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Toward a Trans* Refugee Critique

Notes on the Southeast Asian American Antideportation Movement

JOLIE CHEA

Felons, not families. Criminals, not children. Gang members, not a mom who's working hard to provide for her kids. We'll prioritize, just like law enforcement does every day.

—Barack Obama

Our families have felons, feminist[s], and faggots!

—June Kuoch

Since the start of the twenty-first century, a remarkable coalition of Asian and Southeast Asian American community organizations, legal advocates, scholars, and allies have formed to fight the United States' deportations of primarily Cambodian noncitizens.¹ This movement shows no signs of letting up as it continues to link across US cities with significant Cambodian and Southeast Asian American presence to wage a national campaign to stop deportations. Hashtags such as #KeepFamiliesTogether, #Right2Stay, and #ThisLandIsOurHome have flooded the news feeds of social media platforms as organizers push harder to ingrain in the American public consciousness that these Southeast Asian refugees and lawful permanent residents, despite failing to obtain US citizenship (because of whatever reason), are American. Insisting that these individuals are no longer felons, criminals, or gang members but instead beloved family and community members, organizers and advocates argue that the removals are unjust because these individuals "have already served their time in prison for old convictions, transformed their lives, contribute to their communities, and now support U.S. citizen families" (SEARAC

2018). In doing so, this campaign is premised largely on demonstrating that those who are targets of federal deportation policy are not a threat to US society.

In recent years a segment of the coalition has taken a visible and vocal turn toward a queer and trans leadership with the aim of mobilizing Southeast Asian Americans toward abolition. June Kuoch's (2019) declaration that Southeast Asian organizing must fight for and with "felons, feminist[s], and faggots" reminds us that our antideportation struggle must actively work against factionalization and toward collectivity against the carceral and colonial logics of US empire. The Southeast Asian Freedom Network (SEAFN), in particular, was founded in 2001 to create a united front against the deportation of Southeast Asian noncitizens. In contrast to the efforts described above, these organizers labor to connect the Asian and Southeast Asian American antideportation struggle with other impacted communities in order to join with a broader national movement to end deportations and to abolish the prison industrial complex. While academic accounts of Southeast Asian refugee resettlement draw from racially charged and anti-Black language, detailing how US resettlement efforts have led to "tough inner-city living environments for many, where the refugees are surrounded by urban crime and gang activity" and how "the resulting socioeconomic conditions for these Cambodian refugees explain much of the criminal activity that has created the pool of potential deportees" (Hing 2004–5: 952), queer and trans organizers with SEAFN have rejected the mainstream movement's inculcation of Black and Brown communities and instead insist on a multipronged and multiintersectional approach. To this end, they highlight the totality of the United States' racial imperialist structure as a settler nation founded on war, genocide, and the colonization of racialized peoples.

As SEAFN's former national coordinator Sarath Suong explains, Cambodian Americans formed strong bonds with their peers as they grew up alongside Black, Brown, immigrant, and refugee families in urban city centers. "In order to survive this racial capitalist system," Suong stated, "many of us banded together to protect each other. Then they called us gangs. Then we got caught up in the 90s around the super boom of prisons, the war on drugs, more policing" (Hu 2021). Suong emphasized a need to "build those real connections with poor folks, with Black folks, with brown folks, with immigrants and other refugees who are caught up in the same trappings of this racial capitalist system that we're all in together" (Hu 2021). Suong's statement reflects a growing and unrelenting contingent of queer and trans Southeast Asian American organizers whose vision and strategy are committed to abolishing the systems that produce deportations and challenging the neoliberal multiculturalist impulse that seeks inclusion, acceptance, and belonging to the United States (see Ferguson 2018; Alarcón 1981).

Against the fight for inclusion occurring through the production and demonstration of legible and respectable values (see Conrad 2014; Ferguson 2003,

2018; Reddy 1997), this essay centers a transnational anti-imperialist and anti-colonial analysis attentive to race, class, gender, sexuality, and place. However well-intentioned, the efforts of the mainstream antideportation movement described above ultimately reproduce the imperial logic of US national exception. This essay argues that the fight to end deportations by attempting to construct legible demonstrations of belonging, ultimately produces many more who do not belong to these categories than those that do, and it is from this egress that I wish to articulate a trans* refugee critique of the Asian and Southeast Asian American antideportation movement.

