Judges Getting the Message About Illegal Aliens

by Phyllis Schlafly March 5, 2008

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Four children including two brothers were killed, and 12 others were hospitalized with injuries, in Minnesota last week when a van reportedly ignored a stop sign and barreled into a school bus. The driver of the van, who did not speak English or have a valid driver's license, was charged with homicide.

Authorities described the driver as an illegal alien using a phony name. She had pled guilty in 2006 for driving without a license.

For years, courts and lawyers have intimidated towns from protecting themselves against the invasion of illegal aliens. In 2006, Escondido, California backed away from its housing ordinance to curtail leases to illegal aliens and even agreed to pay $90,000 in legal fees to plaintiffs challenging the law.

Last summer, a federal court slapped down an attempt by Hazleton, Pennsylvania to penalize employers and landlords who hire and lease to illegal aliens. Hazleton had been hit by an influx of illegal aliens and victimized by some of their shocking crimes.

But in August, Newark, New Jersey, no stranger to violence, was shaken by the brutal murder of several college-bound teenagers who were harmlessly enjoying music at a playground. The victims were black, and the perpetrator was an illegal

alien from Peru who had been previously charged with raping a five-year-old girl but released despite his obvious illegal presence in this country.

Another imported crime is driving too fast the wrong way on highways, with the headlights turned off, in order to escape detection while smuggling drugs or people. Several deadly crashes resulting from this practice have been reported.

The American people's outrage at law violations by illegal aliens was heard loud and clear by the Senate when it defeated the amnesty bill last year. Now, even judges may be getting the message.

In December 2007, a federal judge in Oklahoma upheld an Oklahoma law requiring state contractors to determine and verify the immigration status of new hires. Judge James H. Payne threw out a legal challenge to the law.

Less than two months later, in January 2008, federal Judge E. Richard Webber emphatically ruled against illegal aliens who had sued to overturn a similar ordinance enacted by Valley Park, Missouri, a town near St. Louis. The court upheld the ordinance, which was directed at employers who were hiring illegal aliens.

The third strike against illegal aliens came in February when federal Judge Neil V. Wake rejected each and every argument challenging a new Arizona law that imposes penalties on businesses that knowingly hire illegal aliens. He dismissed the claim that federal law somehow ties the hands of state and local governments seeking to protect their own citizens.

These three decisions in three different parts of the country included both Republican and Democratic-appointed judges. In the term loved by the mainstream media, there is now bipartisan judicial support for state and local legislation against illegal aliens.

Law Professor Kris Kobach says these decisions give "a green light to other communities" seeking to pass similar ordinances.

The mayor of Hazleton, Lou Barletta, vigorously supported his city's ordinance cracking down on illegal aliens. Despite being vilified by liberal Pennsylvania newspapers, he won nearly 95 percent of the vote in his Republican primary for reelection last year.

But that wasn't all! In the same election, he also won the Democratic nomination on a write-in vote, defeating the leading candidate in the Democratic primary by a stunning 2-to-1 margin.

In the Arizona case, the court noted the research of Harvard economist George Borjas, who concluded that hiring illegal aliens depresses wages for legal workers because the illegals accept lower pay without benefits. Those hardest hit are uneducated legal workers, who lost $1.4 billion in 2006 in the form of lower wages in Arizona alone.

The nine months between now and the November election give states, cities and towns ample time to do what Congress has failed to do: protect us against the lawless entry of illegal aliens. That means penalizing employers who hire illegal aliens and landlords who lease to them.

It is long overdue for our public officials to rid the U.S. of imported crimes and to stand up for our legal workers, especially the poorly educated ones who need an entry-level job to start building their lives. Now that we have a green light from the courts, states and cities should proceed full steam ahead to protect us from illegal aliens.