

# DHS secretary Kristi Noem before Congress: Fascist lies and Democratic Party pretense

Patrick Martin  
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Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem testified Thursday before a semi-annual oversight hearing of the House Homeland Security Committee, flatly denying that ICE and Border Patrol agents have violated the rights of immigrants and American citizens alike. In a final display of contempt for Congress, she left the hearing early, claiming a meeting at the White House, which had in fact been cancelled.

The nearly three-hour hearing demonstrated two fundamental political facts: The Republican Party and the Trump administration have embraced a fascist policy towards immigrants; and the Democratic Party is content to do nothing about it, substituting handwringing or political theatrics, depending on the political requirements of each member.

Noem is one of the most corrupt members of the Trump cabinet, as well as one of the most slavish in her adulation of the president. In virtually every response to questions, both friendly and hostile, she combined fawning praise for Trump and denunciations of his predecessor, Democrat Joe Biden, as an alleged advocate of open borders (although he continued most of the repressive policies of Trump's first term, deporting millions of immigrants and asylum seekers).

Two other officials, Joe Kent, head of the National Counter Terrorism Center, and Michael Glasheen, who oversees the FBI's National Security Division, testified alongside Noem. Glasheen is a career official who was sent instead of FBI Director Kash Patel, in a calculated display of defiance of congressional oversight. Ranking Democrat Benny Thompson of Mississippi took note of the slight, but the Republican majority said nothing.

The presentation by Noem and Kent—a Special Forces veteran with 11 tours of duty in the Iraq war, twice defeated as a far-right Republican candidate for Congress—was taken apparently word for word from the new National Security Strategy document issued by the Pentagon last week. They declared the supposedly uncontrolled immigration during the Biden administration to be the greatest national security threat to the United States.

Kent said, “I would say what keeps me up at night is that we don't necessarily know all of the people that are in this country, who they are and what their intentions are. We think up to 15 million to 20 million people came in under the Biden

administration over the southern border. They were not vetted. They were allowed to pour in. Our asylum programs, or visa programs were all exploited and the integrity was demolished under Joe Biden and the leadership of the Department of Homeland Security.”

Noem and Kent repeatedly denied that ICE agents had ever engaged in misconduct, that any US citizens had been wrongly deported, and that the immigration sweeps were rounding up thousands of ordinary workers, not the “worst of the worst” as Trump incessantly claims.

They made no attempt to disguise the blatantly racist and Islamophobic basis of Trump's immigration policies. This was particularly apparent when two members of the fascist House Freedom Caucus, Eli Crane of Arizona and Andy Ogles of Tennessee, had their five minutes of questioning.

Crane said that he was particularly concerned that “we continue to let people into this country that don't want to assimilate to our culture and want to harm Americans.” He then showed a series of video clips of young men in Muslim attire being asked on the street whether sharia law or the US Constitution should be supreme. All of them responded “sharia,” based on the Koran.

Christian fundamentalists would give similar answers if they were asked about the Bible and the Constitution, but Crane portrayed the Muslims as an ominous threat to America.

Kent replied, “I think we did not have control of our borders, however, we have had 2.7 million individuals from Muslim regions who came in under the Biden administration who went through minimal to no vetting, who probably share values like the folks you saw on the screen.”

Crane then asked, “What do you believe the long-term consequences will be if the United States continues admitting individuals who either openly reject assimilation into American civic culture, or who falsely swear an oath to uphold the Constitution despite having no intention of honoring it?”

Kent replied, “We simply won't have a country anymore as we know it. We can look to Europe and the U.K. to see where this leads.” This directly echoes the assessment made in the National Security Strategy document that Europe faces “civilizational” destruction due to Muslim immigration.

When it was Ogles' turn, he spent most of his time citing

bogus figures blaming all US social problems on a half century of immigration from “third world countries.” He claimed that 60 million migrants have come to the US since the passage of the Hart-Celler Act in 1965, when ended the quota system that openly privileged immigration from Europe.

He went on to claim that Muslims were overwhelmingly responsible for violent crimes committed in London, Paris, and Rome, as well US cities like Minneapolis, Nashville and Dearborn, Michigan. He concluded with the following fascist diatribe:

I’ve had enough. I’ve said it once and I will say it again. Deport them all. This is our country. We get to decide who comes in. And we get to decide who has to leave. I say deport them all. 90 percent that have come into this country are from third world countries. Most of which are sucking resources from American citizens, burdening our cities. They do not belong here.

Kent replied blandly that critics of the Trump administration “also say this is strictly a race issue. That is a disgusting accusation,” then confirming that charge, saying, “We had 2.7 million folks from Muslim countries and regions who have come into the country with minimum to no vetting.”

The Democratic response consisted largely of political stunts, confronting Noem and Kent with cases of illegal and anti-democratic actions of immigration agents that flagrantly contradicted their own claims during the hearing.

The cases are indeed horrific: the much-publicized beating, arrest and deportation of Narciso Barranco, father of three serving US Marines, from Santa Ana, California; Donna Brown, a legal immigrant from Ireland, married for 46 years to a US Gulf War veteran, arrested and held in ICE detention since July because she wrote an \$80 bad check ten years ago; Sae Joon Park, a decorated veteran, wounded twice in the 1989 invasion of Panama, forced to leave the country to avoid deportation over a minor drug offense linked to PTSD; and on and on.

Barranco’s son and Brown’s husband attended the hearing and stood up and were recognized. Park appeared by Zoom from South Korea. Noem acknowledged that she had the authority to provide compassionate waivers in all these cases, but had not done so.

After the last such episode, Noem abruptly left the hearing, leaving Kent and Glasheen to continue for another hour. In the course of that time, the following exchange took place between ranking Democrat Thompson and the FBI’s Glasheen;

**Thompson:** Mr. Glasheen, will you tell me organizations on the domestic side that are the number

one and number two threat?

**Glasheen:** I would say the first one, President Trump just announced an executive order for Antifa. That is our primary concern right now.

**Thompson:** Where is Antifa headquartered?

**Glasheen:** What we are doing right now—

**Thompson:** Where in the United States does Antifa exist? If it is a terrorist organization and you have identified as number one—

**Glasheen:** We are building out the infrastructure right now.

**Thompson:** So, what does that mean? We are trying to get the information. You say Antifa is a terrorist organization. Tell us as a committee, how did you come to that? Whether it exists, how many members do they have in the United States as of right now?

**Glasheen:** That is very fluid. It is ongoing for us to understand that. No different than Al Qaeda and ISIS.

**Thompson:** I asked one question, sir. I just want you to tell us. If you said Antifa is the number one domestic terrorist organization operating in the United States, I just need to know where they are, how many people? I don’t want a name, I don’t want anything like that. Just how many people have you identified with the FBI that Antifa is made of?

**Glasheen:** The investigations are active.

**Thompson:** Sir, you wouldn’t come to this committee to say something you can’t prove. I know you wouldn’t do that. But you did.

This exchange certainly demonstrates the entirely concocted character of the administration’s claims that left-wing “terrorism” is the principal domestic threat. But none of the Democrats went further than calling for Noem to resign or be impeached. None sought to draw any wider political lessons from Trump’s illegal and unconstitutional attacks on migrants. And most importantly, none sought to alert the working class that these attacks are aimed at setting a precedent for the establishment of police-state rule directed against all workers, whatever country they were born in.



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