Yamlak Gabre

Instructor Name

Political Science

25 October 2019

 Trump’s zero tolerance policy on immigration

 It has been more than a year since the current US President Donald J. Trump’s Administration started to implement the executive order that halted the policy of the separation of immigrant children and parents at the US borders. During the time of the implementation of this order, there were more than two thousand children were forcibly separated from their parents. These acts played its role in plummeting the popularity of the top dog in the eyes of his citizens. This is not the first time the Trump Administration had taken hard and unpopular steps against the immigrants. Human Rights Watch, a non-profit organization, has researched into the past about the ways that the US has prosecuted the immigrants when the sought US citizenship, but these extreme steps for separation of parents and their children were never taken before. However, there has been a severe sidelining regarding the “Zero-tolerance policy” presented beforehand in order to curtail the crime spree that has plagued the US due to the influx of the immigrants.

Now the question arises that what is the Zero-tolerance policy and how did it come to be implemented. This policy was implemented by Washington D.C. in April, 2018. It was specifically directed all the US attorney offices along the southern border to cases of illegal entry on priority basis (Kandel). These cases would be referred to the prosecutors by the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP). Since then, all the five judicial regions along the southern border have experienced a sudden influx of criminal cases regarding illegal entry. In the month of June (2018) alone, there was a seventy-four percent increase in prosecutions than in March of the same year. The Attorney General’s Office have declared that they aim to prosecute all the people booked in these cases. Up till June, Forty-six percent of illegal immigrants were prosecuted which were addressed by the Border Patrol, compared to when they arrested only one-third of the people committing illegal entry in May 2018 (Human Rights Watch).

Another question arises that how did the policy that aimed for the good for the US citizen ended up as a shame for them, meaning how did it all lead to the Parent-Child Separation Policy. The Trump Administration insist that this is a consequence of the zero-tolerance policy combined with the action taken by the Federal Courts regarding the limitations imposed on the legal sentences of children. The rules against the verdicts imposed on minors are different according to the law. Therefore, the state started to run separate detention centers for the children of the illegal entering immigrants. Many reports say otherwise to the state’s narrative. They claim that it was the intention of the Trump’s Administration all along to target families so that a severe and ringing call would be send to the people trying to cross the US borders illegally. This shows a highly significant difference of the immigration policy under previous administrations. This Parent-Child separation technique is a serious breach of the human rights laws as agreed by the members of the United Nations. The Refugee Convention states that a state cannot prosecute any asylum seeker, including those whose requests for citizenship is still in official queue, if they present themselves to the authorities and show probable causes for their illegal entry to the said state (UNHCR). Regardless, these draconian measures failed to achieve the aim intended. Also, they act as a tremendous strain on the already jeopardized US economy. The resources needed to keep these circles running are pulled form the welfare projects that decrease the popularity of the Trump Administration as well as defeating the aim of “Making America Great Again”.

# Works Cited

"Human Rights Watch." 2018.

Kandel, William A. *Congressional Reearch Service*. Washington D.C.: US Congress, 2019.

UNHCR. "Refugee Convention." 1951.