



US Immigration Stalemate

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Whatever people think of President Donald Trump does not matter because he speaks his mind, especially on immigration issues. This makes it very simple because it obviates the need to decipher his message or parse his words.

Immigration is a sensitive issue for every country. Governments should have the choice to limit the number of immigrants who enter their countries as well as to determine who to allow in.

If that limit is breached, it sets in motion a political reaction to stop the flow of immigrants.

In predominant white countries such as the United States, Canada and Germany, the first targets are immigrants of a different race, colour, culture, religion and language. The reaction is much harsher if the immigrants retain their separate and distinctive identities.

No one has the right to illegally enter another country and stay, believing that the privilege of citizenship is an entitlement. It is not. It is the right of governments to decide who and how many foreigners enter their country. Governments must have the right to decide what qualities and qualifications immigrants must have before being admitted on either a temporary or permanent basis into their country.

During the 2016 US presidential election, Mr. Trump promised to reduce the number of people

entering the United States and to repatriate those who are not citizens or permanent residents in the US, including the so-called “Dreamers.” This is based on the view that there are too many illegal migrants in the country. Many are taking jobs away from Americans and others are criminals.

Polls have shown that Trump’s immigration policy is supported by a majority of right wing conservatives. His preference for white, educated immigrants from Western Europe and his derogatory reference to the people of Africa, Haiti, and El Salvador have attracted worldwide criticism.

Trump’s plan to increase the number of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) programme for undocumented immigrants who entered the US as children from 800,000 to 1.8 million persons was seen as a compromise.

However, his decision to rescind DACA did not please most members of Congress because it could place more than ten million undocumented immigrants in the US in real jeopardy of being deported, a promise Mr. Trump made during the presidential campaign.

Data from the Migration Policy Institute in 2016 shows that 82 percent of the undocumented immigrants have been living in the United States for more than five years, 68 percent for more than 10 years and 26 percent for more than 20 years.

Their impact on the US economy has been positive. Studies show that undocumented immigrants have directly contributed \$433 billion or 2.7 percent to the US economy, and most was spent on the consumption of goods and services.

Many of the low-paying jobs for which undocumented immigrants are hired are jobs which the American worker will not willingly accept. In the absence of cheap, undocumented labour, the costs of these businesses and the price of the goods and services they produce would rise.

Many of the businesses would be forced to close either because they would no longer be competitive. This supports the findings of the Cato Institute that the removal of undocumented immigrants would, at least in the short term, reduce the rate of growth in the US economy by two percent, which means that the 2.3 percent growth achieved last year would be reduced to almost zero.

In 1981, President Reagan declared: “Illegal immigrants, in considerable numbers, have become productive members of our society and are a basic part of our work force.

And in 2006, President George W Bush said: “It is neither wise nor realistic to round up millions of people, many with deep roots in the United States, and send them across the border.”