Lincoln-Sudbury Negates

**The Security Rhetoric is a dangerous one**

**Massey 17** finds that

Douglas S. **Massey**, Jorge Durand, and Karen A. Pren,03-xx-**2017**, "Why Border Enforcement Backfired", PubMed Central (PMC), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5049707/>

In this article we undertake a systematic analysis of why border enforcement backfired as a strategy of immigration control in the United States. We argue theoretically that **border enforcement emerged as a policy response to a moral panic about the perceived threat of** Latino **immigration** to the United States **propounded by self-interested bureaucrats, politicians, and pundits who sought to mobilize political and material resources for their own benefit. The** end **result was a self-perpetuating cycle of rising enforcement and increased apprehensions that resulted in the militarization of the border** in a way that was disconnected from the actual size of the undocumented flow. Using an instrumental variable approach, we show how border militarization affected the behavior of unauthorized migrants and border outcomes to transform undocumented Mexican migration from a circular flow of male workers going to three states into an eleven-million person population of settled families living in 50 states. **From 1986 to 2008 the undocumented population of the United States grew from three million to 12 million persons, despite a five-fold increase in Border Patrol officers**, a four-fold increase in hours spent patrolling the border, **and a 20-fold increase in** nomina**l funding**. Whether measured in terms personnel, patrol hours, or budget, studies indicate that the surge in border enforcement had little effect in reducing unauthorized migration to the United States (Hanson and Spilimbergo 1999; Hanson, Robertson, and Spilmbergo 2002; Davila, Pagan, and Soydemir 2002; Hanson and McIntosh 2009, 2010; Massey and Riosmena 2010; Angelucci 2012; Massey, Durand, and Pren 2014). The strategy of enhanced border enforcement was not without consequences, however, for research also suggests that it reduced the rate of return migration and redirected migrant flows to new sectors along the border with Arizona and then toward new destinations throughout the United States (Massey, Durand, and Malone 2002; Massey and Capoferro 2004; Carrión-Flores and Sorensen 2006; Gathmann 2008; Kaufman 2008; Bohn and Pubatch 2013; Rocha et al. 2014; Massey, Durand, and Pren 2014).

**Miller** confirms

Todd **Miller**, 9-xx-**2019**, “More than a Wall”, **Transnational Institute**, <https://www.tni.org/en/publication/more-than-a-wall-0> //LS

The report begins by tracing the history of border control and militarization. It shows how **US budgets for border and immigration control** massively increased from the mid-1980s, a trend that has been accelerating ever since. These budgets rose from $350m in 1980 (then run by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)) to $1.2 billion in 1990; $9.1 billion in 2003 and $23.7 billion in 2018 (under two agencies, the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)). In other words, **budgets have more than doubled in the last 15 years and increased by more than 6000%** since 1980. This growth was matched by a similar growth in border patrol from 4,000 agents in 1994 to 21,000 today. Under its parent CBP agency (which includes an Office of Air and Marine Operations, investigative units, and the Office of Field Operations) there are 60,00i0 agents, the largest federal law-enforcement agency in the United States. Importantly, it shows that modern US border control involves much more than a wall. The physical barriers on which Trump focuses for campaign purposes are but one feature of an extensive technological border-control infrastructure that penetrates deep into the US interior and into the border regions of Mexico as well as countries in Central America and the Caribbean and beyond. **Since 1997, the US government has been steadily expanding the use of surveillance and monitoring technologies, including cameras, aircraft, motion sensors, drones, video surveillance and biometrics at the US–Mexico border.** Border Patrol agent Felix Chavez, speaking at the Border Management Conference and Technology Expo in El Paso in 2012, acknowledged this border arsenal, saying that ‘in terms of technology, the capability we have acquired since 2004 is phenomenal’. **This has created a seemingly limitless market for border-security corporations.** For example, VisionGain argued in 2014 that the global border-security market was in an ‘unprecedented boom period’ due to three interlocking developments: ‘illegal immigration and terrorist infiltration’, more money for border policing in ‘developing countries’, and the ‘maturation’ of new technologies. MarketAndMarkets projects that this will be a $52.95 billion market by 2022. While this is a process taking place in manrequire confronting this border–industrial complex and removing its influence over politics and policy. For while those **corporations who profit from the suffering of migrants [and] remain embedded in positions of power within government and society**, it will be a huge challenge to forge a new approach that puts the lives and dignity of migrants first

