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🇺🇸 IMMIGRATION: "WHAT IS?" and "WHAT ISN'T?"

by Steve Bakke - July 2, 2018



Most acknowledge our immigration system must be fixed, but we can't even agree on the value of border security. And it's election time, so Democrats are trying to "make hay" from the hysteria surrounding the unfortunate process for handling illegal immigrants and their children.

Trump's "zero tolerance" policy has merely taken Obama's practices and introduced stricter law enforcement. Detention centers and shelters were always there and being used to house children separated from parents. Laws haven't changed, earlier settlements are in force, court decisions still stand, and agreements are intact. The President's greatest transgression seems to be more diligently complying with and enforcing them.

The biggest change Trump made was to stop releasing immigrants and their families into the general population, often never returning for their hearing. That led to separating families on a temporary basis because the adults were subject to detention and lengthy investigation. But we were unprepared to support the need for many things, including housing and shelters. Trump's action ended up shining a light on immigration law enforcement

deficiencies that have been festering for decades. And be assured, this problem dealing with families didn't start with Trump's decisions.

To put this in proper context we need to recall what prominent Democrats have said about immigration control, and about "the children," in recent years. Have they changed their tune just to oppose our President? Consider the following:

- "The fact is, the reality is: The children are there and we need to address the problem." – Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi, 2014 – reaction to concern about children being detained during Obama's presidency – but no solution was found.



- "People who enter the United States without our permission are illegal aliens, and illegal aliens should not be treated the same as people who entered the United States legally." – Senator Schumer, 2010.
- "We simply cannot allow people to pour into the United States undetected, undocumented (and) unchecked, and circumventing the line of people who are waiting patiently, diligently and lawfully to become immigrants in this country." – Then-Senator Obama, 2005 news conference.
- "All Americans.....are rightly disturbed by the large numbers of illegal aliens entering our country. The jobs they hold might otherwise be held by citizens or legal immigrants. The public services they use impose burdens on our taxpayers." – President Clinton, 1995 State of the Union Address.
- "We have to send a clear message: Just because your child gets across the border, that doesn't mean the child gets to stay. We don't want to send a message that's contrary to our laws or will encourage more children to make that dangerous journey." – Former Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, 2014 town hall meeting.

I'm becoming convinced that Trump's actions related to immigration, alternating between focused decisions and outrageous comments, is his unique way of hollering to Congress: "Fix the problem!" Sometimes it works, but it's annoying to many. Detractors from both parties must get beyond mere annoyance and work together to make our immigration system work.

Exaggerated accusations against Trump are counter-productive. False equivalencies conjuring up Nazi death camps and Japanese detention camps serve no purpose other than diminishing the tragedy in both of those events. In spite of that, and through it all, public opinion seems to be gradually favoring Trump's immigration and border security goals. How can this be, with all of the hysteria coming from Democrats in Congress and media? Even with the outrageous stuff going on between Trump and his opposition, the public sees through the facade, and realizes not much has changed from the Obama's tenure regarding family separation issues. American citizens seem to know "what is" and "what isn't."

Bottom line, bi-partisan immigration legislation is achievable. The majority of Americans, as well as most of our lawmakers, would probably agree with a reasonable humanitarian solution for DACA "Dreamers," and to building the boarder wall. But in spite of having this common ground, some members of each party refuse to compromise on these "red lines." Let's set that aside and get it done. Only then should we move on to consider other issues, including chain migration and refugee policies.

And Mr. President, it's your responsibility to calm things down and get the details of your policy on the right track.