

The Herald

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THE HERALD

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For Those Whose Futures are at Stake: A Resource Guide

By Oscar Gutierrez
Staff Writer

With the Trump administration returning to the Oval Office, it seems as though the year 2025 is already off to a rough and stressful start for many members of the immigrant community. Many people in these communities have struggled historically with a lack of support and resources and may feel even more distressed and helpless due to new policies that the new administration has implemented.

Trump's ever-growing crackdown on immigration has sparked a heap of controversy throughout the country and has left many fearful of the consequences that may arise. Overseeing the mass deportation is Trump's newly appointed border czar, Tom Homan. The new appointee has made it clear to millions of immigrants that their time in the United States will be ending abruptly. As well, Donald Trump has painted a target on many sanctuary cities, vowing to send federal ICE agents into these cities to deport violent and non-violent undocumented immigrants.

Resources for Uncodumented Students

Undocumented Student Liaison

HWC Representative that undocumented students can reach out to for questions and additional information. **hwc-undocuhelp@ccc.edu**.

Book Vouchers

Vouchers for eligible students to provide financial support for school materials.

Parker Dewey

Career building platform with paid internship oppurtunies
Office of Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights (OIMRR)
Office of the city of Chicago collaborating with local orginizations

The city of Chicago is one of the sanctuary cities that the Trump administration is targeting. Recent statements made by Governor JB Pritzker and current Chicago mayor, Brandon Johnson, have contributed to increased tensions between the Trump administration and the State of Illinois to the point that Trump has threatened cuts to federal aid for Illinois as well as other sanctuary cities and states. Aside from threats made by Donald Trump to federal aid for states

in the country, some of his constituents have threatened legal action against city and state officials if they are to interfere with mass deportation plans.

According to CBS News, in a statement made by Tom Homan, he states, "We're going to start right here in Chicago, Illinois. If your Chicago mayor doesn't want to help, he can step aside, but if he impedes us—if he knowingly harbors or conceals an illegal alien—I will prosecute him" (CBS 2024). It is due to these recent changes in tone and policy from the Trump administration that many migrants and immigrants living in the United States are facing an unprecedented challenge to their livelihoods.

For the average person attending HWC who may be undocumented or have undocumented parents, it may seem to be a hopeless situation. However, many community members have worked together to provide resources for those going through these difficult times. Harold Washington College, and the city of Chicago, provide a variety of resources to people from many walks of life, including those from immigrant backgrounds. In this campus, The USA (Undocumented Students Association) Club acts as a safe space for those of the undocumented status and seeks to protect and educate immigrants about their rights and other resources. Additionally, more information on other resources that students from these backgrounds can use for support was obtained in an interview with Pedro Nungaray, an Associate Dean of Student Services here at Harold Washington. Below are resources that students may consider utilizing for themselves.

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The USA Club is Back! - A Timely Return

By Fiona Clark
Staff Writer

The Undocumented Students and Allies (USA) club has returned to Harold Washington College (HWC) at a critical moment in the nation's history.

Communities across the country have already begun to feel the impact of widespread, discriminatory ICE raids and Chicago is no different. At HWC, the newly reestablished USA club seeks to provide all students-regardless of immigration status-access to extensive resources and a supportive, inclusive environment to foster community in a fractured country.

When first-year student Marcos De Campos started at HWC in Fall 2024, he was looking for support as a first-generation student in the United States and met with Associate Dean of Student Services Pedro Nungaray, who informed him about the inactive USA club. De Campos, a firm advocate for immigrant rights, was determined to revitalize the USA club with the goal of creating a lasting legacy and support system for everyone, regardless of immigration status. Working closely with Nungaray as a club advisor, De Campos successfully reinstated the USA club as club president for the Spring 2025 semester.



"People [need to] understand that they are not left behind. There are people who care about them and support them" De Campos said in an interview. De Campos also emphasized that students do not have to be undocumented to participate in the club and that it is for anyone who cares about the community and wants to support those around them. "If you care about people, it is a club for you." stated De Campos.

As the club advisor, Nungaray described his hope for the club as providing a network of students who can offer guidance and bring the student voice forward more in a way that is visible and cohesive. He emphasized that the club is a way to provide students with a physical community and hopes that the club and Undocumented Student Services at HWC can come together to offer students a holistic experience.

"Community can help affirm that what you're going through, a lot of people are going through... Community is at the heart of [student success]." Nungaray stated in an interview.

De Campos plans for the club to continue hosting a number of activities this semester, including Know Your Rights seminars and mental health sessions. He also hopes to partner with local non-profit organizations to offer students a broader support network and career opportunities. Ultimately, the newly reinstated USA club is a space that provides great opportunities for all students to connect and learn from one another.

If you are interested in the club, please reach out by email to Club Advisor Pedro Nungaray (**pnungaray@ccc.edu**) or Club President Marcos de Campos (**mdecampossilva@student.ccc.edu**).

The Israel/Hamas Ceasefire: Will It Stand?

By Fiona Clark
Staff Writer

After 15 months of conflict between Israeli forces and Hamas, a Palestinian militant group, both parties have agreed to a ceasefire deal which could see the release of thousands of prisoners, the remaining hostages, and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the devastated Gaza Strip.

On January 15, 2025, Israel and Hamas agreed to a ceasefire deal drafted by mediators Egypt, Qatar, and the United States and officially went into effect on January 19, 2025. The ceasefire is organized into a three-stage plan, with each phase lasting 42 days, or six weeks. The main objectives laid forth in the ceasefire include the release of the remaining Israeli hostages and thousands of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli custody, allowing sufficient military aid into Gaza, and notably, the withdrawal of the Israel Defense Force (IDF) from the Gaza Strip.

