

OPINION

Hope is Waiting for the Supreme Court

Speaking up
for our brothers
and sisters

BY MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN

The futures of millions of immigrant families are on hold until the Supreme Court makes a decision in *U.S. v. Texas* expected in June. Texas and 25 other states filed a lawsuit in February 2015 to block President Obama's November 2014 executive action to help keep immigrant families together. The Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA) and Lawful Permanent Residents and expanded Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) initiatives would help parents and young adults remain in the country temporarily to work, further their education, and support their families.

The story of Baldo who came to the United States from Mexico in 1988 when he was 17 years old and who lives in Pasadena, Calif. with his wife and their two U.S. citizen daughters is documented in one of the nine friend of the court briefs filed on behalf of more than 1,000 organizations and individuals supporting the president's executive actions.

The Children's Defense Fund joined 75 other education, health

and child advocacy organizations in one of these briefs. The National Immigration Law Center says the multiple briefs in this case "demonstrate the severe, nationwide harm — to millions of individual families, to the safety of our communities, and to local and national economic well-being — produced by the injunction barring implementation of the Obama administration's DAPA and expanded DACA programs."



The deferred action order would allow immigrant parents like Baldo, with citizen children, to seek protection from deportation, get a work permit, and keep their families together.

The brief shares more about his story: "Baldo's financial difficulties are compounded by his fear of being forced to return to Michoacán, Mexico, where he has not lived in nearly 30 years. He has heard from family members about kidnappings and other drug cartel-related violence, and would not feel safe returning to Michoacán. Given the risk of harm, he would not want to take his daughters there, but he also would not want to be separated from them."

An estimated 16 million people in the United States have mixed-status families like Baldo's. One in five undocumented immigrant adults have a U.S.

citizen or lawful permanent resident spouse and about 3.8 million undocumented immigrants have children who are U.S. citizens.

Deportation can result not only in separation of children from a parent but also food insecurity, challenges in accessing health care, housing instability, and sometimes entry of children into foster care. Families lose the financial stability provided by their formerly employed parent and the local economy suffers lower tax revenue. The very real threat of a parent's removal is causing millions of U.S. citizen and lawful permanent resident children emotional, psychological, and educational harm.

DAPA would allow a parent like Baldo to return to his former job and stay with his family for at least three years without fear of deportation, with the opportunity for renewal.

By expanding DACA, the Department of Homeland Security would offer deferred action to more young people brought to the United States as children before their 16th birthday. They must have continuously lived in the U.S. since January 2010 and every day since Aug. 15, 2012, have a high school diploma or equivalent, or be in school. They would have access to important educational opportunities, internships and career and vocation training and have better chances of new

jobs and increased earnings. The state of Texas' injunction prevents an estimated 290,000 people brought to the country as children from applying for DACA.

Qualifying for these temporary, renewable deportation deferrals requires people to meet a variety of requirements and pass a criminal background check. In recognition of the benefits for children and families and the economic future of our country, there is very broad support for DAPA and expanded DACA. Sixteen states and the District of Columbia; 116 cities and counties, along with the National League of Cities and the U.S. Conference of Mayors; 51 current and former chiefs of police and sheriffs and the Major Cities Chiefs Association and Police Executive Research Forum; 326 immigrants' rights, civil rights, labor, and social service organizations; a bipartisan group of former members of Congress; 225 current U.S. senators and representatives; and former federal immigration and Homeland Security officials have filed friend of the court briefs in the Supreme Court.

Let all of us break our silence and speak up about the suffering of our sisters and brothers whose family members are at risk of being torn apart by deportation.

Marian Wright Edelman is president of the Children's Defense Fund.

Nonviolence Superior to Violence in Every Way

Consider the
research and all
the costs

BY TOM H. HASTINGS

I teach and write in the field of Peace and Conflict Studies, with a special focus on strategic nonviolence. It is a rich field, growing in its scholarship and its widespread usage. I'm so enthused by this—the more we wage our conflicts with nonviolence the lower the costs.

Counting the costs of conflict, we normally think of blood and treasure, of casualties and expense. We are slowly beginning to also count other costs, including our environment, our relationships, our civil rights, our human rights, our metrics of democracy, and more. Nonviolence is superior to violence in every way if we

read the research and consider all the costs.

Nonviolence can fail, of course, and in the most robust of struggles—trying to overthrow a dictator, for example—nonviolent struggle only works about 53 percent of the time. Of course violent insurgency only succeeds 26 percent of the time, about half as often as does nonviolence. This is disturbing to those who define revolution as violent. I hope they get over it. Wake up



and smell the flowers instead of the cordite.

One secret to nonviolent success is communication. When we are quiet the injustices we see or suffer are allowed to continue. When we are aggressive—violent or demeaning, threatening, and insulting—that strengthens the resolve of the opponent and progress is unlikely. The best path to victory is assertion—visualize a thin bright line between you

and the oppressor. Shrink back from the line and nothing changes. Charge over the line and all defenses spring into counter-aggression, counterattack. But go up to the line with insistent civil assertion, creative and resilient, and your chances for winning your objectives are radically increased.

These principles are basic, but ignored all too often, as we see in many conflicts domestic and transnational, in families and workplaces, in neighborhoods and in towns, in regions and states. The destructive, adversarial conflicts that result are often heartbreaking to observe.

From a belligerent North Korean dictator to a misogynist Donald Trump, the results are not impressive. Ruling over others is a poor path to sustainable gains and doing so in an aggressive manner will only generate pushback. If that resistance is civil but insistent, assertive but not aggressive, it can achieve what no one thought possible.

If I had predicted publicly in 1985 that the Philippines would see Marcos deposed without a single fired shot, that the Berlin Wall would fall in a massive nonviolent uprising, that Nelson Mandela would be liberated and apartheid would end without a widely predicted bloodbath, that Pinochet would fall in Chile to mass nonviolent power, and that Slobodan Milosevic would create horrific wars in the Balkans but would be deposed by nonviolence, I might have been diagnosed as delusional.

These cases and 1,000 more are chronicled in a Swarthmore database that is growing constantly. We are humans—we have great big brains that are hardwired for all possible responses, from violent to nonviolent, which makes us the unique species neurologically capable of infinite, illimitable choice. Let's be wise about it.

Dr. Tom H. Hastings is founder and director of PeaceVoice.



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