

Arizona Hispanic Republicans

A Fire Side on Immigration – Essay by Daryl Williams

by [arizona-hispanic-republicans](#) on Mar. 08, 2011, under [Latino Republicans Vocal Against Unconstitutional laws and harm towards our economy, Secure Borders and Reasonable Immigration Solution](#)

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Please find this essay helpful to debunk untruths promoted by Senator Russell Pearce of Arizona. This essay was written by a devout Mormon who resides in Arizona, and is a member of the high council. We will host “A Fire Side On Immigration” event. The lecture will be given on April 8, 2011 in Mesa, Arizona and it will be open to the public. Here is the essay in it’s entirety: [Immigration by Daryl William](#).

Illegal Immigration

by Daryl M. Williams

1 July 29, 2010; September 3, 2010; November 16, 2010

This essay revisits my views about immigration. It was originally provoked by (1) the furor over Arizona’s immigration laws, S.B. 1070, (2) the decision by Judge Susan R. Bolton granting a preliminary injunction in the federal suit filed by the United States, and (3) my desire to think critically about an issue that is so polarizing. I have added to this essay on the dates shown above as events have provoked further elucidation.

My desire to think critically about this issue is partially motivated by the fact that many, perhaps most, of my friends are strong supporters of both securing Arizona’s border and deporting immigrants who do not have papers as a condition precedent to thinking about immigration reform. Amnesty is anathema to most of my friends. The typical refrain I hear is that the law must be enforced because we are law-abiding people. I do not think the issues are so clear or singular, so I want my friends to know why I do not join in their démarche.

I

I do not understand the policy that sustains the current immigration laws in the United States. There is good reason, of course, to have secure borders so that those intent upon mischief are excluded from the country, but I struggle to understand the basis of restricting those who want to come to the country to work and to contribute to the economy of the United States while sharing the basic ideals that have made our country strong from the start. Independence. Freedom. A free-enterprise system that rewards efficiency and lowest cost with the greatest share of the market. An environment where a family can be reared in safety and where one can worship or not according to the dictates of conscience. The American dream.

Immigration laws are relatively recent, a phenomenon effectively put into place when the Immigration Act of 1924 established an annual quota and national-origins system. This early immigration law reflected blatant and articulated prejudice against those with particular religious beliefs and those from certain countries. Hopefully, the national-origins test found in the 1924 act was from a different social era, but it was, in any event, inconsistent with the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It was replaced in 1965 with a first-come, first-served policy and quotas.

The 1920s brought a different type of immigration legislation. The Quota Act of 1921 limited

immigration to three percent of the number of a nationality group in the United States, and the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 limited European immigration to two percent of the particular nationality group in the United States. The Oriental Exclusion Act of 1924 effectively foreclosed any immigration from Asia, including foreign-born wives and children of U.S. citizens of Chinese ancestry (this act was effectively repealed in 1943, and all restrictions on Asians acquiring citizenship were abolished by the end of the 1940s). The Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934 granted independence to the Philippines to be effective on July 4, 1946, but it also stripped Filipinos of their status as U.S. nationals while limiting immigration of anyone from the Philippines to fifty per year (Filipinos were reclassified as citizens in 1942 so they could serve in the military). The Internal Security Act of 1950 barred admission to Communists who were likely to prejudice the national interest. The McCarran Walter Immigration Act of 1952 affirmed the national-origins quota system and limited annual immigration to one-sixth of one percent of the population of the continental United States as it existed in 1920. The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 repealed the national origins quota system. The Immigration Act of 1990 increased the quota of immigrants allowed into the United States to 700,000 per year.

Unfortunately, the current scheme does not work. The economic incentives that drive immigration conflict with the laws designed to regulate it. Fighting economic forces in a market economy like the United States is an uphill if not impossible task. If the market is creating this sort of demand there is a benefit to the market when it is fulfilled: we are better off. One must not believe in the free-enterprise/market-economy system to think otherwise.