Although the ceasefire deal has seen the exchange of 19 hostages of mixed nationalities held by Hamas and 1,135 Palestinian prisoners held by Israel as of February 21, the process has proved to be unstable and has yet to become clear if the deal will lead to the end of the war and occupation of Gaza. Additionally, little progress has been made to achieve freedom and self-determination for Palestinian people.

Negotiations for the second phase were scheduled to begin on February 4 but have been repeatedly delayed, with tensions on the rise as the first stage rapidly approaches its scheduled end on March 2. Hamas has accused Israel of purposely stalling peace talks. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has continued to echo his past calls for the eradication of Hamas, both physically and politically, refusing to withdraw Israeli forces completely from Gaza, which is a condition of the second phase of the ceasefire.

The negotiated deal was based on an incredibly similar proposal drafted by Qatar and Egypt in May 2024. This previous deal was agreed upon by Hamas, yet rejected by Israel. Later that month, a nearly identical proposal was endorsed by former President Biden, with the United Nations Security Council shortly following suit. Israel agreed to the proposal, but Netanyahu asserted that Israel would continue attempts to eliminate Hamas, regardless of any hostage deal, sparking international criticism and bringing motives behind the continued conflict into question.

“The priority is to stop the criminal war on our people.” stated former Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh on June 21, 2024 as negotiations for the ceasefire rapidly deteriorated, with Hamas seeking a permanent end to the war and Israel only agreeing to a temporary ceasefire.

Although Netanyahu has asserted that Israel will not concede to a permanent ceasefire until the goal to eradicate Hamas has been achieved, there has been international speculation of ulterior motives for the continued conflict.

“In order for Netanyahu to survive politically, the ceasefire is a bad deal. He delayed it and delayed it because they [Bezael Smotrich, Itamar Ben-Gvir] were risking leaving his government, and he doesn't want to lose his political power because then he has to go on trial.” states Michal Eskayo, an Israeli American ESL professor at Harold Washington College (HWC) and firm advocate for Palestinian self-determination.

Eskayo speculates that Netanyahu's ongoing reluctance for a ceasefire is due to the fact that he will face criminal trial once removed from office.

Netanyahu was indicted and subsequently charged on January 28, 2020 with fraud and bribery in three different cases during his time as prime minister from 2009-2021. If convicted, he could face up to 13 years in prison. His trial was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and has not resumed, as he was elected to office for his sixth term in 2022. Once Netanyahu loses his political power, his trial will likely resume.

Eskayo also references the pushback that Netanyahu has received from Israeli Finance Minister Bezael Smotrich and former Minister of National Security Itamar Ben-Gvir, marking a wavering in his political power. Both Smotrich and Ben-Gvir are members of the ultra far-right Religious Zionist party in Israel and have condemned the ceasefire deal in favor of continuing the war on Gaza, with Ben-Gvir even resigning from Netanyahu's cabinet in protest. “Smotrich and Ben-Gvir are threatening to take down Netanyahu's government, because they don't want a hostage deal. They want to eradicate Hamas. You can't eradicate an ideology.” stated Eskayo in an interview. “In the process of "destroying" an ideology, they are killing and displacing so many people. For me, their attempt to destroy Hamas is really a way to ethnically cleanse Gaza”, Eskayo further elaborated.

Furthermore, the recent reelection of Donald Trump has further complicated the already unstable relations between Israel and Palestine. Mere days before his inauguration, Trump publicly pressured Netanyahu into agreeing to the ceasefire deal and in a joint press conference with Netanyahu on February 4, Trump announced his plan for the U.S. to take over the Gaza Strip for economic development and called for the permanent resettlement of more than 2 million Gazans.

In a statement on January 5, Trump described Gaza as a “demolition site” and later outlined his plan for the US to transform Gaza into “the Riviera of the Middle East.” on February 4. This surprise proposal which calls for the permanent displacement of all Gazans was met with backlash from the international community.

“I am afraid that the potential for Palestinian self-determination is slimmer than ever, given the thorough destruction of Gaza, the seemingly impending war with the West Bank, and the fact

that the U.S. under Trump is abandoning its role as a broker for both sides. By suggesting that Palestinians be moved to neighboring countries, the U.S. is effectively supporting the completion of Israel's ethnic cleansing.” says Dr. Ingrid Riedle, a professor of political science at HWC who holds an MA in American politics and a PhD in political theory, both from Purdue University.

“Moreover, President Trump's recent statement that he favors the removal of Palestinians from Gaza—with Prime Minister Netanyahu sitting next to him in the Oval Office— makes me question whether a lasting solution, one that benefits both parties, is still possible. Without such a comprehensive peace agreement, the potential for renewed hostilities remains dangerously high.” stated Dr. Riedle.

While the ceasefire has seen to the successful exchange of numerous hostages and prisoners, the deal remains fragile and does not provide long-term solutions for relations between Israel and Palestine or allow for Palestinian self-determination. With tensions on the rise following Trump's reelection, the future for Palestinians is ever more uncertain and unpredictable.

The Israel/Hamas Ceasefire: Details

The accepted ceasefire deal seeks to end the conflict between Israel and Palestine and free the remaining Israeli hostages in exchange for some Palestinian prisoners. The deal is to be executed in three stages, with each stage lasting 42 days.