I position this discussion at the intersections of trans* and trans of color theory, scholarship on Southeast Asian American deportations and antideportation work, and critiques of settler colonialism with attention to Native and Indigenous calls for decolonization and to support movements for land back (see Allen 2012a, 2012b; Sepulveda 2018; Kauanui 2016, 2018). In what follows, I offer a critique of the Southeast Asian American antideportation movement in which I highlight how the mainstream antideportation movement reproduces the imperial logic of the US nation-state, despite what appears to be the movement's challenge to institutions of criminalization and detention. Next, I expand the discussion of deportations to encompass and consider a broader array of competing global imperialisms. Against the logics of the settler colonial impulse to fight for our right to stay, or return, I articulate a trans* refugee critique that highlights the provisional nature of refuge for convicted Southeast Asian American noncitizens amid an ever-changing context of shifting circumstances in a constant state of flux. In doing so, I demonstrate that the United States' deportations of Cambodians and Southeast Asians represent the "unfinished business" of resettlement, to borrow legal scholar E. Tendayi Achiume's words (2019: 1571; see also Wilmer 1993: 5). In this essay I hope to bring a consideration and analysis of the global systems that necessitate deportations and the (re)moving of people for the reproduction of power to the Southeast Asian antideportation movement and scholarship. I end with thoughts on how we who are here owing to the US wars in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam may act in solidarity with abolitionist and decolonizing movements.

Fighting to Stay

Since 2002 the United States has deported over one thousand persons to Cambodia, and there are at least two thousand persons of Cambodian and/or Southeast Asian descent who are living in the United States with orders for removal.² Popular analyses typically approach the issue of Cambodian and Southeast Asian deportations as a deviation from the outcomes expected of resettlement. Diverse viewpoints spanning the political spectrum espouse the view that because US military intervention in Cambodia failed to stop the Khmer Rouge from coming to power,

the United States bears responsibility for the displacement of Cambodians from their homeland and their subsequent resettlement into “tough inner-city living environments [where they are] surrounded by urban crime and gang activity” (Hing 2004–5: 952) and “left to fend for themselves” (*Democracy Now!* 2018). According to these viewpoints, because the United States’ carpet bombing of Cambodia failed to stop the Khmer Rouge from coming to power, the United States must now pardon and give refuge to Cambodian noncitizens who were convicted of crimes and are now or will eventually be scheduled for deportation. The belief that the United States bears a responsibility to Cambodians, convicted or not, is not the issue—it does. Rather, the issue is the idea that restoring US residency for Cambodian noncitizens can fully address a long legacy of racialized violence and imperialist warfare in Cambodia and to Cambodians—it does not.

The Southeast Asian Resource Action Center, for example, has launched a campaign in which they articulate a set of demands to stop the deportations of Cambodian noncitizens. These demands and their legal strategies highlight the United States’ proxy war in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam as the reason for their departures from their homes in the first place. In their estimations, the “double punishment” (SEARAC 2022) of Cambodian deportees is unjust because Cambodian and Southeast Asian deportees have “paid their debt to society” (Couture and Westerman 2018) and rehabilitated themselves (Hing 2017), now leading “productive, crime-free lives” (Kaplan 2018). These analyses perpetuate the legitimization of policing, incarceration, and immigration enforcement systems as they call into question only the final act of deportation while lacking a critical position on the conditions that produce racialized criminality, reinforcing discourses of law-abiding complacency.

To win their clients’ right to stay in the United States, legal advocates and community organizers call out the deportations of Cambodian noncitizens as unjust by emphasizing the historical context of the US war in Cambodia. Some argue that Cambodians are in the United States as a direct result of US bombing campaigns and military intervention in Cambodia (SEADDN 2022) while others lament that Cambodians are in the United States because the US bombings failed to stop Khmer Rouge communists from coming to power. While it is true that Cambodians were displaced by US bombings, where many fled and were resettled in First World nations including the United States, in both instances, advocates essentially raise the history of US military assault as the basis for a transactional exchange in which Cambodian deportees deserve the right to stay in the US.