Milton Friedman and his wife, Rose Friedman, wrote a book about the inimical effects of too much government. Friedman won the Nobel Prize in economics. He effectively destroyed the notion that Keynesian economics—government regulation of the free market—makes any sense. He was an arch-conservative who believed in open borders:

The United States is another striking example. There were tariffs, justified by Alexander Hamilton in his famous Report on Manufacturers in which he attempted—with a decided lack of success—to refute Adam Smith’s arguments in favor of free trade. But they were modest, by modern standards, and few other government restrictions impeded free trade at home or abroad. Until after World War I immigration was almost completely free (there were restrictions on immigration from the Orient). As the Statue of Liberty inscription has it:

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breath free,
The wretched refuse of
your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless tempest-tossed to me: I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

It is important to bear in mind that the nation’s immigration laws are not criminal laws in the traditional sense. Criminal laws have traditionally required a particular type of evil mind, *mens rea*, and intent to injure, *nocendi voluntas*, that must animate deliberate, anti-social acts. The punishment associated with a crime is a means (1) to achieve social control, if you are view criminal from a social science perspective, or (2) vengeance and a means for protecting the public, if you are traditionalist. An individual who crosses the border “illegally” to get a job to earn money for his family is not engaged in anti-social behavior that is paradigmatically criminal; i.e., some act that offends and endangers the social order of society: killing people, burning down buildings, blowing things up, etc. Federal immigration laws recognize the non-criminal character of this “illegal” activity because they involve civil wrongs based on objective liability without regard to intent. Federal law has not proposed to put someone in prison for a violation of civil immigration laws, so making an “illegal” a criminal offends the conceptual underpinnings and purposes of criminal law.

II

I have heard many arguments in favor of strictly enforcing the current immigration laws. The major ones are as follows: (A) Particular groups of people should be kept out of America, whether Irish or

Catholic or Asian or Hispanic or whatever. (B) Restrictions on the labor pool maintains work for citizens. (C) Some argue that the economy of the United States is not sufficiently strong to support all of these poverty-level workers or that only the select, like the well educated or specially skilled, should be permitted to immigrate. (D) There are arguments predicated on the notion that these people come to America to take advantage of social programs for which they do not pay. Finally, (E) there are arguments that immigrants increase crime. None of these arguments survive thoughtful analysis.

A. Keep Them Out

Those who want to keep a particular group out of the country are obstinate proponents of their beliefs, bigots by definition: “A person obstinately and unreasonably wedded to a particular religious creed, opinion, or ritual.” There is little point trying to be rational with an obstinate proponent of a particular position. This country, which is founded on the principle of blindness to race, color, creed, religion or national origin, ought not to promulgate laws that restrict entry for a particular group for arbitrary reasons, quotas, for example. Likewise, just because there are people who think that changes in our society on account of an influx of a particular group of people have been or will be inimical to individual, normative views of what America should be does not justify using immigration as a hedge against such changes, past or future. The American melting pot is, ipse dixit, part of the kitchen of change where immigrants from diverse groups season the whole.

Immigrants to America have not typically come from the elite, either. These have been, to paraphrase the inscription on the Statue of Liberty, the tired, the poor, the homeless, and the wretched refuse of other countries, but these huddled masses have shared one motivating hope: they have been desperate enough “to breathe free” that they have left their homes and their native countries to travel to a strange place to start with nothing but what they carried with them. It has been an incredible model of success, which has made America the most desired place in the world. People would not risk so much, even their lives when they walk across the Arizona deserts, if the scheme of letting people work freely for themselves was not working.

I have a close friend with whom I have discussed immigration a great deal; he has finally settled on his basis for wanting fences at our southern borders—he says, “I like America the way it is. They will outnumber us if they keep coming. I do not want these immigrants changing things.” The problem with this “argument” is the preservation of the status quo and the ideals upon which our country is established. The status quo is death to a market economy, and bigotry, individual or collective, offends the ideals of our country.

