

The Immigration Implications of the Security and Prosperity Partnership

By JAMES R. EDWARDS, JR.

The NAFTA Superhighway. A North American Union. Foreign-run U.S. toll roads. Harmonization with Canada and Mexico. Continental currency called the Amero. If you've heard of any of these things, you're in the ballpark of my topic: the Security and Prosperity Partnership.

- The Bush administration's initiative called the Security and Prosperity Partnership has serious implications for immigration. That's because of its quiet surrender of American sovereignty.
- Self-government is no longer a job Americans will do for themselves, the administration apparently thinks.

Background

- The SPP was launched in March 2005 in Waco. President Bush met there with Mexican President Fox and Canadian Prime Minister Martin.
- These three leaders committed the three North American nations to cooperate, even integrate their policies on security/antiterrorism and economic fronts. These included transportation, energy, customs, and immigration.
- SPP followed the course set by NAFTA — trilateral integration and harmonization. It also mirrors the recommendations of a task force of the Council on Foreign Relations.
- SPP's initial launch has led to the formation of working groups within the administration. The lead department is the Department of Com-

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merce, with Homeland Security a close second. SPP also has a public-private collaborative called the North American Competitiveness Council. NACC gives a leading role to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

- SPP has a very questionable and vague legal basis. Yet this lack of clear legal authority didn't stop the administration from quickly entering various memoranda of understanding with Canada and Mexico.
- SPP has not been conducted in secret, but its activities and participants have been secretive. There's an official website, spp.gov, and lots of material available on it. But for the more substantive details, the public interest group Judicial Watch has had to use the Freedom of Information Act to force the government to disclose SPP's more informative records.

SPP's Immigration Implications

A continental guestworker program

NAFTA established a new class of temporary visas. SPP is building upon that and using the NAFTA visas as the first step toward a continental guestworker program.

- SPP's goal is "to formalize a transnational labor force that could work in any North American country on a temporary basis."
- Of course, that translates, for the most part, into more Mexicans and Canadians coming to the United States to work.

Speedier border crossing

One SPP working group is focused on improving "the crossborder movement of people and goods" and "detecting bottlenecks on the U.S.-Mexican border."

- SPP's approach is a Perimeter Clearance Strategy. That means facilitation of pre-clearance of

people and goods entering the continent at the continental perimeter, rather than at a national border.

- Practically, that means once someone is admitted into one North American country, he may cross the national borders easily, like crossing state lines within the U.S. today.
- One aspect of this involves IDs. The Traveler Screening Systems Working Group has discussed with Canadian and Mexican officials a “One Card” — some kind of international ID card.



- The NACC recommends merging several credentialing systems with US-VISIT. This would perhaps make Big Brother more daunting while lowering the actual level of security and reducing our ability to catch bad guys.

Common security perimeter

The end goal is to treat the outer perimeter of the continent as the effective border for all three nations.

- That would make Mexico’s southern border our southern border. Mexico is one of the more corrupt nations in the hemisphere and is the source of the most illegal aliens in America.
- The New York Times reported on how rampant corruption of Mexican police and soldiers means the majority of Central American illegals gets across Mexico’s southern border.
- Mexico’s endemic corruption and border problems become all the more our own problem if we entrust border security to Mexico and loosen border controls at our own borders.

Other SPP areas that affect our immigration situation

Mexican trucks & the NAFTA Superhighway

- The liberalization of the free flow of people and goods across our borders, with the expansion of “legitimate” Mexican commercial presence within our country, will give criminal enterprises greater opportunity to smuggle illegal aliens, drugs, guns, and sex slaves into the United States.

Regulatory and standards harmonization

- This will force the U.S. to accept or abide by such dangerous foreign policies as Canada’s asylum policies. Canada’s lax asylum rules are more friendly to terrorists, for example.

Social Security totalization with Mexico

- Totalization will risk Social Security’s financial stability, allow Mexican illegal aliens to get Social Security credit for unlawful U.S. work, and most Mexican workers to collect far more from Social Security than they will have contributed into the system.

Conclusion

- Like NAFTA, SPP will increase both legal and illegal immigration levels.
- Its erasure of our immigration controls will make a bad immigration situation worse.
- Of the three SPP partners, the United States stands to lose the most under this deal. ■