

America's "War on Drugs" Has Triggered a "Humanitarian Crisis" in Central American. Children Converging at the US Border

By [Joachim Hagopian](#)

Global Research, July 08, 2014

Region: [Latin America & Caribbean, USA](#)

Theme: [Police State & Civil Rights, US NATO War Agenda](#)

Since 2011 the US has not only continued "losing" its war on drugs while militarizing so called anti-drug police forces throughout Central America (not unlike the secret dirty wars of yesteryear), during this exact same time period murderous violence in Central America has skyrocketed.

Meanwhile, since 2011 simultaneous effects from US foreign policy in the region have only promoted more drug trafficking as well as child trafficking in the form of the massive proliferation of children from Central America (currently [73% from Central America](#) while just 25% are now coming from Mexico) crossing the Mexican border into the US unaccompanied by adults. Just five years ago these percentages were nearly reversed when only 17% of unaccompanied minors originated in Central America and 82% were from Mexico. These four co-occurring developments, the US militarization of the region, nonstop increasing flow of drugs into US, the intensifying, out of control drug cartel-gang violence and influx of young children pouring into the US are all interconnected and intentionally driven by US foreign policy. Either by calculated design or minimally by complicity, America has thousands and thousands of children crossing our border.

None of these phenomena deviate in the least from the oligarch-US-EU-NATO global agenda to destabilize all nations throughout every region on earth through a unified, consistent policy of militarization and globalization that in turn lead directly to political destabilization, racial and class warfare, economic impoverishment, increased violence, war, civil breakdown and ultimate societal and national collapse. This then further creates undermining crises conditions ripe for predatory world bank-IMF loans that cause national bankruptcy and extreme economic hardship accompanied by a full frontal assault unimpeded by transnational corporations to systematically move in for the kill, raping, pillaging, plundering and privatizing every nation on the planet.

The agenda to "balkanize" as in the West's 1990's model of breaking up Yugoslavia into 13 small ineffectual, defenseless pieces is currently being executed in Iraq with the formation of three separate states controlled by the Kurds in the north and the Sunni and Shiite sections dividing the rest of the country. Again, this formulaic divide and conquer strategy has proven 100% effective in weakening each nation and region's sovereignty and autonomy that in turn facilitate and maximize exploitation, ensuring ultimate materialization of the oligarchs' New World Order agenda.

This parallel process is unfolding in both Latin America and the US. The CIA controls and

manages global drug smuggling from the Afghan poppy fields to the coca plantations run by Central-South American-Mexican drug cartels that supply and feed the constant demand for illicit drugs into both North America as well as Europe. Worldwide drug distribution operates under the convenient cover of the tax funded US war on drugs just like the tax funded US war on terror. They are designed to continue on indefinitely as long as the US government is able to persist in getting away with this global theft, death and destruction on such an unparalleled, unprecedented, monumental scale.

Ever since the Iran-Contra Affair of the 1980's when CIA got caught red-handed running drugs for guns during the Reagan years, and financing, arming, and training death squad commandos throughout Central America, the US government has always played an integral and active role in covert drug smuggling operations generating over the decades trillions in drug money revenue [laundered through the central banking cabal](#). San Jose Mercury journalist Gary Webb exposed their "Dark Alliance" operations and [paid for it with his life](#) in December 2004. That is how powerful and heavily invested the US government is through its CIA cover in the international drug trade.

The fact remains that to this day, the CIA meets regularly with informants and representatives from selected Latin American drug cartels, making deals to gain incriminating information on rival cartels while assuring favored ones a free pass of drugs entering North America (an example is using the [Sinaloa cartel](#) to get to the Juarez cartel). Numerous inside US government officials including current Secretary of State (then Senator) John Kerry, and both CIA as well as the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) whistleblowers, corroborated further by various [Mexican government officials](#) and high ranking cartel players all admit how the CIA manages the highly lucrative international drug smuggling business. In fact, El Universal reports that [more than 2,000 US officials](#) that include Border Patrol agents, police officers among other agency officials are currently being investigated this year for their ties to organized crime, proving widespread grand scale corruption. Thus, despite common knowledge that the so called war on drugs is a complete and utter failure as defined by its abysmal record in actual interdiction and cutoff of any drug flow into America, with inside US assistance, the prolonged war on drugs has only steadily increased the narco supply during the four plus decades since Nixon declared war on drugs way back in 1971.

