



CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION The Debate on the Fate of Illegal Migrants

"Born in other countries, yet believing you could be happy in this, our laws acknowledge, as they should do, your right to join us in society, conforming ... to our established rules." --Thomas Jefferson, May 2, 1801

The current debate over the fate of migrants who have illegally entered the United States is a complicated one, not solvable by simply re-warming President Dwight Eisenhower's 1954 "Operation Wetback." Were we to round up the estimated 12 to 18 million Latinos and Hispanics currently here illegally and dump them across our southern border into Mexico, it would have a dramatic impact on some areas of the country, and the illegals would be right back in short order, given the present state of our border insecurity.



What is *not* complicated is the requirement and necessity of enforcing the law, which in this matter stipulates that every person within the political borders of the U.S. who is not a citizen should be documented and either authorized to be here by way of temporary permits, qualified for the strenuous legal process to seek citizenship, or deported. It is equally clear that in order to secure our nation from re-entry by deported illegal migrants, we must [secure our borders](#).

Citizenship is much more than a birthright for indigenous Americans, or a legal change in nationality for immigrants. It is the embodiment of [American](#)

[Patriotism](#), a steadfast devotion to the [First Principles](#) of our nation's founding -- individual Liberty as "endowed by our Creator," and the obligation to extend that legacy to our posterity.

In the words of George Washington, "Citizens by birth or choice of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of American, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of Patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations."

Patriotic devotion to Liberty will always be in contest with its antithesis, allegiance to the state or its sovereigns. Never has that been more true than in the current political climate, where the [Democrat Party](#) establishes authority over people by dividing them according to race, creed, sex, sexual preference, religion, ethnicity, wealth, *ad infinitum*, and indoctrinating these separate constituencies with the pretense that they must depend on [Democratic Socialism](#) for their protection, if not outright salvation.

In regard to immigration, the Democrats' "divide and conquer" strategy will, in the words of historian and noted liberal Arthur Schlesinger, "disunite America." Schlesinger's liberal colleagues ostracized him when he first published his 1992 book, "The Disuniting of America," and accused him of betraying his impeccable liberal credentials as a former senior advisor to Democrat icon John F. Kennedy. But the premise of his book was, and remains, absolutely correct.

Schlesinger argued two decades ago that the cult of ethnicity manifesting as subgroup ethnocentric identities, and supported by errant programs such as bilingual education, would divide the nation, thus

putting at risk the patriotic devotion that has bonded previous generations of immigrants into one nationality.

Of course, Democrats today, who seek to foment division, are banking on that ethnic division as they attempt to supplant patriotic devotion to America with a collective allegiance to their statist regime.

To that end, Democrat National Committee chairman Debbie Wasserman Schultz has condemned conservatives who want to enforce the law as it pertains to illegal migrants. "I think the president was clearly articulating that his position -- the Democrats' position -- is that we need comprehensive immigration reform," said Wasserman Schultz. "We have 12 million undocumented immigrants in this country that are part of the backbone of our economy. And that is not only a reality but a necessity."

What Wasserman Schultz and the titular head of her party, Barack Hussein Obama, mean by "immigration reform" is a fast-track pass to citizenship, not for humane or economic imperatives, but to amass legions of additional dependents to vote for Democrats.

Obama insists, "immigration reform is a moral imperative," and he reiterated his call for reform down on the Mexican border recently, declaring that the melting pot of immigrants is "as old as America itself. *E Pluribus, Unum*. Out of many, one."

Memo to Barry: Our nation's original motto, *E Pluribus Unum*, proposed by Benjamin Franklin, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson in 1776, has nothing to do with uniting American citizens and illegal migrants. Instead, it refers to the uniting of 13 colonies into one nation. At that time, the vast majority of colonial Americans were of Anglo ancestry, not Kenyan, Indonesian or Hawaiian. Perhaps such historical details are not important to a "community organizer."

Obama's advocacy for blanket amnesty is unlawful, and it most assuredly will *not* lead to a "concentration

of affections" or the "exaltation of the just pride of Patriotism" envisioned by our Founders and necessary to sustain Liberty.

In regard to the economic arguments for Obama's so-called "reforms," I have reviewed countless reports on the economic impact of illegal migrants in the U.S. from both conservative and liberal sources. From these, I draw the following conclusions.

First, on balance some two million Americans have lost their jobs to illegal migrants at great cost to the nation in terms of the unemployment and welfare benefits redistributed from taxpayers to the jobless. Those costs outweigh the economic benefit to select corporate sectors.

However, I also find that, despite much ranting to the contrary, there *are* between two and four million low-skill and low-paying jobs in the U.S. that would *not* be filled by domestic labor if illegal migrants were excluded from those jobs, because it is easier to live on government subsidies than on wages earned picking vegetables in the heat of summer.

Second, I conclude that the net cost of providing health care, housing, education and welfare, in addition to the cost of law enforcement and incarceration for all illegal migrants, far exceeds any value that they add to the U.S. economy, at least because their numbers far exceed the capacity of our economy to absorb them. Astonishingly, that cost is more than \$1,000 per citizen-headed household in America.

