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Amnesty Raises Profound Questions

Perhaps one good result of President George W. Bush's toying with the unpopular notion of granting amnesty to millions of illegal aliens is that Americans are starting to debate the constitutional, cultural, social, language, moral, and economic questions involved.

When people all over the world are standing in line to come to America legally, how can we, in justice, put the illegals at the head of the line, in front of all those who respected our laws?

If we grant amnesty to 3 million illegal aliens, doesn't that really mean 15 times that number because of the much-abused section of our law that allows a naturalized American to bring in all family members? Every "regularized" illegal will have at least 15 relatives.

What about the surprising increase in the number of illegal aliens after we were told that the 1986 amnesty of 3 million illegals would cure the problem and be a one-time-only amnesty? After the 2000 census, the U.S. Census Bureau originally said we have 6 million illegal aliens, then revised the number to 9 million, while other researchers estimate 11 million — a population equal to 17 congressional districts. And why does the United States deport only about 1% of the illegal aliens?

Isn't California's energy crisis really due to the large increase in its illegal population during a decade when no new power plants were built? California now has about 4 million illegal aliens, so it's no wonder that existing sources of power are not adequate.

What about abolishing foreign-language ballots as part of the reforms suggested for our election laws? You are not supposed to vote unless you are a citizen, and you can't become a naturalized citizen unless you can speak and write simple English words in ordinary usage.

What about the diseases now being brought in by aliens? We need a public discussion about the health danger and the cost of the outbreaks of tuberculosis, West Nile virus, and other diseases brought in from other countries.

Why did Congress increase the number of H-1B visas to 200,000 per year, just as the high-tech industry was

laying off thousands of workers? Employers want aliens with H-1B visas not only because they can pay them less than U.S. technicians, but especially because the H-1B visas lock them into sticking with the sponsoring employer and prevent them from job-hopping for better pay as Americans do.

Is tolerance of illegals just a ploy of agricultural corporations and wealthy households that want to perpetuate a servant class of low-wage, non-English-speaking immigrants unable to climb up the economic ladder? And of Democrats who want to keep them dependent on government benefits promised by the politicians? California appears to be moving toward a new kind of class structure, similar to that of Mexico and Brazil, with large numbers of both the highly educated and the poorly educated crowding a shrinking middle class.

When is the United States going to repudiate the March 20, 1998 Mexican law that purports to reinstate Mexican nationality for Mexican-Americans who have become naturalized U.S. citizens? Mexico has issued tens of thousands of documents to Mexicans who had become naturalized Americans.

For example, on July 9 a former illegal alien now naturalized American, Andres Bermudez, was elected mayor of Jerez, a city in Mexico, declaring himself a "candidate of two nations." If the Bush Administration believes in the rule of law, Bermudez's U.S. citizenship should be revoked immediately. This sort of "dual citizenship" is an insurmountable barrier to assimilating naturalized citizens into the American culture and turning immigrants from all over the world into *e pluribus unum*.

Those who become naturalized Americans are required to take this oath: "I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state or sovereignty of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear arms

on behalf of the United States when required by law; . . . that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God.”

The oath is an excellent statement of what loyalty to America means: both swearing allegiance to the United States and renouncing all allegiance to foreign countries. But the Mexican government is openly telling Mexicans, in effect, to cross their fingers behind their backs when they take this oath.

Illinois was shocked in August 2001 when Governor George Ryan announced he will not run for a second term. Former Governor Jim Thompson explained the reason why in seven words: “the secretary of state driver’s license business.” Chicago newspapers were explicit in explaining what that meant. Six children of Scott and Janet Willis were incinerated in 1994 when their minivan exploded as it ran over a metal tail-light assembly that fell from a truck driven by Ricardo Guzman.

Guzman was an unqualified truck driver who had paid a bribe to get a license from the Illinois Secretary of State’s office when George Ryan held that office. Because Guzman couldn’t speak English, he didn’t understand the other truckers on the highway who warned him about his dangling tail-light assembly.

