxpayers should not be subsidizing a mass invasion of our country by an endless stream of unknown and unvetted migrants.”

Rep. Lance Gooden

20%

THE UNITED STATES funds about 20 percent of the total budget of the United Nations—which comprises 193 nations—and 40 percent of UNHCR's revenue.

A Haitian migrant shows his cash card provided by the United Nations, in Tapachula, Mexico, on Jan. 14.

on Foreign Relations. The UNHCR budget for 2022 is \$8.99 billion.

Cash-based interventions have been used by UNHCR for several decades.

They are “often a more dignified way of assisting affected populations, as they empower people to determine their own needs and the best way of meeting them,” according to the UNHCR.

Silvia Garduno, the U.N. spokesperson in Tapachula, Mexico, said the cash cards are strictly regulated as a humanitarian intervention.

“Humanitarian cash assistance is available only to individuals with particular vulnerabilities who are seeking asylum in Mexico and who intend to remain in the Mexican state where they have applied for asylum until the process is completed,” Garduno told Bensman.

“It is provided to help ensure they can meet basic living expenses while their requests for asylum in Mexico are processed. This process may last three to four months.”

However, Bensman said he questions that the program only applies to highly vulnerable people, and he wasn't able to get the actual criteria from authorities.

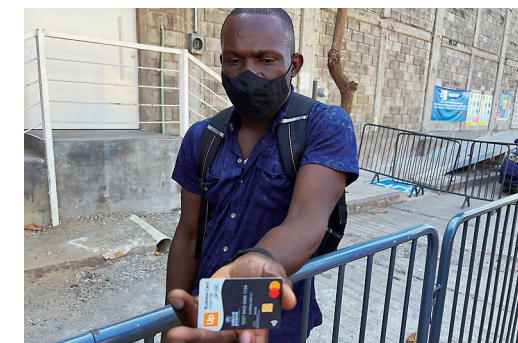
“I suspect they are being very liberal on the definitions based on the migrant demographics I have seen,” Bensman told The Epoch Times.

The vast majority of migrants congregating in Tapachula end up crossing the U.S. southern border within months.

Rep. Lance Gooden (R-Texas) introduced a bill on Dec. 7, 2021, to put a stop to U.S. payments to the UNHCR, the U.N. International Organization for Migration, and the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, but the bill remains in the House Committee on Foreign Affairs.

“U.S. taxpayers should not be subsidizing a mass invasion of our country by an endless stream of unknown and unvetted migrants,” Gooden wrote in a statement at the time.

“It is time for the Biden administration to put an end to this crisis and regain control of our southern border.” ■



LEFT PAGE: TODD BENSMAN/CENTER FOR IMMIGRATION STUDIES; RIGHT PAGE FROM TOP: CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES; TODD BENSMAN/CENTER FOR IMMIGRATION STUDIES

Not From Mexico

70 percent of illegal border-crossers hail from countries other than Mexico *By Charlotte Cuthbertson*



160 COUNTRIES

▲ A Border Patrol agent talks to a Chinese man who just waded across the Rio Grande from Mexico into Eagle Pass, Texas, on Jan. 25.

ONE ARE THE DAYS when most illegal border-crossers were easy-to-return, single male Mexicans looking for work. About 70 percent of the more than 203,500 people apprehended along the southern border in August were foreign nationals from countries other than Mexico, according to Customs and Border Protection (CBP) data. Of those illegal aliens encountered,

104,679 were from countries other than Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, or El Salvador. CBP only provides data on some nationalities, so it isn't clear how many countries are represented in the numbers; however, officials have previously noted it's more than 160. In the first 11 months of this fiscal year, Border Patrol agents along the U.S.-Mexico border arrested more than 2.1 million people after they crossed illegally be-

tween ports of entry. A further 800,000 are known to have evaded Border Patrol after entry. It's impossible to estimate how many more weren't detected or apprehended. Border Patrol agents apprehended 78 individuals on the terrorist screening database between ports of entry on the southern border over the past 11 months. In 11 months, more than 1.1 million illegal aliens have been released into the United States while they await their immigration court proceedings, according to CBP data. "Failing communist regimes in Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Cuba are driving a new wave of migration across the Western Hemisphere, including the recent increase in encounters at the southwest U.S. border," CBP Commissioner Chris Magnus said in a Sept. 19 statement. "Those fleeing repressive regimes pose significant challenges for processing and removal." The agency also said it anticipates illegal immigration to increase further. **Other Nationalities Surging** Cuban nationals have flooded across the southern border since the beginning of the 2022 fiscal year, which began on Oct. 1, 2021, and ends on Sept. 30. Border Patrol agents have arrested more than 194,000 Cubans during the past 11 months. That's equal to almost 590 Cubans entering illegally every day and a 410 percent increase from fiscal year 2021, when just over 38,000 Cubans were apprehended. Nicaraguans are also crossing in droves, with 145,400 apprehended so far this fiscal year—a 190 percent increase on the prior year and a 6,600 percent increase from fiscal 2020. Venezuelans are the next largest group to cross the border, with border agents apprehending 153,666 in the past 11 months. The increase over fiscal year 2020, when just 1,262 Venezuelans were apprehended, is a remarkable 12,000 percent. Significant numbers of illegal aliens from other nations have also crossed the U.S.-Mexico border in the past 11 months, including Haitians (30,646), Turks (13,814, compared to 1,373 in fiscal 2021), Indians (16,219, compared to

Apprehended in 2022 Fiscal Year
Cubans - More than 194,000
Venezuelans - 153,666
Nicaraguans - 145,400
Ukrainians - 81,000
Haitians - 30,646
Indians - 16,219
Turks - 13,814
Russians - 4,503

104,679 PEOPLE
WHO ENTERED THE UNITED STATES illegally during August originated from countries other than Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, or El Salvador.

2,958 in fiscal 2021), and Russians (4,503, compared to 509 in fiscal 2021). There has been an increase in the number of Ukrainians without legal entry papers presenting themselves at ports of entry, rather than crossing in between. In the past 11 months, 81,000 Ukrainians have sought entry, compared to fewer than 10,000 in the previous two years. Chinese nationals are the same, preferring to enter at ports of entry without legal entry papers. The DHS says its border strategy is "based on six pillars: surge resources; increase efficiency to reduce strain on the border; employ an aggressive consequence regime; bolster the capacity of NGOs and partner with state and local partners; go after cartels and smugglers; and work with our regional partners." "This comprehensive plan leverages a whole-of-government approach to prepare for and manage the current and anticipated increases in encounters of noncitizens at our Southwest Border," it says. ■



▲ Illegal immigrants cross the Rio Grande between Del Rio (far side), Texas, and Acuña, Mexico, on Sept. 20, 2021.



▲ Five Chinese illegal immigrants wait within a large group of illegal immigrants near Eagle Pass, Texas, on May 20.

ALL PHOTOS BY CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES



A port of entry on the U.S.-Mexico border in Nogales, Ariz., on May 23, 2018.

PHOTO BY SAMIRA BOUAOU/THE EPOCH TIMES

By Charlotte Cuthbertson

AS DRUGS POUR ACROSS THE southern border, only about 18 percent of vehicles entering from Mexico are searched by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers, their K-9s, and X-ray equipment, according to Guadalupe Ramirez, CBP director of field operations for Arizona.

The vast majority of the drugs that are seized at the southern border are being driven through the ports of entry, hidden in commercial trucks and personal vehicles.

In one week in August, officers at Arizona's small border town of Nogales' port of entry seized more than 1.2 million fentanyl pills.

More contraband-detecting technology is in the pipeline for some ports of entry, including Nogales, where CBP's ability to search will increase from 100 commercial trucks a day to 600 to 800 per day, Ramirez said.

"We had a seizure last month where they basically took the floor of a commercial trailer and they took out the middle section of the floor and they put in some metal containers that had the fentanyl pills," he said, referring to the Nogales commercial port of entry. "It was big—several hundred pounds of fentanyl, primarily pills but also powder."

The amount of fentanyl seized by U.S. border authorities along the southern border since June increased by 220 percent in an already record-breaking year. CBP and Border Patrol agents seized 687 pounds of the deadly substance in June and 2,287 pounds in August, according to CBP statistics.

Two milligrams of fentanyl can be fatal.

CBP officers seize almost 10 times the volume of fentanyl per year than Border Patrol, which operates between the ports of entry.

The amount of fentanyl seized this fiscal year is four times more than it was in fiscal year 2019.

Ramirez said it's hard to estimate how much contraband CBP officers don't catch.

The cartels are "willing to take some loss," with drug shipments being seized at the border, according to Ramirez.

"They're going to send multiple shipments through, and if we knock down most of them and one gets by, that's still profitable for them," he said. "We're doing a fantastic job, and you see it in the increase. But I'm still concerned, because you just don't know. You don't know what you don't know."

"One of the things that I look at is what is the price—and as the price goes up, that means that we're probably catching more; if the price goes ♦

CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES

OPIOID CRISIS

SOUTHERN BORDER DRUG GATEWAY

As cartels drive drugs across border, CBP only searching 18 percent of vehicles



More contraband-detecting technology is in the pipeline. For example in Nogales, CBP’s ability to search will increase from 100 commercial trucks a day to 600–800 per day.

“When these kids are buying Xanax, they think, ‘Well, it’s no big deal. Mom and Dad get it prescribed, what’s the big deal?’” said April Babcock, who started the Facebook group “Lost Voices of Fentanyl.”

Babcock, whose son was killed by fentanyl in 2019, said a fentanyl-related death is a poisoning, not an overdose.

“The term overdose means there’s a safe dose to take, and you took too much. There’s no safe dose of illicit fentanyl,” she told The Epoch Times in a recent interview.

“When you go out and you buy a Xanax or you buy an Adderall or anything, but you’re dying from fentanyl, that’s a deception. These kids are being deceived. And they’re being poisoned to death.

“You might have a fake Percocet that’s got enough fentanyl in it to kill 40 people. Then, you might get another fake Percocet that has no fentanyl in it at all.”

Boosting Search Capacity

Ramirez is itching to get the new scanning technology up and running.

Currently, the system is laborious. “For instance, with a mobile X-ray here at the port of Nogales, we have to line the trucks up, we have to get the drivers down, put them in a secure area, and then we scan maybe six trucks at a time. And we have to take the time for that one officer in that truck to interpret all the images before releasing the truck or referring the truck [to secondary screening],” Ramirez said.

He hopes the new multi-energy X-ray system will be installed and a fully staffed operations center will be in place to quickly read the images by the end of the year.

“So we can just drive the trucks through,” Ramirez said.

The K-9s are still the superior tool for detecting drugs, he said, but they need a lot of rest, especially in the heat.

“Those canines are irreplaceable. They can pick up the scent even when someone will take a package [of drugs] and shrink wrap it and then drop it into the fuel tank—our dogs will pick that up,” he said. ■

down, that means we’re probably not catching as much.”

Currently, a fentanyl-laced pill is as cheap as \$2 in Arizona and as expensive as \$120 on the Indian reservations in Wyoming, according to Derek Maltz, former director of the Drug Enforcement Administration’s (DEA’s) special operations division.

“With all the awesome work being done by CBP and law enforcement around the country seizing massive amounts of deadly drugs, it’s scary to think what’s getting into America,” Maltz told The Epoch Times via email, mentioning the record number of fentanyl seizures.

“This is a clear indication we have a tsunami of deadly fake pills hitting the streets in all communities around the country.”

Fentanyl Pipeline

Arizona and California are the main gateways for the drugs that CBP seizes at the ports of entry.

The Sinaloa cartel sits south of those states. “It seems to be the commonality that it’s coming from Sinaloa and Sonora. They can bring in the precursors through their seaports in Mexico from Asia,” Ramirez told The Epoch Times.

The Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG) sends its fentanyl into Texas.

In August 2019, the Mexican navy intercepted a 25-ton shipload of fentanyl originating from China and bound for Culiacán, Sinaloa—the home base of the Sinaloa cartel in Mexico.

The precursor chemicals to make illicit fentanyl primarily ship from China, but India is also joining the market, and Mexico is starting to make its own. Fentanyl has fast become the primary cause

of many of the 107,000 U.S. overdose deaths per year.

The chemicals are converted to the deadly synthetic opioid fentanyl in cartel-run labs.

“The drug traffickers in Mexico discovered that it’s easier for them to make these synthetics than to have to grow a plant—marijuana or cocaine or opium. They can set up these clandestine labs throughout Sinaloa and Sonora,” Ramirez said. “Then, it’s pretty much a direct route into California and Arizona.”

Over the past weekend, CBP officers at the Nogales port seized five loads

of drugs, including 400,000 fentanyl pills and 152 pounds of methamphetamines, according to Nogales Port Director Michael W. Humphries.

“Concealment methods included the back wall of a truck cab, side walls of a vehicle, throughout a pickup,” Humphries wrote on Twitter.

Approximately 30,000 of the fentanyl pills



(Top Left) A Customs and Border Protection officer works with a police dog to check parcels at John F. Kennedy Airport’s U.S. Postal Service facility in New York on June 24, 2019.

(Above Left) Boxes holding a total of more than 3,100 pounds of illicit drugs seized at the southwest border, in San Diego on Oct. 9, 2020.

(Top Right) A CBP agent searches an automobile for contraband, as vehicles wait to enter the United States in San Ysidro, Calif., on Oct. 2, 2019.

(Above Right) Seized drugs, including approximately 47,000 rainbow-colored fentanyl pills, 186,000 blue fentanyl pills, and 6.5 pounds of meth, that were hidden in a floor compartment in a vehicle, in Nogales, Ariz., on Sept. 3.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: JOHANNES EISEL/AFPIA VIA GETTY IMAGES; SANDY HUI/FAKRA/FP VIA GETTY IMAGES; US CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION



Laborers in a strawberry field near Ventura, Calif., on Aug. 5.

PHOTO BY MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES

INDENTURED

NEW SLAVE CLASS

Illegal immigrants become new slave class in US, says Texas sheriff

BY CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON

GOLIAD, TEXAS—FEDERAL immigration officials have long said that every illegal immigrant who crosses the U.S. southern border has to pay the Mexican cartel in control of that area of the border, known as a “plaza.”

Fees vary depending on the nationality of the border-crosser and what type of “service” they’re paying for. It’s cheaper for those who want to cross and then turn themselves over to Border Patrol, although it’s still pricier for foreign nationals traveling from farther afield, such as China, Africa, or the Middle East.

For the individuals who want to avoid Border Patrol and get smuggled to their destination city in the United States, it costs more and involves more complicated logistics.

A recent Justice Department indictment of four Guatemalan smugglers revealed that the organization charged people between \$10,000 and \$12,000 to be brought from Guatemala to the United States illegally. Several Chinese illegal aliens have previously told The Epoch Times that they paid \$15,000 to get into the country.

These aliens, who evade Border Patrol, are recorded as “gotaways” if agents or cameras detect their presence.

So far this fiscal year, Border Patrol agents have recorded near 850,000 known gotaways, according to former Immigration and Customs Enforcement Director Tom Homan and several Customs and Border Protection sources.

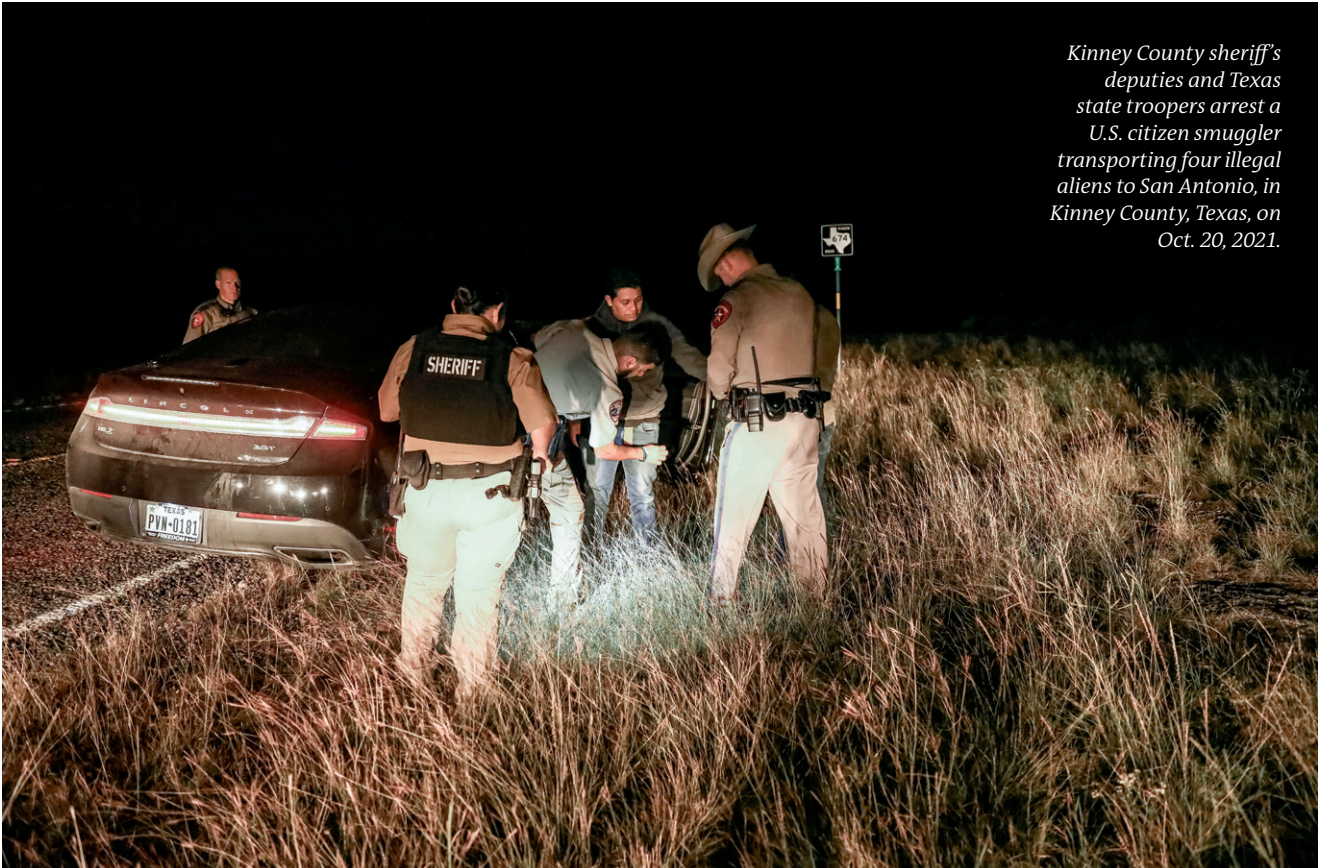
The gotaways often end up indentured to the cartel and spend years paying off their debt—no matter what they were promised at the outset, according to Goliad County Sheriff Roy Boyd.

“I actually have a letter from a sex slave house out of Rockport [Texas] from a search warrant I ran some years ago that articulates it,” Boyd told The Epoch Times on June 23. “It takes 8 to 13 years to buy your freedom once you come into the United States.”

He said Houston is the first major destination for many illegal aliens once they get across the border into Texas.

“Once they get to Houston, where they think they’re going to be shipped out to their families, they’re not,” Boyd said. “In reality, what happens is once they get to Houston, they’re then told that they owe another \$5,000, \$10,000, depending on where they’re from and how much money is invested in them. And they have to work that debt off.”

Working off the debt can involve anything from hospitality work, landscaping, and factory work to forced prostitution and drug



Kinney County sheriff's deputies and Texas state troopers arrest a U.S. citizen smuggler transporting four illegal aliens to San Antonio, in Kinney County, Texas, on Oct. 20, 2021.

“It takes 8 to 13 years to buy your freedom once you come into the United States.”

Roy Boyd,
sheriff, Goliad County

trafficking, he said. Boyd said his office caught a female smuggling three female illegal immigrants in her car last year. “We brought them here to jail. And what we found out was that those three females who thought they were going to be brought here and reunited with their family, were actually going to be taken to Chinatown in Houston and put into sex slavery,” Boyd said. “The smuggler actually had the fake Social Security cards in her underwear.”

In a more recent case, northern Texas woman Manuela Magdalena Jimon Castro, 30, was charged on Aug. 4 with alien harboring. Castro and a family member worked with a smuggling operation to hold illegal aliens hostage at their home and threatened to deprive them of food and water until they paid \$11,000 to \$12,000 or “worked off” the debt, according to the Department of Justice (DOJ).

Law enforcement officers found 17 illegal immigrants, including two minor children, in the Castro home.

If convicted, Castro faces up to five years in federal prison.

Slavery isn’t exclusive to the getaway popula-

tion of illegal immigrants; visa holders and asylum-seekers have also been lured in.

In 2014, during an unprecedented surge of unaccompanied minors crossing the border, the Office of Refugee Resettlement placed eight children into the hands of traffickers, according to a report by the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, released in 2018.

“The traffickers put the children into forced labor on an egg farm in Marion, Ohio,” the report states. “The children worked for no pay for 12 hours a day, six to seven days a week, and lived in deplorable conditions. The traffickers threatened them and their families with violence if the children did not comply with them.”

The traffickers lured the children into the United States over a four-month period, with promises of education and a better life, according to the report.

“There are a lot more slaves than people realize,” Boyd said. “It’s going on within our own sight, but we don’t recognize it, because it doesn’t look like what the History Channel tells us slavery looks like.”

“Slavery is perpetuated, continued, and expands at a constant rate. That’s what we’re seeing.” ■

THIS PAGE: CHARLOTTE/HERBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES



MEXICAN CARTELS

DRONE CAPTURES IMAGES OF MEXICAN CARTEL CAMP

Mexican cartels are battling for territory less than half a mile from the Arizona border

By Allan Stein

ARIVACA, ARIZ.—THE FIRST gunshots seemed to come down the mountain on the other side of the border fence with Mexico, just east of Arivaca, Arizona, where rival drug cartel factions battle to the death for supremacy.

