

Video: Workers speak about families divided by borders

Our reporters
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On April 30th, the immigrant rights group Border Angels sponsored an event at Friendship Park in San Diego, California, to celebrate Children's Day. The park is on the border of the United States and Mexico and is shared by both countries. Five families, out of hundreds who applied, were chosen by the Border Patrol to be reunited with their children at Friendship Park for a few minutes. The WSWS spoke with some of the families who shared their stories.

While the Mexican side of the park is open year round, on the American side it is only open for a few hours on the weekends and is only accessible by walking a mile and a half from the designated parking areas.

The park is separated by a steel mesh gate that friends and families can talk through. This area of the park is under strict surveillance by the Border Patrol, and under normal circumstances filming is not allowed.

In the last two decades alone, thousands of immigrants have died crossing into the United States. The militarized border has intentionally diverted would be migrants to cross into the desert where the extreme heat threatens their lives.

Border Patrol agents have repeatedly murdered immigrants through shootings, beatings and torture all along the border and the numerous detention centers, modern day concentration camps, in the United States.

The event also allowed Democratic Congressman Juan Vargas a platform to make a speech where he paid tribute to the memory of the late President Ronald Reagan for enacting "comprehensive immigration reform." One would never know from Vargas's comments that Reagan funded right-wing death squads throughout Latin America, thereby creating the hellish conditions that forced thousands of immigrants to flee for their lives.

Vargas also made a thinly veiled swipe at Donald Trump, the semi-fascistic nominee of the Republican Party, who has called for an expanded wall between the United States and Mexico and has threatened to deport all immigrants from the country. But no such criticism was leveled at President Obama, who has deported over 2 million immigrants, more than any other president in US history, and has continued to militarize the border.

Moreover, Obama has fast-tracked deportations of immigrants in the last few years, especially after the 2014 increase in border crossings by child immigrants fleeing gang violence in Central America. Toddlers and unaccompanied minors, often not even represented by a lawyer, have been forced to board a bus or plane back to their countries of origin to face the prospect of destitution, violence, and even death.



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