In August 2001, a Mexican truck driver, Fernando Guzman Ruiz, spilled his chemical load on a Chicago expressway, sending 17 policemen and firefighters to the hospital and requiring 1,500 residents to be evacuated. After entering the U.S. illegally, he paid bribes to get a birth certificate, Social Security card, and commercial driver’s license.

Can we assimilate such large numbers of people who have no experience with the Rule of Law? When Americans have a difference of opinion about what the law requires, we ultimately settle it in a court of law, but in Mexico, bribery is the customary way of doing business, doing politics, and getting along day to day.

Bribes are the only “Rule of Law” some illegals know. They may consider themselves legal because they paid off the “coyote” who guided passage across the border and the crooks who provided fake I.D., Social Security numbers and driver’s licenses.

How much of the push for amnesty is driven by the Republican National Committee’s foolish hope that it will win the Hispanic vote?

Yes, we welcome immigrants — but only if they want to become Americans, respect the Rule of Law, and learn to speak our language.

The Costs of NAFTA Are Driving Home

State politicians and federal judges are going the limit to protect us all from the highway hazards of talking on cell phones and not wearing seat belts. How about manifesting an equal enthusiasm to protect us against an invasion of 4.5 million Mexican trucks that have not

passed U.S. safety inspections?

Do you think we need more 18-wheelers on our nation’s highways? Do you think our highways are in such good repair that we can accommodate 14,000 additional trucks every month? When the next big truck is tailgating you on the highway, do you care whether the truck has insurance to pay for any possible accident? whether the driver and truck are licensed, or using forged documents? whether the truck has any brakes?

Under NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement passed in 1993), the United States agreed to let Mexican trucks operate freely in our country after 1999 so long as they meet U.S. safety standards. But they have never met them; and only 1% of the trucks coming across the border are inspected.

The Department of Transportation reported that 36% of the Mexican trucks that were inspected last year were ordered off the road because of violations such as faulty brakes and lights. Nobody even asks questions about emissions or weight or about how many illegal aliens and illegal drugs may be concealed in the 99% of trucks that have not been inspected.

The Clinton Administration restricted the Mexican trucks to a 20-mile commercial zone in four states: California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. At designated locations, they transferred their loads to U.S. trucks for shipment to other states.

The Bush Administration wants to allow Mexican trucks to operate freely on U.S. highways in all 48 states without auditing their safety practices for up to 18 months. A spokesman for the Department of Transportation said, “If it [the safety audit] would take longer than 18 months, they [the Mexican trucks] would still have a conditional operating authority until we do actually perform that safety audit.”

A safety audit is supposed to include inspection of the truck companies’ records of vehicle maintenance and repair, as well as of drug and alcohol testing. But it is widely known that the trucking industry in Mexico, with few exceptions, has never successfully been monitored, much less supervised. Mexico has no requirement that its trucks must be kept maintained. No Mexican agency is authorized to order a dangerous truck off the highways, and Mexico has no weigh stations such as we see all along U.S. highways.

Mexico has no limits on how long a driver can drive a truck, and the typical truck driver drives several hours a day longer than American truckers are permitted to drive. There is no way to check on drivers’ records in Mexico because its database of drivers is still under development.

To gather first-hand evidence, a *San Francisco Chronicle* reporter drove with a Mexican truck driver for over a thousand miles. The reporter said that the driver drove three straight 21-hour days, sleeping a total of only seven hours, staying awake with coffee, listening to CDs, and talking on his CB radio.

We need a full accounting of the risks of accident caused by sleepy or under-age drivers driving uninspected, uncertified trucks. We also need an estimate of the costs of wear and tear on our highways and of the U.S. jobs that will be lost.

Republicans Caught in a Traffic Jam

The U.S. House voted 285-143 on June 26 to scuttle the Bush Administration plans. In the House debate, some Members argued that NAFTA requires us to admit the Mexican trucks freely. One Congressman retorted, "NAFTA is a trade pact; it is not a suicide pact." The Bush Administration promptly threatened a veto if the House restriction remains in the bill.

Senators Patty Murray (D-OR) and Richard Shelby (R-AL) then sponsored a truck safety amendment, unanimously approved by both the Senate Appropriations Committee and its Transportation Subcommittee, to the \$60 billion Transportation bill. Their amendment was approved by the Senate in two votes on July 26 and 27, with all Democrats and 19 Republicans voting for safety and 30 Republicans voting for Mexican trucks.

