

THE SOCIAL CONTRACT Associate Editor Wayne Lutton was recently in Chicago as a guest of Illinois Citizens for Immigration Reform. There he learned that...

# Chicago Provides `Sanctuary' for Illegal Aliens

by Wayne Lutton

In the 1980s a number of American municipalities adopted "sanctuary" orders, by which local governments openly declared that they would not require welfare applicants, public school students, and even convicted criminals to declare their citizenship status (which might have subjected them to legal sanctions and possible deportation). Furthermore, these city administrations prohibited their agencies from cooperating with the INS.

On March 7, 1985 Chicago joined New York City, Madison (Wisconsin), and San Francisco — to name only a few — in becoming an official "sanctuary" city. Then-Mayor Harold Washington signed Executive Order 85-1, which declared that,

*The policy of the Office of the Mayor is declared to be to encourage equal access by persons residing in the City of Chicago, regardless of nationality or citizenship, to the full benefits, opportunities and services, including employment and the issuance of licenses, which are provided or administered by the City of Chicago. To that end, the provisions of this Order shall be liberally construed....*

As word quickly spread among foreign elements and their American allies, Chicago became a destination of preference for illegals from Latin America, Asia, Ireland, and Eastern Europe. They came not only to seek employment opportunities and enjoy education, public housing, and other municipal services unavailable in their homelands, but a certain percentage engaged in outright criminal activity, especially connected with the lucrative drug trade.

However, the suburbs surrounding Chicago did not follow Mayor Washington's lead. And as crime rates soared, by the early 1990s, many suburban police departments were teaming up with federal immigration authorities not merely to share information and report convicted felons to the INS, but also to encourage the deportation of alien criminals.

Currently, 41 Chicago-area communities encourage their local police to cooperate with the INS whose agents are regularly given access to police files and court records, and invited to accompany local police officers during investigations and while making arrests. The city of Elgin provides office space to the INS and, over a recent 30 month period, turned over to

immigration officials more than 100 legal and illegal immigrants involved in criminal gang activity.

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***"Chicago remains a  
`safe haven' for criminal aliens."***

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Many communities that became "sanctuaries" in the 1980s have since amended or rescinded such orders in the wake of escalating welfare and crime-related costs. In 1992 the non-partisan Chicago Crime Commission asked Mayor Richard M. Daley to "clarify" the "sanctuary" executive order by "specifically authorizing the [police] to cooperate with INS investigations of street gangs and other criminal activity by illegal aliens."

Requests by the Chicago Crime Commission and community groups, such as Take Our Neighborhood Back, to repeal the Sanctuary Order have been sharply rebuffed. Attorney Maria Valdez of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) fumed that, "Not only is [repeal of sanctuary] a threat to resident aliens, it's a threat to U.S. citizens of Hispanic descent."

Now running for reelection as a "law and order" candidate, Mayor Daley issued Executive Order 89-6 by which he officially renewed his commitment to "sanctuary." This Order is still in force and Chicago remains a "safe haven" for criminal aliens. ■