

We need to wake up to the costs of illegal immigration

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Body

Re: Student's secret slips out: He's 27, Sept. 29.

Your article on the 27-year-old **illegal** immigrant who falsified his age to go to high school with students who were 10 years his junior was one-sided in its sources. The reporter only mentions a liberal Hispanic interest group which counseled "sympathy." Nowhere was there any attempt to quote a source such as NumbersUSA.org on the incredible **costs** of **illegal immigration** in education, medical care and social services.

Joe and Josephine "Lunchbucket" not only have to work several jobs to care for their children, but then they have to pay for **illegal** immigrants' education and care.

Many Americans, including legal immigrants and Hispanics, are starting to **wake up** to the hidden **cost** of **illegal immigration**. The unholy alliance of big business, which likes the cheap labor, and liberal interest groups (who have silenced labor unions and the Sierra Club, et al.) is starting to unravel.

It's not racism and it's not xenophobia. It's simply about obeying the law and getting in line.

Kerry H. Brown, St. Petersburg

The law seems warped

Re: Student's secret slips out: He's 27.

Your story reveals how porous our borders are and the lack of enforcement through the justice system. He came here three years ago - illegally. Wonder how he got in?

He has apparently been arrested for and found guilty of possession of fictitious identification in 2004 plus other violations of the law. And yet he was still here walking around free and continuing to falsify his identity! Really makes you believe that somehow the law is warped.

The bottom line is this man was continuing to violate the law, and we don't **need** more of his type here. He should have been deported more than a year ago. We have enough of our own home grown problems. Don't import more!

Elizabeth Keith, St. Petersburg

A thirst for education

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Re: Student's secret slips out: He's 27.

I can understand why some parents would be concerned over their high school age children having a 27-year-old immigrant classmate who broke the law with falsified records to get what he wanted. I am one of those who feels our borders are too permeable and that we should use a large chunk of the money we spend on immigrants, illegal or otherwise, to take better care of our "own" citizens.

On the other hand, as a retired college professor, I can also say that it is refreshing to learn how strongly the man desires an education. Though I have been told that I would have had a different experience had I taught in this part of Florida, and although many of my former students were at least knowledge-appreciative, an alarming number of those at Miami-Dade Community College did not want to be there.

It is a relief when a teacher encounters students who don't have to be persuaded that learning is valuable. Therefore, had Josue Oswaldo Ramirez-Mejia been in one of my classes, I probably would have been delighted and might have learned some things from him. It would be interesting to learn his high school teachers' assessment of him as a student.

As a born-and-raised-in-the-USA farm boy and factory worker, I had to struggle to get to college and every single course I took was a privilege. Though I don't condone anyone breaking laws, I can certainly identify with Mr. Ramirez-Mejia's thirst to get a decent education.

T. Ansel Toney, Hernando

Judge appears biased

Something is amiss in the trial of Dr. Sami Al-Arian and his co-defendants. If I understand the Constitution correctly, a federal judge's job is to guarantee a defendant's right to a fair trial.

To many observers of this trial, Judge James Moody's decisions have been biased in favor of the prosecution and against the defense. First he insisted that the trial be held in Tampa, despite a 10-year, negative media campaign against Dr. Al-Arian. Then he seated jurors who were clearly biased against Muslims, Arabs and Palestinians. Although he stated at the beginning of the trial that the prosecution must show that the defendants supported militant actions of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, he has allowed the prosecution to depict graphic bomb scenes and to display the sob stories of the family members of Israeli victims of suicide bombers, without the prosecution having established any connection between the defendants and these bombings. But he has prohibited the defense from telling the Palestinian story or showing scenes of the death and destruction rained on Palestinian civilians by Israeli forces.

More recently, he failed to dismiss a juror or call for a mistrial after a juror inappropriately voiced his opinion against the defendants to other jurors. The judge also permitted the prosecution to enter PIJ Web site information about bombings into evidence, while the prosecution still has not proven any connection to the defendants.

Is Judge Moody bending over backward to help the prosecution out of personal bias, professional disorientation, or plain pity for a prosecution that has spent so much time and money defending Israeli interests in a case that has not yet been proven? Whatever the reason is, he is not serving justice or upholding the Constitution.

Pilar Saad, Tampa

Cut corporate electricity use

Having lived in the United States for more than 30 years, I have often commented on the waste of electricity in all the large high-rise office buildings in our cities and towns. Corporations could contribute in a huge way to

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conservation of energy by turning off 75 percent of the lighting and possibly adjusting the cooling/heating thermostats overnight. The mind boggles at the savings.

Judy Marley, Clearwater

Stop aiding the partisans

Re: Congress and Katrina, editorial, Sept. 28.

You say the hard questions of "what went wrong" with local, state and federal governments in handling the New Orleans catastrophe can't be addressed until "members of both parties in Congress stop wallowing in partisan politics."

It also would seem useful if all news media would stop aiding and abetting the "wallowers."

A.E. Roberts, St. Petersburg

Possible penguin ponderings

The New York Times editorial Penguin family values (Sept. 22) reported that many religious conservatives see the emperor penguins as little Christian beacons of family and faith. I came away from the documentary March of the Penguins with another interpretation.

I had watched the male penguin cradle the egg on the top of his feet while huddling for warmth with other males during an 80-degree-below-zero blizzard. I wondered if he wasn't thinking, "If this is the result of intelligent design, then I'm ready for a little good old evolution."

Palmer O. Hanson Jr., Largo

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