The Hypocrisy of Amnesty Advocates

by Phyllis Schlafly

February 20, 2013

Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again but expecting different results. The Ronald Reagan amnesty of 1986 was a conspicuous failure, and a virtually identical plan failed in 2007 when it was pushed by John McCain, Ted Kennedy and George W. Bush.

Now the establishment has lined up eight Senators plus a media chorus to resurrect the Reagan amnesty. That may make sense if you are seeking leftwing Democratic votes, but it is insanity for conservatives and Republicans.

The Reagan amnesty admitted twice as many illegals as expected and was riddled with fraud and cheating. It started a gigantic stream of illegal aliens to walk, swim, or bribe their way across the border into the U.S. that has continued to this day.

The amnesty pushers are counting on Americans not to remember the Reagan failure, and counting on the American people's ignorance of arithmetic and politics. They are also hoping to make Republicans believe amnesty is the key to getting the Hispanic vote plus the key to conning religious citizens into believing amnesty is the way to practice Christian compassion.

The amnesty proposal cooked up by six Senators who claim to be bipartisan is essentially the same plan that aroused the fury of the grassroots in 2007 and covered Congressmen with a tsunami of messages. But there is one big difference today; this time we know the cost, and that's truly scary.

Robert Rector of the Heritage Foundation estimates that this amnesty plan will cost the U.S. taxpayers "$2.5 Trillion above any taxes paid in" because the majority of illegal aliens who would eventually be legalized by the proposal are uneducated and poor. At least 60 percent are high school dropouts so they live below the poverty level and will be eligible to receive many of our 79 varieties of welfare handouts.

The entire plan should be illegal because it violates an explicit tenet of federal law that anyone granted entry into the U.S. must be financially self-supporting and not likely to become a public charge. Of course President Obama is not shy about issuing illegal executive orders.

Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL) pointed out that "We know already that the Administration refuses to enforce existing law restricting immigrant welfare use, and in fact promotes expanded welfare use to immigrants, including food stamps, public housing, and Medicaid. . . . What good are promises of future enforcement when the Administration covertly undermines those laws now in place?"

There is no way that supporting amnesty will give Republicans the Hispanic vote, and amnesty advocates are plainly dishonest when they assert the contrary. In the election following the Reagan amnesty, George H.W. Bush got only 30 percent of the Hispanic vote in 1988, and only 25 percent when he ran for reelection in 1992.

We've been told that George W. Bush was well-liked by the Hispanics, but he got only 35 percent of the vote when he was elected in 2000. There is no evidence that any plan can give Republicans 50 percent of the Hispanic vote.

When Hispanics are asked what issues they care most about, immigration usually ranks only fifth. Hispanics who come from countries where big government is a permanent fact of life and where the economic systems are based on bribery are unlikely prospects for the Republican message of limited government and restraints on government spending.

Any amnesty plan, no matter how it is dressed up, is a formula for more Democratic votes and the big-government, big-spending policies advocated by the Democrats.

A couple of coalitions have formed to try to convince religious groups that amnesty is a manifestation of Christian compassion. In fact, it is gross hypocrisy because it betrays the millions of immigrants who came here legally and obeyed our laws.

This was well understood by the famous advocate for the rights of Hispanic immigrants, Cesar Chavez. Long deceased, he is still such an Hispanic icon that the National Education Association (NEA), year after year, passes a resolution calling for a national holiday to honor Cesar Chavez, and it's already a state holiday in California.

Chavez was vehemently opposed to illegals coming across the Mexican border because they took jobs from legal immigrants. He ordered union members to call the Immigration and Naturalization Service and report illegals working in the fields so our government could deport them.

Chavez got his supporters to picket INS offices to demand a crackdown on illegals, and he offered staff to the INS to serve as volunteer border guards to keep Mexicans from sneaking into the U.S. Occasionally, Chavez' people even physically attacked illegals to scare them away.