

# [***Opinion: A colossal failure, decades in the making***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B83-KW41-DY7V-G004-00000-00&context=1516831)

CNN Wire

February 4, 2024 Sunday 12:57 PM GMT

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**Length:** 2110 words

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**Dateline:** (CNN)

**Body**

(CNN) &#8212; On January 28, 1948, a plane chartered by the US Immigration Service caught fire and crashed west of Coalinga, California. On board were 28 migrants, including farm workers with expired work permits, being taken to the Mexican border. All 32 people on the DC-3 plane were killed. But songwriter Woody Guthrie was struck by the fact that some news reports named only the three crew members and an immigration officer on board while describing everyone else simply as "deportees."

In words later set to music by Martin Hoffman, Guthrie [*wrote*](https://www.woodyguthrie.org/Lyrics/Plane_Wreck_At_Los_Gatos.htm),

"Goodbye to my Juan, goodbye, Rosalita,Adios mis amigos, Jesus y Maria;You won't have your names when you ride the big airplane,All they will call you will be 'deportees'"

The song, which has been covered by many artists, including Judy Collins, Bruce Springsteen, Bob Dylan and Dolly Parton, shows how little has changed in the American immigration debate. Seventy-six years later, the issue of immigration still revolves around ***politics***, with scant attention to the real people involved.

"A broken immigration system has become too politically profitable for both parties to solve," **SE Cupp** observed. "If you solve it, you can't run on it, fundraise off of it, fearmonger on it..."

"Amidst all of the ***politics***, [*immigrants become mere props to score political wins. Nothing gets fixed, nothing changes."*](https://www.cnn.com/videos/opinions/2024/02/01/se-cupp-immigration-debate-vpx.cnn)

While President Joe Biden promised "to end Trump's harsh practices," the border problem has grown, Cupp noted. "The number of immigrants crossing into the US has more than doubled from the Trump years."

"Now, the asylum system, which allows migrants fleeing dangerous countries to enter the US and then apply for asylum status, instead of the other way around, is inarguably a failure, something Democrats are increasingly acknowledging."

"Republicans, for their part, are also playing ***politics***, with many of them intent on tanking a bipartisan border deal that would help tackle the problem, in part because Trump wants to use the issue to win election."

Instead of showing a willingness to accept a Senate-brokered bipartisan compromise, the GOP House leadership is moving to impeach Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas.

[*"There is no legitimate basis for impeaching Mayorkas,"*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/30/opinions/alejandro-mayorkas-impeachment-push-reyes) wrote **Raul A. Reyes**, "and House Republicans have not presented any evidence that he has violated the law. Instead, they are on the verge of abusing one of the most powerful mechanisms of government to score political points, potentially setting a dangerous precedent."

When Donald Trump descended the Trump Tower escalator in 2015 to announce his run for the presidency, he declared that migrants crossing the Mexico border are "bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people." Last weekend, Trump, the likely GOP nominee for president, posted on Truth Social that terrorists are "POURING IN, UNCHECKED, FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD" and there is a "100% chance that there will be MAJOR TERROR ATTACKS IN THE USA" as a result.

**Peter Bergen** wrote that there's little evidence to back up Trump's claim. "The scaremongering about terrorists pouring across the southern border," Bergen noted, "misstates where the terrorist threat in the US largely emanates from. Since 9/11, there has only been one lethal terrorist attack in the US by a foreign national with ties to a terrorist group: In 2019, a Saudi military officer who had been communicating with an al Qaeda affiliate in Yemen killed three US sailors at the Pensacola Naval Air Station in Florida. This Saudi officer had not crossed the dangerous Darien Gap in Panama and then traveled all the way across Mexico to cross the southern border; he had arrived legally in the US two years earlier..."

"The biggest terrorist threat in the US in recent years hasnot been from jihadist terrorists ... but from extremist right-wing terrorists motivated by racial or ethnic hatred or anti-government sentiments, according to a US Government Accountability Office report last year. [*These terrorists are US citizens, not immigrants*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/28/opinions/trump-terrorism-threat-southern-border-bergen/index.html)."

The new Nikki Haley

For months, Nikki Haley tiptoed around criticism of former President Donald Trump, in whose administration she served as UN Ambassador. But increasingly she's taken the gloves off, labeling Trump "toxic," saying he lacked "moral clarity" and is unelectable, partly because of the massive amount of campaign money that is going to pay his legal bills.

