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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 20, 1975

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR: JIM CANNON
FROM: JIM CONNOR 
SUBJECT: Domestic Council Committee on
Illegal Aliens

The President has reviewed your memorandum of June 16th on the above subject and the following recommendations were approved:

- Option 2 - Immediate Comprehensive Approach
- Option 3 - Review of Immigration and Work Entry Laws

Please follow-up with appropriate action.

cc: Don Rumsfeld

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

THE WHITE HOUSE

ACTION

WASHINGTON

June 16, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: JIM CANNON *Jue*
SUBJECT: Domestic Council Committee on Illegal Aliens

BACKGROUND:

On January 6, 1975, you established the Domestic Council Committee on Illegal Aliens to develop, coordinate and present policy issues that cut across agency lines to provide better programs for dealing with the national problem of illegal aliens. The meetings of the Committee have revealed the current total lack of solid data on the problem and the difficulty in obtaining it. The Committee is divided on its future course -- whether it should adopt a limited, methodical approach which would take several years to carry out or attempt a quicker resolution with several attendant risks. Your guidance is necessary to resolve this impasse.

OPTIONS:

There are two competing alternatives for the Committee's future activities and a non exclusive third option.

1. Limited Step by Step Approach:

A limited option would be to establish a legislative strategy for the passage of the Rodino Bill, which establishes penalties for the employment of illegal aliens, and determine a position on the Kennedy Bill, which would confer legal status on illegals who have resided in the United States for more than three years. The Committee would also monitor an Immigration and Naturalization study, currently awaiting Congressional appropriations approval, which would identify the number, location and employment patterns of illegals in the United States. Following completion of this preliminary study and building on the data it provides, a series of impact studies could then be devised, if considered necessary, to examine the effect of illegal aliens in areas like jobs, schools, social welfare, etc.

Pro - This option would permit a positive step by step approach without incurring great additional costs or creating mandates for further action. It would furnish data necessary to establishing the parameters of the problem and for the formulation of a logical sequence of studies lending to solutions.

Con - It is a limited approach to the problem and would not do much before the election to solve the larger accompanying economic and social impact of the pressure of illegal aliens apart from establishing sanctions against employment.

2. Immediate Comprehensive Approach:

An alternative approach would encompass the legislative and monitoring activities outlined above plus the immediate commencement of long-range impact studies to examine such problems as:

- a. What are the cost effects of illegal aliens on social services like welfare, unemployment insurance, health delivery and education?
- b. What is the cultural and social impact of illegal aliens on areas in which they settle? Do they make contributions to the communities in which they concentrate or are they parasites?
- c. What is the effect of the illegal aliens influx on our foreign policy and international relations? (This question would be examined in concert with the Secretary of State's Interagency Committee for Study of Problems Related to Illegal Mexican Migration into the United States.)
- d. How many and what type of jobs do the illegals take away and in what industries? Can these jobs be filled by Americans and is the U.S. labor force adequate and willing to work in jobs now occupied by illegal aliens?

Pro - It would provide a large body of background data and accelerate your Administration's efforts to deal with the problem.

Con - This proposal would take time, money and the commitment of a full time staff of agency personnel or consultants. The impact studies could heighten tensions among Spanish speaking groups and the results, particularly in the social services area, could produce evidence of the inordinate cost of illegal aliens on state and local governments. This could create pressures for Federal subsidies to ease the problem.

3. Review of Immigration and Work Entry Laws:

An option, not excluded by adoption of either of the preceding two, would be an examination of current laws covering immigration and admission of aliens for employment. This study would seek to determine whether or not liberalizing these laws would remove the influx of illegals and their impact on the economy. It could review the policies of other countries in this regard, notably Europe, and evaluate the old Federal "Bracero" employment program, in which Mexican citizens were allowed entry for employment under a quota system.

Pro - Would provide the data for a "legalistic" solution to the problem by examining the feasibility of admitting more aliens as immigrants and legal workers.

Con - The study could incur the opposition of organized labor to whom the "Bracero" program was an anathema.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Option 1 (Limited Step by Step Approach) - Levi, Buchen, Marsh Seidman
- Option 2 (Immediate Comprehensive Approach) - Dunlop, Lynn, Cannon
- Option 3 (Review of Immigration and Work Entry Laws) - Levi, Buchen, Marsh, Lynn, Cannon

DECISION:

Option 1 _____ or Option 2 MR7

Option 3 Yes MR7 No _____