Stage One:

- A complete ceasefire between Israel and Hamas
- 33 Israeli hostages are to be released (mostly women, children, and the elderly first) in exchange for 1,900 Palestinian prisoners
- Israel must allow sufficient humanitarian aid into Gaza
- Displaced Palestinians must be allowed to return to their homes in Northern Gaza
- Israel must begin a phased withdrawal from Gaza, starting with troops in the Netzarim Corridor- the occupied military zone between North and South Gaza
- After 16 days, negotiations between Israel and Hamas for second stage of the ceasefire must begin

Stage Two:

- Both parties must agree to a permanent ceasefire
- The remaining Israeli hostages will be released in exchange for more Palestinian prisoners
- Israel must fully withdraw from Gaza

Stage Three:

- The remains of the deceased Israeli hostages will be returned
- The reconstruction of Gaza will begin

As of February 21, details for the second and third stage have yet to be solidified.

Project 2025 & Agenda 47

Lucas Pita
Operations Editor

The usage of either Agenda 47 or Project 2025 would actualize a fast paced descent into American neo-fascism. To begin, Project 2025, in an in-discriminatory fashion, is an ultra-right, hyper conservative, pro-authoritarian paradigm issued, constructed, and verified by the American Conservative Think Tank and published in 2023. When enacted through the Trump Administration, this framework would fundamentally deconstruct and disincorporate a myriad of Constitutional rights. While it has been publicly denounced by Trump himself, a plethora of his allies and staff members are indelible proponents of the plan. The foundational tenants at the nucleus of this project would be the incorporation of church and state, the removal and dismissal of checks and balances, a reduction of freedom of the press, and the eradication of protections architected to preserve the integral rights of certain minorities. To exemplify, the paragon of this blueprint for American Fascism would remove any reference to sexual or gender identity from school curriculums and federal literature, abolish any and all access to reproductive healthcare [including but not limited to contraceptives, IVF, and hormonal treatments], dismantle all constructed protective immigration policies, entirely remove the operative functionality of racial justice initiatives, mitigate the transitional movement towards clean energy, reduce public healthcare policies, and eviscerate protective actions for low income students in public school systems. [1]

In regards to the education system specifically, there are a myriad of derivatives of the aforementioned plan which are substantiated as objectively colossal net negatives for the students and administrators of public schooling systems. First and foremost, the most prominent, foreboding facet of initiative action would be the complete removal of federal subsidies from public school networks and diversion of such to private, Catholic education institutions. This includes the reduction in federal aid for materials, construction, safety measures, as well as educational and lunch related programs.

As an additive, this paradigm intends to codify book bannings and rescind any and all protective policies architected to certifiably preserve the integrity of the rights of queer and undocumented students and faculty. Empirically, one hundred and eighty thousand three hundred teaching positions would be jeopardized and lost beneath the reign of Project 2025's elimination of title I which currently affects 2.8 million students. Substituting for the subsidies allotted by title I since 1965 would be "no strings attached block grants with zero regulations or oversight." Additionally, it has been quoted at eight hundred thousand as the evidentiary support for the number of preschool students who would find education services absent with the reduction of Head Start. [2]

Pertaining to queer students, youth, and individual denizens throughout the country, "Project 2025 would give Trump unprecedented powers to undo many of the protections the LGBTQIA community have spent decades fighting to gain." As noted by Cathryn Oakley, the senior director of legal policy at the Human Rights Campaign. She continues, "no part of our lives would be off limits-not the doctor's office, our classrooms, our workplaces, or our families." [2]

Criminal justice 'reform' beneath the paradigms of Project 2025 would bear witness to a drastic, suboptimal account of transformative political action. The plan itself would actualize the conservative notion of a 'restoration of law and order.' To properly delineate these actions, we must examine a multitude of dominant factors, including but not limited to: prosecuting local and otherwise US law enforcement officers such as prosecutors or police who are perceived as 'too soft' on criminal activity, minimizing sentence reduction, increasing overall sentences, as well as proliferating the utilization of the death penalty. Additionally, this framework advances an aggressive exercising of RICO statutes and interstate drug prosecution, even in the event of simple possession. The project itself objectively intends to reformat the elementary, intrinsic properties of our DOJ through conducting a review of all major FBI investigations beneath the prospect of 'confirming their conformation to the president's agenda.'

This would subsequently appoint an increased volume of political individuals to DOJ positions and broaden the derivative of employees who fall beneath 'schedule F' and are legally obligated to serve the president's agenda as opposed to public interest. As well, any employee of the DOJ therein who fails to conform to a political appointee's directionality [regardless of the ethical nature of the actions in question] will be replaced. It would also install preventive action against the FBI investigating disinformation.

The general substance of this 'criminal justice reformation' series of statutes is predicated on verifiably false information. The Trump Campaign has continuously pandered this rhetoric proposing a substantial increase in violent crime recently. When, in actuality, violent crime has decreased over the previous few years beneath the Biden Administration and otherwise. Project 2025 not only reinforces and substantiates the failures of the status quo- it issues fear mongering tactics to promote a reduction in objective-justice oriented individuals. [3]

One hundred and fifty pages of the nine hundred and twenty two page document which encompasses Project 2025 are an abstraction which aims to dismantle climate action policies and remove the right to clean air and a healthy planet. The deregulatory agenda was architected by former Trump officials and the Heritage Foundation staff. This framework would subvert the authority of a myriad of government agencies and disincorporate numerous environmental policies, including but not limited to: removal of the [ESA] or Endangered Species Act, repealing the Antiquities Act [which would reduce the presidents capacity to protect certain allotted lands as national monuments/parks], abolish the facets of the Clean Air Act which require the EPA to design specific air quality standards predicated on public health, as well as compromise the integrity of [NEPA] or the National Environmental Policy Act which afford the general public necessary capacities of control and advocacy regarding climate action issues. [4]

Trump has publicly dismissed this framework and denoted it as 'radical.' However, numerous individuals within his staff and cabinet have politically boasted regarding its implementation and execution. The paradigm of fore-

The crux of this plan is reliant on a return to archaic American Conservatism. This would, at the very least and in a minimized manner, incite a trade war with China [intentionally and by design], completely remove the DEI offices [offices of diversity, equity, and inclusion], and eviscerate federal subsidies from schools which [tenure teachers, educate students on identity politics & gender, and teach critical race theory].