The baser issues of pure race or national-origin prejudice just offend Constitutional notions of equality and the market economy’s indifference to these irrelevancies, leaving no reason to think more about them. However, if the idea of keeping America the way it is means concern over the political preferences these immigrants will have when they become voters, the issue is more complex. This is not really an immigration issue. It is about the rights to suffrage. America had a very different system of suffrage under the Constitution as originally drafted and implemented than we have today. Some may not like what has happened, but it has happened. Using immigration to attempt to staunch the effects of changes which have occurred since our Constitution was adopted and mold our political climate and anticipated political views—the dispositions of future generations—is misdirected. The days of electoral bodies are gone; the days of middleclass governance, once preserved by voter qualifications, are at risk because of the effects of universal, unqualified suffrage. Our country is different from what it was in the early Nineteenth Century when Alexis de Tocqueville said, “In other words, a democratic government is the only one in which those who vote for a tax can escape the obligation to pay it. . . . So universal suffrage really does hand the government of society over to the poor.” De Tocqueville, Alexis, *Democracy in America*, Lawrence, George, trans., Mayer, J.P., ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1969) at 210. If the effect of universal suffrage is the objection to immigration, the objections must be recognized as a backdoor and improper solution to a fundamental Constitutional issue: the right to vote.

The issues of who will govern and how they will shape American society will not be affected by stopgap immigration restrictions. Immigration is an economic and social issue, not a criminal matter, and, as discussed below, there is more to fear from the poor within the nation than the poor entering the nation if the issue is governance by the poor.

B. Belief in Free-enterprise

The idea of keeping out those willing to work for less is, also, attractive if one does not really believe in the free-enterprise system. An immigration tariff means those who really do not want to work efficiently or for a lower wage get to keep their jobs to the detriment of those needing the workers. Immigration restrictions, in other words, result in a regulated economy rather than free enterprise, and everyone in America should recognize that the thing which has made America strong has been free enterprise. Fundamental to free enterprise is the freedom to choose between alternatives, including hiring people at less money for the same job if they are willing to do that. What is wrong with that? Of course, if you are the one losing your job because someone is willing to do it for less, you are hurt as an individual, but the free market requires such harshness and the resulting adjustments by those who are displaced. The free market rewards efficiency, not tenure nor status.

C. America's Economy Lacks Strength

The notion that a free-market economy is not capable of absorbing immigrants is, also, advanced as a reason to have immigration laws. A free market, though, responds to supply and demand by finding an equilibrium where the supply and demand curves cross. Immigration increases the supply of workers. There is nothing wrong with that in a free-market economy. It is a good thing. If someone is willing to work for less, the cost of production goes down, and the cost which must be recovered on sale of goods can go down, too. That is how the market works. It is economic incentives, market forces, that drive most illegal immigrants to walk across a desert to get a job in America. The notion that the economy cannot absorb these people is belied by the lengths to which these people will go to work here.

The belief that we should only allow “qualified” immigrants offends free enterprise, as well. It is nice if there is a demand for the well educated and well-to-do, but the demand for the entry-level worker is no less important in a free-enterprise system. Allowing only a certain status is just a fall back position for those who see they have lost the field so far as general immigration limitations are concerned, and it is myopic. It is what happens during the second and third generations that really matters, and what happens in these generations is the same in a free market whether you have a long or short heritage as an American. The next generations succeed on the basis of their own merits, not the status of their parents. Is there a parent who does not want his child to be better off? Is the field worker any less likely to want his child to go to school than the educated parent? So, what difference does it make if the parents are field workers rather than scientists? The economy handles this. Someone needs to be in the laboratory working on plant genetics, but that does not mean we do not need someone in the field harvesting. Supply and demand handle this nicely. Quotas and government mandates cannot.

