

Behind the “Border Scare”

by Zona Ascensio

“Illegal” immigration is currently a hot topic in current events. Many believe that the best way to remedy this supposed “threat to national security” is by criminalizing undocumented immigration. The U.S. could force undocumented immigrants out of the country, but the government and citizens alike tend to forget one thing: these are people.

One has to wonder about the real motive behind the “border scare.” After all, Mexicans have never been the terrorists, nor is there any real proof of a terrorist plot to invade via the Mexican border. This seems to be an example of government-supported racism. Do you think this would be an issue if Mexico were a Caucasian English-speaking nation like Canada?

Using September 11th as a reason to remove poor people who are simply trying to make a living for themselves and for their families, regardless of their citizenship status, is more than just wrong—it is against the principles that provide the foundation for this nation. Every person has a right to life, liberty, and happiness. Although few dare to question that statement, people are willing to label those attempting to attain these rights as felons, criminals, and, worst of all, potential terrorists. Though allowing anyone and everyone to enter the U.S. without authorization would also be the wrong path to take, we cannot ignore the inalienable rights of undocumented immigrants.

By implementing stricter laws on immigration, several problems can arise. First and most obvious would be the fact that several businesses would lose workers and may be unable to find people willing to take the jobs vacated by immigrants. Another problem would be that the families of undocumented immigrants who had worked in the United States would suffer financial loss and remain in a state of almost unimaginable poverty. One of the less obvious but equally negative outcomes would have to be the lessons our future generations will learn from this. What will our children think when they look back and see that our nation decided to remove individuals because they were unwanted at this point in time? They will likely feel the same way we do now when thinking about segregation before the civil right movement: How could clear-thinking people allow such reasonless inequity?

These are mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, sons, and daughters. They want what we all want—a chance at a better future.



Immigrants at a 2006 march in Chicago.

Christine Kenny

Zona Ascensio is a GED student in Martin, TN.