



Lemkin Institute

for Genocide Prevention
and Human Security

Red Flag Alert for the Anti-Trans Agenda of the Trump Administration in the United States

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The Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention and Human Security condemns the anti-trans agenda of the second Trump Administration and warns Americans that the recent spate of executive orders, which are in line with a genocidal process against the transgender community that has been emerging in the United States for over a decade, *are meant to pave the way for greater state repression against all individuals and other groups in the future.* It is important to consistently and loudly reject this administration's efforts to isolate any people or groups due to their identities, to reaffirm the USA's commitment to individual rights and diversity, and to push back against efforts to normalize state repression and violence. **The time is now.**

The Lemkin Institute believes that current anti-trans hysteria within the government is meant to serve three purposes within a wider genocidal process. First, the Executive Orders constitute the paper marginalization and 'paper persecution' of an identity group that has recently gained rights and greater acceptance in order to lock in evangelical support for the Trump administration. Second, the executive orders create a fictitious 'cosmic enemy' that will justify radicalization of government in general, leading to ever-more power for the executive branch; and third, the executive orders, over time, aim to normalize the destruction of identity groups by desensitizing the public to state-sponsored persecution of people based solely on their identities.

Taken together, the Trump Administration's executive orders related to trans people would effectively destroy, if fully implemented, trans people as a group, in whole, to summarize the text of the [Genocide Convention](#). The orders begin the process of

removing a trans presence from collective life and preventing trans people from existing as themselves, forcing them back into invisibility and isolation. This attack on trans identity is reminiscent in the US context of the Native American Boarding Schools, where the goal was to “[kill the Indian ... and save the man.](#)” Not only would the effort to deprive trans Americans of gender affirming care constitute a form of torture (and medical malpractice) with [terrible mental health repercussions](#), but also such measures are a common phase in genocidal processes and generally lead to ever greater persecution.

Trump’s [language](#) denying the reality of trans identity and criminalizing its expression is similar to Russian President Vladimir Putin’s [language](#) regarding Ukrainian identity and Israel’s [language](#) regarding Palestinian identity. These three states each deny the identity of clearly visible, historically continuous, groups. Identity denial is a genocidal tactic aimed at vanquishing what is believed to be an evil, existential, and inherently criminal foe and it always results in mass atrocity if it is not nipped in the bud. While the latter two cases (Russia and Israel) involve imperialist land claims, in the case of the Trump Administration’s anti-trans policies, the goal is rather to achieve victory over an internal enemy: the perceived virus of “woke” ideology, of which US conservatives [believe](#) trans people are the primary carriers. Many conservatives [are convinced](#) that there is an ideology called “transgenderism” that is supporting a global totalitarian project that aims to destroy family bonds and render humanity enslaved to global government and economic exploitation. That thinking is now in power in the White House.

We remind Americans that trans people constitute at most [1.4 percent](#) of the US population. According to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) there [are](#) “less than ten” trans college student athletes out of over 510,000 athletes total. Research [does not](#) support the idea that trans athletes have unfair advantages over other athletes of the same gender, nor does it support the allegation that trans people [pose](#) a threat when using gender-appropriate bathrooms. *There is absolutely nothing supporting the claims of the anti-trans voices in and around the US government.* Trans people have always existed and are completely ordinary Americans, no different in any fundamental way from those Americans who wish to see them erased. If we are to have a discussion about proper policies in athletics, for example, the legitimacy, rights, and existence of trans people must be the starting off point.

Along these lines, we wish to point out as well that transgender people are completely natural in a world defined by diversity. Scientific studies have [shown](#) time and again that there is great diversity within the biological sex of humans that our binary concepts of

male and female cannot account for. Male and female can be seen as a shorthand for the biology of human reproduction, but those categories do not capture all the many different manifestations of sexual differentiation among us. Here we speak not only of visibly intersex people but also the stages of sexual differentiation in utero, which involve gonadal differentiation but also chromosomal and hormonal differentiation. This leads to a wide variety of gender expression and identification that has existed for all of human history.

The Trump administration is simply wrong when it states that there are only “two sexes.” Biological diversity defines this planet. Biological diversity is what has enabled humanity to live and thrive on this planet. And we know that human beings are defined by biological diversity just like all other living things. If God made this world, in its beautiful diversity, God made trans people as well. It is important for religious conservatives to think hard about that. No political leader, not even one with little regard for the natural world, has the power to challenge the diversity of our creation. It is also suicidal for our species to do so.

Although Trump’s Executive Orders related to trans and non-binary people are written in a language that strongly suggests they were drafted by academics, lawyers, and other well-educated people, the scientific basis for the allegations within them is completely lacking and their reasoning is poor. This ‘pseudoscientific’ reaction to transgender people (what the journal *Scientific American* has called “junk science”), to the emerging science around sexual differentiation, and to the diversity of sex and gender expression, has been cultured by years of unending attacks on the transgender community from the religious right and from a conservative sector of self-appointed feminists who have embraced the gender binary as a type of security against threats from men. These ‘gender critical feminists’ have found common cause with people who do not believe in the fundamental rights of women as they seek to criminalize transgender people.

Regarding women, the fact is that anti-trans initiatives put not only trans people in danger, but also all women, both transgender and cisgender (women who feel comfortable with the sex they were assigned at birth), by challenging women’s right to privacy, their existential autonomy, and their control over their bodies. They reinforce a rigid ideology of binary sex separation that destroys any possibility of sex & gender fluidity or of similarities and shared spaces between the sexes. They set the stage for totalitarian state control over bodies, social space, and family life.

