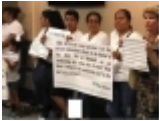


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Trump goes after illegal entrants to U.S., not all immigrants

Donna Locke Published 8:00 a.m. CT Aug. 10, 2017



In response to recent reporting and commentary, it's worth noting that our country now contains a multitude of people devoted to erasing all distinctions between illegal aliens and legal immigrants and between non-citizens and citizens.

We see every conceivable effort to hide and deny the words "illegal" and "criminal" in regard to foreigners who entered our country without our government's permission or remained here after their legal visas expired.

Newspapers tend to reflect changes to The Associated Press Stylebook, but changing "illegal alien" to "illegal," "undocumented," or "unauthorized" "immigrant" reflects bias as well.

In U.S. law, an immigrant is someone who was issued an immigrant visa by the U.S. government: someone here legally.

Therefore, many of us, including law enforcement and our courts, don't use "immigrant" to describe someone here unlawfully. "Alien" is used in federal immigration law.

As for attempts to paint illegal aliens as **noncriminals**, illegal entry and visa overstay are criminal, deportable offenses, and U.S. immigration courts can put these offenders into detention (prison) and sentence them to serve time till they're deported.

The Trump administration recently reinstated criminal prosecution of first-time illegal **border-crossers**, under Operation Streamline, in which first-timers are convicted of misdemeanors and serve possible jail time before deportation.

Re-entry after deportation, which is common, is a felony. Beyond that, it would be difficult for an illegal alien to remain here without committing criminal fraud of some kind, not to mention other crimes many of them commit.

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Illegal entrants caught for the first time at or near the border had been given the option to self-deport, to relieve strain on our enforcement, court, and corrections systems and us taxpayers.

Border Patrol agents told me misdemeanor status allowed the officers to give aliens that option. But illegal entry is a federal criminal offense, which is clear in court.

Foreign consular identification cards are another item in the bag of tricks to make illegal aliens look legal. These are unreliable, unverifiable IDs, according to the Department of Justice and the FBI.

American immigration-control activists, using their real names, have been issued Mexican matricula consular IDs. Apparently anyone can get one or several by using any name.

The "documents" used to obtain consular ID cards are not secure, and the ruse is aimed at helping illegal aliens elude U.S. law enforcement and trench in with a "document" that is ridiculous when compared to gateway IDs required of American citizens.

Legal immigrants and unexpired-visa holders have documents issued by the U.S. government.

In 2001, Democratic legislators, a Republican governor, and the ever-present business lobby colluded and passed a Tennessee law to allow illegal aliens to get driver's licenses, the main gateway document in our country.

After Democrat Phil Bredesen became governor, those licenses were knocked down to "driving certificates" in a nod and shrug to the 2001 **Fulcrum** terrorists, including some illegal aliens.

It wasn't long before our benighted politicians had to essentially repeal the whole thing because of fraud certificates to people who didn't live in this state or even this country.

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I became interested in immigration control because immigration is the main factor in our country's relatively recent massive population growth.

Even if all immigration were halted today, our population would grow for many years through births to people already here. I don't think many Americans have any idea what this means for our natural environment and our quality of life.

And clearly, questionable agendas are behind efforts to circumvent and dismantle our laws and to blur the distinctions between legal and illegal.

From time to time, the future sends us a message. We respond to the drummers we hear.

Donna Locke is a longtime immigration-control advocate who lives in Columbia, Tenn.

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