

PUBLISHED

The Union Tribune, February 20, 2005

BUSH, 'BIGOTS' AND IMMIGRATION

While I agree with much in Ruben Navarrette Jr.'s column "Even more nonsense on immigration" (Opinion, Feb. 6), I was saddened when he attacked the president for pointing out a serious flaw in our immigration laws. The fact is, our current laws are turning good people into criminals, not because they are entering this country to blow up buildings or leech off the government, but simply because they want to share in the same freedom most of us were granted by birth.

Giving legal status to immigrants who are already in the country to work and better their lives will allow immigration officials to concentrate their efforts on those who wish to do this country harm. It's a noble objective.

Unfortunately, to accomplish this goal, not only does President Bush have to deal with Democrats who oppose him; he must deal with Republicans who say his plan will reward lawbreakers.

Let's take a step back and remember who we are (a country of immigrants) and the principles this country was founded on (individual rights). Not only will it make us safer; it is also key to ensuring that America remains the beacon of light that draws so many from across the globe.

PETER MORK

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ORIGINAL

Dear Editor:

While I agree with much in Ruben Navarrette Jr.'s column "Even More Nonsense On Immigration", I was saddened when he attacked the President for pointing out a serious flaw in our immigration laws. The fact is that our current laws are turning good people into criminals, not because they are entering this country to blow up buildings or leech off the government, but simply because they want to share in the same freedom that most of us were granted by birth.

*Have we all forgotten the poetic words that Lady Liberty holds so tight? "Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free..." I for one have not. This country stands apart from others due to our understanding that immigration is not only a benefit economically, but because we understand that there is a moral case behind giving people an opportunity to "breathe free" as well.**

In addition, giving legal status to immigrants who are already in the county, here only to work and better their lives, will enable immigration officials to concentrate their efforts on those who wish to do this country harm. It's a noble objective. Unfortunately, to accomplish this goal, not only does President Bush have to deal with Democrats who oppose him at each and every turn, but now he must deal with Republicans who are crying out that the President's plan will reward lawbreakers. Let's take a step back and remember who we are (a country of immigrants) and the principles this country was founded on (individual rights). Not only will it make us safer, but it is also key to ensuring that America remains the beacon of light that draws so many from across the globe.

Peter Mork

Pacific Beach

*(Feel free to remove italic section if needed for space constraints)