Donald Drives the Debate

by Phyllis Schlafly

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"If it weren't for me," Donald Trump told the Fox News moderators at the first Republican presidential debate, "you wouldn't even be talking about illegal immigration." The record-breaking audience of 24 million, which is ten times Fox's usual nightly viewership, had to agree.

Trump's new position paper reinforces the blunt talk that has propelled his rise in the polls: "A nation without borders is not a nation. A nation without laws is not a nation. A nation that does not serve its own citizens is not a nation."

That's a refreshing contrast to the immigration paper recently released by Jeb Bush, who is the candidate of the big-money, big-business faction of the Republican party. Jeb famously said illegal immigrants were guilty only of "an act of love," and his plan would reward them with permanent "legal status" which he said must be "combined with" long-overdue measures to secure the border.

If Jeb's candidacy falters despite the $114 million he raised, the establishment's next choices, Senator Marco Rubio and Ohio Governor John Kasich, have basically similar views. Kasich said the 12 million illegals should be "legalized once we find out who they are," and Rubio said Obama's executive amnesty "can't be terminated because there are already people benefiting from it."

Rubio's statement was made in Spanish on the Spanish-language network Univision, which is reason enough to eliminate him from serious consideration. When somebody is running for president of the United States, why should we have to get somebody to translate his remarks into English?

Trump's new position paper answers his opponents with the plainspoken truth that "America will only be great as long as America remains a nation of laws that lives according to the Constitution. No one is above the law" – including the 300-plus sanctuary cities and counties that openly refuse to help remove illegal aliens even after they commit horrible crimes.

Donald Trump launched his campaign in June by accusing Mexico of sending its worst criminals, murderers, and rapists to live here illegally -- a charge that was

tragically confirmed by the July 1 murder of Kate Steinle in San Francisco. The rampage continued with the July 24 rape and murder of Marilyn Pharis in her own home in Santa Maria, California; the July 27 attempted rape of a 14-year-old girl and murder of Peggy Kostelnik in Lake County, Ohio, near Cleveland; and the July 29 murders of Jason and Tana Shane of the Crow Nation in Montana – all crimes committed by Mexicans living here illegally who should have been deported for previous crimes.

Having proved his point about crimes by immigrants, Donald Trump's position paper goes on to address the economic harms of unrestricted immigration, both legal and illegal. This subject was introduced to the presidential campaign in April when Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker said immigration should be "based on making our No.1 priority to protect American workers and their wages" – a statement that alarmed Republican donors and the Wall Street Journal's editorial board.

In a section subtitled "Put American Workers First," Trump's new position paper elaborates on Walker's idea by noting that the enormous influx of foreign workers "makes it difficult for Americans – including immigrants themselves – to earn a middle class wage." Trump would restrict the admission of low-earning workers and he would require companies to hire from the domestic pool of our own unemployed before importing foreigners to fill "jobs Americans won't do."

As for the millions of people who settled here illegally since the last amnesty, Trump said without hesitation, "They have to go. We either have a country, or we don't have a country."

A recent guest on my weekly radio program, political expert Steve Deace, emphasized that the "ground game" is decisive in Iowa, where voters want to shake hands with the candidates, look them in the eye, and hear them answer questions about issues that are important to the grassroots. Iowans seem to like Donald Trump's brash New York style, and a Nevada poll even has him winning the Hispanic vote among Republicans.

Trump's high profile assures that the crisis of uncontrolled immigration can't be avoided by presidential candidates of both parties. Hillary Clinton's promise to "go even farther" than Obama in granting legal status to millions of illegal aliens has been challenged by Senator Bernie Sanders, who on July 30 denounced the concept of "a

completely open border, so that anyone can come into the United States of America. If that were to happen, there is no question that that would substantially lower wages in this country."

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