The executive issuing of any federal parameters adopted by Project 2025 or Agenda 47 would ultimately yield a devastating series of social and societal ramifications of a net negative regime. Project 2025, superficially, may appear to embark upon 'more radical' ideals in contrast with Agenda 47. However, when examined within the optics of media control, they hold a similar comprehensive political investment return. The nexus of these paradigms would be the following: Presidential control. Increased government surveillance, agents, actors, and initiatives which return us to this unmentioned and preconceived notion of a 'golden age.' This would be the predominant value system of Trump's second term. They remain an ever present, terminally dangerous framework of ideals. Every permutation which interprets the execution of either manifesto produces an analogous byproduct, a nation in disarray corrupted by fascism. In attempts to neutralize any fear mongering, we shall leave our lovely audience with this. Be cautious, be cognizant, and remember: no political actor is immune to an agenda.

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For Those Whose Futures are at Stake: A Resource Guide cont.

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Furthermore, in a statement provided by Associate Dean, Pedro Nungaray, in regard to students with undocumented statuses, he states, I would say that you are valued. We see you. We are listening to you. We are here for you. My door is always open to anybody who wants to talk about anything that's on their mind, and I truly do value your input that lets me know what are the things that we have to improve upon, you know, with our services, but also what are the things that we have to create if we don't have that. So, I definitely just want to say that I'm appreciative of our undocumented students, and, throughout history, it's because of them that we have liaison positions. That we have a lot of the support that is in existence today. It's because of them that we can keep improving as a network of support. And so, you know, my last thing is just thank you for everything. (Nungaray 2025)

Students who may be worried about their legal status while attending Harold Washington College should rest easy knowing that the staff of this school have their best interests in mind and are doing everything they can to create a warm and welcoming environment to every student regardless of their background or status. Students who are interested in reaching out to Pedro Nungaray for more information can find his contact details on the Undocumented Student Services section on the CCC website. Additionally, Pedro can be found on the 11th floor in room 1108.

For those whose future is at stake, it may be easy to fall into despair and get locked into an incessant cycle of fear and anxiety. The fear of separation from loved ones and the barriers placed before opportunities can feel overwhelming, but it is crucial to remember why we are here. Whether you were born from undocumented parents or were

brought into the United States at a young age, it is clear that we were brought or born here to be given a chance at life that those from previous generations could never dream of having for themselves. We must continue pursuing higher education because it is what our parents struggled for us to get and it is through higher education that people from immigrant backgrounds can fight back against a corrupt administration or pull themselves and their families out of generational poverty. Additionally, it is more crucial now than ever that we start building connections and create strong communities. A support system that consists of strong communities and a social network creates a safety net that people can rely on during hardships that may be expected for the next four years. In the meantime, students from these backgrounds should seek out as much resources and information as they can to better support themselves and their loved ones during these trying times.

THE HERALD

Attention, readers. **T H E HERALD** is looking to hear back from you! If you wish to get in contact with us about the following:

- Any leads or topics you want us to look into
- Corrections
- Follow-ups
- Critiques/Comments
- Photo Request
- Staff Opportunites for HWC Students

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We'll do our best to read and respond to every email we recieve.

Meet The USA Club

Fiona Clark
Staff Writer

Marcos de Campos - Club President
(pictured on page # 1)

Marcos De Campos is a first-year student and political science major at HWC. De Campos immigrated to the United States in 2022 from Brazil, after spending time interning at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rio de Janeiro and moving to Uganda for six months for an internship for Ashinaga, a Japanese NGO. De Campos moved to the United States as a part of the Disney College Program, settling in Chicago in 2023. De Campos stated that he has greatly enjoyed his time at HWC so far, describing the environment of the school as very accepting. Despite fears of retaliation from the government, De Campos was determined to reestablish the USA club and emphasized that now is the time for the HWC community to give its support and offer students a space to voice their experience and feelings. "I think I left my country with a reason, to build a better future for myself and for my family, but at some point, I realized that I can do more than just [that]..., I can help others as well. I think that all my experience led me to this" stated De Campos. De Campos is now president of the USA club with ambitions to transfer to a four-year institution, considering a career as an attorney someday.



Pedro Nungaray - Club Advisor
(pictured left)

Associate Dean Pedro Nungaray celebrates nearly two years at HWC this spring. Although his initial interest was in local government, Nungaray found himself drawn to student services and advising when he first started as an academic success coach at Northeastern Illinois University. "As you help more and more people, there's just something that feels really nice about being able to help someone who is trying to make something work, and all they need is that one little detail that's holding them back, and when you show them the way... you just see them take off and go for their goals, there's just something really fulfilling to me personally about that." Nungaray stated. Prior to his time at HWC, Nungaray served as the assistant director of equitable student success at Columbia College in Chicago and ran the Scholars Project program, which aimed to support students who identify as BIPOC or first-generation college students. Nungaray is now the associate dean of student services, district coordinator of undocumented student services, undocumented student liaison, and club advisor for the USA club at HWC.