Sam, my security guide, listened closely as more shots rang out. Sam is the pseudonym he uses to conceal his identity and that of his security company in Arizona. He's been threatened by the Sinaloa cartel for conducting border-watching activities. He now fears for the safety of his employees and family.

The gunshots came from hunters, no doubt, although not the kind you would typically expect.

"Where exactly do you think the shots are coming from?" I asked Sam nervously from the back seat of his pickup truck.

"I think they're to the right," he said, focused on the nearest mountain. "They could be on top of that big peak as well."

It wasn't as if we were invisible, clambering noisily up the winding dirt fire road in the border zone known as the California Gulch, part of the Coronado National Forest in southern Arizona.

Our arrival in Sam's gargantuan white Chevy

Silverado on the sweltering morning of Aug. 25 was about as clandestine as a bullhorn in a public library.

"They could be warning shots"—for us, Sam said. "But this is where they're coming. Right here."

Below our position, the unfinished Trump border wall and fence stretched east and west for miles, then abruptly stopped. On the U.S. side

of the border, cattle grazed among dry clumps of grass or basked in the imperfect shade of sparse shrubbery, swatting flies with their tails.

The jagged peaks on the Mexican side of the steel-grated border fence loomed green and majestic. Strange, though, how nature doesn't immediately reveal its secrets. Hidden among the Las Guijas Mountains are some of the worst elements of the Sinaloa Cartel, Sam said.

"How strong is your stomach?" Kyle, Sam's security specialist, had asked me the day before.

The fact that I enjoyed watching gory horror movies was good enough for Kyle to share an actual cellphone video of a man being mauled by two pit bulls in a Mexican border town not far from us.

Unfortunately, some things can't be unseen.

Kyle said that kind of cartel brutality is com-

Sam and Kyle use their drone to seek out and photograph nearby cartel encampments on Mexico's side of the border fence.



(Top) Still footage from a drone shows a Mexican drug cartel faction (red dot) camped outside the U.S. border near Arivaca, Ariz., on Aug. 25. (Above) Close-up drone footage shows a rival drug cartel faction member talking on a hand-held radio on the Mexican side of the U.S.-Mexico border, east of Arivaca, Ariz., on Aug. 25.

(Above) Close-up drone footage shows a heavily armed Mexican drug cartel member walking near Arizona's border with Mexico on Aug. 25. Seconds later, the man took aim at the drone with his rifle.

FROM TOP: COURTESY OF A PRIVATE ARIZONA SECURITY COMPANY



Credit: Arizona Border Recon

▲ A group of heavily armed, suspected cartel members at a gate along the Mexico-Arizona border in 2018.

48 MILES PER HOUR

THE DRONE USED BY

Sam's company has a maximum range of five miles and can travel at speeds of over 48 miles per hour, hundreds of feet above the ground.

mon in cities and towns on the Mexican side of the border fence.

"These guys are battling for control of the Sinaloa cartel. You have fights within fights," said Sam, speaking both from experience and professional intelligence gathering.

Sam believes cartel mayhem eventually will spill across the U.S. border in military force, bringing death and destruction to Americans—but not if a coalition of private citizens, law enforcement, and security firms that he envisions has its say.

The real battle, he said, isn't about winning hearts and minds. It's about matching intel with intel, using superior surveillance techniques and equipment to beat the drug and human smugglers.

For this purpose, Sam's company recently acquired a \$33,000 JTI-branded drone that they frequently use to conduct border reconnaissance missions for clients and law enforcement.

The drone is a beast of versatility that's equipped with high-definition and thermal cameras, and high-powered zoom lenses.

Kyle operates the drone from the pickup bed

using a console and laptop computer for imaging purposes. The drone, which has a maximum range of five miles, can travel at speeds of more than 48 miles per hour, hundreds of feet above the ground. Batteries are interchangeable and will last 45 minutes on a single charge.

Clad in fortified gray plastic with four propellers to carry it aloft, you can hear the drone yet rarely see it at higher altitudes.

Sam and Kyle's mission on that day was to seek out and photograph nearby cartel encampments on Mexico's side of the border fence.

Kyle took the drone out of a suitcase, then placed it in the middle of the fire road as he prepared for takeoff. With the push of a button on the console, the drone whirled to life, propellers spinning like a supercharged weed-whacker.

Up, up, and away the drone went with the turn of a joystick.

Kyle monitored the action on the console screen, while Sam watched on a laptop computer. The rugged mountain terrain below seemed alien in both viewfinders, taking shape when Kyle maneuvered to a lower altitude.

"My guess is there are two factions here," Sam

said. "One is trying to keep [the other] from pushing east, the other west. We think they're on the peak right below us—oh, there they are!"

One of the factions is Los Chapitos, whose founder is Ivan Archivaldo-Guzman Salazar, also known as Chapito, a Mexican narco-trafficker and son of imprisoned drug lord Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman.

Guzman was head of the Sinaloa cartel until his arrest and extradition to the United States in 2017.

The other faction is El Mayo, led by suspected Mexican drug kingpin Ismael Maro Zambada-García.

Sam said the factions currently are at war to control the entire Sinaloa cartel on Arizona's southern flank.

High above the nearest mountain less than a half-mile away, the drone's camera suddenly spied two blue tarps spaced about 25 yards apart. In one of the tents, a man could be seen talking frantically on a hand-held radio.

As Kyle zoomed in, the screen showed another man in body armor walking out of the bush, carrying what appeared to be an AR-15 semi-automatic rifle—definitely cartel.

"We found his [expletive]!" Sam shouted and gave

Kyle a fist bump, but it was too soon to celebrate.

At that moment, the man looked up and saw the drone.

He raised his rifle and took aim.

"He's trying to find out where [the drone noise] is coming from," Sam cried. "Whoa! Whoa! Get out of there!"

Kyle hit the joystick and the drone moved to a safe distance—just before the man could get off a shot.

He was now running in our direction.

"He's got a ways to go to get to the border wall," Sam said.

But it was time to get out of there—fast. However, getting out would be harder than getting in.

Along the escape route were unforeseen twists and turns and a few dead ends that took us closer to the border fence and the rifle-wielding cartel member. Finally, after many false starts and turns, we found our way back to the main fire

road and out of danger.

Sam and Kyle had promised a "hot spot" of cartel activity today, and they delivered.

For Americans living near Arizona's southern border wall, it keeps getting hotter every day. ■

Sam says the real battle is about using superior surveillance techniques and equipment to beat the drug and human smugglers.



▲ Sam, the owner of a private security firm in Arizona, keeps watch with binoculars over the U.S. border wall with Mexico on Aug. 25.



◀ An Arizona private security firm keeps high-tech equipment, including a surveillance drone, secure in heavy-duty suitcases in the back of a company pickup truck on Aug. 25.

FROM L: ARIZONA BORDER RECON; ALLAN STEIN/THE EPOCH TIMES

Galveston Lt. Constable Paul Edinburgh arrests a couple from Oklahoma who were smuggling six illegal immigrants from the U.S.–Mexico border through Kinney County, Texas, on Aug. 28.

PHOTO BY CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES



HUMAN SMUGGLING

THE LURE OF *QUICK* *CASH*

*Cartels entice US
citizens to smuggle
illegal aliens in Arizona*

BY ALLEN STEIN

CASA GRANDE, ARIZ. — Mexican drug cartel money drives international human smuggling operations in the United States, according to the owner of a private investigation company in Arizona that deals with border security issues.

Without it, the industry wouldn't exist, he says.

Sam (using a pseudonym, because of concern for his personal safety) told The Epoch Times that human smuggling along Arizona's 372-mile border with Mexico couldn't happen without a defective federal border policy, and American greed makes drug and human smuggling possible.

He's seen cartel money lure U.S. grandmothers out of retirement, college students looking to make a fast dollar, social justice warriors, and "humanitarians" driven by conscience and politics—average citizens to outward appearances.

Many are everyday people you would never suspect of aiding and abetting the cartels in a lucrative business as inhumane as human smuggling. Still, these people have the best chance of sliding under the U.S. Border Patrol's radar.

"The cartels would not be getting top dollar—\$2,500 for each migrant entering the country illegally," he said. "U.S. citizens would not risk going to jail if the money wasn't there.

"The [cartels] control it. You don't cross the border without paying the money. And if you can't pay the money, you either are put to work carrying a load [of drugs]," or forced into sex ❖



▲ A Border Patrol truck drives by the wall at the U.S.–Mexico border in Yuma, Ariz., on May 12, 2021.

\$250,000 FINE

ALIEN SMUGGLING IN Arizona is a federal crime that carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, or both. In cases where death occurs, the maximum penalty is death.

trafficking or some other activity. Alien smuggling in Arizona is a federal crime that carries a maximum of 10 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, or both. In cases when death occurs, the maximum penalty is death. In July, Benjamin Gallegos, 24, of Tucson received a two-year prison sentence after he pleaded guilty to conspiracy for supervising illegal aliens arriving from Mexico, Central America, and South America. On Nov. 18, 2021, Amelia Gonzalez-Lira, 43, of Phoenix, pleaded guilty in federal court to her involvement as coordinator of a human smuggling operation in Avondale, Arizona. Court records stated Gonzalez-Lira conspired to transport and harbor more than 100 illegal aliens for profit, following a U.S. Department of Homeland Security investigation. Co-conspirator Sergio Vazquez-Flores, 46, of Goodyear, Arizona, pleaded guilty to conspiracy on Nov. 5, 2021, after authorities charged him with operating a stash house in Avondale on behalf of Gonzalez-Lira. “To anyone who’s anti-border and anti-wall, why is it only we are the bad guys?” Sam said on a recent Arizona border wall visit. “What other nation has open borders as we do? If I cross the border into Mexico, I will

get arrested and go to a Mexican prison. And they’re going to keep me there. And the [U.S.] State Department will have to argue to get me back and free me. In the southern border town of Arivaca, Arizona, about 60 miles south of Casa Grande as the crow flies, citizens are known to conduct humanitarian operations, dispersing food and water to illegal aliens crossing into the United States through the Coronado National Forest and other points of entry. Whether they know it or not, Sam said humanitarians assist the cartels and their human smugglers known as “coyotes” through the aid they provide. “Usually, a lot of foot traffic is coming up to this point. Casa Grande is a hub for human and drug trafficking and disperses from here. It connects the I-8 and I-10. Those are two major highways to move product and people, and they have the Indian reservation here,” Sam says. Some Arivaca residents seemed ambivalent as Sam and security specialist Kyle made a brief stop on their way to the border wall fence east of the town in a white Chevy Silverado equipped with thermal imaging equipment. Outside the downtown general store, Kyle checked the electronic gear stored in the back of the truck.

FROM L: APU GOMES/GETTY IMAGES; CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON/THEPOUCH TIMES

Just then, a man in a white pickup rolled alongside, frowning. “What are you doing?” he asked. Kyle eyed the man cautiously. “Surveying,” he said. “Well, there’s nothing to survey here,” the man said, then drove off. Further up the street, the La Gitana restaurant warned citizen border monitors to stay away. “Unwanted. Members of any vigilante or border militia group including, but not limited to, AZ Border Recon. Do not enter our establishment. We have the right to refuse service to any person or persons we deem undesirable.” Sam and Kyle dislike the term “vigilante.” Instead, they consider themselves patriotic citizens helping law enforcement to secure the border. Kyle said they aren’t militia members, despite their thick beards and rugged appearance. Sam said the company’s border work is “pro bono” to a large extent. He supports sane immigration laws—not only for the sake of U.S. citizens but also for the illegal aliens who face extreme hardship and even death in the desert. But he knows law enforcement is spread thin and can’t do it all alone. Many illegal aliens arrive at the border fence as unaccompanied children—toddlers barely out of their diapers. “You get a car [load] of six people—that’s over \$10,000,” Sam said. “The people coming through this area don’t want to be caught. They’re the criminals; they’re the bad element. “In Yuma, [Arizona,] they come across in big parties. They’ll come across the fence and sit down and wait for the Border Patrol to come. “It’s usually family units,” he adds. “It’s the same in Sasabe [Arizona] and Arivaca. They have large groups of children, but they just come across the fence, sit down, and wait for Border Patrol to come and get them.” Sam said many illegal aliens are children in groups of 30 or more, with only one adult to guide them across the border. Once they cross over, they are less likely to be deported immediately. Sam said high-speed chases with coyotes and their U.S. counterparts with police and Border Patrol are familiar sights near the border towns of Douglas and Nogales. However, most smuggling activity occurs along the border. On the border wall fence opposite the town of Douglas sits the quaint Mexican city of Agua Prieta, Sonora. Here, cartel activity—murder and brutality—are daily events. “[The cartels] recruit people from up north— younger people,” enticing Americans with money to transport illegal aliens once they cross

“They operate in all states. All states in this country have representatives of the Sinaloa cartel.”

Sam, owner of a private investigation company

into the United States, Sam said. “The younger people take their parents’ cars and make their way” to Arizona from California. He says illegal border crossings in Arizona are “just as bad—or worse—in some cases, depending on where you are,” as in Texas. “Del Rio is the busiest sector in Texas, but Yuma is catching up and surpassing them,” he said. From October 2021 to June 2022, the Border Patrol encountered more than 2 million illegal aliens at the U.S. southern border, apprehending 207,000 migrants in June alone. Illegal migrant deaths also hit a record 670 this year compared to 566 deaths in 2021. Sam and Kyle said they’ve come across the bodies of migrants who died of heat exposure in desolate areas of Casa Grande. According to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), human smuggling is an international business worth billions of dollars. It involves people seeking covert entry into the United States who “know they need to pay an organization for transport.” The smugglers escort the illegal aliens across the border through the desert, then through stash houses to their final destinations in the United States. “A portion of the smuggling fees paid to the transnational criminal organizations helps fuel their criminal enterprises,” ICE stated. Sam said money is the main incentive the cartels use to recruit everyday U.S. citizens as de facto human smugglers. “They use social media—Snapchat, Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger—they use all these social media platforms to recruit people,” he said. “They operate in all states. All states in this country have representatives of the Sinaloa cartel. “You think of the U.S. military having global reach, so does the Sinaloa cartel.” ■

▼ A vehicle containing six illegal immigrants is stopped after crossing the U.S.–Mexico border, in Kinney County, Texas, on Aug. 28.



BORDER WALL

OPEN FLOODGATES IN ARIZONA

Southern border wall gaps highlight breaches, weaknesses

By Allan Stein

DOUGLAS, ARIZ.—THE CHEVY PICKUP truck growled like a wary pit bull as it crept along the narrow dirt road parallel to Arizona's southern border wall fence with Mexico.

Sam, the owner of a private Arizona security firm, stopped the truck and put it in park.

"We're on the Roosevelt easement right now," he said bluntly. "The federal government owns this entire road."

Something, though, was glaringly out of place on Aug. 24.

Three massive irrigation gates built into the steel border wall fence were open for anyone to walk through.

On the Mexican side of the border wall, fresh water bottles lay on the ground, covered in dew. Someone had also left origami puppets with the word "Peace" and notes in Spanish and English in plastic zip-closure bags.

"Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us," the note reads.

Humanitarians leave water bottles, food for the illegal immigrants, and even children's toys to pick up as they cross into the United States through the open gates, said Sam (a pseudonym he uses to protect his identity and that of his company).

"There's another open gate bigger than this one, down that way," he said, pointing up the easement. "There are five or six gates like this"—all open.

"And this is the new wall Trump built. What sense does it make? How about closing the gates?" ➡



Open floodgates provide easy access for illegal aliens crossing into the United States from Mexico along the southern border wall fence in Douglas, Ariz., on Aug. 24.

PHOTO BY ALLAN STEIN/THE EPOCH TIMES



Illegal immigrants enter the United States from Mexico through a gap in the border wall separating the Mexican town of Algodones from Yuma, Arizona, on May 16.

Private border watchers face the public stigma of being called vigilantes, militia groups, or even racists, Sam says.

Sam believes the Roosevelt easement is key to border security through enforcement from the federal level. The easement is a 60-foot-wide dirt road owned by the federal government along the U.S.–Mexico border, spanning nearly 2,000 miles across three of the four border states. In 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt established the federal easement with the intention of protecting border states against smugglers operating between the United States and Mexico. Border wall construction in Arizona stopped soon after President Joe Biden took office in 2021. Its projected construction cost was more than \$21 billion and would require nearly four years to complete. Sam said the Roosevelt easement is like a constitutional “no man’s land,” where federal law enforcement could do the most good at preventing illegal immigration.

In July 2020, the Bureau of Land Management announced the transfer of 65.74 acres of federal public lands in Arizona and New Mexico to the U.S. Army to aid the installation of power and utility infrastructure to support border wall security. On Aug. 24, much of that infrastructure appeared incomplete along the portion of the easement between the cities of Bisbee and Douglas in Arizona. Sam told The Epoch Times that thousands of illegal aliens pass easily through breaches in the wall each month, with little to stop them. Signs written in Spanish greet the migrants with an emergency phone number to call. “No Trespassing” signs are written in English. “I tried to push one [gate] shut. It’s pretty hard to shut,” said Kyle, Sam’s security specialist, riding in the truck’s passenger seat. “They would be secure if they were [kept] shut.” “There are people here that are tired of the

bull,” Sam said. “People aid the cartels and the migrants because they’re migrants themselves.” Further up the road, a lone U.S. Border Patrol officer sat in a pickup truck, watching as we approached. “Why are the irrigation gates kept open?” he was asked. The officer responded that the gates stay open during monsoon season, allowing water and debris to wash through and prevent flooding. “But doesn’t that make it easy for migrants to cross into the United States?” The officer nodded and said the location has been “somewhat active” with illegal crossings. As we moved further up the easement, we found more open gates and even strips of camouflage fabric caught in barbed wire—signs of illegal crossings. “Whoever was hauling backpacks got hung up on here,” Kyle said.

Kyle says it’s ‘disheartening’ when U.S. citizens are left to deal with crime and other adverse effects of illegal immigration.

Illegal immigrants purchase camouflage backpacks and other necessities at makeshift stores along the human smuggling routes run by the Mexican drug cartels. It’s kind of like a mini retail chain, Kyle said. Sam said that many illegal aliens would stop coming if law enforcement had the manpower and resources to intercept them and send them home. “They [either] don’t have the money, or they don’t have the manpower,” Kyle said. Though Sam’s security firm is willing to help monitor the border, law enforcement is hesitant to take them up on the offer, saying they aren’t sworn officers, and they don’t want the liability. Sam said that his firm hires only people with military or law enforcement experience, and only after a strict background check. “We get intel just like [law enforcement] does. We’re just as valuable. We can be just as valuable,” he said. Private border watchers also face the public stigma of being called vigilantes, militia groups, or even racists—characterizations that Sam vehemently disputes. “I’m not going to hire somebody who will be a liability. I don’t want loose cannons—shoot first and ask questions later,” he said. U.S. Customs and Border Patrol didn’t respond to a request for comment. The Pima County Sheriff’s Department deferred to the Border Patrol when contacted by The Epoch Times. Kyle said it’s “disheartening” when U.S. citizens are left to deal with crime and other adverse effects of illegal immigration. “That’s why it’s disheartening for me to talk to [a rancher], and he’s calling for help, and nobody shows up. Or they’re five hours late,” he said. “It’s a national security issue. It’s like, ‘We’ll get there whenever.’” ■

U.S. Border Patrol agents watch over a group of illegal immigrants that crossed the southern border from Mexico into Yuma, Ariz., on Dec. 7, 2021.



FROM TOP: FREDERIC J. BROWN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES; JOHN MOORE/GETTY IMAGES

A step ladder straddles an electrified fence near the border wall fence to usher illegal immigrants across private property, in Hereford, Ariz., on Aug. 24.

PHOTO BY ALLAN STEIN/
THE EPOCH TIMES

POLICY IMPACT

Sleepless ON THE BORDER

Illegal immigration keeps Arizona cattle ranchers armed, awake at night

By Allan Stein

PALOMINAS, ARIZ. — CATTLE ranchers Joe and Patty Scelso didn't always feel the need to carry side-arms walking on their property.

Twenty-eight years ago, the Rock-in JP Ranch was their dream of a country home-stead come true—103 acres of lush grassland, towering cypress, and low-slung mesquite framed with distant green mountain peaks.

It was a quiet place—perfect for raising a small herd of cattle and staging rodeos.

Today, their dream has gone south as illegal immigrants continue marching north through the unfinished border wall fence with Mexico just two miles from their property in Palominas, Arizona.

The illegal immigrants use their land with abandon as a way station waiting for cars—even taxis—to come and pick them up.

They come at “all hours,” Joe Scelso said, sitting on his front porch, watching ominous thunderclouds gather on the horizon.

At least for now, the monsoon rains have stemmed the constant flow of illegal aliens onto their land.

“They were coming in here—one, two, three at a time,” he said. “People will come out of the bushes, pick them up, and drive them out of here.”

“I finally put up that gate to keep them [out], but they keep coming through the gate.”

The trash the illegal aliens leave behind includes used feminine hygiene products, diapers, toilet paper, and human feces—“you name it,” Scelso told The Epoch Times.

“Whatever they don't need or want, they throw on the ground. Now, they all wear camouflage. They never used to.”

“It's just gotten worse and worse and worse. Better under Trump? Oh, yes,” he said.

Down by the river lies the unfinished border wall fence. While the wall doesn't stop every illegal immigrant, Scelso said, “it slows it down considerably.”

The Scelsos say they don't fear for their lives since they're armed constantly and have big dogs for safety.

Even so, they're watchful—and prepared for anything.

They also feel there's not much else they can do under the government's current open border policy and with law enforcement in short supply.