D. Immigrants and Social Programs

Some say, interestingly, that “illegals” work in America and receive benefits for which they are not taxed and do not pay. This argument has nothing to do with the policy behind immigration laws, whether we should have them or not; rather, it has to do with the propriety of social programs. Moreover, it presumes that the only way to benefit from these social programs is to pay into them.

The presumption that one buys entitlement to social programs or transfer payments is certainly not correct because most of the bone fide citizens of the country who receive these benefits are not contributors. They live on the dole. In fact, many on the dole are incentivized not to work or improve their situation because of the way our welfare and social programs are designed. If we were to restrict those receiving benefits to those who have or do contribute—those who pay taxes—we would find the

need for these programs sharply reduced. After all, it is the top five percent of earners paying more than half the income tax revenues and support for government programs and one-half of families in America pay no federal income taxes. It is not the top five percent nor even those who actually pay federal income taxes that benefit from the social programs. One has to wonder, therefore, how it is that those receiving the benefits from these programs are “entitled” to them.

Social programs are an effect of universal suffrage and raise issues much different from the normative question of whether one should be entitled to government subsidies—transfer payments—just because one is a citizen. Is there a right to have health insurance because you are born in America? Are you entitled to welfare because you are born in America? Are you entitled to stop working and live on Social Security because you are born in America? These are political issues, and those served by the status quo of our welfare systems, etc., have no incentive to change them (nor the politicians who pander to these groups in exchange for votes). Indeed, as the segment of society receiving government benefits grows, the chances of changing the system will diminish unless, perhaps, there is an influx of people who will vote differently: people imbued with a work ethic, like most new immigrants.

The complacency of the poor citizen dependent upon social programs for survival is the reason there is more to fear from them than immigrants. Immigrants come looking to improve their lives. They are more likely to contribute to the economy than those satisfied with largess, and illegal immigrants are far less likely to apply for some social benefit for fear of being deported.

I think that being an American should not entitle one to welfare payments, retirement or anything else if the economic system is based on the free market. Status is not rewarded in a free enterprise system, so there is a fundamental conflict between the notion that we get our retirement, etc., from the government because we are taxpayers or Americans. A purely free market says one should not have the right to get money for not working, social security or otherwise.

America does have eleemosynary programs. Americans have a charitable side. There is no difference between the major political parties so far as recognizing and wanting to do something for the downtrodden—widows, orphans, disabled, and others. The difference is how to accomplish it, one political faction thinks it ought to be the role of government—a mandated charity at the expense of taxpayers or those who can afford it, if you will—while the other thinks it ought to be individuals—voluntary and supported by private largess, charities, and churches. The former group does not have faith in individual largess while the latter wants the freedom to choose whether and to whom to give. Ultimately, though, both groups want to do the right thing so far as the needy are concerned.

Here, then, is the rub: should our charity be limited to citizens only and not humanity at large? Putting aside the question of how to do it and accepting the fact that America has chosen to have government programs and spend billions on worldwide humanitarian efforts, what is the rationale for limiting domestic programs to just citizens? Is it not the needy who are to be attended by these programs? It is disingenuous to argue that the needy should not receive benefits because they are not financial contributors—the needy, ipse dixit, never are. Rather than appealing to the prejudice of people by saying the “illegals” should not get benefits, the more appropriate argument should be focused on the manner of disbursing this charity, whether through government or private programs, internationally or domestically.

There is another befuddling problem with the notion that “illegals” can get Social Security or other welfare benefits without paying for them. One must be enrolled to get benefits, and that means the enrollee must have a Social Security number, something he cannot get “legally” if he is an “illegal.” What does an “illegal” do, therefore? Simple. Use a false or someone else’s Social Security number to get a job. This means he is working and paying Social Security taxes without the least expectation of ever getting any benefits out of the system because he is not using his Social Security number. Most “illegals” contribute to taxes and Social Security, etc., without an expectation of receiving benefits.