SOMETHING FISHY by Selena Figel 1/15/25



By Selena Figel
Staff Cartoonist

K-ake Pop

Khari Forrest
Columnist

The Black Influence in K-Pop

February is known as Black History Month, a month celebrated for over 50 years. It has been a month where we highlight black figures and history.. Something that isn't highlighted enough is how big the black cultural impact and reach truly is. Black music has always had a wide impact. And has been shared and loved by many, but just how far does the influence of the cultural diaspora spread

K-pop is a popular music genre originating in South Korea. It is a blend of traditional Korean music with different kinds of international influences and genres such as Pop, R&B, Hip Hop, and electronic dance. Originating in the early 1940s, the genre was created by a band called Seo Taiji and Boys in 1992. Afterward groups like TVXQ and the solo artist BOA were K-pop idols who helped expand on the genre as it started to grow within the East, mostly Japan. It has been a growing topic of interest, especially within the Western music industry. Known for its color, feel-good aesthetics, concepts, and highly regarded choreography that is usually performed alongside the music that it's produced for.

K-pop groups that have gained the most notoriety, and brought K-pop to Western include artists such as BTS, Blackpink, Psy, BigBang, as well as many more iconic acts. Songs like Gangnam Style and Bangbangbang brought attention to them in the West. Around the late 2010's to the early 2020's, Blackpink and BTS hit the charts running and brought millions making K-pop a growing genre of interest for fans everywhere.

So what does this have to do with Black History Month? Everything really, from how some black artists and producers contribute big towards some of the most iconic songs from NCT 127's to the many styles that they wear in their hair that were popularized or founded within African-American or African communities. A lot of black music styles, including hip-hop have been the inspiration for a plethora of songs within K-pop. One of BTS's songs, Idol, incorporated an African dance style called the Gwara Gwara dance, which originated from South Africa. Shortly after, there was a wave of Black and African dance styles being incorporated into these choreographies within K-pop. Another piece of choreography we see was inspired by the African-American, R&B girl group, TLC, from their music video, Creep, was incorporated into a song called OMG, by the group, New Jeans, which showcases how much black artists have inspired them. K-Pop has also been inspired by their fashion as well with concepts influenced by the early 2000s "Y2k aesthetic, a sub genre created by black people"(Yasmin 2023).

These foundational elements of Black culture are shared in multiple musical styles throughout the world, and it is important to educate oneself on how this culture has and history has inspired many other cultures around the world.

Artist? Cartoonist?
Familiar With Adobe?

If you answered yes, The Herald
News Crew wants you!

Intestested?

Email Our Editor-in Chief at
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Or Stop By Room 635 On Wednesday's
From 3pm - 4 pm.

Keyboard Warriors

Josh Tharp
Columnist

Tencent: Gaming Giant or Military Infrastructure?

On January 19th, TikTok was banned for American users. The day after, its service was restored, with a message displayed to millions of Americans the country over: "As a result of President Trump's efforts, TikTok is back in the U.S.!" Talks on whether or not to sell the company off to an American corporation or keep it are ongoing between TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew, and various other American CEOs during the 90-day amnesty. This casts an uneasy shadow over Tencent, a gaming giant responsible for distributing many incredibly popular video games ranging from older titles such as PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds, to new releases such as Marvel Rivals late last year. The Pentagon has blacklisted Tencent as a Chinese Military Asset. This move sets an uneasy precedent on esports here in the United States and runs the risk of harming both competitive and casual scenes.

The gaming giant Tencent is based in Guangdong, China. Tencent is publisher and distributor of various video games popular in the United States, and the world over. The most notable asset wholly owned by Tencent is Riot Games. Riot Games is the company that conceived two absolute juggernauts in the esports industry: League of Legends, and Valorant.

With the popularity of various championships surrounding both games increasing at a rapid pace, Riot's games have been dominating the American esports scene for the past decade since Tencent acquired Riot Games in 2015. According to escharts.com, a website compiling various data pulled from esports from events to players, League of Legends and Valorant placed in the number one and three spots in peak viewership in PC/Console events. League in particular peaked at nearly 6.9 million viewers at its peak. Compared to Counterstrike, the game that earned second place, League of Legends dwarfs Counterstrike's 1.8 million. Valorant attained almost 1.7 million viewers at its peak.

Now, Tencent, along with other Chinese corporations, have been labeled a military asset. As the clock ticks towards a potential deal with TikTok, it is possible to see a negative shift toward the esports industry, as Tencent faces threats of interference from President Trump's administration.

America: It's Time to Free Palestine

Ty Townsend
Staff Writer

Despite a recent ceasefire deal, the conflict between Israel and Palestine remains volatile and could escalate further, with President Donald Trump declaring his intent to use U.S. military forces to permanently displace the Palestinian population in Gaza of almost 2 million.

In a joint press conference with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu—who is currently wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for crimes against humanity—Trump stated, “The U.S. will take over the Gaza Strip.” When asked if he would support deploying U.S. military forces on the ground, Trump added, “If necessary, we’ll do that.”

This vile and dangerous rhetoric follows over a year of asymmetrical violence against Palestinians. For fifteen straight months, the world stood by as the Netanyahu government in Israel launched total warfare against the people of Gaza, displacing nearly 2 million people and killing at least 48,000 more. This casualty estimate from Gaza’s health ministry is believed by most human rights groups to be a severe undercount, as it excludes those who have died from starvation or remain trapped under the rubble.

