

H A R L A N R I C H A R D S

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Deport Me, Please!

President Trump says he wants to deport illegal aliens who commit crimes. Sounds good. Except for the Law of Unintended Consequences.

Here's what happens. An alien comes into the country illegally and gets arrested. It could be for anything - robbery, rape, murder, drug dealing, whatever. If the alien is treated like a citizen, he or she is sent to prison for years or perhaps decades. It is a burden on taxpayers. So what happens? Governments create early release policies for deportable aliens to get rid of them. They go to their home country which frees up a prison bed to incarcerate a U.S. citizen.

Essentially, the alien gets to come to the U.S., commit a crime and get off scott free while U.S. citizens who are convicted of crimes are warehoused for decades when they commit the same (or lesser) crime that the alien commits. Antonio Guterrez received a life sentence in Wisconsin for first degree murder. He served 25 years and was paroled to his INS detainer in 2016. He is home in Mexico and living as a free man. Do you think he served a long time in prison? Not hardly, not in Wisconsin. There are hundreds (perhaps thousands) of U.S. citizens who have served more time in prison for murder than Antonio did, yet have no chance of release because Wis. Gov. Walker (and politicians like him) want to be seen as tough on crime.

A deported alien is out of the public eye so he or she can easily be paroled. But a legal resident of Wisconsin who gets released to go home is considered a ticking bomb in Gov. Walker's eyes. What if that Wisconsin resident does something wrong after he is released? Better not take the chance - keep that person locked up forever. The public will never see the aging prisoner shuffling along, health deteriorating, far beyond the desire or ability to commit another crime.

In the 21st century, our country has locked up more people for more years than ever before in the entire history of our country (and perhaps of the world). Alcatraz, the most notorious prison ever, holding the most notorious gangsters imaginable, was only open for a decade or two. Back then, 10-20 years in prison was a long time. Now, it is the norm.

Yet if you come in from another country and commit a crime, President Trump wants to give you a get out of jail free card. All I can say is treat me like an alien - release me, kick me out of the country and I'll go live where people believe in treating others with fairness, mercy and compassion.