



Written by [William P. Hoar](#) on February 5, 2018

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## Border War Continues

*From the print edition of The New American*

### Correction, Please! Border War Continues

A sampling of news stories:

**Item:** The Washington Post for January 6, 2018 reported on the ongoing budget negotiations calling for building a wall and the reinforcing of barriers on the U.S. border with Mexico over the next decade. “Democrats have repeatedly said they will not pay for a wall,” said the paper. “Even though on a year-over-year basis the CBP [U.S. Customs and Border Patrol] request would not represent a dramatic funding increase over current border spending levels, it would represent a long-term commitment to a physical structure that Trump would be able to claim as a political trophy.”



Also, went on the Post, “Democrats and immigration activists have recoiled at the administration’s other enforcement plans, including proposals to expedite the deportation of unaccompanied minors, tighten asylum standards and crack down on so-called ‘sanctuary cities’ that do not allow local police to cooperate with federal immigration agents.”

**Item:** “President Donald Trump was catapulted into office on the pledge to crack down on illegal immigration, and authorities under his administration cast a wide net — one that snared 30 percent more people in fiscal 2017 than the same period the year before,” reported U.S. News & World Report for December 29, 2017.

The piece went on to say: “Immigration advocates and outreach groups have sharply criticized the Trump administration’s approach to immigration enforcement, which they say does far too little to distinguish dangerous criminals from those who migrated to the U.S. in search of better economic prospects or safe haven from violence.”

**Item:** The Washington Post’s print edition for January 3, 2018 carried an article critical of Trump’s policies on immigration. The edition was entitled “Immigration goal of reunited families now demonized as ‘chain migration.’” (The online version was headlined “Family ties drive U.S. immigration. Why Trump wants to break the ‘chains.’”) The tenor of the piece is characterized by the subhead: “Trump threatens to end what has been touted as a source of social stability.”

“Democrats are unlikely to give ground” on what the paper called the “family unification model.” As the Post said: “Critics see the [Trump] attack on the family-based system as part of a broader attempt to



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*slow the country's transformation into a more diverse society whose growing rolls of nonwhite voters lean toward the Democratic Party."*

*The paper also made reference to a previous immigration reform, saying: "An irony of Trump's campaign against 'chain migration' is that the liberal reformers of the 1960s wanted a merit-based model, too."*

**Correction:** *In fact, the Democrats have been all over the place on this general issue — whether the discussion is immigration or illegal immigration, different matters that are often conflated and tend to confuse the debate.*

When the Democrats were not so completely controlled by the hard Left, things were different. This was a point made last fall by the influential website "FiveThirtyEight," which certainly does not lean conservative. As the site noted in September:

Long before Trump made building a wall along the southern border one of his main campaign issues, some Democrats were open to the idea of fencing along the border. In a May 2006 Gallup survey, before Congress voted on the Secure Fence Act, nearly 40 percent of Democratic voters were in favor of "building a wall along the border with Mexico." And support for a wall generally held through the first part of this decade.

Top Democrat leaders decided not to oppose their constituents on this matter. However, this support for a wall, sometimes called a "fence" (as if that were a major distinction), was clearly not because of any deep-seated convictions of those leaders.

When pressed, Hillary Clinton publicly patted herself on the back during her failed presidential campaign for such votes. As she said in a November 2015 "town hall" in New Hampshire: "I voted numerous times when I was a senator to spend money to build a barrier to try to prevent illegal immigrants from coming in, and I do think that you have to control your borders." Later, to keep the support from the extreme Left, she had to straddle that issue when she wasn't dodging it — though the mass media gave her a free pass on that.

These days, if Donald Trump is on one side of an issue, the opposition Democrats feel compelled to be on the other side. There are also other political factors at play, including a change in the special interests of the labor union bosses that are so vital for Democratic votes.

Lost in the current debate is the incongruous fact that even Barack Obama, while a senator, found it necessary to pretend to be concerned about border security. A year ago, the left-wing *Boston Globe* pointed out that Illinois Senator Obama "offered measured praise for the border control legislation that would become the basis for one of Donald Trump's first acts as president." As quoted by the *Globe* (January 27, 2017):

"The bill before us will certainly do some good," Obama said on the Senate floor in October 2006. He praised the legislation, saying it would provide "better fences and better security along our borders" and would "help stem some of the tide of illegal immigration in this country."

Obama was talking about the Secure Fence Act of 2006, legislation authorizing a barrier along the southern border passed into law with the support of 26 Democratic senators including party leaders like Hillary Clinton, Joe Biden, and Chuck Schumer.

Yet, to listen to many in the media and innumerable politicians who are betting on the short memory of



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the public, placing the interests of the United States first is considered some type of crime against humanity, as is enforcing the law of the land largely ignored by recent chief executives.

And, yes, the Trump administration has been enforcing the law. At least in part because of what was perceived to be in the wind, the number of illegal border jumpers dropped dramatically during the last year, with arrests by the Border Patrol at a 45-year low. “Nearly all of the Border Patrol arrests — 301,916 — were along the southwestern border,” noted the *Washington Times*. The agency said “that underscored the need for a security wall that Mr. Trump wants to build.”

