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Immigrants gather with their belongings outside St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Sept. 14, in Edgartown, Massachusetts, on Martha's Vineyard. (Vineyard Gazette via AP/Ray Ewing)



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The most notable complainers about the immigration crisis are men running for office: Texas Gov. Greg Abbott and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis. They all complain about the situation at the border. They complain about U.S. policy. They complain about human beings trying to find space on the planet.

They are not kind in their words or deeds.

Texas taxpayers are bankrolling Abbott's $12 million migrant busing plan, in which, since April, Texas has sent some 1,800 migrants to Washington, 9,000 to New York and 300 to Chicago. Abbott's New York contract reportedly includes a nondisclosure agreement, so that officials in the destination cities have no way of finding out who is coming or when.

DeSantis, in a move of crass one-upmanship, flew 48 migrants from Texas via Florida to surprise Martha's Vineyard, the 87-square-mile resort island south of Cape Cod, Massachusetts. In his effort to be Trump 2.0, DeSantis earned the former president's vitriol for diverting the news cycle away from him and for "stealing" his idea.

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Not to be outdone, Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey, who is term-limited and will leave office next year, has bused approximately 1,800 migrants to Washington since May, but at least he lets officials know the schedule.

All of them — Abbott, Ducey, DeSantis and their minions — are trafficking human beings. These migrants are people, not numbers, who have risked everything for a chance at a better life, for a chance at survival.

Yes, we all know about the illegal border crossings, about the persons who have come to the U.S. and disappeared into crowded slums and backwater towns. We know as well about the people who overstayed their visas. And we know all about fentanyl, rape, robbery and gang violence seeping out of silent, illegal communities to the larger population.

But the people bused to New York and Chicago and Washington, and who were, incredibly enough, flown to Martha's Vineyard, have paperwork. They are victims of political or economic dysfunction and oppression in their own countries. They do not necessarily want to be in the United States; they want to be someplace they can live. They want to eat. They want to work. They want to have dignified lives for themselves and for their children.

They did not cause their personal tragedies.

In large part, the industrialized world did.



Nia Riningsih, one of few residents who stayed behind after most of her neighbors left due to the rising sea levels that inundated their neighborhood on the northern coast of Java Island, checks salted fish she dries as her daughter Safira plays at their house in Mondoliko village, Central Java, Indonesia, Nov. 7, 2021. (AP/Dita Alangkara)

That would be, in order: the United States, China, Russia, Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan and India, and to a lesser degree France, Canada, Ukraine, Poland, Italy, South Africa and Mexico.

From 1750 through 2020, greenhouse gas emissions totaled 1.7 trillion tons from the developed world's use of fossil fuels for heating and transportation and from industrial chemical reactions.

All of that causes global warming, and global warming changes the weather. Lakes and streams disappear, and with them forests and vegetation. Livestock, let along people, cannot survive in burgeoning deserts. Either they move or they die.

Too often, the forests that survive drought are felled by legal or illegal clear-cutting. The people living within them sometimes escape the browbeaters sent by big business to intimidate them from the land, or the independent murderous thugs harvesting ancient woods. These escapees crowd the cities and find no work. They are the migrants.

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Yes, world powers joined together in Paris to agree that climate change is real and dangerous. Back in the United States, JPMorgan Chase led the world in funding the fossil fuel industry, to the tune of $196 billion. And so, along with its confreres in business and industry, Chase helped warm the planet more than 1 degree Celsius. The Arctic is melting, violent weather is increasing, and a billion animals burned in Australian fires last year.

Yet all the talk does nothing to stop the destruction of the planet and, eventually, its people. There soon will be no more borders to cross to relative security.

The migrants from Central and South America to the United States are in large part coming from situations created by American greed and carelessness.

Why wouldn't they head north?

More importantly, why would the United States not accept them?