Haley is trying to keep her campaign alive after losing to Trump in Iowa and New Hampshire. "Haley must also realize that the risk of angering Trump voters has become less pertinent than the potential gain from solidifying and energizing those in the party who want a different choice," wrote **Julian Zelizer**. "Under current conditions, Haley needs support from those factions of donors and voters who can sustain her run as long as possible, perhaps anticipating the potential for a legal conviction to render his candidacy untenable."

"[*With this mindset, the goal is not to defeat Trump in the next few rounds of competition, but to remain credible enough*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/01/opinions/nikki-haley-criticizes-trump-gop-primary-zelizer/index.html) with those who dislike him to survive for another day. The only way to do this is to distinguish what she offers from what Trump has promised - avoiding the trap DeSantis fell into of thinking that being 'Trump-lite' could have appeal when the real Trump was already on the ballot."

For more on ***politics***:

**Edward J. McCaffery**: [*Nikki Haley is right about the Trump tariffs*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/02/opinions/trump-haley-tax-tariffs-2024-presidency-mccaffery)

**Adam Kinzinger**: [*Swatting is a heinous crime. I was one of its victims*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/29/opinions/swatting-police-politics-trump-kinzinger/index.html)

**Ilene Prusher**: [*Why Ron DeSantis turned out to be a loser*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/29/opinions/florida-desantis-trump-2028-prusher/index.html)

**Dean Obeidallah**: [*How Trump is sure to choose his VP*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/29/opinions/trump-vice-president-scott-stefanki-obeidallah/index.html)

Middle East

Ten countries and four major terrorist groups are now enmeshed in the Mideast conflict stemming from the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, wrote **Peter Bergen**. Three US soldiers died in a drone attack in Jordan last week, the first time US troops have been killed in the conflict. On Friday, the US struck back against 85 targets it said were connected to militia groups in Iraq and Syria.

"To bring some order to the region, the US government must use its vast (largely unused, at least as far as the public can see) leverage with the Israeli government to agree to a deal to initiate a ceasefire in Gaza and return the remaining Israeli and American hostages to their loved ones," Bergen observed.

"[*Then, the Biden administration must use all its leverage to ensure a two-state solution, which is the only way forward for peace.*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/29/opinions/us-middle-east-regional-war-bergen/index.html) It must be supported both politically and financially by America's Arab allies who have long talked a good game about supporting the Palestinians, but other than the Qataris this has almost entirely been lip service for many years now."

For more:

**Michael Bociurkiw**: [*The UN aid lifeline to Palestinians suffering in Gaza is at very high risk*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/02/opinions/opinion-bociurkiw-unrwa-un-aid-lifeline-to-palestinians-at-risk/index.html)

**Mark Dubowitz and Jonathan Schanzer**: [*Biden needs to follow Trump's lead on Iran*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/31/opinions/trump-biden-iran-jordan-attacks-dubowitz-schanzer/index.html)

Ukraine's military chief speaks out

**Valerii Zaluzhnyi**, the popular Ukraine military chief, has drawn attention internationally for his frankness in admitting to the major challenges his country faces in fighting off the Russian invasion.

Amid reports that he might be dismissed by President Volodymyr Zelensky, Zaluzhnyi wrote for CNN Opinion that "we must contend with a reduction in military support from key allies, grappling with their own political tensions. ... [*We must acknowledge the significant advantage enjoyed by the enemy in mobilizing human resources*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/01/opinions/ukraine-army-chief-war-strategy-russia-valerii-zaluzhnyi/index.html) and how that compares with the inability of state institutions in Ukraine to improve the manpower levels of our armed forces without the use of unpopular measures."

Part of the strategy for Ukraine should be maximizing its capability to use "unmanned vehicles" such as drones, he noted. "Our goal must be to seize the moment - to maximize our accumulation of the latest combat capabilities, which will allow us to commit fewer resources to inflicting maximum damage on the enemy, to end the aggression and protect Ukraine from it in the future."

Zuckerberg's apology

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg stood up at a congressional hearing Wednesday and turned to face the parents of children who said they lost their lives due to the malign use of social media. "I'm sorry for everything you have all been through," he said.

The apology was "not enough," wrote **Kara Alaimo**. [*"Lawmakers and tech companies need to do much more to protect our kids...."*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/31/opinions/mark-zuckerberg-apology-social-media-congress-alaimo/index.html)

Alaimo added that tech executives "need to create and enforce better standards for content shown to kids, along with more human moderators, mental health resources, lessons for kids and disclosures when content has been manipulated. And lawmakers need to pass legislation to crack down on online sexual exploitation. These kinds of solutions would give parents something to actually like."

