

Out of the Mouths of Babes

Michael Sean Winters | May. 20, 2010 NCR Today

Most everyone has by now seen the video clip of First Lady Michelle Obama speaking with students at a Silver Spring school. One of the girls said that her mother was worried because "Barack Obama is taking away everyone who doesn't have papers" and then she disclosed that her mother did not have papers. Out of the mouths of babes.

I suppose there will be some whose ideological blinders will keep them from feeling a basic empathy with the child's plight. I am sure such people will be on Fox News around the clock.

Religious leaders have jumped on the story. Sister Simone Cambell,SSS, from NETWORK, hit the nail on the head when she said in [a statement](#) [1] released by the group Faith in Public Life, "This innocent little girl represents the painful fallout of our nation's deeply flawed immigration system. Today, thousands of immigrant families are living in fear and being torn apart because Congress refuses to act. A young mother, a U.S. citizen, recently talked about how her "heart trembled" when her Mexican husband tried to join her in the U.S. so he could be a father to their children. Now he is in a U.S. prison and their young daughter sadly sings "You Are My Sunshine" to him over the phone. The brokenhearted mother asked, "What is the American value behind ripping families apart?" This is a question that Congress must answer by fixing our immigration system now." Other religious leaders have voiced similar sentiments.

Will the little girl's outspoken concern prove a "tipping point"? Will there be a groundswell of support, finally, for comprehensive immigration reform? I am not sure. One of the lessons of the other night's primaries is that voters are not very plugged in. There was record low turnout throughout the country. If Democrats wants to motivate their Latino base to the polls, they should ride this issue for all its worth. Smart Republicans, once they get past primary season, will jump on the bandwagon. President Obama should even consider submitting to Congress the exact same proposal for comprehensive immigration reform that President Bush submitted a few years back. That would show as much as anything that the concern here is a human one, a political one to be sure, but a human one first. That little girl's anxiety deserves an answer. Will our politicians provide one?

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Links:

[1] http://faithinpubliclife.org/content/press/2010/05/faith_coalition_stands_with_2n.html