Mexico's President Vicente Fox then had a tantrum and said on August 2 that, if these regulations go into effect, he will close the border to U.S. truckers!

The purpose of the Murray-Shelby amendment is to require Mexican trucks to meet the same safety standards that U.S. and Canadian trucks meet. U.S. and Canadian trucks can't drive on our highways without adequate insurance from a company licensed to operate within the United States. It is unacceptable to allow Mexican trucks on our highways that do not meet this essential requirement. Currently, they carry only Mexican insurance policies that are good for only one day and are granted without regard to the condition of the truck.

Mexican trucks have been crossing our border grossly over weight, without registration or U.S. insurance, with unlicensed drivers driving far longer hours than U.S. truckers are permitted to drive. The four-state limit has been routinely violated. Mexican trucks have been discovered in 26 states, as far away as New York, Washington State and Florida.

The United States has a uniform commercial drivers license system so that drivers whose licenses are revoked can't simply go to another state and get a new license. Mexico has no such system; Mexico has hardly any computerized data on who gets a driver's license.

Current U.S. law requires U.S. and Canadian trucks to be inspected at the trucking firm's facility where the record books, log-books, wage and hour records, etc., can be reviewed. There is no reason why Mexican trucks should not be subject to the same procedure.

The Senate bill requires Mexican trucks to cross the border only at points where inspectors are actually on duty. The bill closes the current loophole through which unsafe

Mexican trucks cross the border at places and times where no safety inspector is on duty.

The Murray-Shelby amendment is accused of being anti-NAFTA and even anti-Mexican, both of which are false. When the NAFTA panel ruled that the United States must admit Mexican trucks, it also ruled that "U.S. authorities are responsible for the safe operation of trucks within U.S. territory." Murray-Shelby was itself a compromise; it doesn't even require truck drivers to speak enough English to read our road signs.

Is President Bush Being Outfoxed?

Mexican President Vicente Fox spoke in Milwaukee on July 17 to 2,300 people at a meeting sponsored by the National Council of La Raza, a Hispanic-U.S. group. He attacked our laws while his audience waved Mexican flags.

Criticizing "current immigration policies," Fox demanded "an integrated Mexican-U.S. labor market." He demanded that U.S. laws be rewritten to bring about open borders between the U.S. and Mexico. Fox said, "Our goal is to legalize migrant flows between our two countries." Saying that "migration should be an option," he demanded that we exempt Mexico from limits on immigration.

Fox's newly created Mexican government agency, the Office for Mexicans Abroad, announced in August that it would be issuing survival kits to people planning to migrate illegally into the United States. The kits contain water, salt, dry meat, cans of tuna, granola, aspirin, anti-diarrhea medicine, and adhesive bandages.

Fox called for full legalization of illegal aliens, exempting Mexico from U.S. limits on immigration and work visas, giving Mexicans a guest worker program that uses temporary work visas, and allowing illegal Mexican aliens to get U.S. driver's licenses. Fox also demanded in-state college tuition rates and other taxpayer-paid benefits.

Fox is asking for more U.S. financial handouts to bolster his pathetic economy. He didn't offer to give us anything in return except poor, uneducated, unemployed Mexicans who can't find jobs in Mexico's corrupt socialist economy. Mexico won't allow U.S. investment in Mexico's state-owned oil industry.

If Fox wants to show friendship for the United States, he could offer to distance Mexico from the criminal price-fixing cartel called OPEC, which props up oil prices so much higher than they would be in a competitive market. Mexico isn't a member of OPEC but acts as though it is by promising Saudi Arabia that it will refuse to sell the United States more oil when OPEC punishes us by production cutbacks.

The Bush and Fox administrations are now negotiating a broad agreement on immigration policy changes that the two presidents are expected to sign in Washington in September. Fox went public with his accelerated demands in order to force Bush to acquiesce. Fox is trying to build a partnership between legal Mexican immigrants and the illegals and show that Mexicans are a potent political

pressure group in America.