This is because of structural problems with the border

Edward **Graham**, 7-9-**2024**, "AI can enhance border security but won’t close workforce gap, lawmakers say", **Nextgov**, <https://www.nextgov.com/artificial-intelligence/2024/07/ai-can-enhance-border-security-wont-close-workforce-gap-lawmakers-say/397943/>

Correa said **5,000 additional CBP personnel are needed at the southern border** and that the **Border Patrol is also facing “a major shortfall” in personnel**, a problem that cannot simply be addressed through new AI capabilities. “**Even the best technology cannot fill these gaps**,” he said. “AI, **drone systems** and similar tools **are helpful** aids to our law enforcement, **but** ultimately **a successful operation still comes down to a** well funded, trained and a highly supported **personnel**,” Rep. Mike Ezell, R-Miss., said.

Ali **Bradley**, 4-7-**2023**, "US Border: Corruption concerns rise as cartel influence grows", **NewsNation**, <https://www.newsnationnow.com/us-news/immigration/border-coverage/as-cartel-power-rises-so-do-concerns-about-cbp-corruption/>

In 2020, The Intercept reported that **the former head of U.S.** Customs and Border Protection’s (**CBP**) **internal affairs believed between 5 and 10 percent of CBP’s workforce** of roughly 50,000 **was** either actively or formerly **engaged in** some form of **corruption**. As Mexican cartels continue to expand their business dealings — and morale continues to plummet within CBP — there is concern that the temptation could breed more corruption among officers and agents on the front lines.

David J. **Bier**, 4-10-**2017**, "Why the Wall Won't Work", **Cato Institute**, <https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/why-wall-wont-work>

Trump has been adamant that his wall will be built "ahead of schedule." For that to happen, he'll need to avoid the various legal issues that plagued earlier efforts**. Entities other than the federal government**—states, Indian tribes, private individuals—**control over two-thirds of borderland property.** Private parties own the vast majority of the border in Texas, and for this reason, roughly 70 percent of the existing border fence is located in California, Arizona, and New Mexico. Almost all of it is on federally controlled land. The Bush administration bullied property owners, threatening to sue them if they did not "voluntarily" hand over the rights to their land. It offered no compensation for doing so. Thinking that they had no recourse, some people signed off, but others refused. The government then attempted to use eminent domain, a procedure Trump has long defended, to seize their property, but the **lawsuits imposed serious delays**—seven years in one case. In 2009, the Homeland Security inspector general concluded that the **Border Patrol** had "**achieves**d [its] **progress** primarily **[only] in areas where** environmental and **real estate issues did not cause significant delay."** One intransigent resident had owned his property since before the "Roosevelt easement," which gives the federal government a 60-foot right of way along the border. He fought the administration, so the fence had until recently a 1.2-mile gap on his land. Border residents fought more than a third of all land transfers, in fact. Because the Constitution promises just compensation for takings, Trump can do little to speed this process.

UN, 10-9-2023, "Digital technologies at borders: A threat to people on the move", https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2023/10/digital-technologies-borders-threat-people-move

According to the study, emotion detection systems that claim to detect thoughts, feelings and intent are being increasingly used to justify migration decisions, which are likely to result in biased, stereotypes and discriminatory practices and can infringe on a person’s freedom of thought and expression. International borders are increasingly securitised and even militarised, with many countries constructing expansive infrastructures to prevent migration. Drones and automated recognition tools are also used to detect movement on extended border areas, which have been reported to be used to stop migrants from arriving at the border and enabling pushbacks. “Where surveillance prioritizes control rather than life-saving assistance, we will see that less direct and more dangerous migration routes may emerge as a result,” she said. **“Borders continue to be sites of human rights violations and abuses, rather than offering sanctuary, dignity and human rights protection people on the move are entitled to**.” As a result, people on the move are being put at risk of discrimination and harm, with little accountability and means of redress, according to Hicks.

