

Give American workers respect for all they willingly do

St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

April 24, 2006 Monday, 0 South Pinellas Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. 8A

Length: 1005 words

Body

Many, including our president, are claiming that illegal workers are filling jobs Americans will not do, despite many facts showing that in most areas of the country most of the tough jobs are being done by Americans. That is so in restaurants, motels, lawn service, construction, home domestics and in many other jobs of physical labor and low pay.

Yes, some Americans will not work and without immigrant workers, back-breaking jobs are often hard to fill in some places. But the New York Times' Nicholas Kristof (Guest worker program would do more harm to America's poor, April 11) says that even among maids and agricultural workers, only 40 percent are immigrants, and even then, that is in areas where illegal workers concentrate, I believe. Elsewhere, the ones lifting that bale and towing that barge are largely Americans, of all races.

For example, an Associated Press story stated that only 17 percent of farm workers are illegal. Of the 3-million farm workers, 2.5-million are legal and of that number, 2-million are farm families. According to the Pew Hispanic Center, only 4.9 percent of the U.S. labor force is illegal.

Imagine doing those tough jobs, often two of them, just to be told that you are a slacker, not willing to work, that your labor doesn't count, that you as an American don't count. What an insult, how unfair, how unjust, how unkind. Quit besmirching our American workers and give them the respect they deserve.

Bob Womack, Crystal River

A disaster at Delta

Re: Clean for pride, not pay, Delta asks staff, April 20.

Is Delta Air Lines trying to commit corporate suicide? The "Clean Days" program requesting hourly employees to voluntarily (ha!) clean Delta airplanes "off the clock" is insane.

First, as everybody knows who has ever been an employer or manager, it is just plain illegal (and immoral) to ask or even permit hourly employees to work off the clock!

Second, this program is a public relations disaster. My first reaction was: How dirty are these aircraft and why have they been permitted to get that way? Scrape off the tray tables and floors, dirty lavatories. Ick! My second reaction was: These cannot be happy employees to whom I am entrusting my life and health.

Delta management appears to be delusional. I'll not fly with them again.

David Pearce, Tarpon Springs

The reason for police presence

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Re: Worlds apart, letter, April 19.

To the letter writer who questioned the difference in the police presence in Wimauma and Sun City Center and assumed it was to intimidate the Mexicans: Could it be because of the difference in the crime rate?

Sue Simon, St. Pete Beach

A scam made legal

Re: Don't squander surplus, April 16.

Your editorial reinforces the strange scenario that makes property owners at large responsible to pay off the Citizen's insurance deficit. In reality, such a plan is a scam perpetrated by the state to cover its apparently anticipated huge property insurance blunder. The state has often warned property owners, particularly the elderly, about scams targeting them. This scam has been made legitimate by the Legislature.

Meanwhile, folks like me continue to pay for someone else's insurance. I don't recall making such an agreement. And according to my insurance company, next year we'll see a larger hit. No one has yet counseled me on who pays my bills if my insurance company goes bust.

Roger C. Laudati, Tampa

An unseemly subsidy

Re: Infusion will prop up Citizens, April 18.

Your headline leaves me breathless. This news indicates that the Florida Legislature will use approximately \$1-billion of taxpayers' money to subsidize the insurance industry, the insureds and the real estate development industry.

"Thank God," say those subsidized.

Personally, I was afraid that the Legislature might use those funds to retire some of Florida's debt (at a current discount) and save Florida taxpayers tens of millions of dollars annually in interest costs and some future redemption costs.

We can all sleep well knowing that insureds need not pay their own risk-adjusted costs of insurance and the subsidized development and redevelopment of our coastal areas can continue unabated or perhaps even accelerate due to the existence of Citizen's Property Insurance.

John Bussman, Odessa

Unhealthy hurricane cuisine

Re: Hurricane survival kit.

As we approach another daunting Hurricane season, I am left bemused, baffled and bewildered after reading your Hurricane Preparedness Guide in the April 16 paper.

Along with the obvious necessities of batteries, flashlights and water, you consistently urge your readers to stock up on "comfort foods . . . to relieve stress" and give specific examples of "cookies, cakes and pastries."

As a fitness professional advocating lean, green and clean eating, I am shocked that, considering the obese abyss this country has created for itself, and the Times' seemingly genuine desire to inform, that you would print and encourage such unhealthy hurricane cuisine.

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It is bad enough that mother nature could wrap her arms around our vulnerable state and cause mass destruction, devastation and death. Let's not aid and abet by killing ourselves first through "comfort foods" and impending inactivity.

I propose a revised hurricane kit: Unrefrigerated protein shakes, bags of raw almonds, and tuna pouches along with a flex band, yoga mat and Resist-A-Ball.

These would be much better options.

Anne Marie Hutton, Palm Harbor

A better fate for Moussaoui

Many Americans would like to see Zacarias Moussaoui executed for the deaths of those on 9/11. However, execution is precisely what he wants! As a Muslim of his stripe, he believes that if he is executed, he will be rewarded by ascending to heaven, where he will enjoy a plethora of earthly pleasures (e.g., the sexual enjoyment of 72 virgins). Moreover, his execution would make him a martyr to millions of those who believe as he does.

Rather than executing him, it would be better to let him live out his days in solitary confinement, waiting for the day when he thinks he will be released.

Elliott Swift, Treasure Island

Classification

Language: ENGLISH

Document-Type: LETTER

Publication-Type: Newspaper

Subject: FOREIGN LABOR (91%); FARM LABOR (91%); MANAGERS & SUPERVISORS (78%); LABOR FORCE (78%); POLICE FORCES (76%); RURAL COMMUNITIES (74%); CRIME RATES (72%); IMMIGRATION (71%); LETTERS & COMMENTS (60%)

Company: DELTA AIR LINES INC (54%)

Ticker: DAL (NYSE) (54%)

Industry: FARM LABOR (91%); AGRICULTURE (74%); HOTELS & MOTELS (72%); RESTAURANTS (72%); FARMERS & RANCHERS (70%); AIRLINES (63%); PUBLIC RELATIONS (50%)

Geographic: UNITED STATES (96%)

Load-Date: April 24, 2006

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