The solution to illegal immigration, Joe Scelso says, is to “seal the border.”

“Finish that wall,” his wife added.

Absent a strict border policy from Washing-

ton, Arizona's Gov. Doug Ducey recently signed an order directing the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs to plug the gaps in the Yuma border wall with shipping containers.

The project, expected to cost \$6 million, has sparked criticism that the measure falls short of an actual border wall that works.

“Arizona has had enough. We can't wait any longer,” said Ducey in a recent statement.

He added that President Joe Biden's “lack of urgency on border security is a dereliction of duty.”

“For the last two years, Arizona has made every attempt to work with Washington to address the crisis on our border. Time and time again, we've stepped in to clean their mess.”

On June 30, Ducey signed the “most meaningful border security legislation in Arizona history,” earmarking \$564 million to secure the border with a physical barrier and other improvements.

The legislation includes \$15 million for a Department of Public Safety southern border coordinated response center and \$30 million to combat drug trafficking, human smuggling, illegal immigration, and other border-related crimes.

It also seeks to resolve critical public safety staff shortages and equip law enforcement with surveillance technology to target border crime and illegal immigration.

In Cochise County, population 125,500, on the southeastern corner of Arizona, Sheriff Mark Dannels lauded Ducey's order as a step forward to securing the border.

“When the southern border is secure, Cochise County and the entire state are safer,” Dannels said in a statement. “Lax border policies from the federal government and U.S. Congress are putting Arizonans in danger.”

All that sounds well and good, the Scelsos say, but doesn't yet address illegal immigration on their land.

The couple says their rancher neighbors are just as upset over the worsening situation with alien trespassers.

Joe Scelso said he had once encountered a woman and her boyfriend on his property and identified them as humanitarians helping the illegal aliens.

“I know why you're here. Don't come back again. You'll be sorry the next time,” he told them.

The woman came back a year later, he said.

“Since the open border policy started, it's gotten worse,” said Scelso, a retired San Diego police officer. “We had one night where three vehicles



“Seal the border.”

Joe Scelso, cattle rancher



(Top) Belongings left by illegal immigrants by a dirt road near the Rio Grande in Eagle Pass, Texas, on June 30. **(Above Left)** Joe Scelso (R) and his wife, Patty, say more and more illegal aliens have been using their property as a way station since President Donald Trump left office. **(Above Right)** Joe Scelso, owner of the Rockin JP Ranch, fixes a damaged wire fence on his property, in Hereford, Ariz., on Aug. 24.

[arrived] together. They were honking their horns. Thirty minutes later, three more vehicles came in.” Scelso said he called the Border Patrol, the Highway Patrol, and the county sheriff’s department—but “nobody showed up.” “I don’t care who answers the phone. I want somebody here to help us,” Scelso said. Patty Scelso said law enforcement officers “really try” to be helpful, “but they tell me they’re stretched thin. They’ll tell me on the phone.” On another occasion an illegal alien tried to steal the Scelso’s all-terrain vehicle but pushed the kill switch by accident, rendering the ATV inoperable. “Otherwise, it would have been gone,” Joe Scelso said. “They come through here and turn on our water faucets. They fill their water bottles and leave [the faucets] running; they come across the river from the property behind us. They have the combination of our fences.

“Finish that wall.”

Patty Scelso,
cattle rancher

“Look out there. Do you see how thick that brush is? This [area] used to be like that. I cleared all that out. When the brush was like that, they’d come right up a short distance from the house,” Scelso said. Patty Scelso remembered when she nearly stepped on an illegal alien asleep in a gulley in thick bushes. “There were a lot of bushes you couldn’t see,” she said. “My horse almost stepped on them.” The Scelsos say their neighbors feel the same way—“pretty well perturbed.” “The only thing that’s going to solve this problem is if they seal the border again and start screening who comes in,” Joe Scelso said. One thing is sure—he won’t let anyone drive him off his property. “They’re not going to chase me out of here. This is my place,” Scelso said. ■

THIS PAGE FROM TOP: CHANDAN K. HANNA/AP; VIA GETTY IMAGES; ALLAN STEIN/THE EPOCH TIMES



BORDER SECURITY

THE BATTLE FOR THE TEXAS BORDER

By Charlotte Cuthbertson ♦

As Texans lose hope in the federal government,
pressure is growing for going it alone

*Illegal immigrants wait to
be transported to a central
processing center, shortly after
crossing the southern border
from Mexico, near McAllen,
Texas, on March 26, 2018.*

PHOTO BY LOREN ELLIOTT/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

DEL RIO, TEXAS—THE BORDER crisis has reached a point where a growing chorus in Texas is pushing for the state to take matters into its own hands.

Several state Republican lawmakers, bolstered by their U.S. congressional counterparts, argue that Texas needs to step up because the state is being invaded—or, chestrated by Mexican cartels—and the Constitution allows for defense.

The decision rests on the governor, who would have to declare the crisis an invasion to invoke the state constitutional powers.

Article IV, Section 4 of the U.S. Constitution states, in part: “The United States

shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion.”

Article I, Section 10 of the U.S. Constitution states, in part: “No State shall, without the Consent of Congress ... engage in War, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent Danger as will not admit of delay.”

The sheer volume of illegal aliens and drugs coming across the border constitutes a cartel-style invasion, according to five Texas state representatives and five congressmen who recently visited the southern border in Del Rio, Texas.

Combined with federal inaction, it’s enough to trigger state action, they argue.

“There has never been a greater marketing or advertising campaign for the human traffickers, the sex traffickers, the drug cartels, than Joe Biden and Kamala Harris’s open-border policies,” state Rep. Brian Harrison said.

During the first year of President Joe Biden’s tenure, all metrics of border security have dramatically decreased. Fewer Border Patrol agents are

patrolling the border, border wall construction has been halted, more drugs are being smuggled in, more high-speed chases and crashes are occurring in border towns, and fewer illegal aliens are being deported.

The administration’s response to the unprecedented increase in illegal immigrants has been to find ways to process and release them more quickly into the United States. The vast majority (about 85 percent) won’t ultimately be granted asylum, but their case will be processed years after arrival and after a work permit has been issued.

Border security has given way to a United Nations-style policy that focuses on the “safe, orderly, and hu-

mane” movement of anyone who wants to live in the United States. Open borders advocates argue that “wanting a better life” is reason enough to let anyone cross illegally into the United States and that trying to stem illegal



“Every property that [illegal immigrants] trespass on is one victim. ... No one kidnapped them from Mexico and placed them upon the property owners’ land.”

Brent Smith, attorney, Kinney County



President Joe Biden in a meeting at the White House on July 28.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: L: CHARLOTTE CUTLER/SON/THE EPOCH TIMES; PAUL RATUE/ANNA MONE/GETTY IMAGES

immigration is often considered racist.

U.S. Rep. Chip Roy (R-Texas), who is pushing for Mexican cartels to be designated as foreign terrorist organizations, said Democrats in Washington believe in open borders and a globalist worldview.

“You can’t look at what they’re doing and not come away with the conclusion that they are specifically and purposely refusing to secure the border in order to allow a flood of people to come into the United States,” Roy told The Epoch Times.

“Anybody looking at it would have to reasonably conclude they believe it’s in their best interest for crass political purposes.”

Border Patrol agents made more than 1.3 million apprehensions in Texas between the state’s 28 ports of entry in 2021. An additional half a million are estimated to have evaded capture.

During 2020, along the same 1,254-mile

stretch of international border, border agents made about 320,000 apprehensions.

Record amounts of narcotics, especially methamphetamine and fentanyl, are pouring across the southern border, and opioid-related overdose deaths in the United States have reached more than 100,000 per year.

As the federal government prepares to end Title 42, which was a public health directive allowing the immediate expulsion of illegal immigrants, border agents have been told to brace for up to 500,000 apprehensions per month.

Operation Lone Star

Texans living near the border are growing increasingly frustrated with the surge in illegal crossings, human smuggling, vehicle theft, property damage, and threats from illegal aliens trespassing on their property.

85%

OF ILLEGAL immigrants won’t ultimately be granted asylum, but their case will be processed years after arrival and after a work permit has been issued.

▲ Haitian illegal immigrants, part of a group of more than 10,000 people staying in an encampment on the U.S. side of the southern border, cross the Rio Grande river to get food and water in Mexico, near the Acuña–Del Río International Bridge in Del Rio, Texas, on Sept. 19, 2021.

The Biden administration’s response to the unprecedented increase in illegal immigrants has been to find ways to process and release them more quickly into the United States.

Ranchers are having to brandish firearms or even fire warning shots to chase groups of illegal aliens, usually young men, out of their homes and backyards. Parents are afraid to let their young children play outside, while sheriffs are resigned to the idea that someone is going to get shot sooner or later.

Talk of Texas taking border security matters into its own hands began in late spring 2021, and some state resources have been applied through Gov. Greg Abbott’s Operation Lone Star (OLS) border security initiative

A map shows the southern Texas counties that have joined Operation Lone Star, prosecuting illegal immigrants who trespass on state and private land.



Texas state trooper vehicles are lined up along the border as thousands of illegal immigrants, mostly Haitians, stay under the Acuña–Del Río International Bridge while waiting to be detained and processed by Border Patrol, in Del Río, Texas, on Sept. 21, 2021.

launched in March 2021. The OLS program doesn’t stop any illegal immigrants from entering Texas, nor does it expel them, but it allows for illegal immigrants trespassing on private or state land to be arrested and prosecuted. The program has also beefed up Texas state troopers to border roads to intercept smuggling operations, and the Texas National Guard to augment security and observation along the border.

The Texas Legislature approved nearly \$2 billion toward OLS in September 2021, in addition to the \$1 billion it designated to border security earlier in the year.

The OLS budget funded jail space for alleged illegal immigrant trespassers, defense counsel, and prosecution resources. The governor also sent more law enforcement officers to beleaguered border regions to assist in the arrest of trespassers and smugglers who were transporting illegal aliens.

Abbott, a Republican, declared a state of disaster on May 31, 2021, as the crisis escalated.

As of September, OLS has led to more than 17,400 felony charges and more than 19,800 criminal arrests, Abbott stated in a Sept. 16 press release. More than 304,700 illegal immigrants have been apprehended, and state law enforcement officers have seized enough fentanyl to kill every person in the United States, he said on Sept. 21.

Since its inception, OLS has been condemned by state Democrats and organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and lawyer groups for illegal immigrants.

A group of 50 Democrats in the Texas House



Kinney County Sheriff Brad Coe in Brackettville, Texas, on Jan. 18.

of Representatives wrote a letter in January urging the departments of Justice and Homeland Security to investigate the program.

“Operation Lone Star uses state criminal law to target Black and Latino migrants for punishment,” the Democrats’ Jan. 26 letter to the federal agencies alleges. The politicians want the federal government to use “all tools at your disposal to ensure the end of this policy.”

The language of the letter matches that of the ACLU, which filed its own 50-page complaint to the Department of Justice in December 2021.

“Anti-immigrant hate is on the rise in Texas, and state and local officials are fanning the flames,” the ACLU states.

The complaint alleges “race and national origin discrimination by Texas agencies” contrary

to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

“We respectfully request that the Department of Justice investigate Texas state and local agencies implementing the migrant arrest program and terminate federal funding to Texas agencies that engage in discrimination,” the ACLU states.

“There is an urgent need for federal action to protect the rights of Black and Brown migrants targeted by this unlawful system and to ensure that this kind of pretextual, discriminatory program does not flourish in Texas or spread to other states.”

The Department of Justice declined to comment when asked whether it has opened an investigation into OLS or provided a response to the Texas lawmakers.

‘Invasion’

While the statistics undeniably suggest the OLS resources are intercepting criminals, smuggling operations, and taking drugs off the streets, critics say Abbott is putting a Band-Aid on a gunshot wound.

“This is an issue for the people that live in Texas. They feel like they have been abandoned by their governor,” state Rep. Matt Schaefer said.

He wants Abbott to use state resources to apprehend and expel illegal aliens from Texas.

A legal opinion published by Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich provides the argument.

Brnovich’s Feb. 7 opinion centers around the definitions of “actually invaded” and “invasion” and whether the federal government has been derelict in its duty to protect.

“The on-the-ground violence and lawlessness at Arizona’s border caused by cartels and gangs is extensive, well-documented, and persistent. It can satisfy the definition of ‘actually invaded’ and ‘invasion’ under the U.S. Constitution,” the opinion reads.

Brnovich said the Biden administration has taken “unprecedented actions ... to destroy operational control of the border.”

“The federal government is failing to fulfill its duty under Article IV, Section 4 of the Constitution to defend the States from invasion. The State Self-Defense Clause exists precisely for situations such as the present, to ensure ♦



that States are not left helpless,” he wrote.

As commander-in-chief for Arizona, Gov. Doug Ducey has the power to “engage in defensive actions within its own territory at or near its border,” according to Brnovich. The governor has the power to use the National Guard and militia forces.

Ducey rejected the opinion and said the National Guard was already deployed to the border.

“For Attorney General Brnovich to imply the [National] Guard is not on our border does them a serious disservice and shows that he fails to appreciate the commitment these men and women have for protecting Arizona,” Ducey’s office told New Times in a statement.

In Texas, state Rep. Matt Krause submitted a similar query to Attorney General Ken Paxton on March 28, stating that the Texas border situation is “unsustainable.”

“The Biden Administration has been so inept or apathetic to the plight of Texas and other

border states, that it very well could rise to a violation of Article 4, Section 4 of the U.S. Constitution,” Krause wrote in a Facebook post that accompanied a copy of the official letter.

“So, today, I asked the Attorney General for an official opinion on whether that violation has occurred here in Texas.”

An attorney general opinion is a formal interpretation of the law to help guide state and local officials in applying the laws. As the chief legal officer of a state, their opinion carries weight in court decisions.

Paxton’s office didn’t respond to a query asking when he expects to publish an opinion for Texas.

Paxton has sued the Biden administration several times on border security issues, including for its freeze in deportations, the stoppage of the “Remain in Mexico” program, and the halt of border wall construction.

The Texas Legislature itself can’t force the governor to use state powers to secure the bor-

▲ Texas Gov. Greg Abbott tours the U.S.–Mexico border at the Rio Grande in Eagle Pass, Texas, on May 23.

FROM L: ALLISON DINNER/AFPI/GETTY IMAGES; CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES

der, but it can apply pressure.

Texas state Rep. Matt Shaheen said it’s likely the Legislature—when it reconvenes in January 2023—will look at specific actions it can take outside of the need for an “invasion” designation to be made by the governor.

“All options are open,” he said, referring to potential legislative action on border security.

The Texas Legislature is Republican controlled with an 18–13 split in the Senate and an 85–64 split in the House with one vacant seat.

On the County Level

Kinney County and neighboring Val Verde County in south Texas were the first to begin the trespass prosecutions under OLS, and since then, seven more counties have joined, including Edwards, Frio, Jim Hogg, Kimble, Maverick, Uvalde, and Zavala.

Kinney County has prosecuted approximately 4,000 illegal aliens for trespass and other misdemeanors since August 2021, as well as several U.S. citizens.

Since embracing the prosecutions, county leaders have been duking it out with defense lawyers, judges, and district attorneys in Austin and San Antonio.

Kinney County Judge Tully Shahan was challenged when he asked to replace three judges who had been hearing trespass cases on his behalf. Shahan asked the state’s Border Prosecution Unit to release the three judges so he could choose his own.

A group of defense lawyers challenged the switch, and “basically, the court threw it out,” said Kinney County Attorney Brent Smith.

On Feb. 24, Kinney County Sheriff Brad Coe sent a letter to Travis County District Attorney José Garza warning him to stop interfering with matters outside his jurisdiction.

“If you, or any of your assistants, continue to assert you represent the interests of me, acting to effectuate my statutory duties as official custodian of these applicants, the matter will be referred to the State Bar of Texas for resolution,” Coe wrote.

Garza, based in Austin, had filed a writ of habeas corpus to get about 400 illegal aliens, who were being prosecuted in Kinney County, released from jail on a personal recognizance bond. Travis County Judge Jan Soifer granted the release.

“Texas has become critical terrain and operational ground zero in the cartel’s effort to expand into the United States.”

Texas Department of Agriculture

In San Antonio’s Bexar County, Assistant District Attorney Christian Henricksen did the same for 20 illegal aliens and Judge Ron Rangel granted their release on Feb. 16.

Kinney County prosecutors weren’t advised or involved in either of the filings.

The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals on Feb. 24 put a hold on both judges’ rulings and directed them “not to take any action on any pending habeas applications where the underlying offense occurred in Kinney County.”

The court gave the judges 14 days to respond before it makes a final decision. Rangel responded the following day, stating that his court “did not possess a full and complete understanding of the circumstances and pertinent facts when it signed the Order of Release on Personal Bond.”

The illegal aliens involved remained in jail pending their court proceedings.

Smith said he’s confident the Court of Criminal Appeals will make a final ruling in favor of Kinney County.

District judges and district attorneys don’t ♠

▼ A Texas state trooper arrests a U.S. citizen who was transporting three illegal aliens to San Antonio, in Kinney County, Texas, on Oct. 20, 2021.





▲ *Illegal immigrants bathe and play on the U.S. side of the Rio Grande, the international boundary with Mexico, in Del Rio, Texas, on Sept. 18, 2021.*

have jurisdiction to take control of outside cases, he said.

A ruling in favor of the Travis and Bexar County judges would mean “we could meddle in Travis County cases,” Smith said. “Or Lubbock County could start meddling in Travis County. Anyone can meddle in anyone’s cases in Texas. That’s crazy.”

“The DA from Travis County would never be elected here. And there’s a reason for that.”

For Kinney County leaders, the trespass issue is personal.

The county judge, the county attorney, and a county commissioner all live on ranches that are thoroughfares for illegal aliens.

At a county meeting, Commissioner Tim Ward was called away because an eight-foot-wide hole had been cut in his fence and his livestock were all over the highway. In Texas, if a rancher’s livestock is out for any reason and causes injury or death, the ranch owner is liable.

“Every property that they trespass on is one victim. In fact, starting a couple of weeks ago,

we’ve told our DPS officers that if they trespass over three different properties, three different property owners, that’s three charges of criminal trespass, because there’s three different victims involved,” Smith said. “No one kidnapped them from Mexico and placed them upon the property owners’ land.”

Smith wants Texas to undertake a full border security assessment much like the one commissioned by the Texas Department of Agriculture in 2011.

The department commissioned retired four-star Army Gen. Barry McCaffrey and retired Army Maj. Gen. Robert Scales to conduct the assessment, which resulted in a 182-page report titled “Texas Border Security: A Strategic Military Assessment.”

The authors evaluated the border through the strategic, operational, and tactical lenses of conflict.

“America’s fight against narco-terrorism, when viewed at the strategic level, takes on the classic trappings of a real war,” the authors state.

CHARLOTTE OUTHERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES

Open borders advocates argue that ‘wanting a better life’ is reason enough to let anyone cross illegally into the United States.

“Texas has become critical terrain and operational ground zero in the cartel’s effort to expand into the United States.”

“At the tactical level of war the cartels seek to gain advantage by exploiting the creases between U.S. federal and state border agencies, and the separation that exists between Mexican and American crime-fighting agencies.”

Texas hasn’t produced any publicly available reports evaluating border security since the 2011 document, but by all accounts, the cartels are stronger than ever.

They’re raking in billions and strengthening their control of the Texas–Mexico border, as well as deepening their footprint inside the United States, especially on drug-ridden streets.

State Rep. Steve Toth said he started receiving briefings in 2013 that “the cartels basically were controlling just about every major city in the United States.”

100,000 PER YEAR

OPIOID-RELATED overdose deaths in the United States have reached more than 100,000 per year.

Toth said the cartels have since pushed gang activity out of the metropolitan areas into the outlying suburbs, including in his district in northern Houston.

“We’ve had to ask Texas DPS for assistance in gang activity up in the Woodlands,” he said. “We’re seeing a ton of gang activity that has been pushed out of Houston, you’re seeing down in Sugarland, you’re seeing it out in Katy and Pearland.”

“This is a problem. We’re all paying for it. Every single state in the union is paying for what’s going on in the southern border. Texas has to quit asking for permission to close the ... border. We’ve got to close it now, with or without government help.”

Schaefer, who serves on the Homeland Security and Public Safety Committee in the Texas House, said that members have heard “hours and hours of testimony from local law enforcement who are encountering things that they have never experienced in their law enforcement careers.”

“Their citizens do not feel safe,” he said.

“Texas is going to have to find a way to actually deter people from coming across and actually send people back. It is now time. We have a historic situation, we need a historic response.”

In the city of Uvalde, which sits 70 miles off the south Texas border, Mayor Don McLaughlin said the federal government is failing to defend Texas’s border under the Constitution.

“Before the Border Patrol came into existence, Texas patrolled their own border,” McLaughlin said, “and I think it’s time that we go back, and start sending them back to Mexico. And if Mexico doesn’t like it, then Mexico needs to take a harder stand when they’re coming into their country.”

Unless the Biden administration’s policies change, any border security enhancements in Texas will likely remain in the hands of the governor—which, from 2023, will either be Abbott for four more years or his Democratic challenger Beto O’Rourke. ■

A U.S. Border Patrol agent gives instructions to illegal immigrants as they wait in line to be processed after crossing from Mexico, in Yuma, Ariz., on May 21.

PHOTO BY MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES

EXCLUSIVE

BIDEN ADMIN USING 'PAROLE'

TO RELEASE ILLEGAL ALIENS EN MASSE

Parole not a legal status, but permits entry on 'a case-by-case basis'

By Charlotte Cuthbertson

DEL RIO, TEXAS—U.S. Border Patrol has started to use, on a mass scale, a special “parole” exception that was previously used sparingly to allow tens of thousands of illegal immigrants to stay in the United States for at least a year, The Epoch Times has learned.

