WIN WITHOUT WAR

Progressive Foreign Policy Debrief
Intel for Advocacy

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SL: Banning Muslims Won't Stop Coronavirus

Trump Will Use Coronavirus to Advance A Racist Agenda. We Must Not Give In.

Quarantines, lost wages, unaffordable healthcare, rent to pay with no relief — the coronavirus pandemic has disproportionately hurt those who are already oppressed and marginalized. Now, it's being used to advance a right-wing nationalist agenda.

This week, Congress was poised to finally overturn Donald Trump's discriminatory Muslim, African, refugee and asylum bans. After years of grassroots pressure, the House was scheduled to vote on the NO BAN Act, a critical piece of legislation that would repeal Trump's xenophobic travel and migration restrictions and constrain his – and any future president's – ability to unilaterally enact anything similar. But, among the chaos of the coronavirus pandemic, the vote was indefinitely postponed. In the [words of the ACLU](), this was "profoundly disappointing."

While we can do no more than speculate about the reasoning behind the decision, one thing is certain: it comes right as the world confronts a global crisis that offers two starkly divergent paths forward. Donald Trump and others on the Right, will use the coronavirus pandemic to divide us further and try to advance their xenophobic, nationalist agendas. The progressive agenda — of building a more equal, just society for all — will be tested. In the midst of global crisis, we must fight for it now more than ever.

#RepealTheBans
Trump's blatantly Islamophobic Muslim ban — barring travel from five Muslim-majority and two non-Muslim majority nations — and blatantly racist African ban — barring immigration from mostly Muslim-majority countries, including four African and two non-African countries, affecting a full quarter of the African population — are deeply malignant. They separate families, abdicate moral responsibility to victims of the U.S.'s exploitative and violence-first foreign policies, and increase harm against Muslim, immigrant, Black, and brown communities. They must be overturned.

Earlier this month, Win Without War joined over 200 other NGOs in calling on the House to send that exact message by promptly passing the NO BAN Act. Though it seemed a near-certainty that this landmark vote would be successful, it was pulled at the last minute. As Aarti Kohli of Asian Americans Advancing Justice noted: "Our communities have waited long enough. Any delay in the House vote further deepens the suffering of our Muslim and immigrant communities." The cited reason for the about-face was the need to prioritize addressing the coronavirus. But the logic is backward. The coronavirus makes the repeal of the Muslim and African Bans more, not less, urgent.

The Trumpian Response
Trump and his ilk see the coronavirus pandemic as an opportunity. They view it as an opportunity to make people afraid; to blame foreign countries like China and Iran; to whip up resentment against immigrants and other oppressed communities; to use the levers of government to further enrich the primarily-white corporate elite while ignoring the needs of the many. It's an opportunity to advance the right-wing nationalist agenda.

At best, the decision to postpone the NO BAN Act vote is a dereliction of duty in the face of crisis. If others are using the coronavirus pandemic to fuel racism and xenophobia, it is *especially* important that the Muslim and African Bans be repealed *now*. At worst, it reflects that right-wing agenda itself — revealing an unwillingness to appear "soft" on immigration in the face of pandemic, giving in to, rather than combatting, nationalist narratives. As Kohli put it: "Conflating a public health concern with a xenophobic immigration policy only mirrors the very racism and Islamophobia the Muslim ban was premised on."

Crisis... and a New Way Forward
But the coronavirus crisis doesn't just present an opportunity for the Trumps of the world. Tragic though it may be, it also lays bare the need for a progressive alternative. Universal healthcare, paid sick leave, massive fiscal stimulus aimed at protecting the most vulnerable and advancing the just transition to zero fossil fuels rather than bailing out airlines, federal funds spent on global public health initiatives rather than the Pentagon, diplomacy and cooperation rather than harmful sanctions and antagonism, and yes, an end to racist, anti-Muslim, and anti-refugee oppression — these are the foundation of a just, equitable response to the horrors of the pandemic.

This platform was already necessary. But in the face of the coronavirus, and the right-wing nationalists' response, it is especially essential. Passing the NO BAN Act would be a clear repudiation of the Trump administration's racism, and a signal to some of the most vulnerable people in the world that a global health crisis does not justify their repression. We join with our partners in calling on Congress to pass this critical bill during the week that Members of Congress return from recess, and not a day later.

WIN WITHOUT WAR

Read more about U.S. foreign policy and the Muslim and African Bans through Win Without War's new resource here.

See our messaging on the intersection of the coronavirus pandemic and foreign policy here.

BURIED LEDES

A war with Iran is the last thing anyone needs right now. That sadly didn't stop another military confrontation between U.S. and Iran-affiliated forces in Iraq and Syria this week. Read our statement and our messaging on what happens next.

🗣️ Congress has said loud and clear: Trump cannot unilaterally drag the U.S. into war with Iran. **Sen. Kaine's Iran war powers resolution has passed both houses of Congress with bipartisan support**, and will now head to Trump's desk...

...where it will likely be vetoed. So what's next for reining in the president's out-of-control war powers? **Some consider bringing him to court**.

Whether or not that succeeds, one thing is clear: **we need major war powers reform**.

A *HIGHLY* scientific app created in Iran that (claims to) tell you if you have coronavirus was pulled from the app store. (Remember folks, an app CANNOT replace a doctor).

We need fewer landmines, not more. **U.S. removal of these weapons from the Korean peninsula is a smart step toward building confidence for a lasting peace deal** between the two Koreas.

Unsurprisingly, sinking old ships to get rid of them isn't environmentally friendly. **The U.S. military is one of the largest environmental polluters in the world — it's past time we change that.**

Feminism must always be intersectional, including across generations.

Our current discourse on nukes makes humanity less safe. Socializing nonproliferation and abolition of nuclear weapons is essential to increase security at home and abroad.

Coronavirus is a global workers' issue. **Global unions have [put together](#) a worker-first response.**

Women around the world [celebrated](#) **International Women's Day on Sunday, holding events to both celebrate and demonstrate for their rights.**

And finally, treat yo' self! That's exactly what [this cat](#) **did, opening a tupperware full of cookies and taking a single bite out of each one.**