

The Immigration Debate

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Not so long ago, a caption on the front page of the *Wilmington Star-News* read, “Local Hispanics join in immigrant-rights protest.” What exactly is being “protested”? I did not read anything in the article that would support a finding that legal immigrants are having their rights infringed upon. It appears that the caption should have read, “Illegal aliens rally to establish additional rights.”

Let us not allow political correctness or some ill-defined “need for unskilled low-wage workers” to gloss over the objectives of the present movement. In essence, millions of persons, who knowingly entered the United States of America illegally and who flouted the laws and policies of this country, now want new laws, which afford them protections, rights, and privileges.

On the same front page, a sign was pictured which read, in both English and Spanish, “No Human Being Is Illegal.” While this may be a touching sentiment, no country can safely open its borders to unlimited immigration. As much as we would like to believe in a Utopian global society, realities require that we limit immigration. For these reasons, laws are in place, which define the procedures for legal immigration.

The newspaper article identifies a lone opponent at the rally, and a picture of the sign, which she wore on her back, accompanies the article. It read, “Real Immigrants are not ILLEGAL.” Immigration laws are necessary for the security of the country and for the protections of the rights, privileges and freedoms afforded to the citizens of the United States.

Immigration laws also protect U.S. citizens from unfair job and wage competition, which arises from an unregulated influx of foreign labor. The often-reported “shortage” of labor relates more to the unwillingness of companies to pay a “competitive” or even living wage to their employees than it does to an inability to fill a particular position.

I could hardly hold back the laughter when I saw Bill Gates testifying before Congress about Microsoft’s woes arising from a purported need for (in this case “skilled”) foreign workers. If there is a “shortage” of workers, is there any doubt that Mr. Gates’ limiting future additions to his estimated Forty Billion Dollar (\$40,000,000,000.00) personal fortune in order to pay a higher wage to encourage workers to go into the required fields would be an appropriate course of action?

The existing policies are no more than government-sponsored subsidies to these employers, which allow the companies to artificially maintain low wages and reap the benefits for the owners on the backs of the employees. What happened to supply and demand? When you artificially increase the supply, you remove the ability of the U.S. workers to demand higher wages. The only persons benefiting are the illegal aliens and those hiring them. There is certainly no “cost savings” being passed along to the consumers.

There are millions of persons from throughout the world that dream of coming to America and becoming citizens of this great country. Many of these persons have waded through the proper channels for years to secure that right and privilege. I have the pleasure of knowing immigrants and naturalized citizens, who have legally immigrated from North America, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Each of these persons recognizes that the protections, rights, and privileges of citizenship come with a cost.

For most legal immigrants, their eventual goal is citizenship. One of the last steps in becoming a naturalized citizen is the Naturalization Oath of Allegiance to the United States of America, which states:

I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state or sovereignty, of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by the law; that I will perform noncombatant service in the armed forces of the United States when required by the law; that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; and that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God.

I question whether those illegal immigrants demanding these new rights are prepared to “absolutely renounce and [repudiate] all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state or sovereignty.” I question whether they want all of the rights, freedoms and privileges without all of the duties, obligations and responsibilities of citizenship.

Ours is a country of laws. As citizens, we are subject to those laws. Those who are here illegally have already demonstrated their disdain and lack of support for the “laws of the United States.” Are they any more likely to support those laws as “guest workers”? We do not pick and choose the laws that we obey as citizens. If we do break a law, we must be prepared to accept the consequences of breaking that law even if we do not agree with it. Do we now reward those who have acted illegally by giving them protected status?

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