The “illegals” I know, and I know fifty or more families, I suppose, have no, none, zero, zip, expectation

that they will benefit from the social programs of the United States. Yes, they may go to an emergency room for medical care, but most of the people who go to emergency rooms for medical care without paying are, likewise, impecunious. Immigrants without paperwork, though, do not care about workman's compensation, Social Security benefits and the myriad of other transfer payments our government has seen fit to bestow at the expense of those who actually pay taxes; remember, these are basically transfer payments from the haves to the havenots. Immigrants from Mexico are here because they can earn more net money here than they can in Mexico. They have money taken out of their paychecks for America's social programs, but that is inconsequential to them because it is their net paychecks at which they look. Moreover, these are people who have a strong work ethic: they are here to earn money, and they know that they do not earn money unless they work, so they work hard to earn money. No work, no money. It is a very efficient system when it is not burdened with social legislation that is based on collective and negotiated notions of fairness and the right thing. Citizens are often incentivized not to work as a result of social legislation, but "illegals" are in a different situation: no-work, no-eat.

E. Crime

There is a lot said about the increase in crime that results from immigration, and it causes a great deal of hysteria, each side of the immigration argument making arguments that are hard to square with objective facts. The Cato Institute did a study on immigrant crimes in Arizona and found that such fears are based more on perception than reality. A good friend of mine recently told me, "Stop talking to me about this. I do not want the facts to get in the way of what I want to believe," an unusually candid articulation of the problem when it comes to talking about immigrants and crime.

One big problem in the Arizona debate is that the perceptions about immigrants and crime do not square with the most basic data. After years of witnessing a rise in the number of illegal immigrants in their state, the people of Arizona are in reality less likely to be victims of crime than at any time in the past four decades.

According to the most recent figures from the U.S. Department of Justice, the violent crime rate in Arizona in 2008 was the lowest it has been since 1971; the property crime rate fell to its lowest point since 1966. In the past decade, as illegal immigrants were drawn in record numbers by the housing boom, the rate of violent crimes in Phoenix and the entire state fell by more than 20 percent, a steeper drop than in the overall U.S. crime rate.

Phoenix suffers from its share of crime, but it is not out of proportion for a large city. Among similar-sized metro areas, such as Boston, Dallas, Detroit, San Francisco and Washington, D.C., Phoenix had the lowest violent crime rate in 2008. In Detroit, which is not known as a magnet for illegal Hispanic immigrants, the rate was three times that of Phoenix.

Griswold, Daniel, "Unfounded Fear of Immigrant Crime Grips Arizona."

Alex Nowrasteh, a policy analyst at the Competitive Enterprise Institute, published a piece in the Wall Street Journal on July 28, 2010, that said:
 Arizona's law is popular partly because Arizonans fear an illegal immigrant crime wave. But crime rates in Arizona are at historic lows. According to the state Bureau of Justice, violent crime rates in 2008 (the latest year for which data are available) were lower than any point since 1976. Property crime rates have declined even more steeply, with 2008 figures lower than any point since 1966. It is a myth, then, that illegal immigrants bring a wave of crime in their wake.
 Arizona's new enforcement measures won't solve the problems of unauthorized immigration and the black market in labor. Solutions will only come from expanding legal immigration—by removing barriers to the movement of people across borders (except keeping out criminals, potential terrorists, and people with infectious diseases).

III.

The rationales for excluding immigrants by means of quotas or status or some other classification does not survive ratiocination vis-à-vis our economic system: free enterprise. Indeed, careful thought militates in favor of freedom of immigration—no quotas, no restrictions based on status, etc. My personal experience likewise favors a less jingoistic attitude. The “illegals” I know are good people. They are hard workers. They have strong families. They are religious. America should embrace such people because they share core values with Americans.

