

A SMART OBAMA IMMIGRATION POLICY IN THE FACE OF POLITICAL COWARDICE

Clearly comprehensive immigration reform is not achievable in light of the refusal of either party to meaningfully address the subject, especially in an election year consumed with the rabid doings of the Arizona State Legislature (memo to everyone: the Arizona Legislature has *always* been the province of loony nutjobs). Against that backdrop, would be refreshing to see the Obama Administration actually thinking creatively about affirmative policy steps that could be taken to improve the situation and reduce racial tension. Believe it or not, that is exactly what is being done. From Dan Nowicki at the Arizona Republic:

The Obama administration is exploring a broad range of options that potentially could let thousands of illegal immigrants remain in the United States legally or apply for permanent residency if Congress continues to stall on passage of comprehensive immigration reform, according to an internal government memo obtained by The Arizona Republic.

The draft memo, from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the agency in charge of processing immigration benefits, outlines administrative options that would “promote family unity, foster economic growth and achieve significant process improvements and reduce the threat of removal for certain individuals present in the United States without authorization.”

Perhaps the most controversial part of the memo suggests increasing the use of

deferred action, which the government uses to let certain illegal immigrants who haven't committed crimes to remain in the United States without fear of being deported. Once an illegal immigrant is granted deferred action, they are eligible for work permits. Currently, deferred action is rarely granted.

Here is the actual memo from DHS Citizen and Immigration Services.

What a refreshing thought.

In the absence of Comprehensive Immigration Reform,

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USSIS can extend benefits and/or protections to many individuals and groups by issuing new guidance and regulations, exercising discretion with regard to parole-in-place, deferred action and the issuance of Notices to Appear (NTA), and adopting significant process improvements.

Now *this* is the type of intelligent thought and leadership that Barack Obama ran and got elected on. Is it perfect or ideal? No. But it is positive action in the face of an intractable problem Congress is too cowardly to address.

On the other hand, floating this out with little fanfare, almost in a stand off treatment, does not bode well for the confidence of the Administration or its willingness to invest any effort or perceived capital oh so precious to them.

Prediction: The brown haters and conservative shriekers will let fly causing the White House and Administration to run away and disavow their own department and officials who put their necks out on the line to try to make a difference in such a critically important area of domestic

policy. Oh, and John “the Maverick” McCain will rhetorically inflate like cynical nihilistic puffer fish furious about even the thought of such intelligent administration of government.