

RedState

Laura Ingraham's Comments Were Wrong In Every Way

Sarah Quinlan

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Fox News host Laura Ingraham's rhetoric has become increasingly questionable; during her show last night, Ingraham lamented "massive demographic changes" that have caused the end of the "America we know and love."

Ingraham's rant was in response to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the Democrat nominee for New York's 14th congressional district. During an interview with Pod Save America, the podcast hosted by several former Obama staffers, Ocasio-Cortez repeatedly commented on America's changing demographics.

I am neither a fan of Ocasio-Cortez' politics nor of her inability to answer questions with coherent and factual answers, no matter how often she brings up her Boston University economics degree. However, Ingraham's offense was not with Ocasio-Cortez' word salad answers, ignorance of policy, or derision towards rural America. Instead, she took offense at the idea of changing demographics:

Because in some parts of the country, it does seem like the America that we know and love doesn't exist anymore. Massive demographic changes have been foisted upon the American people and they're changes that none of us ever voted for and most of us don't like. From Virginia to California, we see stark examples of how radically in some ways the country has changed. Now, much of this is related to both illegal and in some cases legal immigration that of course progressives love.

As RedState senior contributor and Washington Examiner contributor Kimberly Ross pointed out, this language is bigoted and anti-American.

When Ingraham refers to the end of the "America we know and love," what does she mean? When Ingraham says "the country has changed" in radical ways, to what is she referring?

Because, even though I wholeheartedly believe America is the greatest country that has ever existed. America is not perfect, and her 242 years of history are filled with shameful events — from the savagery of our early history, to slavery, to extrajudicial lynchings and implementing legal discrimination, to women being treated as second-class citizens.

For example, Laura Ingraham was born in 1963.

That year, George Wallace was elected governor of Alabama and declared “segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever”; later that year, he stood in the doorway of the University of Alabama in an attempt to prevent the entrance of two black Americans.

That year, Martin Luther King, Jr., was arrested, issued his *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, and gave his “I Have a Dream” speech at the March on Washington.

That year, civil rights activist and NAACP leader Medgar Evers was murdered by a white supremacist.

That year, the 16th Street Church Bombing killed four little girls in Birmingham, Alabama.

That year, President John F. Kennedy was murdered.

Is that the America that Ingraham says she knew and loved?

During Ingraham’s lifetime, Americans of color have been repeatedly denied justice and forced to fight to receive the rights they were due. During Ingraham’s lifetime, women have had to demand to be treated as human beings in their own right. It wasn’t until the sexual revolution that sexual harassment and domestic violence were seen as serious crimes, not private family matters; marital rape was not outlawed in all 50 states until 1993. Women were not even able to apply for credit in their own names until more than a decade after Ingraham was born.

Is that the America that Ingraham wishes still existed?

I find it utterly baffling that people express nostalgia for a pleasant, untroubled past in American history, because that has never truly existed. For example, that idealistic and wholesome life depicted in *Leave It to Beaver*? The show aired from 1957 to 1963, when racial segregation was underway, the civil rights movement was heating up, and women like June Cleaver were unable to make their own choices about their careers and lives.

Furthermore, Ingraham says “most of us don’t like” the “massive demographic changes” that are the reason “that the America we know and love doesn’t exist anymore.”

Her statement is definitively false. According to Pew, 58% of Americans consistently say increasing diversity makes America a better place to live.

And, as Conor Friedersdorf points out at the *Atlantic*, it’s remarkable Ingraham would say the America she loved doesn’t exist anymore. Why would Ingraham no longer love her country simply because the appearances of her country’s people have changed? **Is Ingraham’s love of her country based on the ideals of her country or on the demographics of her country?**

I love this country because it recognizes “that all men are created equal” and “that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights.” I love this country because it is based on the belief that the people should be safe from tyranny and their rights should be protected. I love this country because of the ideals that America was built upon.

I love my country because of what America represents, not because of the background of her people.

As a friend on Twitter said, if the only commonality I have with a fellow citizen is “American” on our passports, that is all I need. Ronald Reagan once promoted the belief that anyone can come to this country and become an American — which is possible here because America is an idea, not an ethnicity, and no American is more American than another based on birth, wealth, religion, political party, or race.

And, speaking of becoming an American — it’s further noteworthy that Ingraham criticizes *legal* immigration and disparagingly refers to it as something that “of course progressives love.” Since when did Republicans turn against *legal* immigration? Since when are Republicans against the idea of people *legally* coming to America in pursuit of a better life and the American Dream?

Immigrants helped this country become what it is. And America endures because of the core American values that guide us, not because of what her people look like.

Some readers may give Ingraham the benefit of the doubt and believe she was referring to assimilation, not race. Ingraham has, after all, adopted three children from foreign countries. I read her comments as referring to race because of context, the inclusion of legal immigration, and her past statements.

However, even if her comments were regarding assimilation, she would be wrong. Multiculturalism is a part of America’s history, and so she remains America, regardless of the concerns and fears that erupt with each immigration wave.

And that’s because birthright citizenship encourages assimilation, according to Alex Nowrasteh, Senior Immigration Policy Analyst at Cato Institute.

Furthermore, Nowrasteh says, recent immigrants’ assimilation to American culture and values is doing “as well as or [on] a better pace of assimilation than previous immigrant waves.”

Last year, Nowrasteh noted that immigrants typically have high confidence and trust in America’s government institutions, which can result in strong patriotism; immigrants often have negative experiences with the governments in their home countries, making them feel more positively towards America.

Moreover, Pew revealed in 2013 that U.S.-born children of Hispanic and Asian immigrants (making the children second-generation Americans) are much more likely than their immigrant parents to speak English; “to think of themselves as a ‘typical American’”; and to “place more importance than does the general public on hard work and career success.”

So Ingraham is just as wrong about assimilation as she is about race.

It is also not readily apparent from Ingraham's comments that it is the *Democrat* Party that had been consistently losing for the past decade — they lost more than 1000 seats across the country under Obama — while Republicans thoroughly dominated the map in 2016, with overwhelming victories in the White House, Congress, governorships, and state legislatures.

Laura Ingraham's comments last night were despicable, and it is not virtue-signaling for me to point that out but rather simply standing up for what I believe is right; such comments should not be treated as normal or acceptable. When former Ku Klux Klan Grand Wizard David Duke is cheering on Ingraham's comments, that's a side that I do not want to be on.

And, to the people who want to give Ingraham the benefit of the doubt, **it's now an undeniable fact that language and rhetoric such as hers is being used by white supremacists**; if *my* language were being celebrated by a former leader of the KKK, I would rush to change my language.

Suzanne Scott was appointed as Fox News' CEO in May; she told producers in June they would be held accountable for incendiary or inflammatory remarks. It is unknown at this time whether Scott or Ingraham's producers will discipline Ingraham or condemn her comments, but both should happen — and fast.