Judges getting the message about illegal immigrants

by Phyllis_Schlafly

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 drivers license, was charged with homicide.

Authorities described the driver as an illegal immigrant 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 immigrants. In 2006, Escondido, Calif., backed away from its housing ordinance to curtail leases to illegal immigrants 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, Pa., to penalize employers and landlords who hire and lease to illegal immigrants. Hazleton had been hit by an influx of illegal immigrants and victimized by some of their shocking crimes.

But in August, Newark, N.J., 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 immigrant from Peru who had been previously charged with raping a 5-year-old girl but had been released despite his obvious illegal presence in this country.

Another imported crime is driving the wrong way on highways, with 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 violations of the law by illegal immigrants was heard loud and clear by the U.S. Senate when it defeated the amnesty bill last year. Now, even judges may be getting the message.

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

In January, U.S. District Judge E. Richard Webber emphatically ruled against illegal immigrants who had sued to overturn a similar ordinance enacted by Valley Park, Mo., a town near St. Louis. The court upheld the

ordinance, which was directed at employers who were hiring illegal immigrants.

The third strike against illegal immigrants came in February when U.S. District Judge Neil V. Wake rejected each and every argument challenging a new Arizona law that imposes penalties on businesses that knowingly hire illegal immigrants. 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 immigrants.

University of Missouri at Kansas City Law professor Kris Kobach says these decisions give "a green light to other communities" seeking to pass similar ordinances.

Hazleton, Mo., Mayor Lou Barletta vigorously supported his city's ordinance cracking down on illegal immigrants. Despite being vilified by liberal Pennsylvania newspapers, he won nearly 95 percent of the vote in his Republican primary for re-election last year.

But that wasn't all. In the same election, Barletta 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 George Borjas, an economist at the Harvard University Kennedy School of Government, who concluded that hiring illegal immigrants depresses wages for legal workers because illegals accept lower pay without benefits. Those hardest hit are uneducated legal workers, who in Arizona alone lost $1.4 billion in 2006 in the form of lower wages.

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 U.S. citizens against the lawless entry of illegal immigrants. That means penalizing employers who hire illegal immigrants and landlords who lease to them.

It is long overdue for public officials to rid the United States of imported crimes and to stand up for legal workers, especially the poorly educated ones who need an entry-level job to start building their lives. Now that a green light has been provided by the courts, states and cities should proceed full steam ahead to protect their citizens from illegal immigrants.

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