Taylor Swift's NFL

The NFL, preparing for next Sunday's Super Bowl, is riding high, thanks partly to Taylor Swift's fervent support for her beau, Travis Kelce of the Kansas City Chiefs.

**"**Due to her in-person game day attendance alone, NFL viewership has skyrocketed - the playoff game between the Chiefs and the Buffalo Bills was the most-watched divisional playoff game in history according to CBS, raking in a whopping 50 million viewers," **Danielle Campoamor** wrote. "In total, this year's NFL divisional playoff round averaged 40 million viewers, the highest since 1988, and Swift has brought in the highest regular-season viewership among women since tracking began in 2000..."

"The largest pop star has introduced an entirely new demographic to professional football - one the league would have otherwise had a difficult, if not impossible, time trying to reach. But for an organization with a nefarious history when it comes to violence against women, [*does the NFL really deserve Taylor Swift?*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/30/opinions/super-bowl-taylor-swift-travis-kelce-nfl-campoamor/index.html)"

For more:

**Laurie Segall**: [*The Taylor Swift AI photos offer a terrifying warning*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/31/opinions/taylor-swift-deepfakes-ai-segall)

Black History Month begins

**Khalil Gibran Muhammad** teaches history, race and public policy at Harvard University, the epicenter of the many debates raging around US higher education.

"Black History Month, which gets underway this week," he wrote Thursday, "is a chance to give Americans the timely reminder that you can't teach our history honestly without understanding Black struggle and triumph."

"Many academics who teach about the history of race and racism in America, as I do, are being unjustifiably blamed for the rise in antisemitism on campus and falsely accused of creating racial divisions in the country. This has had the undesirable effect of putting us in the crosshairs of some of the most powerful people in the country, including Republican politicians, conservative activists and billionaire donors..."

Muhammad criticized Harvard for what he described as its "failure to push back sufficiently against broader political attacks. ... Silence is a failure of leadership in times like these. [*Harvard, with its motto 'Veritas' - truth - owes it to all of us on the frontlines of these false attacks to defend us for teaching and practicing the very values it claims to uphold*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/01/opinions/black-history-month-racism-harvard-antisemitism-muhammad)."

Don't miss

**Frida Ghitis**: [*Kim Jong-Un wants the world to take his threat seriously*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/02/opinions/kim-jong-un-north-korea-us-war-ghitis/index.html)

**Holly Thomas**: [*Why Megyn Kelly's fake feminism is so chilling*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/31/opinions/megyn-kelly-erin-moriarty-plastic-surgery-fake-feminism-thomas/index.html)

Dr. **Megan L. Ranney**: [*Why I'm cheering about pharmacists in my state prescribing birth control pills*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/30/opinions/pharmacist-birth-control-ranney)

**Jill Filipovic**: [*French women got a wakeup call on abortion rights from their US sisters*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/01/opinions/abortion-rights-france-constitution-filipovic/index.html)

**AND...**

Your haiku

To cope with a turbulent world, poet **Tess Taylor** started writing a haiku each day in 2022. "The assignment to notice something, no matter how small, and often made better by being small, helped me. I wrote about horsetail clouds at dawn. I wrote about the clatter of a midnight storm. I tried in these moments simply to be observant, curious. Little by little my haiku practice seemed to help me make space to hold the difficult weeks, [*giving me time each day - just a few moments - for imagination, observation, and tenderness*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/28/opinions/haiku-a-day-improves-your-life-taylor/index.html)."

Late last year, she asked CNN Opinion readers to write their own haiku - and hundreds responded. Here's a sampling:

The mountain,Half in sunshine, half in shadeDid I come too late

-Philip Chan, Quebec

The day on the trail,The trees, the wind, the silenceI love my office

-Bill, Alaska

Sometimes late at nightWhen it's very quiet I canHear the plants crying

-Carolyn W., Arizona

Deep running riversCan remain a mysteryEven to the trout

-Alyce Guynn, Texas

Once again we meet,Spoon dipped in peanut butterMy crunchy old friend

-Susan B.

We didn't returnto the moon for fifty yearsWeren't invited back

-Stephen Schwei

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**Load-Date:** March 2, 2024

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