

Biden's Border Blowup

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by Victor Davis Hanson

Some 8 to 10 million illegal aliens from all over the world, as expected, have flooded across the border since Joe Biden took office.

A demagogic candidate Biden, remember, in 2019 invited those massing at the southern border to “surge” into the United States without specifying they first needed legal sanction: “We immediately surge to the border all those seeking asylum.”

In contrast, we know *legal* immigration is America's great strength, but it has always depended on a few key prerequisites.

Immigration must be legal and measured.

Why? Because only the host nation can adjudicate how many immigrants it can successfully accept and assimilate. It has no desire to encourage Balkanized tribalism so common in nations abroad torn apart by ethnic conflict.

America must have some knowledge of the background of immigrants, especially whether they have criminal records, belong to gangs, are importing drugs, carry infectious diseases, or can be self-supporting.

By contrast, if the first thing immigrants do is illegally cross the American border, and the second is to reside illegally in America, and the third is to obtain fraudulent identification to mask that illegality, then they will establish long patterns of illegal behavior and disrespect for their hosts.

In addition, immigration should be diverse so that large ethnic groups do not form permanent tribal sects in the fashion of the Balkans, the Middle East, or Latin America.

Ideally, the host should prefer immigrants who have some knowledge of the language and customs of the United States. And they should have some ability to be self-supporting so as not to burden American taxpayers or overtax and deprive social services from poorer U.S. citizens.

As for the host?

America must be confident enough in and knowledgeable enough about its values, customs, and traditions to demand immigrants integrate rapidly into the body politic of the United States.

Both the host and immigrants must agree on the basic facts of

immigration.

Immigrants, *not the host*, have chosen to leave their native land to risk a new life and identity in America.

Therefore, the relationship is, by nature, asymmetrical. The host has a perfect right, indeed a responsibility, to impose its own values upon newcomers—not vice versa.

Otherwise, if immigrants do not absorb their newly adopted culture, why would they have left and, in some sense, rejected their homeland in the first place?

To replicate in the United States the very conditions and environment that they so eagerly fled from back home?

So the host must remind immigrants that they chose a completely different paradigm from their native country. And therefore, they must be helped to embrace an entirely new national identity.

Unfortunately, in the last four years, the Biden administration has violated every historical canon critical to ensuring legal immigration enriches the United States.

They have encouraged 8-10 million of the world's poorest to flood the border and to enter and reside in America without legal sanction.

Most have no prior experience with American traditions, and few speak English.

Host Americans have no idea whether hundreds, thousands, or even tens of thousands of the millions entering illegally have committed crimes in their native countries, or have any record of employment, or are sick, or are here to foment gangs and to import lethal, foreign-made drugs that kill some 100,000 Americans a year.

Worse, we, the hosts, no longer believe in the melting pot

that once made America the world's only successful multiracial democracy, united by the laws of the Constitution and the unique values that emanate from it.

The combination of mass illegal immigration, without audit, into a country beset with \$35 trillion in national debt, an existing 50 million residents not born in the United States, and without confidence in rapid assimilation certainly explains the disaster of illegal immigration that now manifests daily.

Joe Biden may think nullifying federal immigration law is a smart political trick that, in the past, may have flipped southwestern states from red to blue or warped the census to give blue states more congressional districts.

Or he may assume that with 70 percent of the electorate now voting through poorly audited mail-in balloting, there is no real way to prevent foreign nationals from voting for those who neutered the law to let them in.

But in truth, Biden is unfortunately undermining support for *all* immigration, legal or otherwise. He is guaranteeing that more imported drugs and gang members will kill more Americans.

Ironically, Biden is also alienating from the Democratic Party its once loyal black and Latino voters. They, not the party elite, must deal concretely with the consequences of Biden's callous and cynical, ideologically driven policies.

Perhaps the left will only cease destroying immigration law when it realizes that for each illegal alien it invites in, it will lose one or more once loyal Democratic voters.

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