

National Affairs by Claire Hoy ? Trump?s, Obama?s policies similar

The day he announced his unlikely candidacy for U.S. president, Donald Trump made it clear he was going to build a wall between the U.S. and Mexico to keep out illegal immigrants.

Of all the things he said and did during his campaign, he certainly was constantly promising a wall and the mainstream media ? and his opponent, Hillary Clinton ? just as regularly attacked him for it, using it as an excuse to accuse him of being racist.

And so it goes.

A little history may be in order here, so let us all venture back to a typically warm sunny summer day in 1993 when then President Bill Clinton breezed into San Diego and announced his government was adding 14 miles to the local sector of the U.S.-Mexican wall attempting to stem the flow of immigrants.

Clinton boasted that senators had given their ?strong support? to extending the wall first begun in 1990 under the tenure of President George H.W. Bush.

Sounding even tougher on the topic than current President Donald Trump, Clinton spoke of the ?problem of illegal immigration . . . increasing border controls by 50 per cent . . . increasing inspections to prevent the hiring of illegal immigrants and tonight I will sign an Executive Order to deny Federal contracts to businesses that hire illegal immigrants.?

A year later, hoping to counter the apparent popularity in California of Proposition 187 ? and worried that his opposition to it might harm his re-election chances in California ? Clinton dispatched his attorney-general Janet Reno to Los Angeles to announce Operation Gatekeeper.

(Proposition 187, by the way, was a radical denial of all social services to undocumented immigrants. It was approved statewide by a strong 59-41 per cent mandate, but later overturned in court as unconstitutional.)

In any event, Clinton's new plan added more fence and more border patrols and established the first Immigration Court at the boundary so that repeat offenders and ?criminal aliens? could be deported more easily.

In 2006, with more than 100 miles of border fence already constructed, President George W. Bush signed the Secure Fence Act, which called for 670 miles of new fencing along the border. It was approved by Congress 283-138, then by the Senate 80-19.

Among the 26 Democrats approving the extended wall ? they called it a ?barrier? ? were Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, Joe Biden, Ted Kennedy, John Kerry, and both California senators Barbara Boxer and Diane Feinstein.

When she first sought the presidential nomination in 2008 against Obama, Clinton was asked at a Democratic town hall meeting what her position was on securing the Mexican border and she replied: ?Well look, I voted numerous times when I was a senator to spend money to build a barrier to try to prevent illegal immigrants from coming in. And I do think you have to control your borders.?

Indeed. But when she ran against Trump, she dismissed his support for an expanded wall as a ?fantasy.? How the worms turn. And how the media allowed her to get away with it on this and numerous other issues, even though in the end it didn't help her.

As for Obama, he was in El Paso May 16, 2011, claiming that the fence he voted for as a senator was ?now basically complete,? and reaffirming his support for a secure border.

Human Rights Watch claims that the Obama administration carried out more deportation removals of immigrants than other presidents in U.S. history, leading activists to refer to him as ?Deporter in Chief.? Some of these people, they say, were refugees fleeing violence in Central America. ?An investigation found that, from January 2014 to October 2015, up to 83 refugees and migrants the U.S. deported back to Central America were killed.?

And much as you've been deluged with totally one-sided media coverage of Trump's temporary ban on immigration from seven Muslim countries ? a list of unstable governments compiled by Obama's officials, by the way ? Obama himself in 2011 did something similar by stopping the processing of Iraqi refugees for six months. That came after officials discovered two Iraqis granted asylum in the U.S. had constructed improvised roadside bombs in Iraq and about 1,000 soon-to-be immigrants in Iraq were told they wouldn't be allowed to board flights already booked.

One major difference between Trump's plan and Obama's was that Trump announced his publicly, while Obama didn't. It was discovered two years later by ABC News.

So there you are. What makes Trump a vile racist for wanting to do the same things his predecessors have done says less about Trump than it does about the haters who still won't accept the fact that he won the election.

They'll have to get over it eventually.