But these economic arguments, pro or con, are straw-man diversions. While we can debate the economic benefits and detriments of illegal migrants, we must, first and foremost, uphold the law.

Of course, Democrats [shape the law](#) into whatever serves their agenda, regardless of the [Rule of Law](#) enshrined in our Constitution, and in perpetual violation of their "[sacred oaths](#)" to support and defend the same.

That is most evident in the Left's argument for [birthright citizenship](#), which asserts that "anchor babies" born to illegal migrants in the U.S. give the parents automatic standing to remain in the U.S. No matter that the 14th Amendment is clear in its exclusion that illegal migrants are not "[subject to the jurisdiction thereof](#)" and therefore their children born here have no birthright to citizenship. Unfortunately, that amendment has been, in effect, rewritten by judicial diktat, thus overruling that exclusion even in clear violation of its original intent.

Many of the states most heavily affected by the cost burden of illegal migrants are crafting legislation to deny citizenship to anchor babies, and thus their families. Meanwhile, the number of liberal "sanctuary cities" refusing to prosecute illegal migrants grows.



Perhaps the greatest injustice served up by the Democrats' "wink and nod" approach to the illegal migrant issue is the insult to those who have become citizens the hard way: Those who *earned* it. This would include the tens of thousands who joined our military as a means to citizenship, and millions of others who have persevered through the considerable demands and costs of the legal immigration process. They have shown due respect for the law.

Among my colleagues is a man who emigrated from the former Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. He grew up in Bratislava, on the border with Austria. His family garden had a backdrop of high-voltage barbed wire guarded by sentinels in sniper towers every few hundred meters, and sentries with dogs walking the fence line. He tells stories of those who attempted to reach freedom on the outside, most of whom did not make it and many of whom were shot.

He had always dreamed of fleeing socialism and finding the "freedom land." After the "fall of the wall," he applied for a work visa in the U.S., and after

those extensions expired, he received a tourist visa for an additional six months, determined to stay as long as legally allowable in the U.S.

Upon the expiration of his visa, he returned to Slovakia. Later, he met an American exchange student at his college, "a gal from the South." She was part of a college student exchange program. He and she courted and later married in Slovakia, and after an interview with the American embassy in Prague, they moved back to her hometown in the U.S. He left a teaching position in Slovakia to push a broom on construction sites here, but their marriage was priceless. After two years on a temporary green card, he was eligible to apply for a permanent green card, which involved legal fees, reams of applications, and endless commutes to INS offices. A couple of years later, he was eligible to apply for citizenship, which meant more fees, more applications and more commutes, as well as an immersion into the real meaning of American citizenship.

In preparation for his citizenship exam, he read up on the history of the U.S., studied civics, (both once rigorously taught in American public schools) and pored over citizenship materials the INS sent him. His final citizenship test included an interview, and it challenged his reading and writing skills when answering questions regarding American history, government and our Constitution. Notably, most upper-school American students fail to correctly answer enough of the [citizenship questions](#) to pass.

At his citizenship ceremony, there were 150 people from 50 nations, each of whom took the following oath: "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."

My friend said he was surprised at his own reaction, saying it was a deeply moving and emotional event for all present, given that they were the latest generation of citizen immigrants seeking a new life with Liberty. Now, he is a devoted Patriot, a productive citizen, a great husband and father. Oh, and he just got his handgun carry permit!

After all his efforts, I suggested that perhaps he should have just walked across any of the 7,612 miles of our Mexican and Canadian land border, or entered anywhere along our 12,383 miles of shoreline. After all, millions of others have done so, and the taxes he pays now support those illegal migrants.



His reply was solemn. Deeply devoted to the legacy of Liberty granted him by his new country but deeply disturbed by the socialist rhetoric of its new leader, Barack Hussein Obama -- rhetoric he knew so well from the old country -- he said to me, "Sometimes I wonder why we came here and I struggled so hard to become a

U.S. citizen, when the U.S. is moving toward the tyranny I worked so hard to escape."

Those who have lived in the belly of the socialist beast clearly recognize those entrails in Barack Obama's endeavor to transform our nation.

My colleague says, "The out-of-control government spending and regulations, more government programs and employees, just lead to more corruption and constriction of Liberty. This is a cancer that will kill free enterprise. In Czechoslovakia, the socialist's control and regulation led to political corruption, and no reason to work harder because if you earned more, the government took more to give to others. America is sick with this cancer and it should be removed."

In regard to immigration, he concludes, "America needs very strict controls, and those who do become citizens should be 'Americanized' or else America will be no more."

Indeed.

In the words of Alexander Hamilton, "The safety of a republic depends essentially on the energy of a common national sentiment; on a uniformity of principles and habits; on the exemption of the citizens from foreign bias and prejudice; and on that love of country which will almost invariably be found to be closely connected with birth, education, and family. ... Some reasonable term ought to be allowed to enable aliens to get rid of foreign and acquire American attachments; to learn the principles and imbibe the spirit of our government; and to admit of a probability at least, of their feeling a real interest in our affairs."