Fox's foreign minister said that Mexico will not sign any border agreement that fails to include amnesty for 3 to 4 million Mexicans illegally living in the United States. "It's the whole enchilada or nothing," Jorge Castaneda told journalists in Phoenix.

Vicente Fox's speeches are not the words of a friendly neighbor. They are words that resonate with the radicals whose goal is Mexico's conquest of southwest United States by overwhelming us with the sheer numbers of undocumented Mexicans coming north.

A Warning from Denmark

Denmark shocked the world on September 28, 2000 when, rejecting the urging of all their political and media leaders, its citizens voted decisively against participation in the new European currency called the *euro*. It now appears, according to Henrik Bering writing in the Heritage Foundation's *Policy Review*, that a major reason for the *euro*'s defeat was fears about immigration.

Denmark has been in the forefront of European efforts to encourage easy immigration and integration of immigrants with the native-born population.

Denmark's laws spell out generous rights for immigrants. A foreigner admitted to Denmark automatically qualifies for social benefits including free health care, schooling, job training, and an apartment.

The Danish liberals romanticized the immigrants as innocent Third World victims of Western exploitation, more in touch with nature and an understanding of life. The left propagandized the notion that people from different parts of the globe could be transplanted and assimilated into a multicultural Danish society.

In addition to fuzzy idealism, there was a practical side to this easy immigration policy. The Danish birth rate is too low to provide sufficient workers to finance the social benefits of the welfare state. The need for taxes to support the graying population demanded an influx of younger workers. "Guest workers" started coming in the 1960s, especially from Turkey, Pakistan and the Middle East. And they kept coming; today the foreigners number about 7% of Denmark's population.

Conventional Danish wisdom through the 1980s was that these immigrants would be assimilated. Surprise, surprise, multiculturalism bred anger and resentment rather than integration. Those who warned about culture clashes were ignored or called nasty names like racist or xenophobic. Today, the failure of the immigration policies is so obvious that critical reports have been published by mainstream foundations and agencies.

In the middle of the *euro* campaign last year, the Social Democratic interior minister Karen Jespersen, a former 1960s radical, suddenly said that she "did not wish to live in" a multicultural nation "where the cultures were considered equal." She suggested isolating refugees with

criminal records on a "deserted island." Those words caused an international uproar, with spokesmen in other countries accusing her of "racially motivated ideas" and darkly threatening international opprobrium. However, few disputed the problems caused by the refugees.

Denmark's liberal refugee policy, which grants entry to anyone who requests asylum at the border, has become an easy target for members of organized crime from the former Soviet Union, especially Azerbaijan, Armenia and Ukraine. These gangsters have no intention of becoming Danish; they prey on the local population and send huge parcels of stolen goods back to their home countries.

But it was Jespersen's statement that she doesn't want to live in a multicultural state where cultures are deemed equal that struck at a favorite fetish of modern liberals. She was reacting to demands from militant Muslims that they introduce key elements of Islamic law into Danish law, including the death penalty and even mutilation. And that's not all. A lifelong women's rights activist, Jespersen refuses to recognize as "equal" the Muslim immigrants' practices of denying women access to the labor market, denying them the right to divorce, and subjecting them to arranged marriages.

The pro-immigration Danish politicians mistakenly assumed that, after a generation, the children of the newcomers would marry Danish girls and be integrated into the society. That just didn't happen. It is estimated that 95% of Turks, even in the third generation, still import Turkish wives and even feel an obligation to import their relatives through arranged marriages. The result is a new underclass of people of different appearance and language.

When a ghetto of unassimilated foreigners reaches a certain point, the Danes move elsewhere to escape the problems in the local schools. Americans would understand this phenomenon as "white flight."

Bering describes the financial costs of immigration and the failure of the immigrants to integrate as "staggeringly expensive," and 4% of the population is now costing 34 percent of the Danish social budget. Elderly Danes who paid a lifetime of the highest taxes in the world are being squeezed out of the medical and other benefits they expected.

There is something rotten in Denmark. America should make sure that we don't make the same mistakes, either at home or in "nation-building" in other lands.

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