

Inquiring Minds topic – 22 June 2018

Charlotte Strasser, Moderator

... and who will care for the little children?

ICE, the immigration police, say that since all illegal immigrants are criminals, they must be jailed; but small children and infants aren't criminals, so they must be removed from the criminal environment of their parents or guardians. In Texas, 1500 children have been incarcerated in an old Walmart building.

These are more DACA children to add to the thousands, and each incidence and separation is an intense tragedy.

What can be done to protect the children???

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Jeff Sessions Cited the Bible to Defend Separating Immigrant Families



time.com/5312987/jeff-sessions-separating-immigrant-families

(WASHINGTON) — Attorney General Jeff Sessions cited the Bible on Thursday in his defense of his border policy that is resulting in hundreds of immigrant children being separated from their parents after they enter the U.S. illegally.

Sessions, speaking in Fort Wayne, Indiana, on immigration, pushed back against criticism he had received over the policy. On Wednesday, a cardinal in the Roman Catholic Church said that separating mothers from their babies was “immoral.”

Sessions said many of the recent criticisms were not “fair or logical and some are contrary to law.”

“I would cite you to the Apostle Paul and his clear and wise command in Romans 13, to obey the laws of the government because God has ordained them for the purpose of order,” he said. “Orderly and lawful processes are good in themselves and protect the weak and lawful.”

Last month, the attorney general announced a “zero tolerance” policy that any adult who enters the country illegally is criminally prosecuted. U.S. protocol prohibits detaining children with their parents because the children are not charged with a crime and the parents are.

According to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, more than 650 children were separated from their parents at the U.S.-Mexico border during a two-week period in May.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said Thursday that she hadn’t seen Sessions’ comments but affirmed that the Bible did back up the administration’s actions.

“I can say that it is very biblical to enforce the law. That is actually repeated a number of times throughout the Bible,” she said. “It’s a moral policy to follow and enforce the law.”

In an unusually tense series of exchanges in the White House briefing room, Sanders wrongly blamed Democrats for the policy separating children from parents and insisted the administration had made no changes in increasing the use. Until the policy was announced in April, such families were usually referred for civil deportation proceedings, not requiring separation.

“The separation of illegal alien families is the product of the same legal loopholes that Democrats refuse to close, and these laws are the same that have been on the books for over a decade, and the president is simply enforcing them,” she said.

“We don’t want this to be a problem,” she said.

Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, the archbishop of Galveston-Houston, told the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops on Wednesday that he was joining other religious leaders in opposing the government’s border policy.

“Our government has the discretion in our laws to ensure that young children are not separated from their parents and exposed to irreparable harm and trauma,” DiNardo said in a statement.

Seizing Children From Parents at the Border Is Immoral. Here’s What We Can Do About It.

[nytimes.com/2018/06/14/opinion/children-parents-asylum-immigration.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/14/opinion/children-parents-asylum-immigration.html)

By The Editorial Board - June 14, 2018

It may be hard to believe that this is happening in the United States in 2018, that hundreds of children are being snatched from their parents, frequently under false pretenses, often screaming, and placed in vast warehouselike centers like the [former Walmart](#) in Brownsville, Tex., where nearly 1,500 boys now spend their days. The parents often don't know where their children are, or when they will see them again.

In 2014 the Obama administration detained hundreds of families and unaccompanied minors crossing the border, a practice that the federal courts quickly curtailed. But separating families as a matter of unofficial policy is [something new](#) and malicious, a function of President Trump's obsession with undocumented immigrants. This spring, the administration ordered that everyone caught crossing illegally into the United States be prosecuted. And since children cannot accompany grown-ups to jail, people who had crossed illegally with children had their children taken away. Hundreds upon hundreds of children, of all ages, creating a new industry in mass shelters.

The United Nations human rights office called this new practice a serious violation of the rights of children and demanded an immediate halt. Catholic bishops denounced it as immoral. The American Psychological Association warned that the separations threatened the mental and physical health of the children. All to no avail.

The administration has come back with a mix of just-following-orders and falsehoods. The Department of Homeland Security said it had no policy for separating families; it was just catching criminals. President Trump feigned sympathy for the separations but claimed he was [the victim of](#) "bad legislation passed by the Democrats," which nobody could find. Only John Kelly, the White House chief of staff, offered what appeared to be a plausible, if shocking, explanation: that separating parents from their children could be a "[tough deterrent](#)."

The heartlessness of that is mind-boggling. It seems to elude the administration and its cheerleaders that this is not about crime or security, but about the most elemental human values; that ordering armed border guards to cruelly and needlessly rip children from mothers — in one case, while she was breast-feeding the child — goes against fundamental American values and undercuts its standing in the world.

The Trump administration has the opportunity to do the right thing here. If you want to help sway it to do so, here are some concrete steps to take.

Call Congress. Find out [who represents you](#) in Washington, and let them know you want the practice of family separation to end. Ask them to support bills that will help reunited children already taken from their parents and also prohibit future removals. Those include the Senate’s [HELP Separated Children Act](#) and [Keep Families Together Act](#). The American Civil Liberties Union offers [a script](#) for calling the Senate, though we suspect most callers will be able to find the right words themselves.

Join protests. People are taking to the streets [in communities across the country Thursday](#) to register their outrage at this border policy. Join these or future actions.

Donate to legal and humanitarian efforts. Immigrants, even children, have no guarantee of legal representation as they pursue asylum or face deportation. Most do not know their rights or speak English well enough to represent themselves. In 75 percent of cases where children had counsel, an immigration judge [determined](#) they had a strong enough claim for asylum or humanitarian protection and allowed them to stay in the United States.

The proposed [Fair Day in Court for Kids Act](#) would require the government to appoint counsel to unaccompanied children, and it’s important to ask Congress to support its passage. Until then, there are several nonprofits providing vital free legal aid that need financial support: [The Texas Civil Rights Project](#); the [Florence Project](#) in Arizona; and [Kids in Need of Defense](#) and [The Young Center](#), which work nationwide. Lawyers might also consider lending their expertise. The [Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley](#) in Texas is helping families with supplies and humanitarian relief.

Vote. [Your 2018 primary election may be coming up soon](#). Please be sure to [register](#) and vote. Elections are ultimately the most important tool Americans have to seek change in how their government operates — and the values it espouses.



