To Rand Paul, Legal Immigration Is Also a Concern

The New York Times Blogs

(The Caucus)

June 9, 2011 Thursday

Section: US; politics

Length: 376 words

Byline: EMMARIE HUETTEMAN
Highlight: Senator ***Rand*** ***Paul*** asks whether the government is adequately screening and then keeping tabs on those who enter the country with student visas or as refugees.

Body

It's common to hear a senator express ***concerns*** about illegal ***immigration*** these days, but Senator ***Rand Paul, Republican*** of Kentucky, is also ***concerned*** about ***legal*** ***immigration***.

"We have 40,000 students coming to this country from all over the world," he said. "Are they would-be attackers?"

Speaking at a Senate Homeland Security Committee hearing on border patrol corruption, Mr. ***Paul*** on Thursday questioned whether the government was adequately screening and then keeping tabs on those who enter the country with student visas or as refugees.

He cited the *recent arrest of two Iraqi refugees* on terrorism charges in his hometown of Bowling Green, Ky.; the men are accused of trying to send weapons and money to *Al Qaeda*. Mr. ***Paul*** said the fingerprints of one of the men had been found on an unused improvised explosive device in Iraq.

But while Mr. ***Paul*** said he worried about ***legal*** immigrants, he was not ***concerned*** about the potential threat from American citizens.

"We've done so many things to think that we're all terrorists, that universally we have to scrutinize everybody to the Nth degree instead of doing what I just think would be good police work," Mr. ***Paul*** said, adding that it would be less expensive and less intrusive to privacy if the country looked at "the people who did attack us and who continue to attack us, and not really U.S. citizens."

Alan D. Bersin, commissioner of *Customs and Border Protection*, said one million people enter the United States every day, a number that includes immigrants but also American citizens returning from abroad. He cautioned Mr. ***Paul*** against dismissing citizens as a potential threat.

"If we look at a *Faisal Shahzad*, who was a U.S. citizen, naturalized, we have to recognize that this risk assessment system can't just be cut," Mr. Bersin said.

Faisal Shahzad, a Pakistani immigrant, was accused of trying to detonate a car bomb in Times Square last year.

Mr. ***Paul*** said there were factors that should raise a red flag about whether a citizen could pose a threat, including if an American had frequently traveled to Yemen, for example.

"It's not as simple as what your religion is or color your skin is or any of that. It's more complicated," he said. "But it's a whole host of figures that we need to look at."

Classification

Language: ENGLISH

Document-Type: News

Publication-Type: Web Blog

Subject: *IMMIGRATION* (91%); TERRORISM (90%); STUDENTS & STUDENT LIFE (90%); LEGISLATIVE BODIES (90%); BOMBS & EXPLOSIVE DEVICES (89%); PASSPORTS & VISAS (78%); LAW ENFORCEMENT (78%); SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE FORCES (78%); TERRORIST ATTACKS (77%); FOREIGN STUDENTS (77%); BOMBINGS (77%); IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICES (76%); TERRITORIAL & NATIONAL BORDERS (73%); BORDER CONTROL (73%); CORRUPTION (73%); NATIONAL SECURITY (71%)

Organization: AL-QAEDA (56%); US DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (57%)

Person: ALAN BERSIN (79%); *RAND PAUL* (58%)

Geographic: BOWLING GREEN, KY, USA (73%); KENTUCKY, USA (92%); UNITED STATES (94%); YEMEN (79%); IRAQ (71%)

Load-Date: January 9, 2012

End of Document