

We Needed a New President, Not 'Comprehensive Immigration Reform'

Victor Davis Hanson

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Victor Davis Hanson, a senior contributor for The Daily Signal, is a classicist and historian at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University and host of "The Victor Davis Hanson Show." His website, The Blade of Perseus, features columns, lectures, and exclusive content for subscribers.

Hello, this is Victor Davis Hanson for The Daily Signal. At the end of the 90-day period, where are we on the immigration issue?

And there's good news and there's bad news. It's sort of like the trade and tariff issue. It's sort of like the Iran denuclearization effort. It's sort of like the Ukraine war. There's a lot of good indicators, but there's not realization or finalization.

And that is important because President Donald Trump is polling in the RealClear—average is about 44%, 45%. He has gone down some. I think the polls on the Left are trying to exaggerate that average downward. But nevertheless, that reflects that everything is in suspension. And let's look at how that applies to the border.

The good news is that we've gone from 10,000 people entering illegally to zero. And we've got the highest morale ever in Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Border Patrol. People are ecstatic at the work they've done. Mexico is no longer cooperating with the forces of illegal immigration. They're scared to. The wall will be continued all the way to the gulf in some form or the other. It's a big success. And guess what? There was no comprehensive immigration reform. Remember that kind of bogeyman? "We need comprehensive"—no, we didn't. We just needed to enforce the laws on the books. And we've done that.

Now, here's the other part. We don't know how many people were let in under former President Joe Biden. It may have been 10, 11, 12 million. It's hard to know whether an illegal entry always stayed here or not. But they did chart,

roughly, how many people came in. It was somewhere between 10 and 12 million, maybe 400,000 or 500,000 aliens.

But here's the principle that the Left has adopted. And I can't believe it. Maybe you can. It's surreal. It's Orwellian. And it's been reified by the district courts, in some cases, the circuit courts, and de facto by the Supreme Court because they haven't acted. And the principle is this. It was legal de facto for the prior administration to systematically and unashamedly break the law by destroying the border and allowing these 10 to 12 million people to come in illegally and to reside illegally.

The courts did not entertain any objection to that. In other words, there was a blatant destruction of the law by the chief executive.

However, the corollary to that is even more disturbing. The incoming administration who wants to rectify that abuse—in other words, it wants to enforce the law and say that you came in illegally and you shouldn't have because of the prior laxity of this government. Now, you've gotta leave because you're still breaking the law. And they're stopping these deportations, for the most part.

So, the principle is it is lawful to be unlawful if you're Joe Biden—according to the courts—but it is unlawful to be lawful if you're Donald Trump. And the result is that we've got these 10 to 12 million people. Are we going to have an immigration hearing for each one of them? Or are we just going to pick people? Now, Kilmar Abrego Garcia had two administrative hearings with immigration judges. And he was said to be deportable. The third one said, "Well, if we deport him, he might be in danger by gangs." Now, I don't think there's much of an MS-13 gang in El Salvador anymore because they're all in that huge prison. So, that should be nullified.

They didn't say he couldn't be deported. He just said he didn't think he could be deported to El Salvador. They should bring him back and then deport him somewhere else. Deport him to Mexico, if you want. But nobody would want him because, unlike our Left, they believe that he was a gang member.

And by the way, we've had new information that when he was pulled over in Tennessee with eight illegal aliens with him—and I don't know why he wasn't cited—he was speeding at a high speed without a valid license. Anybody listening, right now, if you get in a car and you have eight people with no identification and it looks like you're trafficking and you have no valid driver's

license and you're breaking the speed law, you're gonna go to jail. But not if you're an illegal alien trafficker.

But here's the new information. The car that Abrego Garcia was driving—who said he was just bringing construction workers from Texas to Maryland—it was registered under the name of a known human trafficker who had been arrested for that. In other words, he was, Abrego Garcia, a trafficker.

So, now we have this situation where you cannot deport somebody who beat his partner, who trafficked to smuggle people in, who has gang activity and gang markings on his body and his attire, and is a citizen of El Salvador and is here illegally. If you can't deport him, I don't know who you can deport who was here illegally.

So, that's where we are right now. Great news on the border. But a manipulation, a distortion, a warping of the law in a very surreal fashion that somebody who is trying to enforce the law is considered unlawful and someone who completely made a mockery of it was considered lawful.