Although these statistics can help us understand the scale of devastation endured by the people of Gaza, they can hardly capture the catastrophic human cost of this brutal war.

The Israeli government launched their invasion of Gaza following the October 7, 2023, attack, in which Hamas executed a large-scale surprise assault on Israel.

Although animosity between Israelis and Palestinians existed far prior to October 7th, this particular event resulted in the deaths of hundreds of Israeli civilians and the capture of hostages, which provoked an immediate and aggressive response from the Israeli government. Hamas, the militant group that controls Gaza, is viewed by Israel to be an existential threat, and the need to free the Israeli hostages and eliminate the threat posed by Hamas, is commonly cited by Israel as justifications for the invasion.

However, Israel’s response has raised significant questions regarding the legality and proportionality of its military actions, with many human rights groups accusing the Israeli government of violating international humanitarian law.

Dr. Ingrid Riedle, a government and international relations professor at Harold Washington College (HWC), with a master’s in American politics and a PhD in political theory, offered insight on this complex issue.

“From the longstanding blockade of Gaza—a form of collective punishment prohibited under international law—to military operations in densely populated areas that have resulted in excessive civilian casualties and widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure, as well as the alleged use of weapons like white phosphorus in civilian areas (though Israel denies this), Israel appears to have committed violations that merit investigation,” Dr. Riedle said. An analysis by the UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR) revealed that nearly 70% of the victims were women and children.

They attributed this finding to the tactics exercised by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) in waging this war, specifically the use of very destructive weapons in areas with a dense civilian population. Despite the Israeli government’s claims that their objective is to eliminate Hamas, the UN found that the largest group among the dead were children between the ages of five and nine.

“We do not know at what point Israel may determine that the threat from Hamas has been neutralized,” Dr. Riedle says. “When can they be certain that all Hamas members are gone? This uncertainty may lead to a desire to create an ethnically homogeneous area between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, which is ethnic cleansing.”

Alongside accusations of attempting to ethnically cleanse Gaza, Israel has faced allegations of practicing apartheid—legalized segregation and discrimination.

To explore these claims, we spoke with Michal Eskayo, an Israeli-American and ESL professor at HWC with over 30 years of experience.

Eskayo, a Jewish woman who has toured Israel extensively, shared her observations of what she describes as apartheid conditions. “For most Palestinians, there’s no free movement. You need a work permit. There are different license plates for your car. There’s a wall. You can’t just leave. There are checkpoints everywhere,” Eskayo explained.

On July 19, 2024, the UN International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled that Israel’s actions in the occupied Palestinian territories amounted to apartheid, citing the continued occupation of Palestinian land in the West Bank. “You have a wall, and there are all these right-wing settlements being built beyond it. Netanyahu doesn’t care; he wants it,” Eskayo remarked. In the same ruling, the ICJ called on Israel to return all land taken since 1967 and evacuate Israeli civilians from illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank. However, with U.S. backing, Israel is unlikely to abide by this ruling.

Despite all of this, there are still reasons for hope. On the one hand, the majority of our young people understand this situation for what it is. Poll after poll has shown that a large majority of young Americans support a permanent ceasefire and humanitarian aid for Palestine. They also support,

in large numbers, conditioning aid to Israel to make sure the United States is no longer complicit in the crimes of the Netanyahu government. In this way, it seems that we are witnessing a remarkable shift in the American consciousness with respect to this issue, and that is definitely something to be celebrated.

In addition, following the ceasefire announcement, the world watched as thousands of Palestinians made the trek back to the Gaza Strip. Despite the fact that every three out of five buildings in Gaza have been destroyed, according to the United Nations Satellite Centre (UNOSAT), Palestinian families are returning with the determination to rebuild their communities and continue their struggle for freedom and self-determination. Surely, many of these people know returning to Gaza could mean death, but they are returning anyway.

As of now, the ultimate resolution of this conflict remains uncertain. Will the people of Palestine see justice for the unimaginable violence and destruction they have endured? Will they be guaranteed the freedom to determine their own future within the global community of nations? While we may not have those answers, one thing is undeniable: the spirit of the Palestinian people remains unbroken. For the people of Palestine, the pursuit of justice and self-determination continues with unwavering strength. It is now up to those who believe in human rights and freedom for all people to stand alongside them in their struggle, for their fight is a fight for humanity itself.

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- Social Security & Healthcare:

One of the cardinal principles of this framework would be to eliminate federal expenses, aid to foreign countries, the mass release of illegal aliens, and removal of ‘left wing gender programs for our military & climate extremism.’ Additionally, as a tangential note of relevance: Trump has referenced a desire to eliminate federal funding from schools with mask and vaccine mandates which rouses the common inquiry, exactly what mandated vaccines are included in this logic paradigm? [8]

- Immigration Reform:

“A complete ban on Biden's usage of taxpayer dollars to free illegal aliens and criminal penalties for administrative non compliance.” There will then be an enacting of an executive order which removes the birth right of citizenship from children born in the US due to their parental citizenship status. Additionally, there would be an endorsement of the conclusion of welfare for illegal immigrants. [9], [8]

- Urban Planning & Infrastructure:

Trump intends to engage in a contest which would designate up to ten new cities delineated as “Freedom Cities” in “undeveloped federal lands.” As well, Congress will allot ‘baby bonuses’ to young families and implement a year long celebration of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

