

Setting Records

September 22, 2022

Right now, the crisis at the United States' southern border--and a crisis it is--has been overshadowed by the political show. A couple of governors are busing or flying migrants to Democratic counties in the northeast. Mayors and governors there are whining on TV about the (very) minor disruption. And our "leaders" seem to be all about scoring points. But while they play around and give interviews to the cable "news" shows, the problem grows worse.

Already this year, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection types say they've "encountered" two million illegal migrants trying to get to El Norte. When they encounter, they sometimes turn the migrants away or deport them or shelter them--depending on their ages and their countries of origin and other factors. Sometimes our border patrols encounter the same people more than once.

CNN has had a number of stories on what's happening along the Rio Grande. And considering the news source, we don't think these numbers are being overplayed.

Over the decades, illegal immigrants from Mexico accounted for most of the activity. Then, at the beginning of the Biden administration, we first heard the term "northern triangle"--meaning Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador--from which new bands of immigrants began forming at the southern border.

Recently, Border Patrol says the number of people coming to the States from elsewhere have outpaced the usual suspects. Migrants from Cuba, Colombia, Nicaragua or Venezuela are showing up at the border now. David Bier of the Cato Institute told CNN this is a "radical shift."

And when you add the migrants from the new countries to those from Mexico and the northern triangle, you get a record number of people trying to enter the United States. And often succeeding.

Yet the vice president of the United States went on "Meet the Press" a few Sundays back and declared the border "secure." We don't know where she's getting her information. Or what her definition of the word "secure" is.

There are ways to fix the problem. But the first fix should be enforcement: a wall.

It doesn't have to be a physical wall, not completely. Not with technology like cameras and drones and sensors that border agents have these days. But the border must be real. Countries around the world--even liberal democracies in Europe--have real borders. The United States must have one, too.

After the border is secure--in the way that most people understand that word--then we can sort out who among the illegal immigrants should be allowed to stay. ("We essentially have an NFL

draft where the United States has the first, oh, million or so draft picks. And rather than exercising those picks, i.e., choosing by whatever criteria we want--such as education, enterprise, technical skills and creativity--we admit the tiniest fraction of the best and brightest and permit millions of the unskilled to pour in instead."--Charles Krauthammer, 2006)

And then our leaders at the federal level can decide how many can come--legally--based on economics, persecution or other factors. We don't need to slam shut the border, just make it ... a border.

Our own Estados Unidos can do this. And should. Because we're going to need immigrants, as always.

But they should follow our laws. Call that the first requirement of being a good U.S. citizen.