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Ask anyone who has fallen victim to identity theft and they will tell you, in no ambiguous terms, how identity theft is not a “victimless crime”!

Other business establishments that are highly valued by transnational criminals and terrorists include businesses that provide the opportunity to make phone calls without fear of having their calls tapped. Telephone arcades provide those who so desire, a means of making phone calls, where the patrons of these establishments are provided with random telephones. This makes it all but impossible for law enforcement to set up a wire tap on those phones that are randomly assigned.

Mail box rental services are also valued by illegal aliens who may live nomadic lives in the United States, remaining in a particular apartment for a short period of time before moving on to another apartment. By renting a mail box at a private establishment, no matter where they may live or how frequently they may move, these illegal aliens have a reliable way of receiving mail and other items from home. Mail box establishments also provide another advantage to those seeking to “fly under the radar.” Such mail boxes can be nearly as secure as messengers for providing illegal aliens and criminals and terrorists with a secure means of communicating.

Think about how Osama bin Laden was able to stay “under the radar” by avoiding all “high tech” means of communicating. He avoided all forms of electronic communication and resorted to the oldest form of communication: he used trusted messengers. In my experience, drug traffickers and other other criminals and terrorists use a private mail box service, rented under a false name, as an easy way to communicate with a minimum chance of having those communications intercepted by law enforcement.

When you drive through neighborhoods that have large numbers of illegal aliens, one of the first things you will notice is the profusion of the sorts of services I noted above.

One of the “dirty secrets” about communities in which large numbers of illegal aliens live and work is the prevalence of houses of prostitution. Often the illegal aliens who enter the United States to seek illegal employment are young, able-bodied men who arrive

in the United States without their wives or girlfriends. They frequently seek the companionship to be found in a house of prostitution. This leads to more horrendous exploitation of young women, many of whom are also aliens who are illegally present in the United States. While some of these women came here with the understanding that they would seek to work in brothels, many other young women are tricked into coming to the United States to work at jobs that they believe will involve watching small children or working in a restaurant. When they arrive in the United States they find that they have been duped and their lives become a living nightmare.

When I was an INS Special Agent, my colleagues and I would often raid these brothels and take the illegal alien prostitutes into custody. We also often worked the buzzer to the front door of these establishments. We buzzed lots of young men in, most of whom were illegal aliens who, we arrested, and, as we used to joke, many of them got screwed but no sex was involved!

This is yet another example of how crime begets still more crime and often horrific exploitation.

Once again I am compelled to ask how anyone could honestly claim that it is “Anti-Immigrant” to advocate for secure borders and the creation of an immigration system that has real integrity, which not only protects our nation and our citizens but honors the countless millions of lawful immigrants and their descendants who built this nation since its founding nearly a quarter of a millennium ago?

The problem is that the illegal immigration crisis provides unscrupulous business owners many ways to maximize their profits. Landlords who rent apartments to these illegal aliens count on the fact that these illegal aliens will not complain to the appropriate authorities about the hellish conditions under which they live.

At work, the illegal aliens are often terribly exploited and paid wages that are well below prevailing wage levels and may even be beneath the minimum wage standards. It is not uncommon for illegal aliens to work many more hours than they are paid for or to not be paid appropriate overtime or premium pay when they work long hours or on weekends or holidays. Similarly, the workplace is often so filthy and dangerous as to not meet many of the commonsense standards that various law enforcement agencies on all levels of government would require. Employers count on the vulnerability and desperation of the illegal alien workforce to not report truly egregious violations.

When aliens are paid “off the books,” appropriate taxes are not paid and money under such circumstances

is not being sent to Social Security or Workman's Compensation.

Furthermore, not surprisingly, the goal of foreign workers is to send as much of their paychecks to their families in their home countries. For many countries these remittances represent one of the most significant sources of money for their economies. It is believed that each year well over one hundred billion dollars is sent from the United States to the home countries of these foreign workers. This is money not earned by citizens or resident aliens of the United States and money that is not spent or invested in the United States. This is money that is totally lost to the American economy.

Unscrupulous landlords who intentionally rent apartments to illegal aliens often run buildings that are filthy where many of the systems within the building don't work properly. Many times apartments have interior walls constructed to provide small separate bedrooms that can be locked. When there are fires in these buildings, it is often impossible for the individuals sleeping in these rooms to escape the fire, and at times firefighters also get caught in the mazes that are illegally constructed in these apartments, either by the landlords or by those who see an opportunity to make money by subletting and subdividing these apartments to large numbers of illegal aliens.

The direct consequences of this is that people are badly burned and suffer for the rest of their lives. Others die. This involves the residents of the buildings and it involves firefighters and other first responders. These are yet more examples of greed running amok and the price that the victims pay.

I hope that I have made it clear that immigration involves far more than our nation's borders. Whenever I travel around the United States to participate in debates and panel discussions about the immigration crisis that confronts our nation today, I am often asked about the border fence. I have come to say that we should think of a fence on the border the way we think about an airplane's wing. Without that wing the airplane certainly will not get off the ground- however, that wing by itself will go nowhere!

Each and every component of what should be a coherent and integrated immigration system must work effectively. No matter how much money and efforts are expended on securing the border, those efforts will fail if visas are provided to criminals or terrorists who seek to ply their "trades" in our country.

I think of each of the components of the immigration system as being comparable to a hole in the bottom of a boat. If all of the holes are not plugged, that boat will wind up at the bottom of the lake. Similarly, all elements of the immigration system must be made as secure as possible.

Time and again we have heard our leaders tell us that in order to protect our nation from terrorist attacks our government must "get it right" 100 percent of the time while in order to successfully attack us, the terrorists only need to get it right once!

When our soldiers went to Iraq after the attacks of September 11, 2001, members of the United States Border Patrol were sent to Iraq to secure the Iraqi border against the entry of terrorists and insurgents. Among those Border Patrol agents were members of the elite BORTAC units.

Meanwhile our borders are anything but secure and we have millions of illegal aliens living and working in our country in nearly every city and town. Our government has no idea as to the true identities of these millions of aliens, whose entry into our country constitutes a violation of law. Our government does not even have any real way of knowing how many such illegal aliens are present in our country today. Our government does not know anything about the backgrounds of these illegal aliens or their potential affiliation with criminal or terrorist organizations, yet the administration has made it clear that the "solution" to this unacceptable situation is to provide these illegal aliens with a "pathway to United States citizenship"!

It has been said that the only thing worse than no security is false security. This sort of program would provide us with precisely that false security!

A country without secure borders can no more stand than can a house without walls! ■