## Our sole argument concerns immigration

**Migrants leave their country for two main reasons**

**The first is economic incentives**

Hein De **Haas**, 3-1-**2024**, "Border Crackdowns Won’t Solve America’s Immigration Crisis", archive.is, <https://archive.is/HLk23> //LS

But the issue isn’t going away, and neither party can afford to ignore the crisis. According to data from U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the number of border apprehensions rose from 1.86 million in the 2021 fiscal year to about 2.5 million in 2022 and about the same in 2023. The influx is overwhelming border communities and overstretching the asylum system, and the busing of migrants by Texas Gov. Greg Abbott to Democrat-run “sanctuary cities” has put pressure on blue states too. The border crisis dates back to policy changes in the late 1980s. Ronald Reagan’s Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 was the last major bipartisan immigration reform. It provided amnesty to 2.7 million undocumented, mostly Mexican migrants. But it also fired the opening shot for increasing border surveillance and introduced sanctions for employers hiring undocumented workers. Since then, **successive** Republican and Democratic **administrations have invested massive resources in ramping up border surveillance** and collaborating with countries of transit such as Mexico to deter migration. By 2023, the U.S. border enforcement budget had risen to $25.9 billion—more than double the budget of the FBI. Yet **none of this has stopped people from coming. Migrants are willing to accept the** significant costs and **risks** of the journey **because** they understand that **there are** **plentiful jobs at much higher wages** for them **in the U.S.** It is an opportunity for them to radically improve the living standards of themselves and their families.

Alex **Nowrasteh**, 7-27-**2022**, "U.S. Labor Demand Explains Most of the Rise in Illegal Immigration", **Cato Institute**, <https://www.cato.org/blog/us-labor-demand-explains-most-rise-illegal-immigration> //LS

The flow of illegal immigrants across the southern border has markedly risen over the last several years. In FY2021, Border Patrol had 1,662,167 encounters with illegal immigrants and other border crossers. So far in FY2022, which ends on September 30th, Border Patrol has had almost the same number of encounters. This year will set a new record. From a low number of encounters in April 2020 due in large part to the pandemic, encounters have increased steadily and began to rise even faster after President Biden took office. Many commentators, pundits, and politicians are blaming President Biden’s immigration policies for the rapid increase in border crossers. It’s easy to see why: In January 2021, Border Patrol had 75,312 encounters with border crossers. By March, the number more than doubled to 168,195 and have hovered between about that over 224,000 per month. Changes in asylum policy and other immigration policies, even according to statements by some of the migrants, can explain part of the increase. Those factors play a role, but **the** biggest **explanation for the increase in illegal immigration is the attraction of** the number of near-record number of **job openings in the United States**. **There were 10.2 million private job openings in May** 2022, slightly off a high of 10.8 million in March. The number of private job openings in May 2022 is 69 percent higher than the monthly average during the Trump administration (Figure 1). **The wage gain for immigrants is already a 4**‑fold **to 10-fold increase compared to** mostly **Latin American countries**, which includes the higher cost of living in the United States. That wage premium combined with the hottest labor market in the history of the private job openings dataset likely explain why so many illegal immigrants are trying to come now (usual econometric caveats about spatial autocorrelation and omitted variable bias aside). Due to inflation, real wages have not been rising even though nominal wages are up. This likely reduces U.S. labor supply and increases demand for workers, but these effects have a comparatively small effect on the supply of immigrant labor because their relative wage gains from immigrating here are already so large. To be sure, the supply of willing foreign workers would increase if U.S. wage growth were higher, but real wage declines don’t affect their decisions to immigrate nearly as much as they affect the choice of Americans to reenter the labor market. **The economic gains from working in the U**nited **S**tates largely **explain why immigrants want to come in the first place** and the scarcity of visas explains why so many come illegally. There simply are not enough temporary work visas available in enough sectors of the U.S. economy for legal migrant workers to meet the demand of the U.S. labor market, so illegal migrant workers meet it.

**The Second is sanctuary**

Edward **Alan** , xx-xx-**2017**, "Is Border Enforcement Effective? What We Know and What it Means", **Center for Migration Studies of New York** (CMS), <https://cmsny.org/publications/jmhs-is-border-enforcement-effective/>

hese research advances should help to inform a more rational public debate over the incremental benefits of additional border enforcement expenditures. With Congress gearing up to consider budget proposals from the Trump administration that seek an additional $2.6 billion for border security, including construction of new physical barriers, the debate is long overdue. In particular, Congress should be taking a careful look at the incremental gains that might come from additional spending on border enforcement. The evidence suggests that **deterrence through enforcement, despite its successes to date in reducing illegal entry across the border, is producing diminishing returns**. There are **three primary reasons**. First, **arrivals at the border are increasingly made up of asylum seekers from Central America rather than traditional economic migrants from Mexico; thi**s is a **population that is both harder to deter because of the dangers they face at home, and in many cases not appropriate to deter because the United States has legal obligations to consider serious requests for asylum.** Second, the majority of additions to the US unauthorized population is now arriving on legal visas and then overstaying; enforcement at the southern border does nothing to respond to this challenge. And finally, among Mexican migrants, a growing percentage of the repeat border crossers are parents with children left behind in the United States, a population that is far harder to deter than young economic migrants.

