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Obama administration tearing up immigrant families at record pace

by Thomas C. Fox

Immigration and the Church

Speaking at a *Celebration/NCR* sponsored Immigration conference earlier this month, John Fife, a human rights activist and retired Presbyterian minister who lives in Tucson, Arizona and was a member of the Sanctuary Movement and a co-founder of the immigrant rights group No More Deaths, called the Obama administration's immigration policies brutal and the worst of any in modern history. His attack caught a number of conference attendees by surprise, but a column in today's *New York Times* lends evidence to the accusation.

Two academics specializing in immigration issues, Hirokazu Yoshikawa and Carola Suarez-Orozco, cite a recent Homeland Security department report that states from January to June 2011 Immigration and Customs removed 46,486 undocumented parents who claimed to have at least one child who is an American citizen. In contrast, in the entire decade between 1998 and 2007, about 100,000 such parents were removed. "The extraordinary acceleration in the dismantling of these families, part of the government's efforts to meet an annual quota of about 400,000 deportations, has had devastating results.

The authors, citing the report, wrote that 45 percent of the arrested were not apprehended for any criminal offense. Those who were, were usually arrested for relatively minor offenses not violent crimes.

Yes, brutal. Shocking this is taking place in America. Shocking that this is going on despite words by President Obama last May that the deportation of immigrants would focus on "violent offenders and people convicted of crimes; not families, not folks who are just looking to scrape together an income."

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