

Paste

Trump Set Up an Immigration Snitch Line. It Didn't Work.

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Trump has an inbuilt, bone-deep need to sell people out. He's done this his entire life. Eventually his failing Administration will slouch far into loose-lipped incontinence, and he will have no power left, and no one left to betray. What biological cause compels him towards increasing cruelty? It could be a simple perversity to see how far into hell he can go, and at what speed. Perhaps the illegal phrenologists of Victorian-age medicine could tell us. But their books have been burned and their unscrupulous corpses were crushed under heavy mountain-stones decades ago ... so all we have left to go on is rife speculation.

According to the site *Splinter*, Donald has topped himself again. Trump, pandering to his base, came up with a service only your racist FOX News-loving grandfather could use. It's called the Victims of Immigration Crime Engagement hotline, or VOICE. It was named for all those immigrant crimes *which do not fucking happen in our very real reality*.

Let's get that out of the way, first thing. We've been down this path before. The early twentieth century, which was much more racist and xenophobic than our own time, studied this question *exhaustively*. Immigration does not cause crime. Write that on your arm, and on the foreheads of your friends and neighbors. Text it to your classmates. Burn it onto the face of Mars with letters a thousand miles long. Immigrants. Do. Not. Cause. Crime.

NBC disputes Trump:

The number of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. tripled between the 1990s and 2013, while violent crime declined 48% and property crime fell 41% over that period. What's more, a slew of studies have found that immigrants as a whole — both legal and undocumented — commit less crime than native-born Americans. One study in Criminology found that “violent crime rates tended to decrease as metropolitan areas experienced gains in their concentration of immigrants.”

Politifact disputes Trump. Immigrants are under-represented in California prisons. American-born men are incarcerated at a rate that is *two-and-half-times greater* than newcomers.

The American Immigration Council also reported that 2010 Census data shows incarceration rates of young, less educated Mexican, Salvadoran and Guatemalan men — which comprise the bulk of the unauthorized population — are “significantly lower” than incarceration rates of native-born young men without a high-school diploma. Specifically, for Mexican men ages 18 to 39, the incarceration rate in 2010 was 2.8 percent, compared to 10.7 percent for native-born men in the same age group, the council's report said.

Speaking on *PBS NewsHour*, the sociologist Robert Adelman disputes Trump:

Immigration-crime research over the past 20 years has widely corroborated the conclusions of a number of early 20th-century presidential commissions that found no backing for the immigration-crime connection. Although there are always individual exceptions, the literature demonstrates that immigrants commit fewer crimes, on average, than native-born Americans.

From the same source, criminologist Charis Kubrin disputes Trump:

We conducted a meta-analysis, meaning we systematically evaluated available research on the immigration-crime relationship in neighborhoods, cities and metropolitan areas across the U.S. We examined findings from more than 50 studies published between 1994 and 2014, including studies conducted by our copanelists, Adelman and Reid. Our analysis of the literature reveals that immigration has a weak crime-suppressing effect. In other words, more immigration equals less crime.

Even the right-wing Cato Institute disputes Trump:

But several studies, over many years, have concluded that immigrants are less likely to commit crimes than people born in the United States. And experts say the available evidence does not support the idea that undocumented immigrants commit a disproportionate share of crime. “There’s no way I can mess with the numbers to get a different conclusion,” said Alex Nowrasteh, immigration policy analyst at the libertarian Cato Institute, which advocates more liberal immigration laws.

When Trump said in his Executive Order of January 25 that immigrants “present a significant threat to national security and public safety,” he was either a fool or a fraud. Given his tendency to be both, why choose one?

His administration, untethered from reality, proceeded with their nationalist party line.

From *Splinter*:

In April, the Trump Administration launched what it called the Victims of Immigration Crime Engagement (VOICE) hotline, with a stated mission to “provide proactive, timely, adequate, and professional services to victims of crimes committed by removable aliens.” But internal logs of calls to VOICE obtained by Splinter show that hundreds of Americans seized on the hotline to lodge secret accusations against acquaintances, neighbors, or even their own family members, often to advance petty personal grievances.

