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Mass Immigration Amplifies Threat Posed to America by Mainland China

More often than not, foreign and immigration policies are treated as distinct realms and relegated to separate silos. However, the case of mainland China's communist government — as described in a new [issue brief](#) by the [Federation for American Immigration Reform](#) (FAIR) — demonstrates how immigration policy intersects with not only foreign policy and national security but also trans-national organized crime and drug trafficking, especially of deadly fentanyl. Indeed, Beijing has successfully weaponized illegal and legal immigration against the United States while taking advantage of the Biden administration's anti-borders policies.



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While most Chinese illegal border-crossers can be confidently described as economic migrants, some are almost certainly criminals, spies and other national security threats. The Chinese government has never demonstrated any qualms about [sending migrants](#), legally and illegally, to U.S. soil with hostile and even deadly intent.

As FAIR shows, the increased criminal activity overlapping with growing Biden-era illegal migration from China (and everywhere else, for that matter) found a reflection in everything from prostitution in so-called massage parlors to drug trafficking and illegal marijuana farms. The greatest and most lethal threat here is, of course, fentanyl. In 2023, more than 76,000 Americans were killed due to synthetic opioid poisoning, much of it attributable to fentanyl and its massive increase in our communities.

But this is not just the work of random, run-of-the-mill Chinese drug smugglers. The Chinese state-directed threat to the U.S. goes to the very top. The Chinese regime not only tolerates, but encourages and facilitates, the production and export of chemical precursors used to make fentanyl, which are then combined in labs operated by the brutal Mexican cartels, which are allied with Chinese criminal organizations and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) itself. The CCP thus kills two birds with one stone by profiting off of fentanyl trafficking while simultaneously weakening their greatest global rival, the United States.

The espionage risk posed by illegal aliens from China should not be dismissed lightly. As FAIR points out, illegal aliens have been reported among the Chinese nationals, often posing as merely confused tourists, caught snooping around American military installations or attempting to infiltrate them. As one national security and immigration expert aptly [emphasized](#), China would have been “stupid” not to have taken advantage of porous American borders to infiltrate “spies into this almost-unregulated flow, and the spymasters are not stupid.”

Although only small numbers of Chinese illegal aliens had entered the U.S. in previous decades, border



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encounters with Chinese nationals skyrocketed once former President Biden took office. Between 2010 and 2020 anywhere between 2,000 and 4,000 Chinese citizens were encountered at our borders annually, paling in comparison with the almost 200,000 encountered during the Biden administration.

While the communist regime's highly restrictive "zero Covid" policy, which hurt China's economy, served as a push factor, the numbers clearly demonstrate that the pull factor of loosely enforced borders in 2021-2024 was just as crucial, if not even more so, in driving the surge. This is only reinforced by the fact that illegal immigration from China has [decreased significantly](#) since the second Trump administration took office.

Some have asserted that skyrocketing Chinese illegal migration was attributable to political repression at home. Research conducted by FAIR does not bear out this claim. As a communist state, China has been oppressive since its very inception in 1949. What changed dramatically in 2021 were U.S. border and immigration policies, creating an opportunity for mainly economic migrants from China to make the long journey across the world to the United States.

Chinese citizens were willing to fly to countries such as Ecuador and Mexico, using them as stepping stones into the United States, because they knew that they would likely be released into the country. They could then secure a foot in the door by filing meritless (in the case of most migrants) asylum claims. And, even if their asylum cases were denied, they could keep making money in the United States and sending [remittances](#) back home while the possibility of deportation remained low. In fact, even had the Biden administration wanted to remove them, China — being a "[recalcitrant](#)" country — would undoubtedly have refused to take them back.

There are many scary and disturbing aspects to the manner in which mass illegal migration exacerbates security threats posed by hostile regimes, including that of communist China. One of these is the way in which the pro-mass-migration lobby — both in its [liberal-left](#) and [libertarian](#) versions — denied or downplayed the danger. Such voices either described the illegal aliens as freedom-loving victims of political persecution who should be welcomed by Americans or depicted anyone raising justified concerns as guided by xenophobia or racism.

The CCP surely could not have found better allies than the anti-borders crowd. Now that an anti-borders presidential administration has been replaced by one serious about border security, Beijing's ability to exploit mass illegal migration into the United States has been severely hampered. Letting our guard down is the last thing we should do, however, because the threat may once again surface in the future.

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