That is why President Obama calling upon Congress last week to implement the same policy toward unaccompanied children from Central America as those from Mexico is a hypocritically disingenuous way to sweep what he himself calls "a humanitarian crisis" swiftly and conveniently under the rug by making their deportation instantaneous after a brief Border Patrol interview. Obama knows full well why since last October 52,000 kids mostly from El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala have been showing up at our doorstep in droves in recent months. In a joint press conference with the Costa Rican president during a brief visit to the Central American country in May 2013, [President Obama made the statement](#):

"But we also have to recognize that problems like narco-trafficking arise in part when a country is vulnerable because of poverty, because of institutions that are not working for the people, because young people don't see a brighter future ahead."

Obama understands the plain and simple truth very well - Central America's weak and corrupt governments that the US supports cannot protect the children from the rampant

murder and rape that befall this young, most defenseless population. Desperate parents wanting to protect their children from death are sending them to seek political asylum even in such poor neighboring nations as Nicaragua as well as Belize, Mexico, Panama and Costa Rica also in record numbers (rising by [712 percent](#)). The spiked violence in their own countries has them not just swarming to the US but seeking safety in any and all surrounding nations throughout the region. Their arrival in America has nothing to do with sponging off US social services or gaining an economic advantage as some would have the American public believe.

With 52,000 already in the US, a projected 90,000 children are expected for the fiscal 2014 year. Because the bulk of the migrant kids have been apprehended at the eastern Mexico-Texas Rio Grande border, quickly overwhelming the facilities there, busloads and planeloads of thousands of children have been transported to Arizona and most recently California. Initial reports from the facility in Nogales, Arizona raised humanitarian issues of overcrowding. The Border Patrol has not allowed media inside the facility. Vehement protests in [Murrieta, California](#) where the three California planeloads were originally scheduled had to be re-routed to San Diego. Many of the children in these groups now in San Diego already have adult sponsors or family members. Others will need local housing.

Meanwhile, during the last decade that the US has funded the [militarization of Latin American security forces](#), violence in Mexico and Central America has increased exponentially, at times committed by the security forces themselves, not just by the criminal thugs from drug cartels. Human rights violations perpetrated by both the cartels as well as the government security forces are reminiscent of the dirty secret civil wars of the 1980's. In short, US funded militarization dating back to the Bush regime has only inflicted substantial collateral damage on the civilian populations and neither diminished the drug cartel empires nor diminished the flow of drug trafficking into the US. Under Obama's watch, well over \$2.5 billion US tax dollars were allocated [for beefing up Latin American security forces](#). The bottom line is that the corrupt governments from Mexico and Central America are too often colluding with the drug cartels, which in turn do business covertly with various US governmental agencies. The result - enormous US tax waste, financial malfeasance, increasingly unsafe drug war zones in Latin America and uninterrupted drug flow passage into North America.

Incredibly in the face of glaring evidence of policy failure and the bloodbath spillage of increasing violence and terror in Mexico and Central America that is the direct result, the State Department's head of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, [William Brownfield](#), recently told the Associated Press that "the bloodshed tends to occur and increase when these trafficking organizations...come under some degree of pressure." More boldface government lies in a feeble and vain effort to justify US caused death and destruction.