Under parole status, illegal immigrants don’t have to provide Border Patrol with evidence of credible fear for asylum and are permitted entry without any preconditions, except a quick background check in the U.S. crime database.

A Customs and Border Protection spokesman said the parole designation allows for overwhelmed Border Patrol stations to process large numbers of illegal aliens “significantly faster” and release them into the country much faster than the more involved current system—which releases an illegal alien with a notice to appear that includes a court date for their first immigration hearing.

Parole should be a “very, very boutique thing,” said Andrew Arthur, resident fellow in law and policy at Center

for Immigration Studies and a retired immigration judge.

“This is the exact opposite of what Congress said. This is a misuse and abuse of that immigration authority that borders on malfeasance,” he said.

Through the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), Congress mandated that all inadmissible and illegal aliens be detained until their status is determined, after which they are either deported or granted entry with a legal status.

Parole is an exception and, although it isn’t a legal status, it permits entry on “a case-by-case basis” for “urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit,” according to the INA.

The status allows foreign nationals “who may not otherwise be admissible to the country under the immigration laws” to live and work in the United States temporarily “without being formally admitted to the country and without having a set pathway to a permanent immigration status,” according to a 2020 Congressional Research Service report.

Arthur said parole should be used, for example, when a family member ♦♦



◀ **(Far Left)** An illegal immigrant from Uzbekistan shows his passport to a U.S. Border Patrol agent in Yuma, Ariz., on Dec. 7, 2021. **(Middle Left)** A Border Patrol agent organizes illegal immigrants who crossed the southern border from Mexico, in Yuma, Ariz., on Dec. 10 2021. **(Left)** Illegal immigrants are apprehended by U.S. Border Patrol and National Guard troops in Eagle Pass, Texas, on June 30.

needs entry into the United States to donate a kidney to his brother, or if a witness to a criminal case is needed to testify. As associate general counsel in the former federal immigration agency, he would see a handful of parole cases a year.

However, in the first seven months of this fiscal year, CBP mass released more than 120,600 illegal aliens under the new “Parole+ATD” category. ATD is an Alternatives to Detention program, which is acting as a workaround of the legal requirement to detain illegal aliens.

Under ATD, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) issues the illegal alien a trackable cellphone (or sometimes an ankle bracelet) that he or she can use to check in with the agency on a regular basis.

The CBP spokesman told The Epoch Times that overwhelmed Border Patrol stations are shifting to processing more illegal aliens as parolees.

“It’s more a functionality of the processing conditions at the location where they are giving out the parole-ATD,” he said.

“It’s a functionality of: How do we deal with the people that we’re encountering and how do we keep our population low for people that we cannot Title 42 back to Mexico? That’s the underlying issue.”

The spokesman said, aside from discovering a criminal record, whether an illegal alien is paroled depends on whether detention or transport space is available, the demographic of the person, as well as if the agent thinks the

person is likely to abscond.

CBP didn’t provide historical data on parole numbers, or information on the nationalities of current parolees. A Border Patrol agent in Texas told The Epoch Times, on condition of anonymity, that his station is paroling Venezuelans, Cubans, and Nicaraguans.

Border Patrol agents are currently apprehending around 6,000 illegal aliens on average per day along the southern border, and the Department of Homeland Security warned agents in April to expect up to 18,000 per day at some point.

Failure to Show Up

The use of the parole category replaces the notice to report, which wasn’t a legal designation, but an ad hoc designation used heavily last year as Border Patrol stations were overwhelmed. The notice to report was a request to illegal aliens to report to their nearest ICE office within 60 days.

More than 104,000 notices to report were issued in the five months between the end of March 2021 and the end of October 2021. Of those, 47,705 individuals failed to report to ICE by January, according to official data received by Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.).

“It was an honor system [and] we got beat over the head with that. So they went back and they looked at the Title 8 law,” a CBP spokes-

man told The Epoch Times.

“One thing you can do is you can parole somebody who is coming into the United States as an arriving alien, and you can parole them for a year, so that they can take care of whatever humanitarian issue or whatever issue that they have to deal with.”

Parole status effectively kicks the can down the road to ICE, which issues a notice to appear once the illegal alien reports to the agency.

“The thing about parole is it gives them that year to go in and get that done,” the spokesman said.

If no contact is made, at the end of that year, the alien would revert back to the status he or she had upon arriving as an illegal alien and would be removable, he said.

Almost one-third of parolees released between July and December 2021 have failed to show up to ICE, according to Homeland Security data received by Rep. Chip Roy (R-Texas).

“Mayorkas’s DHS has refused to detain migrants—as required by law—has failed to remove innumerable people who have no right to be here, and are abusing their parole authority to continue to release tens of thousands of migrants,” Roy told The Epoch Times on May 4.

ICE’s stated priorities are such that field agents, when

considering an illegal alien for removal, must obtain permission from supervisors, as well as consider if the individual “might be suffering from serious physical or mental illness,” or if he or she has ties to a community or family members in the United States.

The agency’s available detention space for illegal immigrants has decreased in recent years, going from 51,379 detention beds in 2018 to 30,000 currently. President Joe Biden’s fiscal year 2023 budget asks for Congress to shave a further 5,000 detention beds in ICE facilities, as well as eliminate all 2,500 family beds.

Risks of Mass Parole

Arthur said the mass use of the parole designation is “a huge vulnerability.”

“The likelihood that you are going to release somebody who poses a danger to national security is extremely high. The risk that you are releasing somebody who poses a danger to the community is extremely high,” he said.

“You can run their [fingerprints], but are you going to run their criminal record in San Pedro Sula [in Honduras]? Are you going to be able to run their activities in Yemen? The vetting is only as good as the intel, and the intel isn’t that good.

“But here’s the biggest issue. This becomes a vicious circle. Because the more people who come in, the more overwhelmed you are, the more that you release, the more people are going to come in.”

During April, Border Patrol agents re-

leased more than 40,000 illegal aliens as parolees and an additional 21,769 with a notice to appear, according to CBP statistics. That’s 15,000 more parolees released than in March and the first month the parolee number has exceeded the number of those who received a notice to appear.

An amendment published in the Fed-

Almost one-third of parolees released between July and December last year have failed to show up to ICE, according to Homeland Security data.

eral Register that will go into effect on May 31 argues the case for parole when detention space is lacking.

“Individuals placed in expedited removal proceedings would be eligible for consideration for parole from custody in accordance with section 212(d)(5) of the Act, if DHS determined, in the exercise of its discretion and on a case-by-case basis, that parole is warranted because, inter alia, detention is unavailable or impracticable (including situations in which continued detention would unduly impact the health or safety of individuals with special vulnerabilities),” the rule states.

Arthur said that interpretation isn’t how Congress intended parole to be used. “You’re basically allowing the popula-

tion to drive how you apply the law. That’s not how it works. The law determines how you handle the population,” he said.

The Trump administration used parole as a stop-gap measure before the “Remain in Mexico” program was implemented in January 2019, which then acted as a solution to the lack of detention space.

Remain in Mexico, or the Migration Protection Protocols, allowed for DHS to send illegal immigrants back to Mexico to await their immigration court proceedings—after which they’d either be denied entry or granted legal status in the United States. About 70,000 illegal immigrants had been enrolled in the program by the end of 2020.

Biden paused new enrollments in the program when he took office and, in June 2021, his administration axed the program altogether, despite being sued by Texas and Missouri in April 2021 to keep it in place.

The states argued that the program can’t be rescinded because it’s the only solution that meets the congressional requirement that illegal aliens must be detained until their cases are resolved.

The Supreme Court ruled in August 2021 that the program must continue, at least until the justices make a final ruling. In its subsequent decision in August this year, the high court allowed the Biden administration to end the program.

Since November 2021, when the administration was forced to resume enrollments, 4,652 illegal aliens were sent back to Mexico to await their cases up through August this year, according to CBP data. The DHS has remained vocal about its intention to ultimately end Remain in Mexico. ■

FROM LEFT: JOHN MOORE/GETTY IMAGES; CHARLOTTE GUTHERSON/THE EPOCH TIMES; CHANDAN KHANNA/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

EXCLUSIVE

Biden to Give IDs to Illegal Immigrants

ICE says having ID will help illegal immigrants make it to court hearings

By Zachary Stieber



A NEWLY OBTAINED DOCUMENT outlines the Biden administration's plan to give identification cards to illegal immigrants. The document describes how a pilot program called the "Secure Docket Card" would give some illegal aliens a card with a photograph, counterfeit-resistant security features, and a quick response (QR) code.

The card would replace "the current ad-hoc system" and could save Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) time and resources by enabling officials to more quickly verify an illegal immigrant's status and help immigrants make

it to court hearings, according to the document.

Biden administration officials already confirmed that such a pilot program was being prepared, but the document sheds more light on the details of the program, including its scheduled start date and estimated cost.

Key components of the program were slated to begin on Aug. 1, including designing the identification card, developing an online portal with information for the immigrants such as court dates, and identifying personnel who will work on the program, according to the document.

Those components are slated to be completed by March 1, 2023. After that, the plan calls for temporary cards to start being produced in two

ICE field offices and permanent cards to start being produced at an unidentified central location.

The program is slated to run through Sept. 30, 2023.

The following month, a feasibility study is scheduled to take place to evaluate whether the pilot can be expanded. Also planned is looking at whether illegal immigrant cardholders can access basic information on the online portal without assistance; whether the pilot program was having an effect on the "fugitive rate," or the rate of illegal immigrants who skip their court hearing; how much the program was increasing the workload for officials; and whether any forged cards were appearing.

The estimated total costs were pegged at \$2.5 million.

"It is outrageous and absurd that the Biden administration intends to spend millions of dollars of taxpayer's money designing and issuing identity cards for the hundreds of thousands of illegal aliens they are waving in at the border," Jessica Vaughan, director of policy studies for the Center for Immigration Studies, a think tank that studies immigration, told The Epoch Times after reviewing the document.

"Instead of issuing these documents, they should be sending them back to their home countries."



"It is outrageous and absurd that the Biden administration intends to spend millions of dollars of taxpayer's money designing and issuing identity cards for the hundreds of thousands of illegal aliens they are waving in at the border."

Jessica Vaughan, director of policy studies, Center for Immigration Studies

No Update

After obtaining the document through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, The Epoch Times asked ICE for updates on the pilot, including whether parts of it began in August as scheduled and whether the estimated costs remained the same.

An ICE spokeswoman sent the exact same statement she provided in July, when the agency confirmed the pilot program's existence.

The program "is still in its infancy," a spokesperson for the agency said when pressed on whether it had started, also saying that "there is nothing further to add at this time."

"The ICE secure docket card concept is a pilot program that would modernize documentation provided to some noncitizens. While the specifics of the program are under development, it is important to note the secure card will not be an official form of federal identification. The secure card will indicate it is for use by DHS [Department of Homeland

Security] agencies and would be provided only after national security background checks have been performed," ICE said in its previous statement.

"Currently, noncitizens receive paper documents from the federal government about their immigration status. Paper documents pose a security risk, are easily lost, and degrade rapidly in real-world use, creating inefficiencies for the government and noncitizens. Moving to a secure card will save the agency millions, free up resources, and ensure information is quickly accessible to DHS officials while reducing the agency's FOIA backlog."

The pilot drew criticism from top lawmakers when it was revealed, including Rep. James Comer (R-Ky.), the top Republican on the House Oversight Committee.

Comer said the program looked like "yet another Biden Administration move encouraging illegal immigration by rewarding illegal immigrants for breaking our laws."

Vaughan said the documents won't authenticate a person's identity "because we have no way of knowing the actual identity of these migrants unless they have a passport or other legitimate travel document, in which case they do not need this document."

The effort also indicates that the Biden administration "assumes that the migrants will be here for the long term despite the fact that most have no case for being granted

residency," she said, forecasting the next step will be letting the cards be used as a legitimate identification and demanding that banks, landlords, and other entities accept them. ■



President Joe Biden delivers a speech at the White House on Sept. 15.

A U.S. Border Patrol agent checks passports before taking illegal immigrants to a processing center in Yuma, Ariz., on Dec. 9, 2021.

CLOCKWISE FROM L: JOHN MOORE/GETTY IMAGES; SAMIRA BOUADOU/THE EPOCH TIMES; MANDEL NGAN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



A Border Patrol agent organizes illegal immigrants who crossed from Mexico into the United States in Yuma, Ariz., on Dec. 10, 2021.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Deportation Cases Dismissed Over Paperwork Failure

1 of every 6 cases dismissed due to Homeland Security failure to provide key documents: report

By Charlotte Cuthbertson & Zachary Stieber

TENS OF THOUSANDS OF illegal immigrants are having their deportation cases dismissed before stepping inside an immigration courtroom because Department of Homeland Security (DHS) officials are failing to file the requisite paperwork, a new report has found.

One out of every six new cases (16.6 percent) is being dismissed due to the failure, according to the immigration court docket tracker Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC) at Syracuse University.

For the six-year period from fiscal year

2013 through fiscal 2018, fewer than 1 percent of the cases, or 1,221, were dismissed due to DHS failure to submit the necessary “notice to appear” paperwork.

The number of dismissals due to the same failure has increased dramatically every year since, with 47,330 cases so far in fiscal 2022, with three months remaining to be tallied, according to the newly released data.

TRAC obtained the information through a series of Freedom of Information Act requests.

A notice to appear is typically given to an illegal border-crosser while the person is still in Customs and Border Protection (CBP) custody. The notice includes the date of the illegal immigrant’s first court hearing.

After handing over that notice, CBP is required to make sure the court receives an electronic copy of the document, according to TRAC. If CBP fails to submit the paperwork, the court doesn’t have jurisdiction to hear the case and must dismiss it.

The failure to properly manage the process “suggests there is a serious disconnect between the CBP agents entering new cases and scheduling hearings through the Court’s ISS [Interactive Scheduling System] system, and other CBP personnel responsible for submitting a copy to the Court,” the report states.

CBP and its parent agency, DHS, didn’t respond to requests for comment.

Effects

The dismissals mean asylum seekers “now have no path to a work authorization card, possibly no path to asylum (unless they have an attorney who will file affirmatively), plus it’s just creating a mess for everyone,” Austin Kocher, a researcher at TRAC, wrote on Twitter.

Aaron Reichlin-Melnick, policy director at the American Immigration Council, said immigrants whose cases are dismissed are “effectively stuck in limbo, unclear how to proceed.”

While TRAC was unable to find where exactly the failure was occurring within CBP, it discovered that several immigration courts are responsible for the bulk of the dismissals.

The immigration court in Miami topped the list for dismissals at 81 percent of all new dedicated docket cases,

or a total of 7,700 people. The city was also fourth on the list with a 43 percent dismissal rate for its regular hearing docket. Boston and Houston came in second and third, respectively.

Bryan Griffin, a spokesman for Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, told The Epoch Times in an email that immigration proceedings are handled on the federal level. He said the issue was “another failure of the Biden administration to defend the sovereignty of our nation.”

Biden Administration Changes

The Biden administration created the dedicated docket program in May 2021 and set a goal of issuing decisions in these cases within 300 days from their initial hearing, according to an earlier TRAC report on dedicated dockets. The average wait time for asylum cases is nearly 4 1/2 years.

Immigration judges ruled 92 percent of asylum claims on the dedicated docket as meritless and ordered the defendants be removed from the United States, according to December 2021 data.

In 2021, as illegal border crossings reached record levels, Border Patrol agents began to issue a “notice to report” to illegal aliens, instead of the official notice to appear form.

The notice to report was essentially a request that the illegal alien report within 60 days to a local Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) office once they got to their destination in

the United States.

Nearly 95,000 notices to report were issued from January through October 2021, according to DHS. By January 2022, more than 47,000 illegal immigrants were yet to report to ICE, according to official data received by Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.).

Matt O’Brien, an immigration judge dismissed by the Biden administration, said during his final two months on the bench that ICE dropped 99 percent of its deportation cases that were pending on his docket.

“The vast majority of the matters dismissed were legitimate cases that ICE spent taxpayer dollars investigating, filing, and prosecuting. There was absolutely no legitimate reason to withdraw the charges against any of these immigration law-breakers,” O’Brien, now the director of investigations for the Immigration Reform Law Institute, told The Epoch Times via email.

O’Brien suggested the dumping of cases is related to what he described as “the Biden administration’s radical commitment to destroying America’s borders and its immigration enforcement mechanisms,” as well as a cosmetic reduction in the immigration courts’ overloaded system.

“This kind of complete lawlessness shows a disregard for the safety of the American public that simply cannot be overstated,” he wrote. ■



Illegal immigrants wait to be transported, at local NGO Mission Border Hope in Eagle Pass, Texas, on May 23.

ELECTIONS

The Push to Give Voting Rights to Noncitizens

Noncitizen voting push is part of agenda to rid America of citizenship, says election expert

By Charlotte Cuthbertson

A SHORT-LIVED NEW YORK CITY LAW that allowed at least 800,000 noncitizens to vote in municipal elections was emblematic of the continued lobbying to allow noncitizens to vote. The law was subsequently struck down by the New York Supreme Court. “It’s actually pretty clear that it violates the New York state Constitution—it has a provision that specifically says that you have to be a citizen to vote in all elections in the state of New York, and that includes local elections,” Hans von Spakovsky told The Epoch Times on Jan. 19. He is manager of the Heritage Foundation’s Election Law Reform Initiative and former member of the Federal Election Commission. “I also think it is bad from a policy point of view, because it basically cheapens and diminishes the concept of citizenship. “It ought to be something that makes American citizens mad, particularly because of the potential number of aliens that’s involved.” New York City Mayor Eric Adams allowed the measure to become law on Jan. 9, which includes the provision that voting noncitizens must be in the city for 30 days or more and have authorization to work. “I believe that New Yorkers should have a say in their government, which is why I have and will continue to support this important legislation,” Adams said in a statement. “I believe allowing the legislation to be enacted is by far the best choice, and look forward to bringing millions more into the democratic process.” The following day, the Republican National Committee filed a suit in the New York Supreme Court along with City Council Minority Leader Joseph Borrelli, Rep. Nicole Malliotakis (R-N.Y.), and other Republicans.



Illegal immigrants bused in from Texas wait outside Port Authority Bus Terminal to receive humanitarian assistance, in New York on Aug. 10.



▲ A voting site at a YMCA in Brooklyn, N.Y., on Oct. 25, 2021.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: YUKIMAKURA/AP VIA GETTY IMAGES, THE EPOCH TIMES, SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES

800,000 Noncitizens

A NEW YORK CITY law that allowed at least 800,000 noncitizens to vote in municipal elections was struck down as unconstitutional on June 27.

The law applied to legal aliens, but Spakovsky said New York City’s sanctuary policies that shield illegal aliens would open the floodgates. “Does anybody really believe that the election department is going to investigate the lawful status of any alien who registers to vote?” he said. “And so that means, of course, that lots and lots of illegal aliens will also get registered to vote.” Although he doesn’t think any states will try to change their election laws to include voting rights for noncitizens, Spakovsky said there’s a push from the progressive left to change the concept or definition of “citizen.” “The whole point of the open borders crowd is to do two things: one, extinguish the line between

legal and illegal aliens in this country. And second, to frankly get rid of the whole concept of citizenship,” he said. New York City Councilwoman Margaret Chin, a Democrat, told colleagues before the vote that many noncitizens struggle to become citizens but should still be able to vote in the meantime because they pay taxes and live and work in the city. “They want to be citizens, they want to be able to vote for the president, but at least we have the opportunity to allow them to vote for the elected officials that are representing them in the city,” Chin said. However, Spakovsky said paying taxes doesn’t make someone a citizen.



“[The new law means] that lots and lots of illegal aliens will also get registered to vote.”

Hans von Spakovsky, manager, The Heritage Foundation’s Election Law Reform Initiative

“My response to that is that first of all, the vast majority of illegal aliens do not pay taxes. In fact, they get free rides from many jurisdictions,” he said. “This is being pushed by the progressive left today because they believe that aliens will vote for them ... and keep them in power.” Spakovsky said the inability of the Trump administration to get a question placed on the 2020 Census about citizenship status was a major win for the progressive left to blur the lines between citizen and noncitizen. “One of the main reasons they wanted that done is for apportionment purposes, they did not want congressional seats apportioned based on citizen population—if they did, places like California would lose congressional seats,” he said. “That’s why California probably has four or five more congressional seats than they should have, because of the huge population of illegal aliens in the state.” The Biden administration supports the creation of a citizenship pathway for millions of illegal immigrants in the United States. A decade-old estimate puts the number of illegal aliens at 11 million, and since then, millions more have crossed the southern border. ■

A sign marks the Goliad County line in Goliad, Texas, on Nov. 23, 2021.

PHOTO BY CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES



POLICY

OPEN BORDER IS ROAD TO **MARXIST STATE**

‘It’s all done by design—and it’s at the design of the federal government’ —*Texas Sheriff*

By Charlotte Cuthbertson

GOLIAD, TEXAS—Sheriffs in Texas are experiencing the effects of the border crisis in their counties every day—whether it’s armed cartel operatives smuggling illegal immigrants, vehicle pursuits resulting in crashes and deaths, or drug overdose deaths from fentanyl brought across the southern border.

In Goliad, Sheriff Roy Boyd sits 200 miles from the Texas–Mexico border, between McAllen and Houston—a major transport corridor of illegal immigrants and illicit goods.

As a 29-year law enforcement veteran in the region, Boyd said he’s never seen a border crisis so bad or border-related crime so egregious.

“There’s no end to it,” he told The Epoch Times on June 23.

He monitors 16 cartel-operated sites in his county that are currently dormant, but have been used to stash illegal immigrants on their way to Houston. Currently, it’s mostly carloads of illegal immigrants being smuggled straight through his county to the city.