Lindsay **Maizland**, 7-9-**2024**, "Why Six Countries Account for Most Migrants at the U.S.-Mexico Border", **Council on Foreign Relations**, <https://www.cfr.org/article/why-six-countries-account-most-migrants-us-mexico-border>

A 2022 UN International Organization for Migration survey found that **90 percent of Mexican migrants left the country due to violence**, extortion, or **organized crime.** The United States and Mexico have historically cooperated on countering organized crime, but during the six-year term of outgoing Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, Mexico’s federal government often took a hands-off approach to cartels and gangs, allowing them to expand their territorial presence. Meanwhile, bilateral security cooperation has faltered.

Because of the benefits that US provides, **Massey** concludes

Douglas S. Massey, Jorge Durand, and Karen A. Pren,03-xx-2017, "Why Border Enforcement Backfired", PubMed Central (PMC), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5049707/>

ected the behavior of unauthorized migrants and border outcomes to transform undocumented Mexican migration from a circular flow of male workers going to three states into an eleven-million person population of settled families living in 50 states. **From 1986 to 2008 the undocumented population of the United States grew from three million to 12 million persons, despite a five-fold increase in Border Patrol officers**, a four-fold increase in hours spent patrolling the border, **and a 20-fold increase in** nomina**l funding**. Whether measured in terms personnel, patrol hours, or budget, studies indicate that the surge in border enforcement had little effect in reducing unauthorized migration to the United States (Hanson and Spilimbergo 1999; Hanson, Robertson, and Spilmbergo 2002; Davila, Pagan, and Soydemir 2002; Hanson and McIntosh 2009, 2010; Massey and Riosmena 2010; Angelucci 2012; Massey, Durand, and Pren 2014). The strategy of enhanced border enforcement was not without consequences, however, for research also suggests that it reduced the rate of return migration and redirected migrant flows to new sectors along the border with Arizona and then toward new destinations throughout the United States (Massey, Durand, and Malone 2002; Massey and Capoferro 2004; Carrión-Flores and Sorensen 2006; Gathmann 2008; Kaufman 2008; Bohn and Pubatch 2013; Rocha et al. 2014; Massey, Durand, and Pren 2014).

**Unfortunately, more surveillance only pushes migrants to two different paths**

**The first is riskier routes**

**UN**, 10-9-**2023**, "Digital technologies at borders: A threat to people on the move", https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2023/10/digital-technologies-borders-threat-people-move

International borders are increasingly securitised and even militarised, with many countries constructing expansive infrastructures to prevent migration. Drones and automated recognition tools are also used to detect movement on extended border areas, which have been reported to be used to stop migrants from arriving at the border and enabling pushbacks. “**Whe[N]**re **surveillance prioritizes control rather than life-saving assistance, we will see that less direct and more dangerous migration routes may emerge as a result**,” she said. “Borders continue to be sites of human rights violations and abuses, rather than offering sanctuary, dignity and human rights protection people on the move are entitled to.”

Which is why historically, Valle of Verge reveals that

Gaby Del **Valle**, A Policy Reporter. Her Past Work Has Focused On Immigration Politics, Border Surveillance Technologies, and The Rise Of The New Right., 3-20-**2024**, "Surveillance has a body count", **Verge**, <https://www.theverge.com/2024/3/20/24106098/cbp-migrant-deaths-border-surveillance>

