



Straight Talk

by Muriel Sluyter

Amnesty or Opportunity

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Greetings, Gentle Reader,

Another plan for dealing with the illegal immigrant problem is being put forward. Is it a good one? Can there be such a thing in this time of suicidal political correctness, when we must be so careful not to offend anyone from a different culture or race? Many important considerations cannot be addressed at all, no matter how critical, because the outcry against such a discussion is so extreme and so abusive.

Let's at least try to evaluate some of the negatives and positives of this thing. America has had immigration laws for a long time. Their purpose has been to allow law-abiding, healthy immigrants who would contribute to the good of our country to become citizens. People with serious communicable diseases or criminal backgrounds were denied the privilege of immigrating. They were considered a risk to the physical and moral health of the country.

Illegal aliens, on the other hand, bring whatever diseases and backgrounds they have, and no one can stop them. If they have tuberculosis, they bring it with them. If they are criminals there, they will be criminals here. If they are terrorists, the damage they can do is incalculable, yet we have no control over their activities.

One part of our present immigration law is especially bad: Children born here are automatically American citizens, which then allows immigration of the child's family members. This goes around the roadblocks designed to protect the American people from potentially destructive immigration.

When people from Mexico come here to work, they usually work hard and do what they can to provide for their families, but they do not readily assimilate. In my mind that is a negative. I often hear the term "daisy-chain immigration," meaning that if one member of a family is accepted, all his or her family will also immigrate. How many non-assimilated immigrants can we afford?

Another problem: Immigration is not supposed to exacerbate America's problems. It is supposed to fill a need for both the immigrant and American society. Our

immigration policy should strive to avoid creating both social and monetary crises, rather than importing a whole new crop of them. Yet we have some systems that have reached crisis level already, due to illegal immigration; both our health care and prison systems come under that heading.

We don't know much about this particular proposal yet, but I hope these concerns, be they threats to health or safety, will not be swept away by those overly eager to rush this proposal into law.

My desire for immigrants is that they assimilate within one or two generations. That cannot be too much to ask, considering what they gain by coming to America.

The old story is still true. Tear down the fences between countries, and you will soon know which country is best. Just watch the way the people run. Do they run out to escape, or do they run in to benefit?

America has been a place to which people from all over the globe have run to enjoy its bounties and freedom. We want that to continue to be true, but if we cannot control our borders, we will be overrun by people who do not respect our laws, people who will turn America into the kind of country they left behind. Some areas of our country, where they have severe illegal alien problems, are already experiencing that.

Would Americans resist and resent immigrants who integrate, thinking and acting like law-abiding citizens? I don't think so. Can that be legislated? No. Can any number of laws, amnesty or otherwise, change that? Probably not.

Therein lies the problem.