“It’s a movement of individuals from third-world countries, all over the place, into our country. But the farther you get into it, the more you realize it’s all done by design—and it’s at the design of the federal government.

“We’re in a transformation of America from a free Republic to moving to something that’s more of a Marxist state.”

Since President Joe Biden took office in

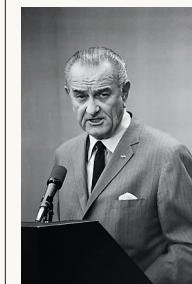
15 Million to 25 Million

RESEARCHER

Trevor Loudon says that an additional 15 million to 25 million Democratic voters would ensure perpetual Democratic control of government.

80%

TRADITIONALLY, noncitizens have voted about 80 percent Democratic, according to a study by Old Dominion University.



President Lyndon B. Johnson on Nov. 5, 1968.

January 2021, border authorities have apprehended more than 3.2 million illegal border crossers, according to Customs and Border Protection data. An additional 800,000 or so have been detected, but evaded capture.

When asked how allowing millions of people from more than 160 countries through the southern border results in the transformation to communism, Boyd harkened back to the 1960s and President Lyndon B. Johnson’s “war on poverty.”

“LBJ sold the war on poverty to the Democratic National Party ... and the DNC’s response was, ‘Why would we give those people something for nothing?’” Boyd said.

LBJ responded by saying he’d have them voting Democratic for 200 years, Boyd said, paraphrasing an infamous quote that has been widely attributed to the former president.

“This is nothing but a replication of the soft enslavement of people through entitlement,” Boyd said. “Because if you understand psychology and you look at the history of things, this is how it functions. Once it starts, it’s hard to stop.”

Trevor Loudon, a communism expert and contributor to The Epoch Times, said in a previous interview that the communists’ main enemy is the United States.

“And if you can’t bring it down through nuclear weapons, you bring it down through illegal immigration, which is maybe just as effective in the long run,” he said. “This is an orchestrated, communist assault on America, to destroy America’s borders, to create confusion in America, to overwhelm the system politically.” ♦



◀ Goliad Sheriff Roy Boyd (R) speaks to Texas gubernatorial candidate Col. Allen West in Brackettville, Texas, on July 22, 2021.

Loudon said an additional 15 million to 25 million Democratic voters would ensure perpetual Democratic control of government.

“You will have a one-party state in America. And that is the plan. That is why they are doing this,” he said.

“This is Marxist. This is Leninist. And this goes back to American politicians cooperating with hostile foreign powers in the destruction of America. And their No. 1 weapon is illegal immigration and overwhelming the border.”

Traditionally, noncitizens have voted about 80 percent Democratic and 20 percent Republican, according to a 2014 study by Old Dominion University.

“We find that some non-citizens participate in U.S. elections, and that this participation has been large enough to change meaningful election outcomes including Electoral College votes, and congressional elections,” the study concluded.

“Non-citizen votes likely gave Senate Democrats the pivotal 60th vote needed to overcome filibusters in order to pass health care reform and other Obama administration priorities in the 111th Congress.”

Now, the number of non-Hispanic illegal aliens entering the United States is increasing at the same time that Hispanics are skewing more Republican, as evidenced by Rep. Mayra Flores’s recent win in south Texas.

While it’s illegal for non-U.S. citizens to vote in federal elections, there’s been

“This is nothing but a replication of the soft enslavement of people through entitlement.”

Roy Boyd, sheriff, Goliad County

a push for years for municipal elections to accept noncitizen voters, including visa holders.

Fourteen municipalities currently allow noncitizens to vote, including 11 in Maryland, two in Vermont, and one in San Francisco.

A recent court ruling quashed a New York City law that would have allowed at least 800,000 noncitizens to vote in municipal elections.

New York City Mayor Eric Adams allowed the measure to become law on Jan. 9.

“I believe that New Yorkers should have a say in their government, which is why I have and will continue to support this important legislation,” Adams said in a statement at the time. “I believe allowing the legislation to be enacted is by far the best choice, and look forward to bringing millions more into the democratic process.”

Hans von Spakovsky, manager of the Heritage Foundation’s Election Law Reform Initiative and former member of

the Federal Election Commission, said allowing noncitizens to vote “cheapens and diminishes” the concept of citizenship.

“The whole point of the open borders crowd is to do two things: one, extinguish the line between legal and illegal aliens in this country. And second, to frankly get rid of the whole concept of citizenship,” Spakovsky said in a previous interview.

Biden has said he wants a pathway to citizenship for all illegal immigrants in the United States.

Boyd said the Biden administration is working hard to purge conservative and constitutional thinkers at the federal level and replace them with people with a socialist mindset.

“But always remember, as Stalin said, the aim of socialism is communism,” Boyd said.

He said his focus remains in Goliad to protect his county and make it an unwelcoming place for criminals. The sheriffs in the region try to work together to “help each other to fight this massive wave of criminal activity,” he said.

“We don’t deal with immigration, we’re not tasked with it, we’re not authorized with it, we don’t want anything to do with it.

“But we’re fighting all the felonies that are being brought to our doorstep as a result of the national policy that’s causing this problem. And to be quite honest with you, I have no faith in the federal government.” ■



President Barack Obama (L) at an event to promote immigration reform, in Washington on Nov. 29, 2013.

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The Week



Federal Reserve Board Chairman Jerome Powell speaks to media following a meeting of the Federal Open Market Committee, at the headquarters of the Federal Reserve in Washington on Sept. 21.

PHOTO BY DREW ANGERER/GETTY IMAGES

Fed Raises Interest Rates to Highest Level Since 2008

THE FEDERAL RESERVE RAISED the benchmark federal funds rate by 75 basis points to a new target range of 3 to 3.25 percent on Sept. 21, matching market expectations.

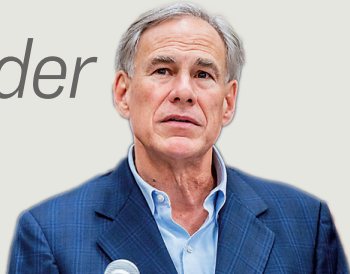
This is the third consecutive three-quarter-point rate hike, with the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) lifting interest rates to their highest levels since 2008.

Officials now expect rates to end the year at 4.4 percent, up from 3.4 percent in the prior forecast, and to reach 4.6 percent in 2023, up from the 3.8 percent predicted previously.

The futures market now sees an 89 percent chance of the Fed raising rates by an additional 75 basis points at the November FOMC meeting.”

“*[Busing illegal immigrants] is providing much-needed relief to our overwhelmed border communities.*”

Office of Texas Gov. Greg Abbott



“The inflation came from the free checks that were passed out.”



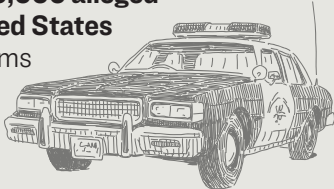
Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.), saying the stimulus checks sent to Americans by the Biden administration are to blame for high inflation.

6 SEATS

Republicans only need to win six of 31 toss-up House elections in order to take control in the upcoming 2022 midterm elections, according to the Cook Political Report.

6,000 ARRESTS

FBI agents have arrested about 6,000 alleged violent criminals across the United States and seized more than 2,700 firearms and large quantities of fentanyl over the past four months, the bureau says.



990 Deaths — The Senate’s Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations and the Government Accountability Office allege that in fiscal year 2021 alone, the Department of Justice failed to identify at least 990 prison and arrest-related deaths, while 70 percent of the data that were collected were incomplete.

17%
The average household will pay about 17 percent more this winter compared to last winter to heat their home, marking a 10-year high of \$1,202 per property, according to the National Energy Assistance Directors Association.

18%
As drugs pour across the southern border, Customs and Border Protection officers are only able to search about 18 percent of vehicles entering from Mexico, according to the agency’s director of field operations for Arizona.

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Students in class in Leesburg, Va., on Aug. 11.

TRANSGENDERISM
Virginia Overhauls Transgender Student Policies on Pronouns, Bathrooms, and Sports

VIRGINIA HAS TAKEN a sharp turn on transgender student policies with newly released guidelines. According to the new guidelines, public schools can’t affirm a student’s gender without a written request from a parent. In addition, bathroom and locker room use is to be based on students’ biological sex at birth. Student sports participation will be sex-based as well, unless federal laws require otherwise. The new policies represent a complete reversal of the previous guidelines, which defined transgender as a student’s “self-identifying term.” Those rules, which took effect in March 2021 under former Gov. Ralph Northam, a Democrat, ask schools to refrain from disclosing a student’s gender identity to the parents “if a student is not ready or able to safely share” it with his or her family.

GUN RIGHTS
24 Attorneys General Demand That Credit Card Companies Drop Plans to Track Gun Sales

TWO DOZEN REPUBLICAN attorneys general have sent a letter to Visa, Mastercard, and American Express demanding the credit card companies abandon plans to track gun sales in the United States through firearm-specific transaction codes. Credit card companies face pressure from gun control groups and lawmakers sympathetic to their cause to adopt new merchant category codes for firearms, which now fall into the “general merchandise” category. In the letter, the attorneys general argue that the new codes wouldn’t protect public safety, would unfairly single out law-abiding merchants and customers, and would be prone to misuse.



A man fills out paperwork to purchase a gun in Tinley Park, Ill., on April 8, 2021.

SAFETY
NTSB Calls for All New Vehicles to Be Fitted With Intoxication Detection Systems

THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION Safety Board (NTSB) has recommended that alcohol impairment detection systems be fitted into all new vehicles in the United States to prevent an intoxicated person from getting behind the wheel. The recommendation comes following an investigation into a crash near Avenal, California, on Jan. 1, 2021, that killed nine people, including seven children. Investigators found that the driver of the vehicle lost control because of a “high level of alcohol impairment.” In a statement, the NTSB said that as a result of the investigation into that crash, the agency is recommending a string of new in-vehicle technologies that “can limit or prohibit impaired drivers from operating their vehicles,” as well as technologies aimed at preventing drivers from speeding.

HEALTH
Researchers Discover Mutated Protein Linked to Increased Risk of Alzheimer’s Disease

A NEW MUTATED PROTEIN has been discovered that is connected to a significantly increased risk of an individual developing Alzheimer’s disease, according to a study by the University of Southern California (USC). The “microprotein,” called SHMOOSE, is encoded by a newly discovered gene within cells’ mitochondria. “A mutation within this gene partially inactivates the SHMOOSE microprotein and is associated with a 20–50 percent higher risk for Alzheimer’s disease across four different cohorts. Nearly a quarter of people of European ancestry have the mutated version of the protein,” a USC press release states.



Russian President Vladimir Putin chairs a meeting with the leadership of military-industrial complex enterprises, at the Kremlin in Moscow on Sept. 20.

RUSSIA-UKRAINE

Putin Mobilizes More Troops, Hints at Nuclear Weapon Use in Conflict Over Ukraine

RUSSIAN PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN on Sept. 21 accused Western powers of engaging in nuclear blackmail and put his country onto an enhanced wartime footing, ordering a partial military mobilization and vowing to use “all means available” in the event of a threat against Russia and its people.

Putin made the remarks in a televised address, in which he said that some high-ranking representatives of Western powers had expressed “the possibility of using nuclear weapons of mass destruction against Russia,” according to a translation of his remarks by The Scotsman.

UK

PayPal Shuts Down Free Speech Union, The Daily Sceptic Accounts

PAYPAL HAS DEMONETIZED the account of the Free Speech Union (FSU), a British organization that defends people who have lost work and have been canceled for expressing opinions.

Without a clear explanation, the U.S. online payment system closed the accounts of FSU and news and opinion website The Daily Sceptic, a move that the founder of both organizations, Toby Young, called “a new low.” Young said he received notifications that both accounts had allegedly violated the company’s “Acceptable Use Policy.”

FSU has supported people including author Gillian Philip, who was canceled by publisher HarperCollins in 2020 when she expressed her support for JK Rowling on Twitter, and a British rail conductor who was fired when he questioned “black privilege” in an online diversity training.

INDIA-CHINA

Complete De-escalation Yet to Occur on India-China Border: Expert

RECENT MEDIA REPORTS of a complete de-escalation on the India-China border in Eastern Ladakh are false, as Chinese troops have not retreated from the friction points last created post May 2020, according to an Indian satellite imagery expert.

“Latest images do not indicate any significant troop or equipment reduction by CCP China’s [People’s Liberation Army],” retired Col. Vinayak Bhat, a satellite imagery expert and an Indian military intelligence veteran, told The Epoch Times in an email.

It was widely reported on Sept. 13 that troops from both countries had pulled back from their positions at the last remaining friction points on the Line of Actual Control, the de-facto disputed border between India and China, in the Gogra Heights-Hot Springs area.

AUSTRALIA

Researchers Developing ‘Game-Changer’ Blood Test to Identify Concussions

UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND researchers are attempting to develop a new blood test that could identify and diagnose concussions.

The project will employ advanced brain imaging, cognitive testing, and blood analysis to identify biomarkers in the blood that are indicative of a concussion, and will involve testing on volunteers involved in high school rugby and basketball.

Researchers believe concussion blood tests could be used to avoid expensive and unnecessary imaging scans, without missing a serious brain injury.

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Perspectives



Shoppers at a grocery store in New York on May 31.

PHOTO BY SAMIRA BOUAOU/THE EPOCH TIMES



OIL FOR VOTES

The Strategic Petroleum Reserve is not a presidential toy to be used to help his party. **80**



BIDEN'S NEW BIOTECH ORDER

The China threat is driving America into subsidizing its bioeconomy. **81**



POLITICAL BIAS AND FOOD INFLATION

Liberals and conservatives have different perceptions of rising food costs. **83**

Thomas McArdle



Oil for Votes

The SPR is not a presidential toy to be used to help his party

IN THE FILM “ALL the President’s Men,” Washington Post reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein’s shadowy source, “Deep Throat,” says, “Follow the money.” Some point to evidence that there really was no Deep Throat or that there were actually half a dozen Deep Throats, but what the supposed source actually says in Woodward and Bernstein’s book is: “The key was the secret campaign cash, and it should all be traced.”

Despite the fact that attacking rich oil companies is a favored Democratic Party talking point, President Joe Biden has, for all intents and purposes, been converting oil into campaign cash for his party’s House and Senate candidates as their midterm campaigns go into high gear—and it doesn’t take any investigative reporting to trace it. This president has been abusing his executive powers over the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, which is only supposed to be tapped into during times of emergency, and Democrats at risk of losing congressional seats doesn’t qualify as one of those times.

GasBuddy.com reports that gasoline at lower than \$3 per gallon can now be found in areas near Houston, Atlanta, and within the state of Mississippi. The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee boasted earlier this month that “gas prices are down more than \$1.20 a gallon in just about 70 days. That’s because the president increased supplies, went after price gouging, and released the Strategic Petroleum Reserve [SPR].” In fact, the Democratic-controlled Congress hasn’t enacted its threatened hate-oil legislation restricting Big Oil’s supposed price gouging, for which there’s no evidence, nor has it passed the windfall profits tax Democrats proposed for oil companies. And Biden has done the opposite of increasing

supplies, canceling the Keystone XL pipeline and imposing restrictions on energy production in Alaska and on federal lands and waters, at variance with congressional directives.

Even with the drops, the average price at the pump remains \$1.30 higher than the \$2.38 that the country enjoyed the week of Biden’s inauguration last year; from then to the week before Russian President Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Ukraine, the average price of gas has increased by nearly 50 percent. What’s more, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen just warned of a return to higher gas prices after the midterm elections in November, citing the European Union’s pending reduction in the purchase of oil from Russia as it

Biden has depleted the Strategic Petroleum Reserve by more than 160 million barrels, brining it to its lowest point in 37 years.

continues its war against Ukraine.

So the drop in gas prices over the past couple of months is a brazen political maneuver to dampen certain Republican gains in Congress on Election Day. Biden has depleted the SPR by more than 160 million barrels to its lowest level in 37 years, with reserves falling to about 453 million barrels. The SPR exceeded 700 million barrels in 2008, remaining at that level until after September 2011.

The SPR isn’t a presidential toy to be used to help his party. It was established in the aftermath of the 1973–74 oil embargo and at full volume constitutes only 30 days of oil consumption for the nation, to be utilized in wartime or other national emergencies that could disrupt global petro-

leum supply routes. President Dwight Eisenhower originally proposed the establishment of such a reserve supply after the Suez Canal crisis of 1956.

Underlining just how irresponsible and dishonest the president’s misuse of the SPR has been is the fact that millions of barrels of the reserve oil he released, worth hundreds of millions of dollars, ended up in the hands of the communist Chinese state-owned firm Unipet, which has been linked to his son, Hunter Biden.

The Paris-based International Energy Agency, consisting of 31 member countries, knew back in May that the unilateral release of the U.S. emergency reserves was being conducted for political purposes rather than to compensate for any global supply disruptions, as Reuters was told by IEA “sources who declined to be identified because of the sensitivity of the topic.”

When will the U.S. emergency oil supply be replenished? The Department of Energy stated that “we anticipate that replenishment would not occur until well into the future, likely after fiscal year 2023.” It was reacting to Bloomberg reporting that the beginning of refilling the SPR could be triggered if oil prices fall to lower than \$80 per barrel; crude isn’t much higher than that right now at less than \$85. So if the report is true, the replenishment could begin soon. But a disturbing aspect of the story is the Biden administration’s rationale for the move: It reportedly would be trying to prevent a global reduction in oil prices. Imagine if voters believed this.

Petroleum remains what it has been for more than a century: the lifeblood of modern economies throughout the world. Democrats have abused it every which way, whether it’s restricting its use out of green extremism or manipulating its price in an undemocratic yearning to retain power in Washington.

Anders Corr



Biden’s New Biotech Order

China threat drives America into subsidizing its bioeconomy

THE BIDEN administration is boosting biotech. Big time.

It’s leveraging \$2 billion to turbocharge the bioeconomy in the United States for a market expected to add tens of trillions of dollars in value over the coming years.

“Global industry is on the cusp of an industrial revolution powered by biotechnology,” according to a White House fact sheet accompanying President Joe Biden’s executive order on advancing biotechnology and biomanufacturing innovation. “Other countries are positioning themselves to become the world’s resource for biotechnology solutions and products.”

Biden wants the United States in the lead on biotech and is trying to speak to his voters’ minds to get there. His fact sheet details biotech initiatives to “lower prices, create good jobs, strengthen supply chains, improve health outcomes, and reduce carbon emissions.”

International competition also drives the initiative.

“The United States has relied too heavily on foreign materials and bioproduction, and our past off-shoring of critical industries, including biotechnology, threatens our ability to access materials like important chemicals and active pharmaceutical ingredients,” according to the fact sheet.

That’s true. More than 70 percent of drug manufacturing facilities registered with the Food and Drug Administration are foreign. A full 13 percent are in China. China produces 42.4 percent of the world’s exported antibiotics.

In an emergency, those antibiotics could be difficult to access, costing American lives.

“Yet, bioeconomy remains an American strength—as well as a huge opportunity—given our industries, our innovators, and our robust research enterprise,” the Biden administration wrote. “By responsibly harnessing the

full potential of biotechnology and biomanufacturing, we will be able to realize the potential of biology that can make almost anything that we use in our day-to-day lives, from medicines to fuels to plastics, and continue to drive U.S. innovation into economic and societal success.”

Chinese state media denounced the initiative, claiming it targeted China and expanded decoupling from the computer chip industry to the biotech sector.

Over 70 percent of drug manufacturing facilities registered with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration are foreign.

“Although the statement did not mention China, it is widely believed that the executive order aims to reduce the US’ reliance on China for medicines and chemicals,” the Global Times reported.

The Biden administration’s biotech initiative details support for active pharmaceutical ingredients, antibiotics, and, more broadly, biotechnology, biomanufacturing, and biological engineering, including research into sub-cell biomolecules.

One of the most famous examples of genetic engineering is the splicing of human genes into bacteria for the production of insulin, which was previously harvested from farm animals. The genetically modified insulin is cheaper to produce and reduces the risk of allergic reactions in patients.

Synthetic biology goes beyond the splicing of natural genes, to the printing of synthetic DNA of any sequence. It creates biological products by using human-invented artificial DNA to make proteins that detect, for example, lead in water, or produce pheromones to

attract insects as part of pest control. It could be used mass-produce meat and milk, thus decreasing greenhouse gases, as well as biopharmaceuticals, pigments, or spider silk (five times stronger than steel by weight).

Synthetic biology has created new organisms such as synthetic yeast, synthetic bacteria, and synthetic viruses (to defeat cancer or E. coli, for example).

Bioengineering can produce biochemicals and biofuels and could eventually “account for more than a third of global output of manufacturing industries before the end of the decade—almost \$30 trillion in terms of value,” according to the White House.

China would like as much of this market as it can get. Beijing is pushing its bioeconomy, aiming to expand it to \$3.28 trillion in the next three years.

Given the threats from the Chinese Communist Party, however, Biden’s executive order rightly reveals elements of decoupling. It includes risk mitigation language, including against the theft of U.S. biological data and biotech innovation and from dual-use research, pathogens, pandemics, and “foreign adversaries.”

Unfortunately, the initiative lists no mitigation measures for its increased risk of inflation, redundancy, uneven funding, reduction of market solutions, and persistent executive order end-runs around Congress.

The order is a form of industrial policy, using subsidies to promote a particular industry. But it’s silent on the need for matching tariffs and export controls on biotech products and science.

The United States’ bioeconomy must become stronger and more independent, and the executive order is a step in the right direction. But the order should more thoroughly address not only new biotech expenditures, but how to protect them from our biggest geopolitical threats.

