## The Argument Against Illegal Immigration No One Wants to Make

Last year, as a member of a Southern California moms' group, I received an email from a woman with a dilemma. Her part-time nanny, who had been in her employ a little over a year, was asking for a raise, from \$25 to \$30-an-hour. The mom wanted a basis for comparison before she said "No." (The language she actually used was far more colorful.)

The response she got was nothing short of astounding. "Absolutely not!" said one. "That's highway robbery!" said another.

And then the truth. Another mom on the list suggested—and I'm paraphrasing here—that because she could just go to our local park and pick up another "helper" for less than what she was already paying, that raise was over the top.

As a frequent visitor to that park, I thought about what that last mom was saying. It exposed what these women were really thinking: not that the raise was too much, but that the many Latina nannies caring for children at that park should be happy to receive less than the going rate, and not have the audacity to ask for a raise because they're easily replaced. The truth is, these moms have ready access to a pool of cheap, trapped labor, and they won't think twice about dipping into it when the need arises.

Sadly, the underlying assumption was accurate and almost universally shared: these "helpers" are probably here illegally. We can pay them whatever we want.

## Don't Ask, Don't Tell

This is the same sentiment shared by 90 percent of the well-heeled, white, liberal Democrats in my suburban Southern California community, as well as the few remaining well-heeled Republicans. Illegals are here, and we can afford to employ them because they are a source of cheap, domestic labor.

Our nannies, gardeners and housekeepers could all be here illegally. We don't ask and don't care. Because they are trapped. Same goes for the dishwashers, busboys, car wash employees and day laborers we hire without batting an eye. We don't ask and they don't tell. We give them a job, without a green card, and pay them less—often significantly less—than what we would have to pay someone here legally. We also trap them into an employment cycle from which there is no upward mobility and no escape.

It didn't start out this way. This underclass showed up at our southern border, slipped through a dilapidated piece of chain mail, and sighed a happy sigh. They were in the land of milk and honey! Sorry folks, not so fast. No green card? You can buy one, but it will cost you. No Social Security number? You can buy that, too. All of a sudden, you've committed three felonies, not one. If you choose not to buy them, sorry, no bank account. So, you get paid cash, under the table, if you get a check, you have to pay a check cashing firm a hefty percentage to get cash. So, the government gives you an Individual Taxpayer ID Number? Great, now you can open a bank account—and also pay taxes on your ill-gotten gains.

But think of all those laws that California passed to make your life better! As one California state lawmaker explained when I called her out: "Huh? You know I write bills to make sure all workers have the rights to a living wage, overtime, healthcare, benefits regardless of immigration status, right?"

So true! Thanks to lawmakers like her, you can get a driver's

license! And loads of other guarantees to make your illegal existence here better. Nevertheless, you are still here, under the cloud of illegality, trapped with no escape.

Why? As one person who is here illegally wrote in 2016:

Because most undocumented people don't have access to a social security number or a work permit, planning ahead is often tough — because any money that comes in has to be used for immediate survival: food, shelter, water, heat, and clothing. Planning ahead often requires citizenship and financial stability. For example, a U.S. citizen can plan ahead by saving and eventually becoming a homebuyer, a privilege that undocumented people often don't have. In addition, there are banks that discriminate against undocumented people, so opening a checking and/or savings account is already predetermined based on citizenship status. All undocumented workers will also never see the money that they paid in social security benefits and/or taxes because retirement money is only afforded to those with US work authorization. (Emphasis added)

Some may disagree, but I contend this ability to plan is a crucial step to allowing assimilation and upward mobility.

## Back to "Jobs Americans Won't Do"

And here's the real ugly truth: while these politicians like the one above want you to think they are supportive of those here illegally, they do nothing to disincentivize those walking blindly into this existence. Why? Because secretly politicians want illegals to have that driver's license as a benefit for their exploiter, I mean employer, i.e. the politicians' rich constituents: drive their kids to school; haul around the leaf blower so you can make their lawn look pretty; haul away the trash they picked up from your yard—you know, the "jobs Americans won't do."

As <u>one columnist</u> put it, "I don't think [illegal immigration] affects my life much, at least not negatively . . . They're taking our jobs? Not really, unless you're getting outbid for a low-paying, strenuous, dirty or dangerous job."

This "argument" supports the view that illegal immigration is essential because we need a class of people to whom we can pay so little that others, who are more privileged, don't have to do those jobs. Sounds a lot like the justification for slavery, doesn't it?

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) and their colleagues will tell you that a southern border wall—unlike like the walls and fences that enclose the gated communities where they and their wealthy constituents live—is immoral. It is not—obviously.

That wall would be no different than the ones that surround the homes of those employing illegal immigrants, walls are deterrents to people you don't want to entice to come in. Walls and fences say to those looking in "it's not worth it to come in here without being invited, you have more to lose than you have to gain." And that's the truth we owe to those looking in.

What's immoral is enticing poor, hopeful people into a country with weak borders with a promise of opportunity simply so you and your hypocritical constituents can have a cheap source of domestic labor. It's immoral, wrong, and no one wants to talk about it. Let's change that.

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