Obama and Mexican Trucks

by Phyllis Schlafly April 15, 2011

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Barack Obama's deal with the president of Mexico to allow Mexican trucks to carry their loads onto U.S. highways and roads is new evidence of his high-handed solo behavior that has become Standard Operating Procedure in the Administration. Here are ten reasons why Obama's plan is dangerous and must be stopped by Congress and public protest.

Obama's deal with President Felipe Calderon, announced on March 3, bypasses Congress, defies the wishes of the American people, and looks like the action of a Third World dictator who thinks representative government is a nuisance and can be ignored. Congress made its wishes emphatically clear in 2007 when it voted to continue our ban on Mexican trucks: the House roll-call vote was 411 to 3 and the Senate's was 75 to 23.

Obama's deal is a direct attack on the jobs available to U.S. truck drivers because it helps big-business interests cut their costs by hiring cheaper Mexican drivers. Obama's deal is also an attack on small business (i.e., the owner-operated and independent truck drivers) who constitute the big majority of U.S. trucks.

The claim that Obama's deal is reciprocal (i.e., U.S. trucks will be allowed to drive into Mexico) is so cynical that we can hardly believe anyone says it with a straight face. "South of the border down Mexico way" (in the words of the old popular song) is the most dangerous war zone in the world (more dangerous than Afghanistan or Libya), where U.S. truck drivers would become the targets of hijackings, theft, murder, kidnappings, and even beheadings committed by the drug cartels.

Built into the Obama deal is the sneaky imposition of costs on both U.S. truck drivers and U.S. taxpayers. Each truck will be required to install an EOBR (electronic on-board recorder) costing $3,000 plus maintenance fees: U.S. drivers at their own expense, and Mexican trucks as a gift from U.S. taxpayers paid out of the Highway Trust Fund. U.S. taxpayers are already paying $1,600 each for many Mexican trucks to replace their old mufflers with catalytic converters.

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Obama's deal will make it easy for Mexican trucks to bring in loads of illegal aliens and illegal drugs. Border inspection will be a farce, maybe only one in ten trucks inspected, perhaps merely one in twenty.

Opening our southern border to Mexican trucks will be a giant step toward the goal of creating a North American Union with open borders between Mexico, the U.S., and Canada, a proposal launched by President George W. Bush using a website called Security and Prosperity Partnership (since deactivated). Obama is advancing the plan under less threatening names: the March 23, 2010 State Department fact sheet titled "United States-Mexico Partnership: A New Border Vision," a Nov. 30, 2010 "Trusted Traveler" agreement with Mexico signed by DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano, and a Feb. 4, 2011 declaration signed by Obama with Canada called "Beyond the Border: A Shared Vision for Perimeter Security."

When Mexican truck drivers have their layovers and turn-arounds in the U.S., what's to prevent them from enjoying a frolic and diversion? They could use that time to father a baby who would then be proclaimed a U.S. citizen and get generous financial benefits and handouts provided by U.S. taxpayers.

We can assume that Mexican truck drivers will not be required to speak and read English, as U.S. law requires. The previous Secretary of Transportation, Mary Peters, stated at a Senate hearing that if drivers respond to test questions in Spanish, the test-taker nevertheless checks the box that they are "English proficient."

While U.S. truck drivers are strictly limited to the number of hours per day they can be on the road, there is no way to figure out how many hours a Mexican truck driver has been on the road when he clocks in at the border. Has he been driving the typical Mexican 20-hour day?

Mexican trucks will make highway safety for Americans a major problem. We have no way to know a Mexican driver's record of accidents, alcohol or drugs, or a Mexican truck's record of brakes or emissions. Mexico doesn't bother with records or regulations.

Don't let anybody get by with saying that NAFTA requires us to admit Mexican trucks because it's a treaty. It isn't; NAFTA never complied with the treaty provision in the U.S. Constitution and is merely a law passed by Congress that can be changed or overturned.

Tell your Member of Congress to take action to cancel Obama's truck deal with the Mexican president. Solo deals like this one cannot be tolerated under constitutional government.