Mixed Stats Muddy the Waters

A strong employment report feeds optimists, but the economy is weak



FOR ALL THE DEBATE over and ambiguity in recent statistics, the U.S. economy can only be described as weak. Economic pessimists claim that it’s already in recession, pointing to the past two consecutive quarters of declining real gross domestic product (GDP). The White House and members of the Democratic Party are, for obvious political reasons, loath to make such a concession. They cling to a more technical definition of recession formulated by the venerable National Bureau of Economic Research and point to historically strong hiring rates to claim that there’s more economic strength than meets the eye. Though there’s ammunition for both optimists and pessimists, the balance of data points to economic weakness, if not yet outright recession. Moreove

Job growth offers the most significant support for economic optimists. The Labor Department’s July survey of employers showed a striking 526,000 expansion in payrolls, while the August survey showed a smaller but impressive gain of 315,000. These aren’t record increases, but they are nonetheless beyond most historical experience and far beyond where consensus expectations were. Behind these impressive tallies, however, other aspects of the Labor Department’s report suggest less strength. The department’s separate survey of households indicated a jobs gain of 626,000 in July and August, a good showing historically but far short of the payroll increases from the employers’ survey that have been

emphasized by the White House and much of the media. Also, the unemployment rate rose to 3.7 percent of the workforce in August, above July’s 3.5 percent rate and even June’s 3.6 percent. Some of this increase resulted from an otherwise encouraging increase in the number of people looking for work, but it nonetheless points to the beginnings of slack. Though there is ammunition for both optimists and pessimists, the balance of data points to economic weakness, if not yet outright recession. Meanwhile, the average weekly hours worked has remained flat since June at 34.5 and remains below numbers from earlier in the year. From this, it would seem that employers are hiring less to expand output than to relieve earlier needs to work people overtime. Outside the Labor Department’s accounting, there are, of course, the first and second quarter declines in real GDP. Weakness also comes through in declining measures of consumer confidence. Though the Conference Board’s measure showed a modest uptick in August, it failed to overcome the earlier declines and remains 10 percent below last December’s level. Reporting by the Institute of Supply Management showed no gain in August after a 5.5 percent drop in July, hardly a signal of strength. This list is, of course, far from complete, but it is nonetheless indicative. Apart from the mix of recent statistics, two other considerations weigh heavily on the economy’s prospects.

One is the ongoing inflation. At last measure, for August, the consumer price index rose 8.3 percent from year-ago levels. Though down from June highs, this kind of unacceptable price pressure seems likely to persist. In themselves, these inflation rates are sufficient to impair economic growth prospects by eroding business and consumer confidence, as well as discouraging the savings and investments on which economic growth ultimately depends. These effects could bring on recession all on their own. It certainly wouldn’t be the first time in history that inflation did so. A more potent recessionary threat emerges from the Fed’s fight against inflation. This effort began in March. Earlier, it had pursued a pro-inflationary monetary policy. It had kept short-term interest rates near zero and poured new money into financial markets by buying bonds directly—mostly Treasurys and mortgages—what the Fed refers to as “quantitative easing.” But since March, the Fed has begun to drain money from financial markets by selling the hoard of bonds it had previously acquired and pushing up short-term interest rates by some 1.75 percentage points. These standard anti-inflation moves also restrain economic activity. Moreover, the Fed seems determined to take further steps along these lines in the coming weeks and months—a pattern that will make recession still more likely. If this assessment is correct—and it seems likely—the statistics on which the White House and other optimists rely will soon turn against their view. The evidence of economic weakness, if not outright recession, will become overwhelming. Whether this resolution of the economic picture takes place in the next month or two remains uncertain. Still, it’s hardly likely that today’s ambiguities will remain in place much longer.

Political Bias and Food Inflation

Liberals and conservatives have different perceptions of rising food costs



INFLATION IS HITTING PEOPLE hard at the grocery store and crushing the budgets of millions, yet not everyone is complaining about rising prices to the same degree. A new study shows that the way Americans feel about food inflation depends on their political views. A survey by Purdue University’s Center for Food Demand Analysis and Sustainability discovered that liberals and conservatives have different perceptions of rising costs. Liberals are way too optimistic about food inflation, according to the study, which was conducted among 1,200 people from all over the United States. Compared to conservatives, liberals say they’ve experienced fewer food price increases over the past year, and they foresee less food price inflation in the future. It’s interesting to observe “the divergent perceptions of food inflation between liberals and conservatives,” according to Jayson Lusk, head and distinguished professor of agricultural economics at Purdue, who leads the center. “Not only are liberals severely underestimating the increase in food prices from last year but conservatives’ expectations for inflation are also likely overstating its rate for the coming year—at least compared to U.S. Department of Agriculture predictions,” Lusk said in a statement. However, conservatives and liberals share some common ground when it comes to spending. Consumers reported spending an average of \$114 per week on groceries and \$67 per week on restaurants and takeout meals. Food spending is almost identical across the political spectrum, according to the study. However, liberals place food price inflation approximately 3 to 4 percentage points below conservatives. For example, based on the survey data collected between January and August,



A survey shows liberals place food price inflation approximately three to four percentage points below conservatives.

liberals think food price inflation has been 6 percent for the past 12 months, compared to conservatives who said 9 percent. In addition, liberals think food prices will go up by 3 percent over the next 12 months, while conservatives think they will rise by 7 percent. These forecasts are far lower than the recent official figures. The August inflation report released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics on Sept. 13 shows that the food index surged at an annualized rate of 11.4 percent. Grocery store prices jumped by 13.5 percent year-over-year, while food-away-from-home rose by 8 percent. Overall, the food index saw its biggest annual increase since 1979. Americans have begun to feel the effects of drastically increased farming costs this year. Fertilizer prices have been rising because of surging input costs and supply disruptions caused by the conflict in Ukraine. Fertilizer prices are expected to rise further as plant closures in Europe tighten global supplies, placing more pressure on food costs.

As a result, while Americans are seeing lower prices at the gas pump, they aren’t getting the same relief in food and other areas. Almost everything outside of the energy index was up across the board last month. High inflation has also increased the demand for food assistance. The Purdue survey revealed that 25 percent of self-identified liberals reported getting free groceries from a food pantry or food bank, compared to 18 percent of moderates and 16 percent of conservatives. Liberals also care the most about the social and environmental sustainability of their food. And there’s a big disagreement over whether “eating less meat is better for the environment,” according to the survey. Liberals are roughly twice as likely to identify as vegetarian or vegan as compared to moderates and conservatives. According to the survey, conservatives are less likely to rely on the Food and Drug Administration, The New York Times, CNN, or academic institutions when seeking information about food, instead preferring more traditional sources, such as family, doctors, friends, and the Department of Agriculture. When asked to choose their top three budgetary stresses, shoppers reported food costs as the highest, followed by gas and rent/mortgage. The ranking emphasizes the important role that food plays in household budgets. It also explains why food price inflation has been so widely discussed over the past year. “We don’t have previous data to show whether this is a recent phenomenon given the high price environment,” said Sam Polzin, a food and agricultural survey scientist for the center and co-author of the report. “But at a time when consumers continue to make changes to their shopping to adjust to prices, this highlights that food is one of the first essentials that gets squeezed under budget stress.”

DANIEL LACALLE is chief economist at hedge fund Tressis and author of “Freedom or Equality,” “Escape from the Central Bank Trap,” and “Life in the Financial Markets.”

Daniel Lacalle

Productive Sector Recession

Loose monetary policy massively increases the size of government



QUANTITATIVE EASING was designed as a tool to provide time for governments to implement structural reforms, boost growth, and strengthen the economy. However, it has become a tool to increase the size of government and take on increasingly riskier levels of debt.

The U.S. economy hasn’t strengthened in the period of enormous fiscal and monetary stimuli, as the latest data show. It needs increasing units of debt to generate a new unit of gross domestic product (GDP), productivity is extremely poor, and leading indicators are negative.

The main problem of loose monetary policy is that it massively increases the size of government on the way in through debt and deficit spending monetization, but it also expands government on the way out as rate hikes and liquidity constraints affect households and small businesses but deficit spending and rising public debt remain. This “tightening” period is particularly negative in this crowding-out effect because the government is presenting new spending packages every week while the Fed is trying to contain inflation, curbing demand growth. The public sector is unaffected by the normalization of monetary policy, but the private productive sector suffers the crunch.

When the central bank tries to reduce inflation with rate hikes and monetary contraction, but the government increases spending and keeps an astonishing pace of indebtedness, what follows is wealth confiscation and stagnation.

The latest unemployment figures show the divergence between headline positive figures and reality. Yes, the official unemployment rate is optically low at 3.7 percent, but the labor participation rate remains at 62.4 percent, or



The United States seems to be on its way to a private sector contraction of unprecedented levels.

1 percentage point below its February 2020 level. Real wage growth is negative and consumer confidence remains extremely low. The Ipsos-Forbes Advisor U.S. Consumer Confidence Tracker fell back below the 50-point mark, which indicates contraction, in the first week of September.

The private sector is truly in a bad shape. The August S&P Global U.S. Sector Purchasing Managers’ Index shows all sectors in contraction. The report states that the financials sector “continues to record [the] fastest fall in activity,” health care “signals [the] sharpest decline in activity on record,” and the “industrials and technology output drops into contraction territory.” And they say there’s no recession risk?

The U.S. economy is projected to add just 8.3 million jobs from 2021 to 2031, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Total employment is projected to grow by 0.5 percent annually, which is half the 1 percent annual growth recorded over the 2011–21 decade. And

this projection is for a period in which it’s estimated that public debt will increase by another \$10 trillion with an average annual deficit spending of \$1 trillion.

Think of the trend for a second: The government adds trillions of so-called stimuli to the economy, the multiplier effect is inexistent, even when all conditions remain positive, then the same government increases debt and deficits again because of an exogenous factor, and the result is even more debt.

In the past three decades, the result has always been the same: The U.S. economy exits a crisis with significantly more debt, lower employment growth, weaker real wage growth, and slower GDP recoveries. Why? Government spending on everything and anything for any occasion is the equivalent of an athlete eating cake to face the challenging curves and expecting to run faster afterward.

Excessive monetary and fiscal intervention have left higher inflation and a weaker economy. Rate hikes may help reduce inflation, but permanent deficit spending will continue to erode the purchasing power of wages and deposits.

The United States seems to be on its way to a private sector contraction of unprecedented levels as it may affect all relevant industries at the same time. The divergence between the ISM indicator and the S&P Global PMI indicator also shows another worrying trend: Large businesses are doing fine in a high inflation–low growth economy, but small and medium enterprises, which create about 65 percent of employment, are in deep contraction.

Someday we’ll understand that supply-side measures create fewer headlines but have a better impact on the economy than a constant increase in government size and spending followed by more debt, more taxes, and more inflation.

EVA HAMBACH/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

FAN YU is an expert in finance and economics and has contributed analyses on China’s economy since 2015.

Fan Yu

RIP, Renminbi

This could be China’s longest and deepest recession

THE CHINESE YUAN (also known as the renminbi) is on pace to drop the most against the U.S. dollar in history as the world’s two biggest economies carve divergent paths in monetary policy. On Sept. 15, it broke the psychologically important 7 yuan to \$1 barrier.

The U.S. Federal Reserve is poised to continue its tightening measures to combat inflation. That itself has given a boost to the dollar compared to the euro and the yuan.

With respect to the yuan, which has dropped by almost 9 percent year-to-date against the dollar, the currency is on course to post its weakest annual showing against the dollar since China loosened the yuan’s dollar peg in 2005.

And as the Fed continues to hike rates—U.S. inflation readings remain stubbornly high—the People’s Bank of China is expected to maintain its loose monetary policy to keep a struggling economy afloat. That should lead the yuan to weaken further.

This is no aberration. As the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) prepares for its annual meeting in October, where regime boss Xi Jinping is expected to receive a third term as the nation’s de facto leader, China’s economy has been on a decidedly different path than the U.S. economy for some time.

For months now, global forecasters have cut their China gross domestic product (GDP) estimates. Beijing itself came out over the summer and admitted that it’s unlikely that the country will meet its 2022 goal of 5.5 percent headline official GDP growth. Most banks have reforecast the growth in the mid-2 percent to 3 percent range.

The country has been hurt by Beijing’s punitive “zero-COVID” policy, which shut down key economic cen-



Hedge fund Crescat Capital’s long-term bet against the Chinese currency may finally pay off after eight long years.

ters Shanghai and Shenzhen earlier this year and continues to plague certain areas.

This summer, China struggled with droughts and heat waves, putting a strain on its power grid, which also led to factory production cuts in parts of the country.

Unemployment is a key worry. Youth unemployment in urban areas was approaching 20 percent in July, continuing an elevated trend that has become difficult to assuage given weak consumer sentiment and spending trends.

The property market, with a downturn that’s about to head into a third year, remains in the doldrums. The real estate sector accounts for as much as a third of China’s GDP. But it’s a double-edged sword, as past growth has created massive property and debt bubbles that Beijing has been attempting to rein in. Both property prices and home sales have been declining.

None of this is breaking news. But the length and depth of this Chinese economic downturn could be more severe than those of the past.

It has become such a critical issue that on Sept. 12, a federal holiday in China for the Mid-Autumn Festival, no less, CCP premier Li Keqiang and all four vice ministers headed an “emergency meeting” to discuss the economy, review working group reports, and brainstorm ways to stabilize its free fall.

Judging from domestic and online discourse, more economic stimulus measures are coming. They could include items such as more infrastructure spending and broad relaxation of home purchase restrictions.

Li has been tasked by Xi to fix the economy, and failing at it could be an easy pretense for his ouster from the Politburo of the Standing Committee after his term as premier ends. Xi recently said China hadn’t yet “aggressively increased the fiscal deficit” to help the economy.

Reading between the lines, it appears that Beijing may do just that, which would be another contributor to the yuan’s decline.

The currency’s further weakening is now so obvious that Bloomberg—a longtime China bull—recently published a piece highlighting that hedge fund Crescat Capital’s long-term bet against the Chinese currency may finally pay off after eight long years.

Yet Bloomberg was quick to point out that the hedge fund’s position is still among the minority, citing “China’s large savings, high mortgage down payments, and the strong government control of banks” as reasons against an uncontrolled financial crisis.

As this once-contrarian view moves firmly into the mainstream, China’s currency will be under severe pressure from FX traders and hedge funds.

DAVID KIRTON/REUTERS

THOUGHT LEADERS

Taking on Big Tech and the Federal Government

‘The subpoenas have gone out. Dr. Anthony Fauci got served,’ Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry says

“What we found, and what the whistleblowers found, was that the government and the White House were directly communicating with Big Tech on stories and information they either wanted to promote or suppress,” says Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry.

On a recent episode of EpochTV’s “American Thought Leaders,” host Jan Jekielek and Landry discuss assaults on the First Amendment by government and Big Tech. One of the most assertive attorneys general in the country, Landry has filed a number of lawsuits against the Biden administration over Big Tech censorship, the Biden administration’s Disinformation Governance Board, COVID-19 mandates, illegal immigration, and election integrity.

JAN JEKIELEK: In May, you signed on with 19 different attorneys general against the establishment of this disinformation board, what some people call a Ministry of Truth, in the U.S. government. You sent a letter saying, “This kind of board cannot stand.” This is a big issue, correct?



One hundred cardboard cutouts of Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg stand outside the U.S. Capitol, as an advocacy group calls attention to hundreds of millions of fake accounts spreading disinformation on the platform, in Washington on April 10, 2018.

ATTORNEY GENERAL JEFF LANDRY:

It’s extremely troublesome when you have the federal government creating a disinformation board. That’s a prima facie violation of the First Amendment. Think about it. This is government that is going to filter information to the American people. They are basically going to ensure that some information gets out and some information doesn’t.

That’s exactly why the First Amendment was established under our Bill of Rights. That’s exactly the kind of conduct the Founders in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights wanted to

prevent. They didn’t want the government censoring information.

MR. JEKIELEK: There’s a lot of disinformation. Everyone will agree on that these days. So, what do we do about that?

MR. LANDRY: The greatness about America was that information could flow freely between people. The citizenry could ascertain truth from fiction and then come up with their own decisions based upon that information. Recently, the government has decided, “There’s some information we don’t want

the public to know.” That’s concerning, especially when that information ends up being correct. That’s why you saw attorneys general, like myself, go after the government the minute they announced this, saying, “This is an incorrect use of federal authority.”

MR. JEKIELEK: Not too long after, you and Attorney General Eric Schmitt in Missouri decided to launch a lawsuit looking at Big Tech and government colluding to censor.

MR. LANDRY: That lawsuit was instituted within 24 hours of the letter. Schmitt and I believe that if the government is censoring speech, then it’s violating your First Amendment rights. This was our theory. So if the government coerces or works with Big Tech and says, “We want you to censor this information,” and Big Tech does that, then Big Tech becomes a government actor and is violating citizens’ constitutional rights. That was the legal theory we had in play.

So, Schmitt and I filed the lawsuit in Louisiana. Three to five weeks later, some whistleblowers basically

said: “They’re censoring information. The government is colluding with Big Tech and telling them this is the information we want you to put out, and this is the information we want you to suppress,” which was the basis for our lawsuit. It was surprising to many, but it was affirming to us.

MR. JEKIELEK: What is the substance of the lawsuit? Please explain it to me.

MR. LANDRY: Let’s think about it in a criminal context. We all are familiar with Fourth Amendment search and seizure. The police can’t barge into your home to search for things. They have to have a reasonable belief that there is evidence connected to a crime.

Then, they have to go before a judge and say, “Judge, under these conditions,

this is the information we have.” Then the judge says, “OK, this is enough for a warrant to be granted.” That’s a Fourth Amendment protection.

The police can’t say: “We don’t want to go to a judge. We’ll get your neighbors to go into your house, because we know that you invite your neighbors into your house. We will tell them what to find, and then tell us if it’s in your house.”

That’s illegal. That’s the government short-circuiting the Fourth Amendment. It’s the same

thing with speech, and that’s what our lawsuit says about Big Tech and government. If we find this collusion to be true, then those platforms will be liable for violating citizens’ rights.

MR. JEKIELEK: What examples did you find? Where were the specific areas? You suggested a lot of things around COVID.

MR. LANDRY: What we found, and what the whistleblowers found, was that the government and the White House were directly

communicating with Big Tech on stories and information they either wanted to promote or suppress.

We have a treasure trove of information that should come out shortly. The good news is that the judge in our case granted our motion for discovery, so the subpoenas have gone out. Dr. Anthony Fauci got served, along with other members of the president’s Cabinet. They have to send us the communications between them and the platforms. We believe we’ll find communications telling the platforms what they should and shouldn’t put out.

MR. JEKIELEK: But you weren’t only looking at COVID-related issues in this lawsuit, correct?

MR. LANDRY: It’s not only those issues. Think about the suppression of the Hunter Biden laptop and Russiagate with its dossier. We’re seeing a disturbing pattern of the government taking information that’s fictitious and then making it a fact. Then, they try to hide the cover of that false story from the American people. They use the power of these Big Tech companies to limit the information the American people are getting.

Think about how the federal government spied on a presidential campaign. The basis for which they did so was a false document, the dossier. Again, when the evidence showing that dossier as fictitious tried to come out, that information was suppressed.

“Recently, the government has decided, ‘There’s some information we don’t want the public to know.’”

Attorney General Jeff Landry.



FROM L: SAUL LOEB/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES; MATTHEW PEARSON/CH STUDIOS

“Think about the suppression of the Hunter Biden laptop and Russiagate with its dossier.”

MR. JEKIELEK: Right now, there’s much less appreciation of the value of freedom of speech than there once was. Once, it was sacrosanct. Now people are talking about balancing these things.

We have this technology that can create big narratives of information and can change in a moment’s notice. With the information landscape changing so much, people are arguing that new rules are required to balance these capabilities with freedom. We wouldn’t want the wrong information to capture everyone’s mind in an instant. Things like that have happened.

MR. LANDRY: There used to be a thing called journalistic integrity. One of the things I appreciate about The Epoch Times is that it has risen above the fray and brought back journalistic integrity. Journalism was about writing a story based on facts and letting the reader draw an opinion.

And we used to have a physical public square. And in that physical public square, the press was welcome. People were free to debate and say things in that public square. But the internet created a virtual

public square, which at first seemed great. It was going to be a marketplace for ideas and connect more people. It was going to expand the physical public square. If you wanted to go and talk in New York, now you could do it through the internet and not have to travel to New York.

Unfortunately, the virtual public square is now controlled by just a handful of private corporations—Big Tech, as we’ve labeled them. Instead of the Bill of Rights and the

First Amendment being the gateway of that information, Big Tech now controls what goes in and out of the virtual public square. And when the government joins them, they are absolutely violating the First Amendment when it comes to information.

That’s where we are right now. What has happened is a collision of antitrust law, the monopolistic power of Big Tech, and what people believe and appreciate about the First Amendment.

MR. JEKIELEK: It seems to take the states to challenge the federal government.

MR. LANDRY: Let’s break it down to basics. Let’s look at the Constitution as a contract. There are only two parties to that contract, the states and the people. The federal government is a by-product of the Constitution. It’s not even really a party to it, but it’s an outgrowth

of the Constitution. That document is supposed to be a contract limited to the people and the states.

What you’re seeing right now are attorneys general either trying to bring the federal government in check or trying to expand it, based upon their ideology.

MR. JEKIELEK: I’ll be watching to see what you come up with out of the Louisiana attorney general’s office.

MR. LANDRY: This case against the Biden administration and the Cabinet members whom we’ve subpoenaed is going to be interesting. We can peel back the layers of that discovery and the public can watch. Schmitt and I are excited to litigate that case, and I hope that you all stay on top of it. ■

This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.



▲ A man uses his cellphone in front of a U.S. flag motif in New York on March 5, 2020.

