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IMMIGRATION CONTROL: SOMETIMES IT'S A CATCH-22

By Steve Bakke  January 23, 2019



Recall the novel/movie "Catch-22." A fighter pilot was concerned about his psychological fitness to fly. He is required to submit himself for evaluation. However, doing so was adequate evidence of a rational mind, so he was considered fit to fly. If he flies, he's crazy but if he refuses, he's rational, and has to fly, which is evidence of being crazy.....and so on. "Catch-22" has become the catch phrase designating a relentlessly circular bureaucratic logic which prevents a solution.

Let's look at one phase of immigration control. The administration is criticized by virtually everybody for not having information and monitoring control over who is in the U.S. from other countries, and whether they are undocumented or holding visas. If so, has the visa expired? Using funds for identifying and solving the expired visa issue is one argument against funding Trump's "barrier" project.

So, the Administration inserts a question into the 2020 census to identify citizenship status. But a court said no you can't do it. Can they make that query outside of the census process? Nope, they can't. They're given a responsibility, but blocked from fulfilling it.

It's today's version of "Catch-22." You can't make this stuff up.