



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on April 25, 2018

DHS Secretary Warns that Caravan Members Who Enter U.S. Illegally Subject to Prosecution

Dozens of Central Americans, mostly from Honduras, who were among the “caravan” of more than 1,200 migrants that began heading northward through Mexico at the end of March, arrived at the border city of Tijuana late on April 24.

The previous day, Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen M. Nielsen released a statement about the “caravan,” noting: “The Trump Administration is committed to enforcing our immigration laws — whether persons are part of this ‘caravan’ or not.” Nielsen’s statement continued:



If members of the “caravan” enter the country illegally, they will be referred for prosecution for illegal entry in accordance with existing law. For those seeking asylum, all individuals may be detained while their claims are adjudicated efficiently and expeditiously, and those found not to have a claim will be promptly removed from the United States.

The statement noted that Homeland Security, in partnership with the Justice Department, is taking a number of steps to ensure that all cases and claims for asylum are adjudicated promptly. These steps include sending additional U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services asylum officers, ICE attorneys, DOJ Immigration Judges, and DOJ prosecutors to the U.S.-Mexican border.

Mere hours before Nielsen released her statement, President Donald Trump said on Twitter that he had ordered the secretary to stop the caravan and others like it from entering the United States, stating:

Despite the Democrat inspired laws on Sanctuary Cities and the Border being so bad and one sided, I have instructed the Secretary of Homeland Security not to let these large Caravans of people into our Country. It is a disgrace. We are the only Country in the World so naive! WALL

As noted, Nielsen said that if members of the “caravan” enter the country illegally and seek asylum, they may be detained while their claims are being adjudicated.

One suggestion for accomplishing this detention was suggested in an April 24 Breitbart article that cited a statement from former immigration judge Andrew Arthur. Arthur proposed to Breitbart News that to unilaterally, temporarily end the practice of “catch and release,” the Trump administration could set up the tent cities along the southern border, similar to what President Clinton did in the 1990s.

“Catch and release” is the unofficial name of a protocol that has been followed by ICE and U.S. Customs and Border Protection, under which people those who have entered the country illegally to seek asylum are released while they wait for a hearing with an immigration judge.

Photo: [cbp.gov](#)

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