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You Must Lead to Succeed

Being an effective boss requires taking an active role

By Jeff Minick



GO TO ANY PUBLIC library and you’ll find dozens of books on leadership. Google “leadership in the workplace,” and up pop a multitude of sites. Observe leaders in action, from your supervisor to the president of the United States, and you can draw a myriad of lessons, positive and negative, from their management styles. If we boil down these findings, we’re left with some basic precepts for becoming stronger, better leaders. Below are six of these essentials. I’m sure others can add to my inventory.

RESPONSIBILITY. “The buck stops here,” read the sign on President Harry Truman’s desk. Whether in the Oval Office or a small business, the best leaders own up to their errors. No one wants a boss who’s always blaming others for failed policies or practices. And good leaders don’t just accept responsibility for mistakes made. They take action to correct them.

VISION. You’re the captain of the ship. If you don’t know where you’re sailing, then neither will your crew. Share that dream and destination with them on a regular basis. When British Gen. Bernard Montgomery turned defeat into victory in North Africa, he began by letting his troops know the goal he had set—driving the Germans from El Alamein—and the way he intended for them to achieve that goal. Montgomery’s clear-cut statement of purpose

breathed new life into his men’s flagging morale.

INVOLVEMENT. The best leaders aren’t too high and mighty to pitch in when their subordinates need a hand. At my local grocery store is a manager who, when the occasion demands, bags groceries, helps out at the service desk, and strolls about the store assisting customers. The store’s employees surely notice and value his will-do attitude.

Attitude; it’s up to you. The enthusiastic leader brightens the workplace.

COACHING. Like my high school football coach or college boxing instructor, the best leaders mix love with discipline. They want to draw out the best in each player. Sometimes, this may be a metaphorical kick in the rear, sometimes a clap of congratulations on the shoulder. “It is better to be feared than loved,” writes Machiavelli in a famous line from “The Prince.” Often omitted, however, is the rest of the quotation, “... if you cannot be both.” Substitute respect for fear, add some love, and you have a cornerstone of leadership.

BONDING. Whether you have charge of a squad of 10 or a battalion of 1,000 subordinates, like a coach, you want to forge them into a team. One attorney I

know in North Carolina, who founded and manages seven law offices across the state, gathers his employees two or three times a year for retreats or other outings, getaways which often include spouses and children. They exchange ideas for making the firm stronger, but just as importantly, they share a time of fellowship and come to know one another better. “E pluribus unum” is the original motto of the United States. Good leaders will seek to make it their motto as well.

ATTITUDE. It’s up to you. The enthusiastic leader brightens the workplace. Here, my dentist comes to mind. As he examines my teeth, this man sometimes literally dances or sings to the piped-in music, usually hits from the ‘80s and ‘90s, jokes with his assistant, who often teases him, and wears wacky scrubs, yet he is clearly the guy in charge, extremely competent and directing his fellow workers as necessary.

Noted for his lectures and books on leadership, John C. Maxwell once said, “A great leader’s courage to fulfill his vision comes from passion, not from position.”

That’s the winning ticket. The beating heart of good leadership, as evidenced above, is passion.

Jeff Minick lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. He is the author of two novels, “Amanda Bell” and “Dust on Their Wings,” and two works of nonfiction, “Learning as I Go” and “Movies Make the Man.”



Unwind



The name “Woodstock” may conjure images of a legendary concert, but Vermont’s Woodstock Inn & Resort is a magnet for those seeking to immerse themselves in nature and rustic splendor.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WOODSTOCK INN & RESORT

One of Vermont’s Most Appealing Spots. 94

GYMS AND EXERCISE equipment are great, but you can get and stay fit without them, using effective toning and trimming exercises wherever you may be. 98

CONSIDER THIS COLLECTION of tech to take calls or listen to music to improve concentration, without disturbing those around you. 101

YOUR DOG IS YOUR BEST friend, so here are some etiquette tips to make sure it is always welcome when you visit your friends’ homes. 104

Beyond the sunken garden lies a manicured lawn, with ample spaces for a picnic or solitary reading.

A Storybook Cottage

This estate is near the market town of Bishop's Stortford, with connecting transportation to London

By Phil Butler

TO SOME, THE IDEA OF LUXURIOUS living brings images of lavish rooftop penthouses, private islands, or perhaps a castle complete with a moat. But for others, a quaint little cottage tucked away in the historic market town of Bishop's Stortford in Hertfordshire, England, may be the sanctuary that they've long dreamed of.

This storybook cottage sits at the end of a narrow country lane. Tucked away at the end of a private driveway crossing a narrow little bridge over a tributary of the River Stort, the property is available for \$1.933 million. The property's two residences make up a total of 5,518 square feet, with seven bedrooms and five baths beneath the shade of mature spruce trees.

The main house, a Grade II-listed historical building, features Victorian elements, period country architecture, and numerous modern conveniences. The lower level has a spacious professional-grade country kitchen, a dining room with a flagstone floor, and a spacious sitting room. Also on this level are a utility room,

a cloakroom, and a home office.

On the second floor, the main bedroom has a high-beamed ceiling and a walk-in closet. Two additional bedrooms and a family bath are on this level, as well as a guest bedroom with a private staircase. The older section of the primary residence also features an inglenook fireplace, a cozy bay window, and a brick-floored study.

Just across the manicured gardens lies a detached timber frame annex with a kitchenette, two bedrooms, and a bath on the ground level. Upstairs, there's a double en suite bedroom. A small private courtyard cloaked in plants and natural greenery frames the front of this structure. Behind the annex and the principal residence is an in-ground pool.

The property has a vegetable plot, a herb garden, a bog garden, pear and peach trees, a greenhouse, and a sunken garden with a water feature, as well as a lawn area with a pagoda.

Phil Butler is a publisher, editor, author, and analyst who is a widely cited expert on subjects ranging from digital and social media to travel technology.



THE MILLERS COTTAGE
BISHOP'S STORTFORD,
HERTFORDSHIRE, UK

\$1.933 MILLION

- 7 BEDROOMS
- 5,518 SQUARE FEET
- 2.29 ACRES

KEY FEATURES:

- LISTED HISTORIC RESIDENCE
- PERIOD ARCHITECTURE
- UNIQUE/CHOICE LOCATION
- PRIVATE POOL

AGENT
MULLUCKS—PART OF
HUNTERS

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(Above) Beyond the sunken garden with a fascinating water feature lies a pagoda on the manicured lawn, with ample other natural spaces for a picnic or quiet afternoon. **(Top Right)** Upstairs in the main house, three charming and cozy bedrooms reflect an old-world country charm. **(Right)** A later addition features a drawing room with a partially vaulted room with large oak timbers, classic furnishings, and a handsome fireplace.



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF MULLUCKS - PART OF HUNTERS

Vermont Luxury

The Woodstock Inn & Resort has a rich history tied to the Rockefeller family

By Cary Dunst

Beautiful autumn foliage in Woodstock, Vt., on Oct. 8, 2018.
PHOTO BY MINDSTORM/SHUTTERSTOCK

ON A BLUE-SKY SUMMER afternoon, we approached the historic Woodstock Inn's long driveway. A surreal feeling set in as we parked on the red brick landing near the front porch's white columns, above which sat a giant golden eagle statue.

We were transported to a bygone era upon entering the lobby, as if we were co-stars on the silver screen, expecting Cary Grant, Humphrey Bogart, and Katharine Hepburn to be sipping cocktails at one of the cozy sitting areas. The Victorian furnishings, décor, and oil paintings of pastoral Vermont completed the scene.

Indeed, the Woodstock Inn's charms aren't captured by its five-star hotel rating. It's a place with 229 years of historical significance and the blessings of a benefactor in Laurance Rockefeller, grandson of Standard Oil's John Rockefeller, history's wealthiest American.

1934

The year 1934 was a notable one in the New England town of Woodstock, Vermont. In the snowy winter, the nation's first tow rope would be installed, giving birth to a modern, industrial-powered ski era.

Then, in August, the town's local heiress, Mary French Billings, married one of the world's most eligible bachelors: Laurance Rockefeller.

With the means to wed anywhere in the world, Mary and Laurance chose the Billings's third-generation family farm and estate for the event. This sealed the Rockefeller connection to Woodstock.

A Home for a Conservationist

In 1951, the Rockefellers renovated the Billings mansion and made Woodstock their country home.

Rockefeller would become the nation's leader on conservation, advising every president from Eisenhower until his death. His practical approach combined the preservation of lands with an emphasis on public access so that the masses could enjoy and benefit from nature's wonders.

Rockefeller invested his time in many projects to establish public parklands. He also invested his private capital into creating a new kind of hospitality category called "ecotourism."

The Woodstock Inn approached Rockefeller in 1967 about an investment. It was determined that the inn's historical treasures should be preserved but

Gillingham's General Store has been open since 1886



Woodstock, Vt., is centrally located near I-89 and I-91.

For a sweet souvenir, pick up some maple syrup from Sugarbush Farm.

Laurance and Mary Rockefeller frequently spent time together in nature.



FROM TOP: THE EPOCH TIMES; COURTESY OF THE WOODSTOCK INN & RESORT



(Top Left) The cozy lobby of the Woodstock Inn & Resort. **(Left)** The Mary Rockefeller Suite at the Woodstock Inn & Resort. **(Above)** The front entry to the historic Woodstock Inn & Resort in Woodstock, Vt.

that the hotel’s structure needed to be completely rebuilt. The following year, Rockefeller opened a new and vastly improved facility while maintaining the style and character of the original property.

Since then, the inn and surrounding area have seen constant capital improvements—both on its property and via acquisitions to include a country club for golf, a ski resort, a tennis and fitness center, a full onsite spa and bridal suite, an organic garden, and a complete interior renovation of all guest rooms in 2018.

Experiencing Woodstock and the Inn

The town of Woodstock and the inn seem to effortlessly blend into each other with no discernible line of demarcation, as if they’re all part of the same quaint experience.

We would take walks around the inn’s grounds and find ourselves drifting into town, stopping for a picture on the covered bridge, admiring the Victorian homes in the residential neighborhoods, exploring different spots along the river, and browsing the shops for gifts, books, and yummy treats.

Despite being a grand hotel, the inn is Vermont casual. It was most welcoming to our children, who used the old-timey parlor game room, explored the gift shop, and were treated to cookies in the lobby. Our dog, Sophie, was also treated with cookies at the front desk, as well as with a dog bed and bowl in our room.

After various morning excursions, we would spend our afternoons on chaise lounges by the heated saltwater pool enjoying the Vermont sun. We would also spend time roasting s’mores in the evening at the firepit.

Frequently, we would see fly fishing lessons underway on the lawn by the activity center, which also hosts a fleet of cruiser and mountain bikes ready to be fitted to families. In the winter, it’s all about the inn’s owned and operated ski resort, which is less than a 10-minute drive away.

The Billings Farm and Mansion

For guests of the hotel, admission to the nearby Billings Farm Museum is at no cost, and I highly recommend it. There, a theater plays a short documentary on the Billings Farm & Museum and the adjoining Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park.

As you walk through the Billings Mansion, you see all their original art, furniture, and even periodicals on the coffee tables as if it’s a space frozen in time. From the top floor windows, you can look out to the farm, gardens, mountains, the inn, and the town of Woodstock.

“The spirit of man needs to refresh itself by communion with unspoiled nature,” Rockefeller said. “In such surroundings—occasional as our visits may be—we can achieve that kind of physical and spiritual renewal that comes alone from the wonder of the natural world.” ■

If You Go

- Getting Around:** Burlington Airport is a 90-minute drive; Hartford and Boston Airports are 2 1/2 hours away.
- Stay:** Reserve at WoodstockInn.com or call 888-338-2745.
- Dine:** The lobby restaurant has a decadent morning buffet and a Vermont-themed dinner menu. For restaurants in town, check with the concierge.
- Activities:** Hiking, walking, golf, fishing, and biking are all great options. Skiing is the main draw in the winter.
- Take Note:** To truly experience the Woodstock Inn’s charms, leave an afternoon or a full day with no agenda.

THIS PAGE: ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE WOODSTOCK INN & RESORT

THE SILKEN SPIRIT OF GREECE: METAXA SITS IN A CLASS OF ITS OWN

Though the precise recipe remains a prized secret, the amber spirit’s history is as rich and layered as the drink itself

By Xenia Taliotis

ON THE GREEK ISLAND OF Samos, gnarly vines claw their way out of the sun-scorched, stony soil on Mount Ambelos. Their branches, twisted, low-lying, and braced against sea-salt winds, hold up clusters of the small gold-green muscat grapes that have made this tiny isle in the North Aegean Sea a world-famous wine producer.

Floral and honeyed, the best of them become a key ingredient in one of Greece’s most celebrated products: Metaxa.

Likened to cognac and brandy, Metaxa is neither, but a blend of wine distillates, rose petals, Mediterranean herbs, and, crucially, muscat. It was created more than 130 years ago by a silk merchant named Spyros Metaxa, who dreamed of a new spirit that would be as smooth and luxurious as the fabric that had given his family its name and livelihood—metaxi, or silk.

Trial followed error, followed trial, followed error. Finally, in 1888, he tried something different: He added aromatic muscat to sweeten his botanical-infused Savatiano and Black Corinth wine distillates. Suddenly, he had the silken spirit he had been striving to make for years. Metaxa had arrived.

The original Metaxa distillery was in Piraeus, but in 1968, production was moved to the House of Metaxa on the outskirts of Athens. Constantinos Raptis has been Metaxa Master since 1992 and has created some of the most remarkable styles in the spirit’s history, including Metaxa 12 Stars, Private Reserve, Angels’ Treasure, and the AEN series—three limited releases drawn from elixirs made from 200 blends that had been aged in the distillery’s oldest casks. The latest

- Aromatic** muscat grapes from Samos are hand-harvested, made into wine, and blended for Metaxa.
- Wine** distillates are aged in French Limousin oak casks before being blended with muscat and a secret bouquet of herbs.
- AEN Three** Generations, the latest release, contains blends from 1910, 1920, 1960, and 1980.



Constantinos Raptis is the current and longest-serving Metaxa Master.

METAXA 12 STARS SOUR

- 1 2/3 ounces Metaxa 12 Stars
 - 2/3 ounce lemon juice
 - 1/3 ounce simple syrup
 - Optional 2/3 ounce egg white
 - 2 dashes Angostura bitters
- Shake well and serve in a double old-fashioned glass. Garnish with lemon zest.

release, AEN Three Generations, will be his last AEN.

Raptis, a qualified chemist with an additional degree in oenology, is also a master of discretion; apparently, only two people know what goes into the secret bouquet of herbs that make Metaxa what it is, and he has no intention of adding a third.

“It is not necessary to reveal this information,” he said. “The only ingredient we speak about is the May rose petals and then only because the scent is so distinctive that we cannot conceal it.”

AEN Three Generations contains blends from 1910, 1920, 1960, and 1980—made by Spyros Metaxa; his son, Andreas; and Andreas’s son, Elias. Only 1,000 bottles have been released.

“When you taste it, you will see that the notes are in total harmony—like an orchestra,” Raptis said.

“There is the warmth of honey-suckle, bergamot, nutmeg. There is the richness of blackberry, plum, and fig. There is the sweetness of wild honey, of chocolate and toffee. ... Savor it; each sip reveals a new taste.”

Now, a new master is waiting in the wings: Konstantinos Kalpaxidis is currently training under Raptis and will take over once his tuition is complete, in perhaps two years’ time.

“Metaxa is about legacy and heritage and tradition, not only of its founding family but also of Greece,” Raptis said. “It was years in the making in the first instance, and it has been evolving ever since. It is infused with history. Every drop is a lesson in craftsmanship.” ■

Xenia Taliotis is a UK-based writer and editor, covering lifestyle, travel, wellness, property, business, and finance.

GETTING HEALTHY *Is Easy*

An exercise routine is a great way to shed stress and possibly a few extra pounds as well

By Bill Lindsey ➦

With motivation, dedication, and proper shoes, you can head down the road of fitness.

LEFT PAGE: GORGEV/SHUTTERSTOCK; RIGHT PAGE FROM TOP: NEW AFRICA/SHUTTERSTOCK, SHOWCAKE/SHUTTERSTOCK, CHRISTIAN MUELLER/SHUTTERSTOCK, FENG YU/SHUTTERSTOCK

IT'S EASY TO TAKE HEALTH FOR granted when you're young and active, but as time goes by, effort is required to remain limber, vibrant, and toned. Exercising in a gym, either at home or in one open to the public, is certainly one way to stay in shape, but it isn't an option for everyone, or for times when you're traveling. These routines don't require weights, machines, or any other specialized equipment, yet they have the potential to provide impressive results in terms of cardio health, muscle tone, and reduced body weight. All you need is the desire to be fit, a comfortable place to exercise, optional inspiring or soothing music, plenty of water to stay hydrated, and the discipline to keep at it.

Fitness isn't easy, but when a goal of weight loss or being able to fit into clothes from many years ago is reached, many find themselves inspired to set new, higher goals. However, before you consider any type of exercise, get your doctor's OK; it's critical that you make sure there are no underlying conditions that could cause or exacerbate health issues while exercising.

The most basic no-gym exercise is one you're already doing: walking. Any distance walked consumes calories and tones muscles to some degree, but as with all exercise, the results are commensurate with the effort expended. If you need motivation, a 2021 report published by the Journal of the American Medical Association revealed that a group of adults, with an average age of 45, who took at least



➤ *Taking the dog for a walk definitely counts as exercise. Make this a daily routine to keep you and the pooch fit and trim.*

Barring physiological issues, we all walk, so converting it to serious exercise is relatively simple.

7,000 steps per day had a 50 percent to 70 percent lower risk of mortality than a second group the same age taking fewer steps per day.

The goal is to elevate the heart rate for at least 10 minutes, making longer walks more beneficial than short bursts. When compared to running, Dr. Richard Josephson of University Hospital in Ohio suggests that a total of 150 minutes of walking per week at a moderate pace equates to a total of 75 minutes of running per week. Higher levels of cardio fitness require more intense exertion, allowing individuals to develop exercise routines based on their needs.

Barring physiological issues, we all walk, so converting it to serious exercise is relatively simple. Before you choose a route, proper shoes are a must; if possible, consult with a podiatrist to determine if you require extra arch support or have other foot-related issues. A great thing about walking is that it can be done virtually anywhere, at any time. In addition to strolls through a nearby park, or in the neighborhood, or around the block during office breaks, another option is the local mall, particularly during rainy, hot, or cold weather.

Water walking—literally walking in a pool (the shallow end, please!)—provides a bit more of a cardio workout compared to walking on dry land. Jumping jacks or no-rope jump roping provides a higher-intensity alternative to walking; however, if these are done in a hotel, office, or multistory residence, be courteous to neighbors on the floor beneath yours.

To increase the intensity of a walking workout, head for the stairs; if you work or live in a multistory building, use the stairs instead of the eleva- ➦

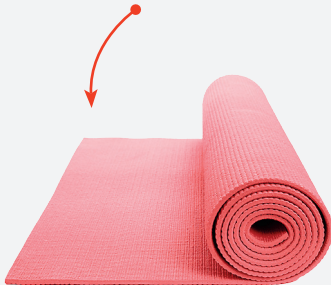
Jumping rope is a great cardio exercise you can do almost anywhere, any time, and once you know how to do it, you don't even need the rope.



Exercise is taxing on your body, so make sure to stay hydrated before, during, and after.



An exercise mat makes doing planks or other floor-based exercises more pleasant, but if you don't have one, you can make do with a thick towel.





Before you try them, planks may seem too easy to provide any results, but they are actually a great and challenging way to strengthen core muscle groups.

tor. This exercise can be hard on the knees, so go slowly and work your way up as your stamina allows. Maintain a tight grip on the railing, especially when going down and when you're tired. If your goal is to be able to run the steps at the local sports arena such as you see in movies, that's admirable, but start off slowly.

Strengthening the core muscles of your abdominal area is a common goal, and there are many effective exercises that don't require specialized equipment, such as planks, leg lifts, and hollow body holds. At first glance, a plank, which resembles the extended part of a push-up, seems too easy to provide a tighter abdomen, but those new to this exercise soon realize that holding the position for even one minute is a great accomplishment.

Working your way up to five minutes per day over a span of 30 consecutive days can result in a very noticeable tightening of your core, and also serves to make exercising a normal part of your day. A hollow body hold is essentially a reverse plank. Lying on your back, raise your legs, arms, shoulders, and head to work and tone the muscles along the sides, back, and front of your body. Extend the hold time and number of repetitions over time for ever-improving results.

Leg lifts are just that: Raise and hold one or both legs to provide a toning

effect to core muscles, as well as thighs and gluteal muscles. The most basic lifts have you lying on your back and raising one or both legs, pausing briefly at the top of each lift. Start with four sets of 10 repetitions and work your way up in how long you hold the raised position. To increase intensity, try the donkey kick: Start on your knees with your palms flat on the floor, then raise one leg straight up and point the bottom of your foot at the ceiling. Start with four sets of 10 repetitions, increasing reps as your muscles become stronger.

Start your own custom no-gym exercise routine and stick to it; you'll soon experience the overall great feeling that comes with being fit. ■



Shoes that fit perfectly and provide sure, no-slip support are a critical part of any exercise routine.

E
LIFESTYLE
**NO EXCUSES
NOT TO BE
HEALTHY**

Get fit anywhere



Why?

Hours spent in the office or on the couch take a toll on overall health, making any exercise a good idea. Results match the effort, so after getting your physician's OK, set a goal such as reduced weight.



How?

Not all great exercises require equipment, such as walking or doing planks. The intensity and number of repetitions will determine your results.



Where?

No-gym workouts can be done at home, while traveling, or even at the mall, with walking being appropriate anywhere. Others such as jumping jacks are best done in the privacy of your home or hotel room.