Current immigration laws distinguish between the policy for handling unaccompanied Mexican children at the US border and unaccompanied children from other nations. Standing protocol has children from Mexico interviewed by a Border Patrol agent to discern if grounds for potential political asylum are present. If the interviewer concludes that conditions are not met, the child is then deported back to Mexico immediately. Last week Obama requested that Congress make the policy for handling the children from Central America the same as Mexico's, which would rescind current existing laws voted into place during the Bush administration specifically designed to protect potential asylum seeking youth from other

countries. After taking lots of flack and criticism for his rigidly harsh and hypocritical stand all week, [today Obama backed down](#) away from that hard-line position. Instead, the White House announced today that the current children in federal custody from Central America will be processed under existing law and given due process that ensures the children will be granted opportunity for an immigration hearing that might lead to legal asylum. However in a seemingly hollow, face saving gesture, it was also announced today that “most of the children will be deported.” And Obama aims still to expedite legislation for removal of all future undocumented children at the border regardless of their national origin or danger at home.

Also [\\$2 billion](#) in additional emergency funding was requested this week to deal with the growing crisis. The funding will be allocated for more immigration judges along with legal aid and detainment facilities to provide adequate housing and care for the children.

Public announcements in Central America are already being aired on television in attempt to dissuade parents from sending their children to the US. Yet that may be a hard sell when parents observe their children already in the US being allowed to stay in America, especially when other family members already are living in America.

Many Americans who have never experienced the dangerously dire conditions that families in Central American nations face every single day cannot possibly grasp how parents can be so “coldhearted” as to ship their children away. But it is all relative. Their option of trying to keep their kids safe in their own country is simply weaker than the calculated risk involved in sending them 1500 miles or more north to America to face an unknown, uncertain future there.

Two reputable investigations found that a high percentage of the children meet the necessary criteria to qualify for political asylum. The United Nations agency, the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), assessed 404 young people who left Latin America and found that [58 percent](#) of the minors were seeking international asylum because their own nations failed to protect them. A 2012 report from the [Vera Institute](#) determined that at least 40 percent warranted consideration for asylum. With the worsening conditions in Central America just in the last two years, that percentage would undoubtedly be higher now. A look at current life conditions in the children’s homelands of these three “Northern Triangle” Central American nations might shed light to explain why parents in desperation are so willing to send their offspring to far away foreign lands.

Displacement of families in Central America due to systematic criminal violence and extortion by drug cartels and local gangs are extremely commonplace. So is murder. The murder rates in Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador have skyrocketed, largely due to oppressive national security forces as well as highly organized street gangs and very powerful drug cartels. All are murdering innocent people at will. In Mexico alone since 2006, the war on drugs has killed [150,000 people](#). Known as the murder capital of the world, Honduras has 85 to 91 killings per 100,000 people and a daily rate of 19 murders a day. Out of the 52,000 unaccompanied children at the border since last October, over 15,000 are from Honduras.

After the military coup in 2009, trafficking gangs diverted their weapons and narco-routes from South America through Honduras into Mexico. An estimated [three-quarters](#) of all US-bound cocaine passes through Honduras. Two out of three people in the country live in

poverty. The two transnational gangs imported from California prisons – Mara Salvatrucha and Barrio 18 gangs compete in turf wars and control the cities. Gang members recruit children as young as kindergarteners. They will kill those young people who refuse to become members and will target “girlfriends” that are customarily raped by one or more members. Because [40% of the Honduran population](#) is under 15 years of age, they are extremely vulnerable to being forced into violent and destructive gang life. This is the primary reason why parents send their children away seeking refuge in other safer countries.

El Salvador suffered from a US induced civil war from 1980 to 1992. Infamous death squads financed, armed and trained by US Special Operations forces murdered nearly [40,000 people](#). As a result, two million Salvadorans reside in the US, the third largest Hispanic group behind Mexicans and Puerto Ricans. This is another reason many families in El Salvador with relatives in the US are sending their children to America. And with the US policy re-militarizing El Salvador’s national security forces ostensibly to fight drug cartels and gangs, a reactivation of the ruthless killing of citizens en masse once again has become the norm. Elizabeth Kennedy, a Fulbright researcher working in the country, has stated that the current homicide rates are even more than during the civil war, and that assault, rape, disappearance and extortion are at higher rates than ever before. El Salvador murder rate ranks at number two in the world behind Honduras. Nearly 11,500 youth from El Salvador comprise the 52,000 children apprehended at the border.

