

The Dallas Morning News

Letters to the Editor - Wealth gap, gas prices, name-calling, immigration

October 12, 2022

A little fuzzy math ...

Re: “Numerical disadvantage,” by Phil Gramm and John F. Early, Sunday Opinion.

In their column explaining that the wealth gap in America is not as big as some portray, Gramm and Early give statistics showing that the income of America’s impoverished workers is closer to the income of the financially elite than it was 50 years ago.

In their statistics, they include both government-dole income and compensation for work as they calculate the finances of the impoverished. This mixing of income shows the real economic hole our government has dug.

The ever-increasing portion of America’s workers who depend on government income is a major contributor to our growing national debt. The best solution to this problem — increasing the labor income of impoverished workers so that they can go off of the government dole — is not practical when America’s employers are also America’s political campaign financiers.

Elected officials enter office beholden to America’s employers for campaign donations. Corporate owners and managers work hard to keep labor costs at a minimum. Solving this problem will likely require a change in campaign finance.

... Or a circular argument?

It would be funny if it weren’t so sad. Gramm and Early think they are proving there is no substantial financial inequality by adding in the financial assistance that low-income individuals and families receive because they are near the poverty level and then making it appear they are nowhere near it.

They are used-car salesmen twisting an argument that counts “governmental transfer payments,” including refundable tax credits, SNAP benefits, Medicaid, housing subsidies and other aid as income. These transfer payments wouldn’t be needed if people were able to make a living wage instead of attempting to subsist near a percentage of the poverty level. Companies see no need to trickle down the massive revenue created by a productive yet undervalued workforce.

You, sirs, are trying to make a case that doesn’t exist. Both of you are from so-called conservative think tanks: CATO and the American Enterprise Institute. Apparently, what you want to *conserve* is the status quo that serves to keep you in a position to which you are unfortunately all too accustomed.

Jody Pellerin, Rockwall

Same gas, higher price

Re: “Crude cuts propel prices — Move by OPEC+ comes after months of lower costs at pump, could impact U.S. midterms,” Thursday news story.

The price of gasoline at my local station shot up 30 cents overnight. We all know that the gasoline in the tank this morning is the same gasoline that was in the tank last night.

Every time the price of crude goes up, the price of gas instantly goes up. But when the price of crude drops, gasoline prices fall much more slowly. We also know that it takes six months for the crude coming out of the ground to reach my gas station in the form of gasoline.

This is just plain gouging. I also have to wonder: Is it just coincidence that such inflation fuels voter discontent one month prior to elections?

Steve McCluer, Far North Dallas

Biden helped make this mess

Fuel prices have been rising since President Joe Biden killed the Keystone pipeline program and instituted other policies that attacked fossil fuel production.

Sure OPEC+, even after Biden pleaded with that group not to cut crude production, did what it perceived to be in its best interests and not ours. The bottom line is that at one time, before Biden, the U.S. was energy independent and our president didn't have to go to OPEC with hat in hand to beg for more crude.

For Biden to call OPEC's cutting crude production shortsighted but not put the blame on his anti-energy policies is pure hypocrisy.

Don Skaggs, Garland

Pot calling the kettle black

Re: “Move away from the grifters,” by Darryl Smyers, Oct. 1 Letters.

Smyers begins, “The name-calling and divisiveness has got to stop.” Next, he says that Donald Trump voters are “conspiracy theorists and race-baiting charlatans” who have become “a cult” of “idolatry” at “the MAGA altar.”

Kudos to this writer for helping to stop divisive name-calling.

Ken Ashby, Dallas

Slow, regulated migration sought

The issue of immigration has become a common topic in the political landscape, yet it would benefit all people, native or not, for heavy regulation of immigrant arrivals. The benefits immigrants provide and have provided are undoubtedly real, as well as their right to life.

Yet, while everyone speaks of moral and economic reasons, nobody seems to point to the social aspect. If large sums of immigrants flood the gates of the United States, large pockets of immigrants will create a societal bubble that blocks out assimilation into American values and traditions.

This was seen in the industrial era. These pockets create regions of people locked away from other Americans, both unable to communicate and unable to understand other cultures.

This is why I firmly preach that slow and regulated immigration should be applied. With fewer immigrants coming in, we retain the benefits of migrant workers while encouraging migrants to assimilate into language, traditions and ethics.

While it would be a pleasure to allow all people into the United States, it's simply a task that must undergo excruciating caution, or the fabric of unity may fall.

Braedon Kayd Darden, Grand Prairie