

## We're victims in illegal immigration



### Guest Editorial

By RICHARD DAVIS

**I**N May, Senate leaders and the Bush administration came out of their back rooms and unveiled a "compromise" deal on Comprehensive Immigration Reform. The bill is a boon for the 12 million to 20 million illegals in this country who get an eventual pathway to citizenship — and for their extended families who get to follow them here. We could be looking at 30 million to 60 million new people in the U.S. in this wave!

This "deal" is no deal for U.S. citizens. The politicians who authored it immediately pushed but failed to get a vote on it before Memorial Day — before the general public had a chance to mount opposition. As I am writing this, I'm not certain of the status of the bill.

Farmers simply do not need any part of amnesty. All farmers need is a tightened border and for the government to efficiently bring a limited number of legally documented workers into the country for specific jobs. When the jobs are done, those foreigners can go home again.

Between the times when they are marching in our street, rioting in L.A. or, astoundingly, bringing "civil" lawsuits in our courts, the illegals say they provide a service in America by doing the jobs

that no one else will do. Untrue, but that is the reason they give for being here. Yet, we've got to realize that once they become citizens, they're not going to continue doing those low-paying jobs they brag about. They'll climb the ladder as quickly as they can. Many will use their citizenship to get more government benefits. Some will get employment preferences.

Obviously, the politicians realized this as their "compromise" provides for a continued and accelerated immigration program.

Politicians have their hands over their ears on this issue. A poll from McLaughlin & Associates points out that 74% of likely American voters agree "we have to stop the flow of illegals before we address what to do about those who are already here." (As an aside, I wonder what percentage of phone respondents who answered differently are here illegally, themselves.)

#### I can't hear you!

The hypocrisy of the left on this issue almost makes me speechless. For 35 years now, I've been hearing about one crisis after another in the left's attempts to scare me into some kind of collectivist action. These cries are loosely collected around problems of overpopulation like pollution, overdevelopment, urban

blight, poverty, hunger, global cooling, global warming, etc. They complain incessantly that there are too many people drinking the water, polluting the air, cutting the trees, dirtying the sky, and overdeveloping our wetlands, open spaces and green spaces. We are all guilty, they maintain, of driving too many cars, cutting down the trees, using air conditioning or filling up too many landfills.

Yet, tens of millions of foreigners are coming to partake of the "American" dream. They want to drive SUVs and build houses on our beaches and mountains. They want to overcrowd our endangered wildlife. Yet, not a single word from any of the leftist groups.

Let me tell you something: We're the victims here. While the politicians make their speeches, we get more property laws, more regulations and higher taxes. We'll never be able to build schools for all these foreign children. When we do build more schools for them, they'll march into them and demand we rewrite our history books to take phrases like "Remember the Alamo!" out of them.

I believe this country belongs to its citizens. If the politicians go against the people and carelessly hand out citizenship to foreigners, they're giving our country away.

*Davis writes for Farm Progress.*

## Dick Lugar strikes out with farm-bill proposal



### The Ford Report

By STEVE FORD

**I**T is amazing how old ideas are recycled when a new farm bill appears on the horizon.

The farm savings account recently arose from the ashes of the last farm-policy debate. Sen. Richard Lugar of Indiana has included it as a key piece of his proposed farm-bill legislation. Farmers may remember him from his attempt in 2002 to introduce legislation to limit all farm subsidies to \$7,000 per farmer.

Lugar's intent this year is to eliminate gradually all direct payments over the course of six years and during that time deposit the payments that are received in an account jointly held with USDA. Farmers would then be able to withdraw funds from the account when farm revenues are low. What does he think farmers do with the money now?

Farmers use profits from good years (if there are any) to pay down debt from previous poor years or pay on other farm debt for machinery and land. They use the profits from good years to invest in new machinery, equipment and facilities. They use profits as down payments for farm expansion and new technology, investments that are necessary to maintain current standards of living. They use profits to reduce the amount of operating capital that must be borrowed for the next crop.

Tying up direct payments in a restricted account would be bad for farmers and bad for the rural economy.

#### One drought drains savings

The amount of money in the account would also be insufficient. Depositing the full average direct payment for corn of \$29 an acre in each of the six years only results in an amount of \$174 per base acre in the account, plus whatever interest the account earns. The proposal

actually calls for declining direct payments over that period. The amount in the account would be only one drought away from being depleted.

What Lugar's proposal and many other proposals really reflect, however, is some confusion about how to craft agricultural policy in the current economic climate where the market is providing adequate profit for some commodities. Lugar's proposal is simply an effort to reduce ag policy support to farmers under those conditions. However, his is a very corn-soybean-centric view of farm policy coming out of the Midwest. Southern producers of rice and cotton face a very different outlook.

It would be better to condition the receipt of direct payments on the market being below the target price than to eliminate direct payments in their entirety for all producers.

#### Three solid ideas

There are three overriding ideas that I think have merit in the farm-bill debate right now:

■ First, we need to move to some type of crop revenue assurance program. This would do away with most crop insurance needs, protecting both yield and price on the downside. Setting the appropriate level of coverage and the exact mechanisms is where the debate should be.

■ Second, it is time to scrap the one-size-fits-all model of commodity policy. Rice and cotton are not like corn, soybeans and wheat. The new domestic demand for biofuels has fundamentally changed how these commodity markets relate to one another. In addition, they face different challenges in international trade.

■ Finally, our policy-makers should proceed with caution in crafting new farm policy. The structural shifts in the corn and soybean markets have not played out yet.

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