



Edict Usurps Constitutional Values

Ramin Pejan

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I want to express my extreme shock and absolute revulsion at President Trump's recent executive order on immigration. I am an Iranian born, Canadian passport holder, and legal permanent resident. I have lived in Laguna Beach for over three years and I am proud to call this community home. If I was travelling back the days after the order came out, I would have been denied entry to see my family and come home. And I am hardly alone. There are over 500,000 people like me who hold green cards from the seven countries covered by the order. In one case, legal permanent residents from Yemen were sent back, and in many other cases permanent residents were detained for hours, and even handcuffed.

I went to university and law school in America, work as a full time lawyer and even have worked for government. I cannot believe that any person, regardless of their political affiliation, would support the executive order on immigration, which was arbitrarily adopted without thinking through the repercussions on thousands of individuals and their families. By all accounts, the order has wreaked havoc on thousands of individuals and families, from refugees who were vetted for three years and finally on planes coming to reunite with their families to permanent residents like me.

It appears that there was no effort to understand the problem before creating a proposal. Are terrorists really from these countries attacking the U.S.? According to conservative leaning think-tank Cato Institute, no. Would an order like this make us safer? How so? Is the current vetting flawed? How so? These are basic questions, none of which President Trump has answered for the American public.

Instead, President Trump is playing a game with our lives, and with the stroke of his pen has ruined the lives of thousands upon thousands of people. It is inhumane and an assault on human dignity to single out entire peoples based on their national origin and religion for what we are made to believe, without any empirical evidence, is for the protection of our national security. The order is dangerous in its broadness and vagueness, resulting in confusion around

its implementation and casting a wide net of victims. This entire process is an affront to our democratic values of freedom, non-discrimination, tolerance and respect.

I wrote to Rep. Dana Rohrabacher requesting him to oppose President Trump's draconian measure and calling on him to represent all of us in this community, and protect all of our rights. I asked him to please send a clear message to President Trump that he is usurping on many of our Constitutional values and request that the executive order be withdrawn immediately.

But Laguna Beach can also do more. As a city we should make every effort to condemn these types of acts, which serve only to divide us and promote hate and intolerance. The mayors of cities across America have spoken out against the order, including Los Angeles, New York City, Boston, San Francisco, Seattle, Columbus, Philadelphia, and Portland to name a few. Strong and diverse voices must continue to challenge all acts and measures that violate our basic sense of human dignity, many more of which will be forthcoming. I can only hope that compassion, rationality and tolerance, and most important solidarity, will overcome the ominous seeds President Trump is planting.