I am not happy with the fact that so many of my Hispanic friends are here illegally. I do not believe, however, they are committing a crime in the traditional or moral sense. I think of traditional crime as offenses against the health, safety and welfare of society or individuals: assault, battery, theft, murder, mayhem, destruction of property, etc. What we have with undocumented immigrants are people who are, generally speaking, socially desirable. They are law-abiding people in the traditional sense. They certainly do not want trouble that will focus attention on them, which will get them deported, for example. There are problems with these people, but perhaps fewer problems than there are with any other group living at the poverty level. What is interesting, though, is what happens to these people after the first generation living in America: they become entrepreneurs and successful, just like our ancestors. That does not happen, by the way, with the native-born citizens on the dole who develop a multi-generation tradition of reliance on society for their well-being.

I, like almost every American, am descended from immigrants. Mine came here before there were immigration laws, but they came for the same reason immigrants come today. They were oppressed in their countries of origin, religiously or socially or economically, so they came to America for religious, social, or economic reasons: to better their lives. They came to live where there is freedom of choice and a free market where status and birth are not barriers to success. The first generation or two struggled, but the succeeding became and are successful. What a great paradigm. It has worked for so many Americans, why not for today’s immigrants? One nice thing about competition: it does not let those who have a measure of success rest on their laurels. If there is competition from the new immigrants for jobs and efficiency, that is a boon to those already here because it will incentivize them to work more efficiently, themselves. They need to out work them. That is the free market.

It remains startling to me that there are those who would thwart the effects of the free market by raising barriers to entry so that the pool of labor is artificially restricted to the detriment of free enterprise. Why are we so far removed from freedom?

IV.

There is one more reason for my resistance to our current immigration laws and Arizona’s recent law. It is more personal. It is because I am religious. I happen to believe we are all children of our Father in Heaven. I have often wondered if God is pleased with political lines between countries that separate His children. Will it make a difference to the Lord if we build a fence?

The Old Testament has something to say about treatment of aliens. One of the enumerated sins—there were not many—for which the Jews were condemned by the Lord before Jerusalem’s destruction and the resulting Diaspora was the treatment of the aliens among them. “In thee [meaning Jerusalem] . . . have they dealt by oppression with the stranger [how the King James translators translated the word for foreigner or alien]; in thee have they vexed the fatherless and the widow. Ezekiel 22:7. “The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and the needy; yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.” Ezekiel 22:29. The Old Testament has many scriptures that deal with the non-disparate treatment the Lord required for foreigners. To Him, it seems, a boundary between one nation and another is nonsense.

How can someone with a religious and moral foundation rationalize the breakup of families and the

deportation of individuals who were brought into this country as infants and know no other country? Is it not tantamount to oppression of the “strangers” among us? And, as discussed above, deleterious to our economy? Lots of people say that they believe in honoring and sustaining the law, but they are too quick to repeat this aphoristic refrain without deeper consideration. Was it right for the founding fathers to flout the laws of England and King George? Germany required extermination of the Jews, making it a crime even to harbor or to protect Jews from the death camps; were those laws to be honored and sustained by religious adherents to the Bible, either the Old or New Testament? Was the internment of the Japanese in World War II a “good” law? Did Rosa Parks really break a law deserving honor and support when she refused to give up her seat to a white person and move to the back of the bus? The rubric of honor and sustain, in other words, is no refuge for those who support immigration laws just because they are the laws.

Mormons are particularly patriotic when it comes to the law. Indeed, much of the support for Arizona’s vitriol comes from Phoenix’s “east valley,” the Mesa/Gilbert area of the valley, which is heavily populated by members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (“the Church”). One of the Articles of Faith of the Church says, “We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law.” The Articles of Faith of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Art. 12. The Mormons who cite this article of faith in support of their position on illegal immigration like black and white characterization of issues; however, these same Mormons do not consider the founder of the Church, Joseph Smith, a scofflaw even though he was a fugitive escapee from a Missouri jail at the time of his martyrdom in Carthage, Illinois; the injustice of the Missouri imprisonment, they may rationalize, justifies Smith’s escape and avoidance of process. Of course, these Mormons would not feel compelled to sustain the examples of unjust laws in the preceding paragraph either. Perhaps, then, these Mormons accede to the easiness of the answer rather than consider its rightness.