Related arguments assert that the United States is failing to uphold a commitment made to Cambodian refugees by stressing that immigration raids and deportations further destabilize already vulnerable refugee families rather

than provide the stability and security that ostensibly come with resettlement in the United States. “You are breaking your promise on immigration by conducting raids on Cambodian families. . . . Our refugee families deserve stability, not more displacement” (SEADDN 2022), they say, calling for the US government to “stop tearing families apart” (see, e.g., Constante 2019). Additionally, another argument proclaims, “The United States abandoned Cambodians during the Vietnam War, and we abandon refugees again by deporting our communities” (SEADDN 2022). The notion of abandonment in this context refers to the United States’ failure to fulfill an obligation to protect and support Cambodian refugees. However, this point of contention offers an opportunity to engage a trans* refugee critique of the Asian and Southeast Asian antideportation movement.³ In their reframing of deportations not as the consequence of individual actions but as part of a deliberate pattern of policies and a broader and more extensive trajectory of warfare, queer and trans* abolitionists take up the work of highlighting the common experience of expulsion and exclusion for nonconforming community and family members. Their organizing strategies call for the abolition of systems and structures of inclusion which are inherently predicated upon the exclusion of Others.

At the risk of brevity, displacement is, in all contexts and scales, violence. The suffering that ensues when loved ones are forcibly separated is real. But such arguments and the resounding liberal disbelief at these forms of state violence indicate a shallow understanding of empire and its operations, and make the work of abolishing systems of oppression, for all, not just for some, all the more challenging. If the fight to end deportations relies on reproducing “the rules of power [and] the politics of colonialism” then we must be ready to grapple with refugees of US imperialist wars who have themselves “bec[o]me the colonizer” (Tuihawai Smith 1999: 9). The Asian Law Caucus of Lawyers with Advancing Justice, founded in 1972 as the nation’s first legal and civil rights organization serving low-income, immigrant, and underserved Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, express their disappointment with the Biden administration’s decision to continue the deportations of Cambodian Americans following Trump’s departure from the White House (Huang 2022). The notion that the United States “broke its promise” to Cambodians and the disappointment that ensued when Biden and his Democratic administration continued to ramp up deportations following Trump’s departure from office is a delusional reaction to the realities of war. There is no promise that the United States could have made that would undo the near annihilation of this region over the course of approximately two decades, and there is no promise that we can expect the United States to keep.

When United Nations Secretary General Kurt Waldheim and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Poul Hartling convened an international conference in July 1979 to deal with the “Indochinese refugee problem,”

they initially faced strong resistance from leaders of the so-called first world to the idea of resettling people from Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam to their nations. Senator Edward M. Kennedy (1981) explained that there were several reasons for their refusal to provide asylum to those displaced by the US war in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. According to Kennedy, neither protocol nor procedure existed at the time for the resettlement of refugees in the United States, and there was a concern that admitting this group of people would open the “flood-gates” for others to follow (146). In addition, there was a general attitude of racist abhorrence toward the ravaged boat (and land) peoples emerging from the war-torn countries of former Indochina. But the conference apparently changed the minds of many, including those who were previously opposed to the resettlement of these populations in the United States.⁴

The participating countries at this conference discussed and weighed the impacts and benefits of resettlement for the receiving nations. According to their calculations, the average cost of resettling one person was approximately \$4,000 in 1979, but the refugees were expected to have success in finding jobs and eventually become self-sufficient. At the time of his writing in 1981, Kennedy reported, “Preliminary statistics [have] indicated that after a few years, most Indochinese have paid back in federal income taxes more than the cost to the federal government of resettling them in this country” (147–48). But beyond that, he concluded, the real “test” of the 1980 Refugee Act and the decision to admit Indochinese refugees rested on whether their admission was “justified by grave humanitarian concerns or *is otherwise in the national interest*” (141, 155; emphasis mine). The 1980 Refugee Act, as I understand it, was not intended to rescue people. In other words, the 1980 Refugee Act also intended to rescue capitalism.