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- Economy & Civics:

Restrict and regulate Chinese ownership of infrastructures in the US, exiting the Paris Agreement and ratifying expedited approval of oil projects. Engage in universal baseline tariffs, applying the Trump Reciprocal Trade Act [if any country applies a certain tariff on American crafted goods, the analogous percentage tariff will be applied to theirs], as well as witness the removal of any of all Biden instated policies regarding the Green New Deal which sought to regulate emissions, fossil fuels, and electric vehicles. [9]

- Education Platform:

Slashing federal funding to any and all institutions which profess to engage in ‘gender ideology’ and critical race theory education, constructing a modern method for certifying teachers predicated on their patriotism, and designing preferential funding to institutions which abolish tenure for faculty. They intend to remove all ‘radical left accreditors’ and replace them with individuals who will ‘impose real standards’ on educational institutions such as ‘defending the American tradition and Western civilization.’ Additionally, they would design the release of all ‘unnecessary positions’ such as those within the DEI as well as execute a blatant increase in standardized testing through the implementation of entrance and exit exams at a collegiate level. The following are merely a few of Trumps ‘ten principles for achieving great schools that lead to great jobs’: restoring parental rights to control the education of their children, knowledge and skills not CRT and gender indoctrination, love of country, and freedom to pray.

- Expansion in Presidential Powers:

This plan is by and large predicated on what is known as Unitary Executive Theory. The substance of this theory interprets the constitutional powers of the executive branch as being held in sole authority by the president. The nexus of this plan is contingent on Trump’s ideology that the government necessitates a ‘dismantling of the deep state and reclamation of Washington from corruption.’ This would be accomplished through the reissuing of Executive Order 13957 [Schedule F] which constitutes the employment of political individuals who serve the authority and agenda of the president as opposed to the interest of the general public. Additionally, there would be a reformation of Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Courts, taking action against ‘government whistleblowers’, relocation of federal and government positions out of Washington [therein displacing thousands of employees and their livelihoods] bringing the FCC and FTC under presidential authority, and declassifying of all documentation on deep state spying. [8], [9]

- Foreign Affairs:

“Rebuilding military strength and power through providing record funding, reevaluating NATO’s purpose and mission, ending the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 24 hours, and removing the ‘deep staters’ from intelligence positions.”

- Law Enforcement:

There would be a colossal influx in law enforcement particularly police personnel as their investments would bear witness to a massive degree of subsidies. However, it is most cardinal to note the proposed enforcement of: stop and frisk, ICE arrests, and gun policies. Additionally, this would explicitly direct the DOJ to issue civil rights investigations against ‘radical left prosecutors.’ This would be to determine if such law enforcement officers have ‘given the victims of their marxist policies the right to sue local officials for harm and suffering,’ and to issue investigations into ‘marxist leftist local district attorneys.’ Tangentially, it is of value to denote the proposed employment of the death penalty for drug dealing and human traffickers. There would as well be a complete overhaul on the federal disciplining of minors. There will be a full inquisition into the efficacy of forces issued to combat drug cartels and the ‘imposition of a naval embargo on the cartels.’ To contextualize, this would be in reference to the usage and employment of ‘all necessary military assets’ to accomplish the task, entailing: directing the DOD to exercise cyber warfare, special forces, and other covert ops actions. Cartels will then be delineated as foreign terrorist organizations. Finally, there will be a confrontation of the ‘radicalization’ of law schools,

- National Security:

There will be a construction of a missile defense shield, bearing similarities and drawing comparisons to Israel’s Iron Dome. Forbes has issued the commentary that it would be ‘highly inadequate to intercept large intercontinental ballistic missiles,’ or, in a less academic format, to complete the task it has been designed to uphold. In another aspect, there would be an exercising of tactics architected to target Chinese espionage throughout the continental US. It has been noted in a letter issued by the Brennan Center for Justice and Asian Americans Advancing Justice that consequently, the policy initiatives engaged in to investigate Asian individuals in political spaces has “been that the FBI and federal agencies have put pressure on grant makers, universities, and [other] research institutions to participate in racial, ethnic, and national origin profiling collectively leading to discriminatory and stigmatizing investigations of people of Chinese descent.” Stanford University sent an additional letter demanding the termination of such an initiative, which was subsequently received by attorney general Merrick Garland. [9]

- Social Reform:

The first and perhaps most integral issue of social reform would be the removal of Executive Order 13985 which adopted neoteric policies designed to address racial inequities in federal agencies and policy initiatives. According to the Trump Administration, there will be an objective to “eradicate any attempt to weaken America’s institutions through these harmful a discriminatory ‘equity’ programs.” Additionally, there will not be a corner of social reform which does not bear witness to drastic policy disincorporation. Subsequently, a complete restriction of provisions regarding urban camping and an elimination of ‘tent cities’ will be enacted. As well, Trump intends to induct an Executive Order which would entirely redirect all subsidies allotted to housing undocumented migrants towards housing exclusively homeless veterans. [9]

- Queer Rights:

Firstly, there will be a baseline eradication and reduction of transgender healthcare for minors, with no circumstantial opportunities in lifesaving instances. Following this, all federal agencies will be inaugurated beneath a doctrine which supposes transition at any age as improper and inexcusable. There will additionally be a revision of medicare and medicaid statutes regarding transgender healthcare for minors [any facility caught issuing such care will be removed from the federal qualifications which standardize the legal operations as medicare and medicaid institutions]. There will be a construction of legal cases against physicians who have performed those procedures and an objective to retroactively prosecute such individuals. The Department of Education will then be instructed to inform students ‘if anyone suggests they could be transgender’ they will be at the mercy of civil liabilities for sex discrimination and a loss of federal subsidies. [9], [8]

- Journalism, Media, & Censorship:

The paragon of this paradigm would be to ‘shatter the left-wing censorship regime’ through labeling information as misinformation or disinformation, as determined and denoted by the Trump Administration. [9]

Do We Feel Safe on the CTA

By Paul Tavoularis
Staff Writer & Photographer

Every day the people of the city of Chicago commute on public transportation through methods of bus or train and the neighborhood you are in, the number of people, and the time of day are all factors that go into taking it day to day and how safe you feel taking the CTA.