The vast **surveillance apparatus at the border is driving desperate people into more dangerous terrain, resulting in a 57 percent increase in recorded deaths at the US-Mexico border.** **[Resulting from]**CBP’s network of **surveillance towers, hidden cameras, aerial drones, and overhead sensors is the result of an enforcement strategy called “prevention through deterrence.”** Thirty years later, **the plan** has borne out, though it **hasn’t actually reduced migration. Instead**, as the 1994 plan predicted, **it just shifted the location of crossings.** Surveillance tools allow Border Patrol to track migrants through vast expanses of the border without actually having to be there — the agency considers them a “force multiplier.” But the expansion of CBP’s surveillance apparatus has come at a significant human cost. A 2019 study by researchers at the University of Arizona found a “significant correlation between the location of border surveillance technology, the routes taken by migrants, and the locations of recovered human remains in the southern Arizona desert.” Migrants don’t always know about the tools CBP uses to track them through the desert, but smugglers certainly do — and so they encourage migrants to enter the US via remote, dangerous routes where they’re less likely to be intercepted by Border Patrol agents but far more likely to die. If the recent past is any indication, **more surveillance won’t reduce migration.** Its body count, however, will keep growing.

Human Rights Watch, 6-26-2024, "US: Border Deterrence Leads to Deaths, Disappearances", https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/06/26/us-border-deterrence-leads-deaths-disappearances

(Mexico City) – **Border deterrence policies [has led to] are** driving increased deaths and disappearances of people migrating to the United States, said Human Rights Watch and the Colibrí Center for Human Rights in a web feature published today. The web feature, “‘Nothing but Bones:’ 30 Years of Deadly **Deterrence at the US-Mexico Border**,” features the stories of nine people who died or disappeared while trying to cross the southern US border and of their surviving family members. **US Border Patrol has reported** about **10,000 deaths,** when Prevention Through Deterrence was first implemented, but local rights groups at the border believ**e the number could be up to 80,000, with thousands more disappeared**. Most of those dead are Indigenous, Brown, and Black people.

“The number of deaths is shocking, but each death represents a human being, a family, a community,” said Ari Sawyer, US border researcher at Human Rights Watch. “The US government should end deadly border deterrence policies and enact policies that protect human life.”

**The Second is being smuggled by Cartels**

More surveillance makes migrants more vulnerable to migrant smugglers. **Rodriguez:**

Ivón Padilla-**Rodríguez**, 1-3-**2023**, "Perspective", **Washington Post**, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/made-by-history/2023/01/03/us-policies-like-title-42-make-migrants-more-vulnerable-smugglers/>

But the reason smugglers can endanger and exploit migrants in the first place is because of policies like this one, which increase — rather than decrease — border-crossers’ vulnerability. Restrictive immigration policies and long-standing **immigration-deterrence strategies** — which study after study show don’t actually deter anyone from migrating — **funnel child and adult migrants into clandestine routes of entry that force migrants to turn to smugglers for aid.** When poor migrants, especially unaccompanied children, cannot pay the high price tag of smugglers’ services, they sometimes get coerced into forced labor schemes to pay back their debts, just as they have in states like Alabama, Ohio and Illinois. These human rights dilemmas are not aberrations or exceptions. They are the outcome of border enforcement schemes that, for decades, have eliminated safe and legal avenues for migration and intensified border policing, making migrants vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

The price of these journeys are outrageous. **Fisher of USA Today in 2024:**

Steve **Fisher**, 6-20-20**24**, "Mexican cartels offering pricey VIP package for migrants trying to get into US", **USA TODAY**, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/investigations/2024/06/20/mexican-drug-cartels-migrant-vip-package/74154061007/>

**Heightened U.S. security along the** 2,000-mile **border** with Mexico and fewer legal pathways to come north **have been an economic boon for Mexican criminal organizations**. Instead of fixing a broken immigration system, the U.S. government is outsourcing migration policy to criminal groups, some experts say, increasing practices of corruption. “The migrant,” said Blanca Navarrete, director of the migrant advocacy nonprofit, Integral Human Rights in Action, “is the one to pay the price for that lack of action.” “**Criminals have shifted from** their primary business, which was **drug trafficking,**” said Arturo Velasco, head of the anti-kidnapping unit at the Chihuahua attorney general’s office. “Now **60 to 70% of their focus is migrant smuggling**.Velasco said investigations by his office have found that Mexican National Guard and **immigration authorities turn migrants over to cartels** and sell migration permits that allow people to legally transit through the country.**Local police abduct migrants for profit** as well, Velasco said. And they are **a** crucial part of the migrant smuggling operations in Juárez networks in the city. The tunnel **route costs at least $6,000**, according to interviews with top Mexican state authorities, federal law enforcement officials from both sides of the border and migrants waiting to cross in encampments along the Rio Grande. Ricardo, **a migrant smuggler**, said he **has charged as much as $15,000.**