THIS PAGE FROM TOP: PROSTOCK-STUDIO/SHUTTERSTOCK, IVANKO80/SHUTTERSTOCK

ENJOY YOUR OWN
ON-THE-GO SOUNDTRACK

A favorite playlist, access to news, and the ability to make hands-free calls makes daily workouts, commutes, or time at the office pass more enjoyably

By Bill Lindsey



**Stay Connected
TREBLAB X3 PRO**

\$69.97

A clever set of ear hooks keeps these buds where they belong, so you don't have to jam them into your ear, which is a good thing. Nine hours of run time per charge and passive noise canceling, combined with the ability to take and make calls, help you to maintain your focus while still being connected to the outside world. Compatible with all Bluetooth devices, they can also be used to summon assistance from Siri or Alexa.



**Born to Run
SHOKZ OPENRUN PRO**

A great soundtrack can make exercising more enjoyable—unless your earbuds keep falling out. This unique design keeps them securely in place, no matter how hard you're running or working out. The open-air design allows outside sounds such as traffic to be heard, while the bone conduction system provides excellent audio quality. A full charge provides up to 10 hours of use, but if you forget, a five-minute charge allows 1 1/2 hours of use.



**Hear All the Notes
SHURE AONIC 40**

These over-the-ear headphones deliver 25 hours per charge of studio-quality sound, with customizable equalization settings for maximum enjoyment. The sound-canceling system can be adjusted to either block all external sound or allow background input, making them a good choice for office use. For the ultimate in flexibility, they can be used with either Bluetooth wireless systems or wired inputs such as airplane entertainment systems, and an integral microphone pairs with cellphones to make or take calls.



**Relaxed and Alert
JABRA ELITE 4 ACTIVE**

The best earbuds are those you scarcely notice, making these a good choice for use during active sports. Both waterproof and sweatproof, they're designed to comfortably stay in place as you work out to avoid any interruption of your music soundtrack. Active noise cancellation allows you to focus on the music, while the HearThrough system picks up the sounds around you while running or cycling outdoors, or while in the office when you need to hear the boss talking to you.



**Upgrade Your Shades
JLAB JBUDS FRAMES**

While sunglasses with integral speakers are available, there's something to be said for being able to add music and phone capability to your favorite shades or prescription glasses. Simply slide these onto the earpieces and connect via Bluetooth to access your favorite music or news sources. An integral microphone in each unit allows you to take or make phone calls, and access Siri or Alexa. To ensure your privacy, the microphones can be deactivated.

RECOMMENDED READING

This week, we feature an incisive analysis of the Goths' sacking of Rome and an endearing novel about a boy saved from grief by a musical genius.

FICTION

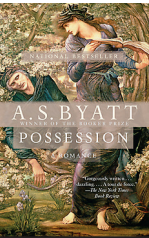


'THE GREAT PASSION'
By James Runcie

From Grief to Solace in Faith

It's 1727 and 13-year-old Stefan Silbermann is grieving the loss of his mother. When he's sent to school in Leipzig, her absence plagues him further. Then, the school's cantor, Johann Sebastian Bach, hears beauty in his voice and his life is forever changed.

BLOOMSBURY PUBLISHING,
2022, 272 PAGES



'POSSESSION'
By A.S. Byatt

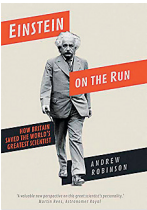
A Meeting of Passions and Ideas

Two modern literary researchers, Maud Bailey and Roland Mitchell, explore the tangled lives of two Victorian poets, Randolph Ash and Christabel LaMotte. Byatt's novel is jam-packed with poetry, letters, mystery, and love

thwarted and found, all of which should delight lovers of literature. Back and forth we go between these two couples, who struggle to find their way through attachment and emotion. Over this story, too, hangs a cloud: the "cunning" of love and fate. This is a perfect read for autumn evenings.

VINTAGE, 1991, 576 PAGES

BIOGRAPHY



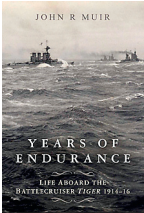
'EINSTEIN ON THE RUN'
By Andrew Robinson

Einstein's British Fans

Albert Einstein was one of the 20th century's great men. Although famous for his theory of relativity, he was an accomplished musician, a noted pacifist, and an Anglophile. He was also an assassin's target in the 1930s. This book tells two tales: one of the mutual admiration between Einstein and Great Britain and the other of how England offered Einstein sanctuary when his life was in danger. This focused biography recounts Einstein's life in the context of his relationship with Britain.

YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS,
2019, 376 PAGES

MEMOIR



'YEARS OF ENDURANCE'
By John R. Muir

The North Sea in World War I

At the beginning of World War I, John R. Muir was a Royal Navy surgeon. An avid yachtsman, he served as surgeon on the battlecruiser Tiger. He joined the HMS Tiger prior to its 1914 commission and remained with it past the 1916 Battle of Jutland. First published in 1936, this memoir describes life aboard the ship and its service during battle and as such offers a fascinating look at a Royal Navy surgeon's life, ashore and afloat.

NAVAL INSTITUTE PRESS,
2022, 312 PAGES

HISTORY



'AT THE GATES OF ROME'
By Don Hollway

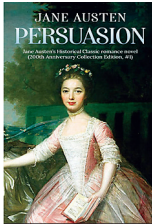
The Goths Take Rome

Don Hollway has given readers an incisive look

into how Rome came to be sacked by the Goths in 410 A.D.: constant warring, usurpation, the untenable division of the empire between east and west, a city-state that turned on its protector, and a leader who sought revenge. It's a beautifully written and intriguing work on the fall of Rome.

OSPREY, 2022, 368 PAGES

CLASSICS



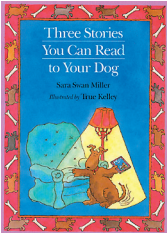
'PERSUASION'
By Jane Austen

Love's 2nd Chance

After financial distress forces her family to rent out their beloved home to an admiral, Anne Elliott, 27, finds herself entangled once again with Capt. Frederick Wentworth. He's brother to the admiral's wife and the fiancé Anne had broken up with seven years earlier under pressure from her family and a close friend. Austen's final novel offers us a tender and oftentimes humorous tale of the renewed romantic interest between the pair, while underlining the meaning of true love and the intervention of fate and possibility.

INDEPENDENTLY PUBLISHED,
2021, 167 PAGES

FOR KIDS

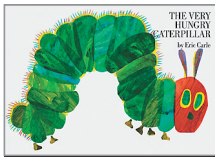


'THREE STORIES YOU CAN READ TO YOUR DOG'
By Sara Swan Miller

No Dog? Still Fun!

Youngsters (and maybe even the dog) will get a charge out of these tales: "The Burglar," "The Bone," and "The Wild Dog." True Kelley's illustrations of this goofy pet and his exploits just add to the pleasure. This book is for preschool to third grade.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN, 1997,
48 PAGES



'THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR'
By Eric Carle

'He Was Still Hungry'

As a caterpillar eats his way through the week, young readers will learn colors, numbers, the days of the week, and the life cycle of a butterfly. They're sure to giggle at the repeating refrain after each of the caterpillar's meals.

WORLD OF ERIC CARLE, 1981,
32 PAGES



Ian Kane
is a U.S. Army veteran, filmmaker, and author.
He enjoys the great outdoors and volunteering.

MOVIE REVIEWS

This week, we feature a new documentary that encourages us to find gratitude in our lives, and a beautiful family drama based on a children's classic.

NEW RELEASE



'Gratitude Revealed' (2022)

► Director Louie Schwartzberg takes us on an epic journey across the world, interviewing a wide assortment of people, from philosophers to common folks. It's a cinematic celebration of how we can all strive to have more meaningful lives through the practice of gratitude. Beyond mere virtue-signaling platitudes, this film is a guidebook on how we can chart a course back from the disconnection and division of modern times. Whatever your religious or spiritual beliefs, this is an inspirational documentary that lifts the spirit.

DOCUMENTARY

Release Date:
Nov. 1, 2022
Director:
Louie Schwartzber
Running Time:
1 hour, 22 minutes
MPAA Rating:
Not Rated
Where to Watch:
Theaters

★★★★★

A CHARMING ROMANCE ABOUT BOUNDLESS LOVE



'An Affair to Remember' (1957)

► Playboy Nickie Ferrante (Cary Grant) and singer Terry McKay (Deborah Kerr) meet on a cruise from Europe

to New York and fall in love. However, since both are engaged, they agree to wait and meet again in six months. But things don't go as planned. This is a delectably

sentimental love story, with fantastic chemistry between the leads. It's packed with charm, humor, and romance.

DRAMA | ROMANCE

Release Date:
July 19, 1957
Director:
Leo McCarey
Starring:
Cary Grant,
Deborah Kerr,
Richard Denning
Running Time:
1 hour, 55 minutes
Not Rated
Where to Watch:
Redbox, DirecTV, Vudu

★★★★★

Epoch Watchlist

FAMILY PICK

'The Secret Garden' (1993)

► Based on the children's classic, the film tells the heart-warming story of young Mary Lennox (Kate Maberly). When orphaned, she goes to live with her uncle, Lord Archibald Craven (John Lynch), at his estate. There she meets her sickly young cousin Colin Craven (Heydon Prowse), and most importantly, she discovers a neglected garden. This is one of those films that can be enjoyed by the entire family. It's a work of beauty and has an



alluring fairytale-like feel that invites the viewer to enter a world of magic and mystery.

DRAMA | FAMILY | FANTASY

Release Date:
Aug. 13, 1993
Director:
Agnieszka Holland
Starring:
Kate Maberly, Maggie Smith, Heydon Prowse
Running Time:
1 hour, 41 minutes
MPAA Rating:
G
Where to Watch:
Redbox, Vudu, DirecTV

★★★★★

A FRENCH GEM WITH GOOD LIFE LESSONS

'Jean de Florette' (1987)

► When Ugolin Soubeyran (Daniel Auteuil) returns to his rural French hamlet after serving in the military, he and his uncle Cesar (Yves Montand) hatch a scheme for a coveted spring on a neighbor's property. But their neighbor, Jean de Florette (Gérard Depardieu), doesn't intend on giving up his land. This is an incredibly well-crafted film with superb acting, a charming score, and skillful cinematogra-



phy. Its use of vibrant colors and stunning scenery enhances the comedic and intriguing dialogue.

COMEDY | DRAMA

Release Date:
Aug. 28, 1987
Director:
Claude Berri
Starring:
Yves Montand, Gérard Depardieu, Daniel Auteuil
Running Time:
2 hours
MPAA Rating: PG
Where to Watch:
Amazon, Netflix

★★★★★



Pet Etiquette for Visits

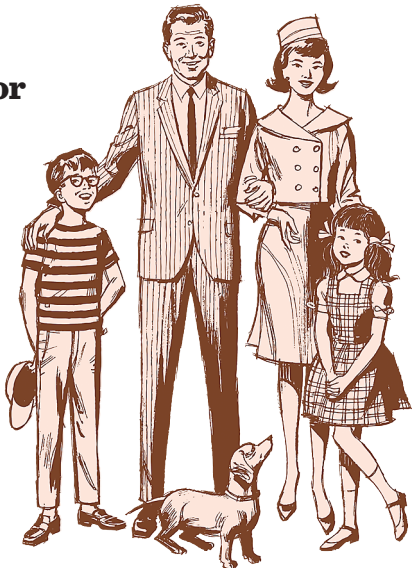
Bringing your dog along makes everything better—when it has good manners

Many dogs love just going for a casual ride, but when it's time to visit friends, that makes for an epic day. To make sure everyone has fun, here are a few suggestions to help your pup put its best paw forward.

By Bill Lindsey

1 Be a Pet Ambassador

Some folks aren't "dog people," so be aware if they're nervous around your pet. It's hard to believe, but not everyone wants puppy kisses! Keep the pup on a leash, even inside, and don't allow it to jump on your friends. Definitely keep your dog off the couch, and don't feed it from the table. Have your pooch obey "sit," "stay," and "lie down" commands to demonstrate how great it is to have a pet around the home.



2 Enjoy the Visit

Your pet may be exuberant when meeting new people and seeing new things, so be patient. Resist the urge to scold it if it get rambunctious, especially around kids and pet-friendly adults who are happy to see it and add to the excitement. If your friends have a dog, don't attempt to train it or otherwise correct its behavior—that's very rude and usually doesn't work, so there's no need to go there.

3 It Broke It, You Bought It

Accidents happen, especially when pets are in unfamiliar surroundings. If your furry buddy breaks something, it becomes your responsibility to replace the item immediately. It's natural for dogs to sniff around a new area to see what they can find, so keep them on a leash, or if you let them explore, pay attention to what they're doing. They don't mean to break things, but a happily wagging tail can leave behind a trail of destruction.

4 Enjoy the Quiet

Not everyone will be impressed by how Scruffy barks at everything, real or imagined, which makes it important to work with your pet to quell unnecessary barking. Some folks use bark collars, but if they were to try one on themselves, they'd find another method. Use positive reinforcements such as treats to help your dog learn when it's OK to bark and when it's not.

5 Bring a Toy

You may be having a great time visiting with friends, but don't be offended if the dog gets bored. Keep your pet occupied by bringing a favorite toy and snacks. Pups can be sneaky, stealing another dog's toys, so make sure that doesn't happen. Pay attention to see if your pet looks about to "answer the call of nature," so you can take it outside in time and then clean up afterward.

USA-PRINTSTOCK/GETTY IMAGES

Real News Other Media Ignore

We believe that investigating and exposing the truth is the only way that we can remain safe and free

CROSSFIRE HURRICANE

ON MAY 25, 2017, The Epoch Times published an article headlined "Despite Allegations, No Evidence of Trump–Russia Collusion Found." The article detailed that—despite a media frenzy at the time—no actual evidence had been uncovered that President Donald Trump or anyone associated with his campaign had colluded with Russia to influence the 2016 presidential election.

OUR REPORTING was proven accurate with the conclusion of the investigation by special counsel Robert Mueller.

NOT ONLY DID WE NOT BUY INTO the false narrative that Trump colluded with Russia, but we have also been a leader in reporting on the irregular and apparently politicized nature of the FBI's investigation of the Trump campaign. During the past five years, we have published dozens—many of them exclusive—articles on the topic.



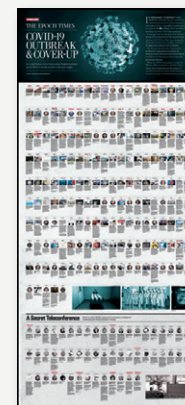
ELECTION INTEGRITY

FOLLOWING THE 2020 ELECTION, The Epoch Times was at the forefront of investigating and reporting on the questions surrounding the integrity of the election. Through our fact-based and independent reporting, we were able to uncover multiple irregularities.



ORIGINS OF COVID-19

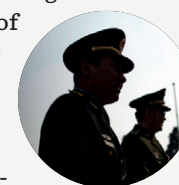
ON APRIL 15, 2020, The Epoch Times published its documentary "Tracking Down the Origin of Wuhan Coronavirus." The film, which received over 100 million views, explored the origins of the virus, including the possibility of a lab leak. It presents scientific data and interviews with top scientists and national security experts.



YEARS AFTER THE RELEASE of this groundbreaking documentary, the possibility of a lab leak is considered by government officials and experts as the most likely explanation for the virus's spread.

CHINA THREAT

SINCE ITS INCEPTION in the year 2000, The Epoch Times has been at the forefront of reporting on the infiltration of the United States by the Chinese Communist Party. Numerous times over the years, we've broken major China-related stories ahead of other news organizations. In 2003, The Epoch Times was the first media outlet to systematically and continuously report on the spread of SARS, well ahead of most other Western media. We were also the first to report on state-sponsored forced organ harvesting in China—one of the most underreported atrocities of our time—in



which prisoners of conscience are killed for their organs, which are then sold for profit on a large scale.

THE EPOCH TIMES also published the editorial series "Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party," revealing the true nature and history of the Communist Party and inspiring a movement that so far has seen more than 400 million Chinese people quit the Party and its affiliated organizations. Another of our series, "How the Specter of Communism Is Ruling Our World," systematically exposes the evil nature of communism, as well as the harm it has brought and continues to inflict on the United States and the world.

A message and a story you do not want to miss

Dear future subscriber,
If you are sick of the bias, lies, and fake outrage that's business-as-usual in the media today, I have a prediction for you: You are going to like our weekly Epoch Insight magazine. And by "like," I mean love.

My name is Kirk Wang, and I am senior vice president of subscription at The Epoch Times—the fastest-growing independent news outlet in America.

When The Epoch Times was founded in 2000, I was the first to join the production team in Atlanta. Together, we made our first edition, in Chinese. Thus began our commitment to reporting the truth and exposing the Chinese Community Party and its infiltration in the United States and around the world. Today, I'd like to share a few things with you.

In today's desert of shameless media dishonesty, The Epoch Times has become an oasis for those thirsting for truthful, fact-based coverage of current events. Our news magazine, Epoch Insight, takes you even deeper.

Produced by our award-winning newsroom, Epoch Insight is a weekly publication that provides big-picture news coverage and in-depth analysis of today's most challenging issues.

Epoch Insight will keep you up to date on the most significant developments in the United States, world, and economic news, with exclusive content in the timeless format of a real American news magazine.

That's what you can trust us to give you. Why? Because we're committed to honoring Truth and Tradition—and treating our readers with the respect you deserve.

Let me offer you three reasons why honest reporting is absolutely central to every line you read in The Epoch Times and Epoch



Kirk Wang, SVP of Subscription

Insight. Then I want you to assess the truth of my claims for yourself.

1. The Epoch Times rejects politically motivated journalism.

We're so old-fashioned, we believe that YOU ought to be able to judge the facts and decide for yourself what to make of them.

Other media corporations want to tightly control what you're allowed to see or read, so that you don't arrive at the "wrong" views.

Not us. When we search for new hires, every single job description emphasizes that the candidate must practice ethical journalism: "seek the truth and report it." This used to be standard in American newsrooms ... but lately it's been sacrificed for social-justice activism.

Is it hard to find reporters who qualify? You bet. Journalism schools have taught students to forsake traditional journalistic ethics for woke newsroom activism.

But while this hiring process is laborious, it has proven successful: The Epoch Times has built a team of reporters who are dedicated to seeking and reporting the truth, regardless of whether what they find conflicts with their personal biases.

And get this: The Epoch Times is so committed to this principle that it has never endorsed a political candidate for office. Can you imagine?

2. The Epoch Times is indebted to no one.

Let's face it: If you are beholden to a corporation or conglomerate, you aren't really free to report the facts. That's the problem we see with many news outlets today... they know where their bread is buttered, and their "factual" reporting shows it!

What's more, if your business model depends on getting a ton of "clicks," you aren't really free to report the news honestly. Every single headline is an advertisement looking to manipulate the consumer. (Remember the saying, "If a product is 'free,' there's a good chance that YOU are the product.")

But The Epoch Times is totally independent. We are funded by loyal subscribers like you and generous donors who are proud to support high-quality, trustworthy journalism.

(By becoming a subscriber today, YOU will become part of this movement to restore truth to our country.)

3. The Epoch Times has seen firsthand where ideological manipulation leads.

I have to warn you, this part of the letter gets a little heavy, and I write it with a somber heart.

You see, the founders of The Epoch Times are Chinese Americans who witnessed persecution in communist China.

We started a newspaper that would counteract the total censorship of the press inside China and the world's reporting about China, and let people see the truth, not just the official government narrative.

And for their courageous commitment to the truth, many Epoch Times journalists paid a very heavy price.

In 2000, China's state security agents arrested the manager of the newspaper's China bureau and 10 journalists. Editor-in-chief Zhang Yuhui received a prison sentence of 10 years, while Epoch Times staff member Huang Kui received five.

Both men were interrogated, tortured, forced into slave labor, and subjected to brainwashing classes. Huang was released in 2004 and Zhang in 2010. But several other Epoch Times staff members were never heard from again. We fear they paid the ultimate price for their commitment to telling the truth.

So, for us, it's personal. When you have colleagues tortured and killed for honest reporting, you're not going to forsake those principles just because it's convenient. We would dishonor their sacrifice if we gave you anything less than the honest truth.

I'd like to invite you to take a look at this Epoch Insight magazine and decide for yourself if it's the kind of in-depth news you've been looking for.

So please, right now, act on our special offer: only \$1 for your first four issues of Epoch Insight. Just go to **ReadEpochInsight.com** You'll also enjoy a savings of 45 percent off our regular rate on the next 12 months of superior journalism ... plus other big extras, including complete access to the exceptional content on The Epoch Times' acclaimed website, **TheEpochTimes.com**

In Truth and Tradition,

Kirk Wang
SVP of Subscription
The Epoch Times

What Our Readers Say

**"It's a magazine that's
FOR the American people,
not against."**

Vanessa Morrison, medical records clerk

**"Well thought out material,
thoroughly investigated,
and I trust [the] sources."**

Gail F. Sauve, homemaker

**"It is straightforward, rather
than a lot of speculation or
pontificating."**

Jan Hamilton, retired professional

**"[Insight] reminds me
that there are still a LOT
of wonderful, good, and
dedicated people in this
country."**

Creed Haymond, surgeon

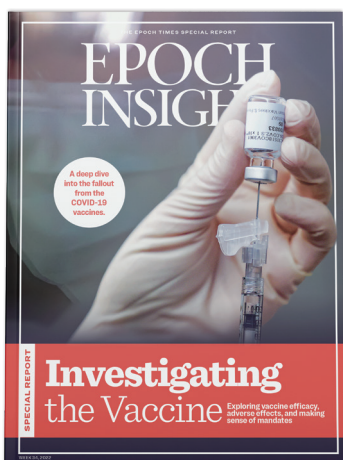
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Mark Naumann, photographer

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make up my own mind how
I feel about the subject."**

Jim Edwards, retired

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