In fact, the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act (IIRIRA), which applied retroactively to criminal convictions taking place prior to the law’s passage, demonstrates that the state’s right to deport refugees was an unstated condition of their resettlement. And indeed the “business of deportation,” according to a study from the University of Washington’s Center for Human Rights (2019), is lucrative. When the “first world” leaders at this conference suddenly joined in chorus to proclaim a humanitarian concern for displaced peoples from Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam, arguing that this concern “goes beyond economic statistics or cost-benefit ratios,” it is important to highlight that “ICE Air [Immigration and Customs Enforcement Air Operations] pays, on average, \$8,419 per flight hour for charter flights regardless of the number of passengers on the plane” (Center for Human Rights 2019). In 1980 UN members concluded that the benefits that refugees and migrants brought to the United States in terms of “culture, diversity, and economic vitality” were “far more important” than the “dollar value on saving the life of a refugee” (Kennedy 1981:

148). And yet Kennedy's words, and their words, gave away the shape, color, and texture of what was discussed at the conference venue; the capitalist logic bleeding into their debate; and the motivations that came to underlie the passage of the 1980 Refugee Act, which would, firstly, resettle and incorporate hundreds of thousands of people from Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam, and later expel from the body politic those for whom legal belonging was unrecognizable and whose convictions determined their deportability.

That the United States failed to prevent a communist takeover is a misconception. The Khmer Rouge insurgency—their regime not beyond reproach—was a response to US imperialism. It was the result and outcome of US colonization, military conquest, neocolonial rule, economic dominance, and cultural hegemony. The notion that deportations evidence the failure of resettlement reflects a hopeful and imprudent yearning for benevolence and mercy from an imperial and colonial master that will never come. The federal project of resettling refugees of war from former Indochina to the United States did not fail. Rather, it continues to iterate as deportation. Resettlement was never a promise.

Twenty-First-Century Manifest Destinies and Cold Warfare

"This is America's contribution to Cambodia's development," said founder of the Phnom Penh-based Returnee Assistance Project Bill Herod about the United States' deportations of Cambodian noncitizens (Paddock 2003). Herod's statement, though facetious, reflects a reality that antideportation activist and abolitionist organizers should take seriously. Indeed, not only do the federal deportations of Cambodians and Southeast Asian Americans carry significance for local and national communities, they also bear impact on a global and transnational level. Historically, the removal of persons convicted of crimes was practiced as alternatives to death sentences in the British kingdom and, later, the American colonies. Individuals who were convicted of crimes were banished and transported to newly appropriated lands where their presence and their labor were intended to support the growth of the settler colony. As an alternative to corporal punishment, convict transportation was utilized to manage rising crime rates by addressing overpopulation, which in turn would alleviate poverty and other challenges. I draw briefly on this history to posit that federal deportations in the twenty-first century can be understood as a continuation of convict transportations, from which we can glean a major lesson: that federal deportations continue to be motivated by economic and racial concerns and interests rather than a response to growing fears about crime and safety.

Cambodia, among other small nations, continues to be a cold war site of struggle. On one hand, neoconservative pundits have begun to observe a "new" cold war in the twenty-first century. As Hal Brands and John Lewis Gaddis (2021)

comment, “It’s no longer debatable that the United States and China, tacit allies during the last half of the last Cold War, are entering their own new cold war: Chinese President [Xi Jinping] has declared it, and a rare bipartisan consensus in the United States has accepted the challenge. What, then, might previous contests—the one and only Cold War and the many earlier cold wars—suggest about this one?” On the other hand, as Phidel Vineles, senior analyst at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, explains, “Southeast Asia is an important strategic partner in China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The region serves as a key link in the BRI’s Maritime Silk Road, which aims to connect China’s coast to South Asia, the Middle East and Europe through the South China Sea and Indian Ocean” (2019). Additionally, analysts Sigfrido Burgos and Sophal Ear (2010: 615) insist, Cambodia continues to be “pivotal to China’s strategies to project greater influence in Southeast Asia, buffer long-standing rivals, and potentially tame America’s hegemony.” This is nowhere more evident than in China’s massively ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), portentously dubbed the “New Silk Road,” and in which Cambodia is a key link, given its geopolitical positioning on the Southeast Asian peninsula.