How could this possibly go wrong?

The reports rarely involve the sort of dangerous criminality that Donald Trump campaigned against. Despite the VOICE office’s statement that the service “is not a hotline to report crime,” callers are using it to alert Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers to minor infractions, or merely to the presence of people they suspect of being undocumented immigrants.

By their own weapons shall they be struck down. The far-right, who think food stamps are the first step towards totalitarianism, support a secret informer system. I can’t get over that. There’s rich irony here. Conservatives claimed for years that liberals, given the chance, would set up an ideological regime where children told on parents, friends betrayed friends, servant turn on master, and so on. Cuba, they screamed. Soviet Russia, they hollered. *It’s all 1984!*

But their Orange Messiah has made done just that: created a snitch service so anonymous grievances can be shared. This is legitimately the most middle-aged, grumpy, conservative uncle approach I have ever heard. Nowadays, the Net is primarily a home for bitchy small-business Dads in Indiana to vent about their daughter's sexy Latino boyfriend. Spend some time reading Free Republic, or the comments on any YouTube video featuring Obama, and you'll see what I mean.

VOICE is an extension of that demographic into the space of law enforcement. The far-right gift for self-owning is on display, and it's just beautiful. Americans have a talent for turning the legitimately scary into the profoundly stupid, and by God, we've done it here too. Reader, I want you to imagine the kind of complaints that Trump's retinue of entitled, suburban, Ski-doo-owning dorks would have. The VOICE line has captured them for posterity. *Splinter* listed a few:

Caller requested to report her mother-in law and sister-in law. Caller stated these individuals came to the U.S. as tourists and stayed in the U.S. in order to get legal status.

Caller stated the undocumented individual is destroying her family and is committing adultery.

Caller requested to report his ex wife that is undocumented as an overstayed on her visa.

Caller requested to report the illegal alien because the illegal alien will not let her see [her] granddaughter. ...

Caller requested to report an undocumented alien who is accusing him of domestic violence in order to obtain legal status. Caller claims subject is his legal wife.

Caller wanted to know how to report an illegal marriage (sham marriage) with an immigration benefit involved. Caller stated that the subject [name redacted by Splinter] pressed domestic violence charges against her in order to receive a Visa.

Caller claimed subject made false accusations of domestic violence towards the caller. Caller claimed subject is trying to claim Asylum through the false accusation of domestic violation in order for subject to stay in the U.S.

A tool designed for ethnic cleansing—for driving suspicious brown people out in the open—is now being used as Star Court of petty, Facebook-wine-mom grievances. Don't get me wrong: VOICE is doing real damage to our country, and should be shut down immediately. But we need to temper our repulsion with the appropriate perspective. VOICE is disturbing in its malice, and hilarious in its attempted execution.

Not that Trump's supporters ever believed in much of anything beyond fighting their dreary culture war. They would remove the last traditional barriers of the Constitution and the rights of man to give Obama's followers a thumb in the eye. You can tell because Trump's Homeland Security Department kept the *spreadsheet of information online*, and Team Grievance has not objected. I need to reiterate that: when these people speak of God-given rights, they are not serious. If violations of privacy mattered to them, they wouldn't call a gossip squad to inform on their neighbors, and they would certainly object to ICE. Rights, like clubs, are only useful when threatening poor and marginalized people. Otherwise, they can be forgotten when convenient.

VOICE is an incompetent, racist dragnet, just as befuddled and clumsy as the President who invented it. Here's a tip for your hotline: there's a jackass in a White House in Washington

causing massive damage to my property. Yes, I have reason to believe he is an immigrant from Manhattan. Yes, I am a tax-paying, patriotic American. Anyway, VOICE, he's a danger to my neighborhood. I advise you to lure him outdoors by telling him there's the largest rally ever, much bigger than Obama's. I assure you, my information is genuine, and will save the country at least three years of crime. We all must do our part.