Asylum-seekers who have turned themselves in being taken to a Border Patrol processing center
Stephen Miller, Trump’s senior immigration policy adviser
Expedited removal
The “decriminalization” debate
Cases pending in immigration courts

Backlog on July 31, 2019: 975,298 cases

Number of immigration court judges: 444
U.S. immigration prison system, 2017
(excluding county jails)
Mass incarceration of undocumented migrants and asylum-seeking is big business!

- **55,000** beds: adults @ **$318/day**, children @ **$775/day**
- **$22 million** per day; **$7.4 billion/yr**
- **72%** of detainees held in *for-profit* facilities, run by 2 corporations: CoreCivic + GEO Group
Official stats: 98.6% of immigrants appeared for scheduled hearing in immigration courts in FY 2018.
Asylum-seekers being bused to immigration court hearing in San Diego CA, August 2019
“Tent court” in Laredo TX. The judge is 160 miles north, in a courtroom in San Antonio.
Refugees resettled in U.S.

- 2016: 97,000
- 2018: 23,000
- 2020: 0 ?
Immigration policy as a litigation strategy
Newly built border wall near Santa Teresa NM, August 2019
Mexican migration has plummeted by 53% -- without a wall!
“Our country is full.”
-- Donald Trump, April 1, 2019
U.S. unemployment rate at 50-year low

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics
Population ageing
Dependency ratio is climbing sharply

70 years ago: 150 workers for every 20 retirees;
10 years ago: 100 workers per 20 retirees.
By 2050: 56 workers for every 20 retirees.

% of U.S. population 65+ years old

Graph showing the percentage of the U.S. population 65+ years old from 1950 to 2027.
Reducing labor requirements?

Labor may be saved in manufacturing & retail via robotics + AI, but most services & construction tasks can’t be automated.

Sanyo’s automatic patient-washing machine in a Tokyo nursing home
How much immigration is optimal?

Ben Bernanke,
Federal Reserve chairman,
Congressional testimony,
Oct. 2006:

“We need a more liberal immigration policy to ease the burden of a shrinking work force.

“But we would need an annual inflow of nearly 3.5 million immigrants – not the 1 million per year being admitted under current policy -- to replace the 76 million retiring baby boomers.”
Migrants head for destinations all over the United States
Destinations for 7,512 migrants who passed through the Casa Alitas shelter in Tucson AZ from Oct. 16, 2018, to April 22, 2019.
General public support for immigration is at a record high (2019): 64% want to increase immigration or keep at current level.

81% now support offering undocs legalization with a path to citizenship.
Generations think differently about immigration!

75% of Millennials think immigrants strengthen U.S. vs. 52% of baby boomers. 44% of 1928-45 generation.
Thanks for your attention!

Wayne Cornelius
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Comprehensive Immigration reform, 2008-14

2008: Great Recession took CIR off Congress’ agenda. Unemployment surged, zero-sum mentality prevailed.

2009-10: Obama ramped up deportations to build credibility in Congress for CIR’s passage.


GOP blamed inaction on Obama: “Can’t be trusted to enforce our laws.”

Real reason: Election politics! CIR very unpopular with GOP base voters; supporting it invites primary challenges from nativist right.

2012: Obama’s focus moved to protecting Dreamers: DACA program created by executive order in 2012.