First announced by Chinese president Xi Jinping in September 2013, the BRI is a massive global infrastructural construction project aiming to compose a transnational network of trade and travel routes connecting Asia with the Middle East, Europe, Africa, the Caribbean, Central America, and the Pacific. The “belt” refers to overland routes consisting of newly paved roads, railways, and bridges intended to support increasing traffic, while the “road” refers to maritime routes with port construction at bases located at strategic points throughout the involved regions. BRI sites are strategically located in key geopolitical regions across the earth’s surface. As of 2022 there are approximately twenty-six hundred construction projects underway in over one hundred countries representing key geopolitical regions across the earth’s surface. According to the Mercator Institute for China Studies (2018), the BRI aims to open and link the global market to China, facilitate trade, strengthen social and political relations, and bring economic development policies in alignment with China’s by building and connecting infrastructure between participating countries. The Green Finance & Development Center (2021) reports that China has spent more than \$100 billion USD toward the construction of railroads, pipelines, and port projects in 146 countries since its launch.

Incidentally, in 2015, the United States started to resume the repatriation of deportable refugee noncitizens to Cambodia. Most deportees and noncitizens with deportations are Cambodian, given Laos does not have a repatriation agreement with the United States, although it did agree to issue a limited number of travel documents for the deportation of Laotian nationals in 2018, owing to US pressure. Vietnam signed a repatriation agreement with the United States in

2008 for individuals who arrived in the United States on or after July 12, 1995, following the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two nations. In November 2020 the agreement was amended to include individuals who arrived in the United States before 1995, and currently there are over eighty-six hundred persons with removal orders to Vietnam. Because the Cambodian government still refused to issue travel documents to Cambodian American refugee noncitizens, the United States, under the Trump administration, imposed visa sanctions and discontinued the issuance of B visas (temporary visitors for business or pleasure) for Cambodian government officials and employees and their families. I contend that this was intended to counter China's growing power in the region in the ongoing competition of twenty-first-century manifest destinies in the twenty-first century.⁵ In addition to Cambodia, Sierra Leone, Eritrea, and Guinea were also countries given visa sanctions by the United States (DHS 2017). All of these nations have refused to accept deportees from the United States, and all are low-income countries that have signed memoranda of understanding to become key locations along the "New Silk Road."

On February 9, 2018, however, Cambodian government leaders agreed to an offer that would lift the travel ban (Vicheika and Boyle 2018). Per the agreement, Cambodia would issue travel documents and begin to accept cohorts of deportees, while the United States would increase financial support to Cambodia to assist in the (re)integration of Cambodian nationals returning to Cambodia. The events taking place in that part of the world are not without consequence for people in this part of the world. Implicit in the vision and the web cast by the BRI is a recognition and understanding of the power of interconnections—the relationships, associations, and links between different and distinct peoples, lands, places, and systems. Wherever the BRI takes root, the United States is likely to respond in some way. In Cambodia, I contend, it has been (and will continue to be) the deportation of *American* Cambodians.

Toward a Trans* Refugee Critique

Southeast Asian antideportation work must continue to wrestle with what it means to be incorporated and then displaced from, disowned by, and reclaimed through various iterations of the US nation-state and citizenship. Our field of vision and political analyses must extend toward the total structure of imperialist and colonial nation-building processes, including how our presence and participation in US settler activities and rituals contributes to the ongoing dispossession of Indigenous peoples of the lands we live on. A win for one may very well result in the sublimation of violence and abuse elsewhere, and it is our ethical responsibility to demand a complete end to local, national, and global scales of violence for everyone and not just for ourselves. This is to demand abolition, period.

Scott Lauria Morgensen (2011: 227) has posited that “a possibility of allied work for decolonization grows” when non-Natives release attachment to place. In a written response to Morgensen’s work, Indigenous scholar Jay T. Johnson (2012: 695) asks Morgensen to elaborate further on “how non-Natives envision this work to release attachment to proceed?” Here I take up Johnson’s question to discuss ways that a trans* of color abolitionist movement to end deportations can begin, not only to bear witness, but to live, act, breathe, and move in all ways possible against the settler state and its imperialist wars. Instead of fighting for inclusion in the settler state and our “right to stay” as Americans, we should support Indigenous movements for the repatriation of their lands and center anti-colonial and abolitionist struggles to end deportations for all and not just for those who appear to be deserving. As descendants of peoples displaced by multiple wars and colonialist incursions, our first responsibility on Turtle Island is to position ourselves clearly and unequivocally as guests with respect to the Indigenous peoples here.