Consequently, immigrants are exploited by their smugglers. **Rodriguez:**

Ivón Padilla-**Rodríguez**, 1-3-**2023**, "Perspective", **Washington Post**, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/made-by-history/2023/01/03/us-policies-like-title-42-make-migrants-more-vulnerable-smugglers/>

But the reason smugglers can endanger and exploit migrants in the first place is because of policies like this one, which increase — rather than decrease — border-crossers’ vulnerability. Restrictive immigration policies and long-standing immigration-deterrence strategies — which study after study show don’t actually deter anyone from migrating — funnel child and adult migrants into clandestine routes of entry that force migrants to turn to smugglers for aid. **When poor migrants**, especially unaccompanied children, **cannot pay the high price** tag **of smugglers’ services, they** sometimes **get coerced into forced labor** schemes **to pay back their debt**s, just as they have in states like Alabama, Ohio and Illinois.

This system of labor trafficking is horrendous. **Rodriguez:**

Ivón Padilla-**Rodríguez**, 1-3-**2023**, "Perspective", **Washington Post**, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/made-by-history/2023/01/03/us-policies-like-title-42-make-migrants-more-vulnerable-smugglers/>

Impoverished migrants who could not afford the growing costs of smuggling services had no choice but to consent to arrangements in which smugglers transported them directly to worksites inside the United States, predominantly on remote commercial farms where labor law enforcement was nearly nonexistent, so migrants could work off their debts. When unscrupulous people recruit vulnerable individuals for the purpose of labor exploitation by using fraud or coercion, **the practice is considered labor trafficking.** When it comes to noncitizens, labor trafficking is often carried out through debt bondage, in which desperate migrants are coaxed into taking on smuggling debts impossible to pay off and are silenced with the threat of deportation. **Those who survived the**ir perilous **journey** in the 1970s and arrived to their worksites uninjured **were forced to work from dawn to dusk.** For these long hours, they received paychecks that ranged from $0 to $40 because **their earnings were deducted to pay smuggling debts arbitrarily inflated after their arrival.** **Migrants** also **were denied food** for days at a time, **schooling and medical attention**. When undocumented workers spoke out against their labor exploitation, they were intimidated into subservience with violence and threats of deportation. In 1980, estimates compiled by the Globe and Mail suggested that as many as 100,000 immigrants in the United States were victims of labor trafficking every year.

Devastatingly, cartels have capitalized on this business. **Fisher:**

Steve **Fisher**, 6-20-20**24**, "Mexican cartels offering pricey VIP package for migrants trying to get into US", **USA TODAY**, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/investigations/2024/06/20/mexican-drug-cartels-migrant-vip-package/74154061007/>

**Heightened U.S. security along the** 2,000-mile **border** with Mexico and fewer legal pathways to come north **have been an economic boon for Mexican criminal organizations**. Instead of fixing a broken immigration system, the U.S. government is outsourcing migration policy to criminal groups, some experts say, increasing practices of corruption. “The migrant,” said Blanca Navarrete, director of the migrant advocacy nonprofit, Integral Human Rights in Action, “is the one to pay the price for that lack of action.” “**Criminals have shifted from** their primary business, which was **drug trafficking,**” said Arturo Velasco, head of the anti-kidnapping unit at the Chihuahua attorney general’s office. “Now **60 to 70% of their focus is migrant smuggling**.Velasco said investigations by his office have found that Mexican National Guard and **immigration authorities turn migrants over to cartels** and sell migration permits that allow people to legally transit through the country.**Local police abduct migrants for profit** as well, Velasco said. And they are a crucial part of the migrant smuggling operations in Juárez networks in the city. The tunnel **route costs at least $6,000**, according to interviews with top Mexican state authorities, federal law enforcement officials from both sides of the border and migrants waiting to cross in encampments along the Rio Grande. Ricardo, a migrant smuggler, said he has charged **as much as $15,000.** A joint investigation by Mexican and U.S. authorities has discovered that one Juárez-based cartel, La Linea, has been smuggling at least 1,000 migrants through the tunnels into El Paso every month, according to a senior Mexican official. **Experts predict the return on investment of trafficking humans has eclipsed that of trafficking drugs.**