Amnesty/Guest-Worker is Immoral

by Phyllis Schlafly Dec. 14, 2005

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President George W. Bush, Senators John McCain, Edward Kennedy, and several others are promoting legislation to grant some kind of amnesty/guest-worker status to millions of illegal aliens residing in the United States, as well as to an indefinite number of additional foreign workers. All these bills should be rejected because they are immoral.

Inviting foreigners to come to America as guest workers is equivalent to sending the message: You people are only fit to do menial jobs that Americans think they are too good to do. We will let you come into our country for a few years to work low-paid jobs, but you have no hope of rising up the economic and social ladder.

The various bills differ in whether or when the guest-workers will be expelled back to the poverty they came from, but the bottom line of all is to create a subordinate underclass of unassimilated foreign workers, like serfs or peasants in corrupt foreign countries. That's not the kind of economy that made America a great nation.

America is a country that welcomes immigrants who want to be Americans, who come here legally, who obey our laws and our Constitution, and speak our language. They start with entry-level jobs, but they have the opportunity to rise into the middle class and realize the American dream.

France and Germany have already demonstrated the folly of a guest-worker economy. They admitted foreigners to do low-paid jobs, and now both countries have thousands of foreign residents who do not assimilate, who burden the social welfare system, and who become more disgruntled and dangerous every year.

Amnesty/guest-worker would help to perpetuate Mexico's corrupt economic system, which keeps a few people very rich and most Mexicans in abject poverty. Mexico is a very rich country with enormous quantities of oil, but the oil is all owned by the government, and the wealthy Mexicans are glad to get rid of some of their country's unemployed.

Amnesty/guest-worker would reward lawbreakers. The guest-workers would be exempted from punishment for breaking our laws in entering our country illegally and then using fraudulent documents, and employers would be exempted from punishment for hiring them.

The employers commit a double offense if they pay the illegal workers with cash in order to evade paying payroll taxes and providing benefits to the workers. For our government to tolerate the vast underground economy is unjust to honest businessmen who pay their taxes.

Amnesty/guest-worker is unjust to the millions of people who complied with our immigration laws, stood in line, and patiently waited their turn to win legal residence in the United States.

Some people say that leaving our borders open to people who want to sneak into our country illegally is the compassionate and Christian thing to do. On the contrary, it is uncaring and immoral to close our eyes to the crime on our southern border.

Failing to close our border to illegals means giving up on the war on drugs because most illegal drugs come over our southern border. Mexican drug cartels are even running illegal marijuana farms in our national parks, protected by booby traps and guards carrying AK-47s.

The smuggling of human beings over our border is an organized criminal racket that ought to be stopped, and the number of illegal crossings has significantly increased ever since the President began talking about his amnesty/guest-worker plan. That's no surprise; the amnesty we granted in 1986 quadrupled the number of illegal aliens.

The smugglers charge thousands of dollars for the promise to bring people across the border, and then often hold them for ransom until additional payments are made. Hundreds die from thirst and dehydration when crossing the desert or in locked trucks without air or water.

How many people will have to die before our government closes our border so smugglers and their victims won't believe the illegal racket is worth the risk?

Legal immigrants must be healthy to be admitted, but nobody is giving a health exam to people sneaking across the border. Illegal aliens are bringing in diseases that were formerly unknown in the United States plus bedbugs and diseases we had eradicated decades ago such as tuberculosis, malaria and even leprosy.

Failure to close our border to illegals means that Arizonans live in fear of the aliens who cross their land every night, tearing down fences and killing their animals. American citizens cannot go outside their own homes without a gun and a cell phone.

The most moral and humanitarian thing we can do is to erect a fence and double our border agents in order to stop the drugs, the smuggling racket, the diseases, and the crimes.

President Theodore Roosevelt left us some still-relevant words about the folly of valuing people only for the low-paid work they do. "Never under any condition should this nation look at an immigrant as primarily a labor unit."

Continuing with TR's wisdom: "We cannot afford to continue to use hundreds of thousands of immigrants merely as industrial assets while they remain social outcasts and menaces any more than 50 years ago we could afford to keep the black man merely as an industrial asset and not as a human being."