To recognize that twenty-first-century deportations of Cambodian and Southeast Asian Americans are unjust is also to recognize that the United States of America is a settler nation founded on war, racism, genocide, and colonization in which deportations and the production of deportability enhances and increasingly extends the reach of imperialist white supremacist law, order, and power throughout the US nation-state and around the world. It is to fight against all systems and logics of oppression and to build with social movements for abolition and decolonization in ways that do not harm, destroy, tear down, pillage, or plunder what which gives us life but instead to be in what I call “epiphytic relation” (Chea 2023) with the lands we currently occupy and its indigenous people. This effort and its conjoining dialogue is long overdue but also far from over.

Jolie Chea is assistant professor in the Department of Asian American Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. Their publications include “Refugee Acts: Articulating Silence through Critical Remembering and Re-Membering” in *Amerasia Journal* (2009) and “Epiphytic Lives: Cambodian American Nonmemory and the Value of Silence,” in *Social Text* (2023). Their monograph in progress, tentatively titled *This Is War: Cambodian American Exceptionalism and the Settler Colonial Logic of Incorporation*, traces the twentieth-century emergence of the Cambodian refugee figure to a deeper and more expansive history of global racialized warfare and imperialist state violence and analyzes how Cambodian refugees have been incorporated into the American body politic. They have spent over two decades working alongside various immigrant, women, and queer and trans youth of color communities, and one decade organizing with prison abolition movements in Los Angeles, where they combine social justice activism and scholarship.

Notes

1. Under the Obama administration (2009–17), approximately two dozen Cambodians were deported from the United States. When Donald Trump entered the White House in 2017, federal campaigns to remove noncitizens were intensified. Cambodian American community members reported an upsurge in ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) raids and the disappearance of loved ones into the system of ICE offices and detention centers across the United States during routine check-ins. Many of these arrests and detentions violated due process and ICE's own internal procedures, leading a group of immigration attorneys from the nonprofit group Asian Americans Advancing Justice to file suit against ICE. On January 3, 2019, a federal judge issued a nationwide temporary restraining order that would prevent ICE from re-detaining Cambodian refugees with final deportation orders without first providing notice. The order was to remain operational only until the end of that month, allowing detained persons and community members to bide time for next steps and legal strategy.
2. These deportations are the result of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed between the United States and Cambodia six years after the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) passed into law by Bill Clinton that made deportation mandatory for undocumented immigrants and noncitizens (including lawful permanent residents) convicted of crimes in the United States. While Cambodia signed the 1996 MOU, its government refused to provide travel documents necessary to expedite the deportations and thereby obstructing the process. This occurred primarily because of fears that an influx of crime would accompany the landing of convicted felons from the United States as well as the Cambodian government's position that the United States bears the responsibility for their rehabilitation.
3. Engaging Achille Mbembe (2003), C. Riley Snorton and Jin Haritaworn (2006: 66) argue that the concept of necropolitics, which “describes a form of power that marks some fraction of a population for death even while it deems other fractions unsuitable for life-enhancing investment . . . accurately reflects the circumstances of trans of color existence.” Bringing a transnational perspective to bear on systemic forms of often deadly violence experienced by trans people of color, Snorton and Haritaworn assert that “value extracted from the deaths of trans people of color vitalizes projects as diverse as inner-city gentrification, anti-immigration and anti-Muslim moral panics, homonationalism, and white transnormative community formation” (66). As they discuss the ways in which “the circulation of trans people of color in their afterlife accrues value to a newly professionalizing and institutionalizing class of experts whose lives could not be further removed from those they are professing to help,” they articulate a trans of color critique that I find useful for understanding US deportations of Cambodian noncitizens and why a queer and trans abolitionist politics offers the broadest intersectional analysis and approach to ending deportations and the expulsion of nonnormative community members, as well as the dismantling of systems of policing and incarceration that produce disproportionate levels of harm for more vulnerable groups.
4. US Senator Strom Thurmond, for example, was vocal and unwavering in his contempt for Indochinese refugees but would change his mind just two days later and “enthusiastically urge favorable consideration of the bill.” He was not the only one. Most of the countries participating at the United Nations convening, including Japan, Australia, and France, ultimately agreed to double the number of Indochinese refugees they previously planned (or had not planned) to admit.

5. This subtitle is inspired by Steven Osuna (2021), “Securing Manifest Destiny: Mexico’s War on Drugs, Crisis of Legitimacy, and Global Capitalism.”

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