

# ABOVE THE LAW

## Merry Excusemas For Racists!

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April 23, 2020

The coronavirus pandemic has always been Excusemas for racists. In addition to Donald Trump going out of his way to whip up racism against East Asian people, it's provided an excellent excuse to end immigration, which is what this administration wanted from the start. In the past month or so, the Trump administration has closed the Mexican border, even though the United States had far more coronavirus cases at the time than Latin America. It has expelled asylum seekers and immigrant minors without interviews, in direct violation of US and international law. It has suspended visa processing, ended refugee resettlement, postponed citizenship ceremonies, and more.

And this week, it took the next logical step: It will no longer issue green cards, which confer lawful permanent residency, in most cases.

It actually looked worse than that on Monday, when the incompetent clown who has somehow gained control of my country announced (via Twitter, natch) that he was going to end all immigration. But losing guest workers turned out to be unpopular with some of the companies that Trump needs to continue propping up the economy, so he backpedaled on Tuesday and turned it into a ban on green cards.

The details are unclear right now, since Trump tends to spring new immigration policies on the relevant federal agencies without bothering to tell them. In fact, the New York Times said Tuesday that DOJ was still studying whether this plan is even legal. That article said it's a 60-day suspension of new green cards for every applicant except those who are children or spouses of US citizens. That means green cards will be unavailable to other relatives of citizens; relatives of green card holders; anyone who is applying for a green card through employment; and a handful of other people, including former translators and other workers for the US military whose lives are threatened because they helped us.

Trump says this "will help put unemployed Americans first in line for jobs as America reopens," and if I were a fool, I would believe that. But this has never been about economic competition between immigrants and native-born US citizens, which studies consistently show doesn't really exist. (The flaming liberals over at the Cato Institute once called it "a wrongheaded idea that just refuses to die.") When nobody's listening, Trump welcomes European immigrants, who are in a much better position to compete with American workers than the subsistence farmers of

Guatemala. He's even married a couple, and brought another into the White House despite suspect credentials.

This is about whipping up the far-right voter base with prejudice. And the Supreme Court majority has already shown that it does not care.