

being born American, they fall low on the conservative moral hierarchy: They are seen as less moral. They are discriminated against for their color and language and blamed for their poverty.

The issue for Americans is empathy: Do we care for those fellow human beings who are functioning as our fellow citizens? Or do we treat them as lesser beings, not worthy of the freedom they are earning day by day? The issue for those who have come here to escape the brutality of oppression and poverty is freedom.

This is especially true for the tens of thousands of children who have crossed the border, sent by parents or fleeing on their own from human traffickers, gangs, and death squads in Guatemala, Honduras, and parts of Mexico who are murdering, harming, or kidnapping children. Under an executive order signed by George W. Bush before he left office, these children have to be taken care of reasonably well by the US government, processed, given a court hearing, and then either sent to live with family in the United States or deported to another country—Mexico if they are from Mexico.

It was never expected that there would be so many. Conservatives are blaming the situation on Obama, for not just immediately deporting them—though it would be illegal, as well as inhuman, for him to do so. They are not called “Bush’s refugee children,” though they could be if the issue were just pinning the problem on a conservative rather than treating them humanely—and according to law.

Meanwhile, southern conservatives living near the border are rebelling against treating these refugees humanely and not just deporting them. There are massive conservative-organized protests—people lining the roads waving American flags—shouting racist slogans. Those interviewed in the media say things like *Send them back. They’re dirty. They carry diseases. They’re criminals. Why is Obama spending our taxpayer dollars to give them clean rooms and clothes and food and medical care? Soon they’ll be in our schools. Where are their parents? How could their parents have been so irresponsible to have sent their children here alone? Don’t they love their children?*