In their specific obsession with transgender women as threats to cis women in sports and bathrooms, anti-trans initiatives are driven by genocidal transmisogyny, which defines trans women as illicit, dangerous, and criminal border crossers — themes that are common to genocidal ideology. In Hutu Power ideology, Tutsi women were accused of being infiltrators and spies who used sex to tempt Hutu men and control UN Peacekeepers. In Nazism, Jewish men were accused of being lechers and rapists who sought to sully Aryan German women. Ottoman Turkish Armenophobia cast Armenian men as traitorous internal enemies aligned with hostile external powers. Transmisogyny shares many of the assumptions about spatial and conceptual purity that are found in the genocidal ideologies of the 20th century.

Less often noted but also important is the way in which “gender critical feminists” and the gender critical movement more generally are hostile towards the male sex as well. They insist that something as complex as biological sex can only be determined by a quick visual inspection of genitalia upon birth (erasing intersex people entirely) and that the appearance of male genitalia at birth will create people who will always constitute a threat to women, implying that bodies with male genitalia at birth are inherently, biologically, and permanently, violent. Patriarchal gender tropes and the strict gender binary are always used in this way to create violent social orders and to normalize masculinist violence so that male elites can expend bodies at will to prop up a specific power system. To treat anyone who is not a heterosexual, cis woman as inherently violent, for whatever reason, is to justify sexual violence against all women as a natural fact rather than a preventable action.

While the real problem of men’s violence against women is clear and should be a primary concern for all states and societies around the world, Trump’s Executive Orders ‘protecting women and girls’ do not address the causes of this violence or even mention cis men at all. Instead, the Trump Administration is deflecting the problems faced by women – sexism and misogyny, which require structural changes and real investments to solve – onto a tiny minority of marginalized people – transgender women – in an effort to shore up the fascist image of happy patriarchal (cisgender and heterosexual) families that ensure the “safety” of women and children. These initiatives therefore do not benefit or protect cisgender women at all, as the Trump administration is trying to claim, since the greatest danger to women and children is posed by cisgender men in their families. Instead, the Executive Orders reinforce patriarchy and sexism through transmisogyny. Additionally, claims that young girls are also under threat of being pressured into transitioning, as well as the pseudoscientific concept of “rapid onset gender dysphoria,” are forms of transandrophobia (hostility to transgender men) and

exorosexism (hostility to nonbinary people) that punish anyone assigned the female sex at birth for deviating from traditional gender roles.

Clearly the Trump Administration's attacks on trans people is about something much, much larger than the lives of the 1.6 million trans Americans who will be directly and negatively affected by his Executive Orders. The Make America Great Again movement has embraced a return to the "plantation complex" of power in the USA, with white supremacy and a patriarchal power structure at its core. Transgender people, and especially transgender women, are targeted and punished within this power complex for being perceived to transgress the ideological categories that uphold this system of power. As 'illicit border crossers,' they are singled out as cosmic enemies, not unlike the position accorded to Jews in Nazi ideology. It should not be surprising that trans people are being targeted first, alongside immigrants of color; both groups are accused of being dangerous border crossers constituting an existential threat to the United States.

To the American people, we ask you to reaffirm your commitment to individual rights and to the project of equality under the law that is written into the US Constitution and that has animated the best nature of the USA since its founding. Reject efforts to desensitize you to violence against other Americans, whether that violence is legal, social, or physical. To protect trans people and the Constitution, and to prevent the hardening of a genocidal process that will eventually impact every single American, it is critical that you loudly resist the normalization of anti-trans talking points and make your voice heard against efforts to marginalize and erase the trans community. This can mean many things – writing a letter to your representatives, organizing your community to flood your representatives with phone calls, or supporting and engaging with organizations that protect LGBTQ+ rights. Talking to family and friends is also important. Autocratic states need to control language or they will fall. Keep talking.

To Republican politicians and supporters, we ask that you think hard about what is known regarding the genocidal processes of the past. We know, for example, that targeting one tiny group for persecution always expands to the targeting of other groups. It is an easy way for the state to claim powers outside of the constitutional order. Jews were less than 1 percent of the population of Germany in 1933. Many people discounted the "paper persecution" of Jews in the early 1930s, but we now know it radicalized the state and society, gave the Nazis impunity, and led directly to the Holocaust. Do you want to be responsible for a similar process in the United States? Is that what you want for your country? We at the Lemkin Institute believe that many of you do not.

To religious conservatives, we ask that you think about the core tenets of your faith and how they are being abused in an effort to garner political power serving ends that have nothing to do with God's creation and instead directly threaten it. You may believe that there is no room for trans or gender nonbinary people in doctrine, but does doctrine really mandate a state exercising authoritarian powers over trans people, both child and adult, as well as their families, communities, schools and doctors, with all the misery and harm that will cause? We hope you will search your hearts to answer these questions and ask yourselves, is this moral?

To trans Americans, we send our solidarity and support. Do not panic, but be smart and try to plan ahead, turning to existing LGBTQ+ groups, mutual aid initiatives, and human rights organizations for guidance. You are loved by many, many people and we can all work together to ensure your safety.

In the Trump Administration's full-frontal assault on trans existence, we are seeing the consequences of hate ideology play out in real time. The rubber is hitting the road. Not only are trans lives at stake, but also the very freedoms upon which the United States was founded. Just as people have had to fight in the past to have these freedoms recognized, Americans must continue to fight now for their recognition and protection. If Americans refuse to abandon marginalized and vulnerable communities, like trans people, we have no doubt that the American people and their values of individual rights, freedom of expression, and equality can prevail. There is power in unity. Embrace it. Defend it. Use it.