Mormons are like most people when it comes to easy answers. Easy answers are, well, easy, while thoughtful answers require linedrawing between shades of grey rather than black and white. The Doctrine & Covenants, which is accepted by me and the Church as scripture, contains a section on government and laws that requires more depth than the foregoing article of faith:

We believe that the commission of crime should be punished according to the nature of the offense . . . according to their criminality and their tendency to evil among men . . . and for the public peace and tranquility all men should step forward and use their ability in bringing offenders against good laws to punishment.

D. & C 134:8 (bolding added).

What are “good” laws? Are they only those that criminalize the upset of public peace and tranquility? Are they laws that keep a man from earning a living for his family among his brothers and sisters, all children of God? Does a “good” law serve to break up families and separate children from their fathers and mothers?

Mormons who advocate closed borders, deportation of illegal immigrants, and individual states taking strong positions on immigration into the United States find themselves at cross-purposes with the official position of the Church on immigration.

The Church’s adoption of The Utah Compact is notable, but not surprising because it is consistent with the actions of the Church. The leader of the Mormon church is a Prophet, like the Old Testament prophets, who is revered by me and the membership of the Church as God’s oracle on earth. The Prophet has two counselors, the three of them forming what is called the First Presidency. The First Presidency, really the Prophet, is sustained by a Quorum of Twelve Apostles similar to the Lord’s twelve at the meridian of time. This is how the Prophet at the time, Spencer W. Kimball, and the Quorum of the Twelve dealt with the illegal immigrant question vis-à-vis worthy candidates for baptism:

For President [Spencer W.] Kimball to express an opinion boldly and expect compliance was rare, but

years later Francis Gibbons [secretary to the First Presidency] remembered an incident because it was so unusual. In a joint meeting of the First Presidency and the [Quorum of the] Twelve considering whether illegal aliens should be baptized, some of the Brethren [members of the Twelve] expressed the view that as law breakers they should not be baptized. After hearing all the views, President Kimball reportedly said, “I think they should be baptized.” that ended the discussion. Kimball, Edward L., *Lengthen Your Stride* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2005) at 34.

The Church continues to baptize these “illegals” and even sends them on proselyting missions, but only within the United States so they do not have to cross an international boundary requiring them to have a passport. Indeed, rather than travel by airplane to their assigned field of work within the United States, undocumented missionaries for the Church travel to their assigned areas by car. I presume this is done so they do not have to pass through security where identification would be required.

V.

There is no doubt that the evil-minded criminal element should be arrested and punished. Those with communicable diseases should not be admitted to the United States. Those with clear criminal tendencies, like potential terrorists and enemies to the United States, should not be allowed into the United States. But, what about the honest, hard-working family man who only came or comes here for what almost all of our ancestors came: freedom and the chance to succeed? Our history and our market economy answers this question: we want and need these people because they contribute to our prosperity.

The question of border security and amnesty are easier once one realizes the importance of immigrants. Something ought to be done when good men seeking work to support themselves and their families risk their lives crossing the desert because of a roadblock at the border. These people cut through the desert like those of us who cut through neighborhoods to avoid a roadblocking accident on a road. The answer to the road-blocking accident, though, is not to post police at every side street to keep cars from cutting through the residential neighborhood; rather, the answer is to unblock the road. Likewise, we need to unblock the immigration road so good people do not feel compelled to cut through the desert. Will the criminals then use the road? Of course not. But having the road open will make it easier to identify who is well-intentioned and who is not. Criminals cannot use the road; they have to cut through. They will always dig tunnels and take advantage of immigrants risking their lives for a job and family if they think they can use them as mules or extract a tariff for transporting them here or hiding them in a drop house. Let’s get these evil-minded criminals, truly criminals because they are involved in anti-social behavior, but let’s embrace the family-man worker who contributes to our economy and just wants to work hard and improve his station in life.

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