According to the Illinois Policy Institute, Chicago faces one crime every 3 hours on public transit. Meaning in one day 8 potential crimes can happen, and with the Red Line, Green Line, Brown Line, and Orange Line as well as an array of bus stops Harold Washington students may have more to worry about than most commuters. This brings upon an issue of safety that a lot of citizens must worry about daily in certain parts of the city, issues that may have citizens detour away from the CTA altogether. This means there is no better way to get a perspective than from the commuters themselves.

Professor Shanina Thomas when asked about how she feels personally is quoted as saying “I’m not going to say that I’m fearful or scared, but I will say that I am more vigilant now of my surroundings.” When asked how she felt taking the bus on her commute. “We are experiencing an upsweep in mental health among our citizens here in Chicago, especially downtown” was quoted as well when asked about what implications may lead to the CTA appearing unsafe.

In April of 2024, the Chicago Transit Authority released this in a new According to statistics released last week by the Chicago Police Department (CPD), which provides law enforcement across the CTA system, crimes decreased across the board during the month of April: Overall transit crime is down 6% year to date, as well as a 16% drop compared to April 2023. Violent crime on the CTA is down 6% compared to April 2023.



Which is improvement but that is a margin that can be improved and may not speak to the opinion of the public as of late.

As of Mid-2008, the Chicago Police Department began documenting crimes that appear on the CTA due to a rising influx of robbery, assault, harassment, and an increase in the homeless and mentally ill population overtaking it. Roosevelt University Student Mekhi Shambee when asked about how to make his train commute better is quoted as saying, “There is hope to change the CTA, but people need to speak up more about problems on the CTA because it’s been like this forever,” when asked about the status of the CTA post and pre-COVID 19.

Safety is still a concern for the CTA, and it seems that other city problems such as homelessness, mental health, and drug addiction may need to be addressed to improve these conditions and provide a better feeling of safety for our citizens regardless of what the numbers have stated about a downward trend in crime.

Why Chinese New Year Deserves More Spotlight

By Kelly Rivas
Staff Writer

When asked if Chinese New Year celebrations have changed over time, Mei said “People no longer decorate their houses like before. Many families now just have dinner together.” In Chinese culture decorations for Chinese New Year are very important because they symbolize luck, prosperity, and renewal. Mei also remarks how it is difficult for her and other people to celebrate this big holiday because in the U.S. they don’t get days off work or school like they would in China and it’s hard to plan the celebrations. Mei says, “We can’t plan our celebrations ahead of time because we don’t get days off work or school like we would in China.” Mei pointed out that she sometimes is scared that she’ll forget what Chinese New Year is like. “I feel afraid that I will forget the fun, how the festival is fun.”

Chinese New Year traditions include giving red envelopes that are filled with money and are typically given to children or unmarried adults with no job. Red denotes good luck/fortune and happiness/abundance in the Chinese culture. Fireworks are used to scare away the evil spirits and monsters. The dragon dance is a key part of Chinese New Year Celebrations. The dragon is seen as a symbol of power, luck, and good fortune.

Does Chinese New Year get as much attention as other cultural events?

Chinese New Year is an annual 15-day festival in China and in other Asian countries. It marks the new year on the lunisolar calendar, and the new year starts on the new moon nearest the midpoint between the winter solstice and the spring equinox sometime between January 21st and February 20th. New Year on January 1st has endless celebrations that occur worldwide, days off work and school, and the endless media coverage on it. Some people are concerned that Chinese New Year doesn’t get as much of a spotlight as it does in China. The celebrations are not even close to how it’s traditionally celebrated in China. Yaen Mei at Harold Washington College who has lived in Chicago for 2 years after moving from China shared key distinctions in how Chinese New Year is celebrated.

It is believed that the dragon dance drives away evil spirits and the longer the dance is the more luck it will bring the community. Different towns in China might have additional traditions during this holiday. Harold Washington College student Xiaomi Weng shares “In my hometown in the first day of New Year you can’t wash your hair.” Weng says that sometimes every town might have different traditions that are different from the traditional ones. Chinese New Year has a different date every year because they use a lunisolar calendar, which means it’s based on the cycles of the moon. Chinese New Year usually falls between late January and mid-February. This year Chinese New Year started on January 29th and ends on February 12th.

It’s important to acknowledge that these cultural holidays are deeply meaningful to the communities from which they originate. Mei emphasized the importance for people to respect these celebrations. Mei says, “This is a very traditional festival...some customs make people think that its only for fun but in our culture it’s not only for fun but also for respect.” Weng suggests that hosting the parade in downtown would be a better idea to create more focus for Chinese New Year. Wang said, “I learned from the news other countries hold the parades in downtown.”

If you are more interested in taking part of this beautiful celebration you can attend the Lunar New Year Parade on March 1,2026 at the intersection of 24th street and Wentworth Avenue.