*Photo: AP Images*

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Here are some of the results of the first year of work of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in relation to border and immigration issues. (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection, CBP, are major operational components of DHS). In addition to Border Patrol actions, here is what ICE was doing, as noted by the Associated Press:

Immigration and Customs Enforcement, whose officers pick up people for deportation away from the border, made 143,470 arrests, an increase of 25 percent from 114,434 a year earlier. After Trump took office, ICE arrests surged 40 percent from the same period a year earlier....

ICE said “interior removals” — people deported after being arrested away from the border — jumped 25 percent to 81,603 from 65,332 the previous year. They rose 37 percent since Trump’s inauguration compared to the same period a year earlier.

ICE noted in a December 19 report that its enforcement and investigative activities are handled by two distinct directorates: Enforcement and Removal Operations, or ERO, and Homeland Security Investigations, or HSI. The account continued:

In ERO, the most significant gains were made in administrative arrests and interior removals. Administrative arrests totaled more than 143,000; of those, 110,568 occurred after January 20, which is a 42% increase over the same time period last year.

Despite numerous stories and allegations in the media falsely accusing ICE of conducting indiscriminate raids and sweeps, the fact is that 92% of all aliens arrested by ICE this year had criminal convictions, pending criminal charges, were an immigration fugitive, or were an illegal re-entrant.

The issues involving immigration, legal and otherwise, are myriad — covering politics, crime, foreign policy, and the so-called Dreamers. That latter group includes up to two million illegal aliens who came to the United States as children. Some 700,000 of them have been living under protection of the Obama-era Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) deportation amnesty, one of the controversial issues beyond our scope here.

We have so many illegals and other immigrants in this country that it affects our foreign policies (and those of their nations of origin), to include Mexico and El Salvador. There are about 200,000 Salvadorans in this nation under what is called “temporary protected status” that dates to a 2001 earthquake in that Central American country — seriously challenging the meaning of the word “temporary.” They are, as the *Washington Times* rightfully noted, worth more to the Salvadoran government if they are working in this country earning American wages and sending the cash back



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home. This totals about \$4.6 billion a year, “accounting for a staggering 17 percent of the country’s gross domestic product.” San Salvador wants Washington to keep its citizens.

Remittances are also important to Mexico. The government in Mexico City, as columnist Victor Davis Hanson noted early last year, keeps taxes low on its own

elite in part by exporting, rather than helping, its own poor. It causes little worry that some \$25 billion in remittances sent from Mexican citizens working in America puts hardship on those expatriates, who are often subsidized by generous U.S. social services.

Mexico City rarely welcomes a heartfelt discussion about why its citizens flee Mexican exploitation and apparently have no wish to return home. Nor does Mexico City publicize its own stern approaches to immigration enforcement along its southern border.

Then there is the fact that the Democratic Party in the United States is also invested in illegal immigration, says Hanson, “worried that its current agendas cannot win in the Electoral College without new constituents who appreciate liberal support for open borders and generous social services.”

The Left brags about changing the Democrat Party’s stances on illegals and other immigrants. In October, a veteran reporter on the immigration issue, writing for the left-wing advocacy news website Vox, explained what has happened in recent years. Wrote Dara Lind:

Democrats have come to defer to organized immigration activists in a way they didn’t 10 years ago, or even during the early years of the Obama administration. Thanks in part to a change of strategy by major labor unions, whose success [is] in organizing immigrant-heavy professions like the hospitality industry rather than relying on its traditional manufacturing base, this important component of the Democratic base has wholly embraced the idea of comprehensive immigration reform. As a result, the party has moved substantially to the left on the issue of immigration enforcement.

Meanwhile, it should be noted that the Trump administration, widely maligned though it is, is not against “immigration.” In fact, as the president has said, he favors a “point” system similar to those in Canada and Australia — which has led to immigrants there having above-average income and education, as opposed to the contrary system in this country.

We have steered in a very different direction, a point made by Senator Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) in a vital speech (“Immigration in the National Interest”) in September at Hillsdale College’s annual Constitution Day celebration in Washington, D.C.: In total, more than

36 million immigrants, or 94 percent of the total, have come to America over the last 50 years for reasons having nothing to do with employment. And that’s to say nothing of the over 24 million illegal immigrants who have come here. Put them together and you have 60 million immigrants, legal and illegal, who did not come to this country because of a job offer or because of their skills. That’s like adding almost the entire population of the United Kingdom. And this is still leaving aside the millions of temporary guest workers who we import every year into our country.

That is a far cry from the guidelines drawn by the Founding Fathers. Cotton cited the remarks of James Madison on the floor of the House of Representatives in 1790, when the first Congress was debating the very first U.S. naturalization law. Said Madison: “It is no doubt very desirable that we should hold out



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as many inducements as possible for the worthy part of mankind to come and settle amongst us, and throw their fortunes into a common lot with ours.”

Madison stressed without apology the “worthy part,” not some pipedream about a world without borders. Madison went on: “But why is this desirable? Not merely to swell the catalogue of people. No, sir, it is to increase the wealth and strength of the community.”

Gracious, that’s a radical idea.

*Photo: AP Images*



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