Guatemala sustained a civil war from 1960 to 1996. For multiple generations war, violence and rape are all Guatemalans have known. Ethnic cleansing of Mayan Indians and mass murder over such a prolonged period has given rise to a lawless drug trafficking operation that is an organized crime syndicate. In 2012 this small nation incurred nearly [100 murders a week](#). Rape and teenage pregnancy are among the highest in the Northern Triangle. Nearly 13,000 of the 52,000 migrant children are from Guatemala.

Another high risk for children in central America is falling victims to human trafficking, prostitution, and child slavery that have become a major global problem. The regional crime syndicates not only traffic drugs but humans as well. Just from all these horrific, highly disturbing Central American statistics, young family members seeking safety and escape in other countries appears not only understandable but a prudent decision as well.

Extracted from the UN Commissioner report, [17-year old Alfonso](#) offers the following compelling testimony:

“The problem was that where I studied there were lots of M-18 gang members, and where I lived was under control of the other gang, the MS-13. The M-18 gang thought I belonged to the MS-13. They had killed the two police officers who protected our school. They waited for me outside the school. It was a Friday, the week before Easter, and I was headed home. The gang told me that if I returned to school, I wouldn’t make it home alive. The gang had killed two kids I went to school with, and I thought I might be the next one. After that, I couldn’t even leave my neighborhood. They prohibited me. I know someone whom the gangs threatened this way. He didn’t take their threats seriously. They killed him in the park. He was wearing his school uniform. If I hadn’t had these problems, I wouldn’t have come here.”

Unfortunately the issue of so many children converging at the US border has been

politicized (like everything else in Washington) and used as a hot potato weapon against any chance of passing much needed, long overdue immigration reform. And during an election year when politicians play it safe and focus exclusively on getting reelected, what to do with unwanted kids at the border has put the nail in the coffin. No attempt to even deal with such a volatile and divisive issue will be forthcoming from Congress and status quo inactivity only buys more time of business as usual deportations that continue breaking up thousands of immigrant families.

Since 2009 Obama, Homeland Security and the Border Patrol have teamed up with local law enforcement agencies throughout the US and began an accelerated and unprecedented campaign of deporting parents as undocumented immigrants, ruthlessly ripping families apart, creating orphans of their children as legal US born citizens. Obama removes illegal immigrants at [nine times](#) the rate of just twenty years ago, far more than any other president. Two million of the undocumented have in fact been removed already. Regardless of how long a person may be residing in America, and regardless of having a family here, being a law abiding, productive citizen, it makes no difference. Victims of the US militarized police state are only being sent back to militarized Latin American police states funded and largely created by the US where the deported are frequently persecuted, tortured and murdered. The hardship and tragedy brought down on so many hardworking, taxpaying families are anything but humane and compassionate. But then American Empire aggression has never been humane and compassionate.

Another oligarch plan is to homogenize all regions of the earth through [massive migrant immigration globally](#). This systematic leveling of the so called playing field between the developed Western world (North America and Europe) and the developing Third World is simply part of the plan leading to the New World Order. Hence, the globalized aggressive attack and disintegration of the middle class around the world is designed to lower the standard of living in the West, homogenizing a destabilized worldwide lower standard of living that will facilitate maximum control over a desperate, struggling global population. With this bigger picture in mind, current policies promoting mass migrant immigration perceived by the likely majority in the host nation as unwanted guests and an additional burden, in effect stirs up tension and conflict between ethnicities and classes, acting as more evidence of the divide and conquer tactic. By design, the present humanitarian crisis at the US border is US made.

Joachim Hagopian is a West Point graduate and former US Army officer. He has written a manuscript based on his unique military experience entitled ["Don't Let The Bastards Getcha Down."](#) It examines and focuses on US international relations, leadership and national security issues. After the military, Joachim earned a masters degree in Clinical Psychology and worked as a licensed therapist in the mental health field for more than a quarter century. He now concentrates on his writing.

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [Joachim Hagopian](#), Global Research, 2014

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Joachim Hagopian](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca