

On May 13, 1939 the St. Louis was denied port to the U.S. to accept 935 mostly Jewish refugees from Germany, only approving overall at the time 30% of applicants for refugee visas to Jewish individuals. The pervasive stain on stifling migration with fear of terrorism has been a blight on immigration throughout our history. The U.S. has resettled nearly 3 million refugees since 1980, however each year the Administration of the Executive Branch sets the acceptable number of refugees into the U.S. with this Administration requesting 0.2% or 45,000 as the highest request with a push for lower numbers admitted into the U.S. as their Immigration Principles.

The pervasive push to suppress refugee and asylum seekers with false narratives and myths of terrorists and 'bad hombres' to support the building of a monument to White Nationalism is an affront to Human Rights Stances and the needs of the most marginalized and vulnerable to human trafficking around the globe. We cannot condemn the speaking point of abducted and duct-taped individuals brought into the U.S. as a conclusive never happening because, we simply do not know of a case where this has happened—we will not alienate a potential victim of human trafficking with adamant condemnations of false narratives. The National Survivor Network would rather focus on the known facts of human trafficking.

Migrants seeking asylum paying smugglers to obtain access to the U.S. and being enslaved in a debt bondage scheme, migrants coming here legally on a visa and being coerced or forced into debt peonage or bondage, migrants crossing the border and being forced, coerced, or defrauded into human trafficking schemes to maintain status with immigration status being used as the main weapon of coercion are all common points of entry. Most of these cases cross a legal point of entry into the U.S. and are not happening in absence of a wall.

This narrative and dialog of horror stories to perpetuate the push for a wall or increased surveillance at the southern border speaks clearly to a racial animosity and myth that the border with Mexico is unsecure, while ignoring the northern border with Canada. According to the Department of Homeland Security 600,000 immigrants overstayed a visa in 2017 as to how they lost their documentation for immigration; this number is representing 2/3s of the issue of unauthorized immigration. It is a flagrant attack on marginalized individuals that are ostracized based on status, arrested without question in courtrooms attempting to obtain status, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement using a fraudulent school as means to deport migrants attempting to maintain and keep status that allow potential victims to become victims of trafficking.

The erroneous and intentionally misleading dialog coming out of the White House to support policy that will do nothing but fuel human trafficking of migrants seeking asylum and refugee status is beyond problematic and a clear push for continuing racist policy derived of myths and outright lies. This heinous attempt to systemically marginalize people from programs and services built into the Trafficking Victims Protection Act and reauthorized in the U.S. as law is a travesty to our Country, our spirit of Justice, and our spirit as a Refuge to people in need. You cannot proclaim on one hand you are working to eradicate human trafficking while standing on policy that directly supports traffickers.