

Three Ways Immigration Has Changed My Community

BY INGER EBERHART

NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS

The major news outlets in my town are controlled by the media conglomerates. We have Cox Media, Gannett, CNN, and Fox. When I view the local news or read it online, it is through these filters. If it bleeds it leads. Outside of the crime, and sex scandals of the month, the next headlines go to sports, entertainment, weather, and opinion.

As I sit here on election night, working on this article, I searched on the word “immigrant” on AJC.com. The most recent article about immigrants relevant to the state of Georgia is “Immigrant students arrested protesting Georgia’s enrollment policies,” dated May 10, 2016. <http://www.ajc.com/news/local-education/immigrant-students-arrested-protesting-georgia-enrollment-policies/HvfDNgGge2cIKz0OAqNfaJ/>

The protests occurred at a meeting of the Board of Regents (BOR). <http://www.usg.edu/regents/> The Board oversees elements such as testing, admissions, and tuition rates for the public colleges and universities in Georgia. Nineteen members from the business community, government, education, law, and medicine sit on the Board. They periodically meet to discuss the business of higher education.

The article initially refers to the students as “immigrants” then “undocumented” but never illegal aliens. As the story goes, the formerly “immigrant” but now “undocumented” students entered the BOR boardroom, each carrying a sign that reads #BoycottGeorgia #EndSegregation.

The hashtags are in opposition to “immigrants” paying higher tuition rates to attend Georgia universities. So, imagine a rather eminent group of leaders entering their distinguished board room only to find disheveled “undoc-

umented” students (trespassers) occupying their seats.

After approximately 30 minutes of the disruption, the Georgia State Patrol officers arrived to escort the formerly “undocumented” students out of the BOR seats; they refused and were promptly arrested, and are now documented.

Since that time, there have been no articles about illegal immigration or immigrants on AJC.com. If I were a regular Jane Doe, I would surmise that Georgia, and certainly Atlanta, no longer have an illegal immigration problem, for I’ve not heard about the issue for several months. Surely no news is good news.

YOUR HYPOCRISY INSULTS MY INTELLIGENCE

Georgia’s legislative session is only 40 days long, the shortest in the nation. I would hope 40 days would produce a concentrated effort, a single focus on those matters of utmost importance like the economy, security, and, perhaps, less taxes. At the end of day 40, the General Assembly in their respective chambers cast their legislative papers into the air in joy at another session in the books. At 12:01 the next day, we, the people, assess the damage 40 days of government have wreaked on our life, liberties, and pursuit of happiness. This legislative session was no different.

Our GOP House, Senate, and Governor gifted the illegal aliens of Georgia with driver’s licenses. With drivers’ licenses, illegal aliens can access jobs, public benefits, and unemployment benefits. This action gifted the legal citizens of Georgia with higher taxes, less safety, more competition for jobs, and fewer public benefits.

Yet, every two years, the illustrious Georgia General Assembly touts job creation, lower taxes, and safety/security as reasons we should allow them another 80 days to wreak havoc on our sensibilities.

THE MEASURE OF A MAN IS WHAT HE DOES WITH POWER

Georgia is now 10 million people strong. At the same time, the face of Georgia is evolving. Ten percent of our population speaks a foreign language. When I was 10 years old, the population was 72 percent White, 26 percent Black, 1 percent Hispanic, and 1 percent other. At 40 years old, the population has changed to 56 percent White, 30 percent Black, 9 percent Hispanic, and 5

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percent other. Now, this is not to say that the change is solely because of immigration; however, it is a factor in the changing demographics of Georgia.

The Asian population in Cobb, Fulton, Gwinnett, and Henry counties has increased 291 percent, 519 percent, 739 percent, and 1,753 percent respectively. Gwinnett County has the largest new immigrant Asian population, and Henry County is one of the four fastest growing counties in the U.S. Fast growth means fast Hispanic growth. From 2000 to 2010, Hispanic growth increased by over 100 percent in 15 of Georgia’s most populous counties. Eleven of those same counties count Hispanics as 20 percent or more of the population, with 4 of those counties having a population of 30 percent or more Hispanics.

The changing face of Georgia influences schools, the economy, and voting patterns. With demographics comes a change in who and how schools teach, where education funding is allocated, and how much is allocated. If the need for jobs outpaces job creation, the economy of the

state can become depressed. Newly minted voters bring their values and ideals to each election. No one yet knows how much of an effect this change in demographics will have on Georgia, which for the last several years has been a Republican state. On the other hand, demographics and immigration have the potential to change this. This new population possesses an immense amount of power. We are unsure if they realize the amount of power they have and what they will do with the power once they realize they have it.

As Lincoln stated, “Elections belong to the people. It’s their decision. If they decide to turn their back on the fire and burn their behinds, then they will just have to sit on their blisters.”

References

Carl Vinson Institute at the University of Georgia: Changing Demographics of Georgia: https://gbpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/matt_hauer_gbpipresentation.pdf ■



Radical protestors with “Freedom University,” a tuition-free school for illegal aliens, demand that the Georgia Board of Regents change admissions policies and tuition rates to accommodate the needs and interests of illegal immigrant activists.