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Editorial: Some just don't want to hear the truth of the border crisis

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Longview News-Journal

If political courage ever has been displayed in abundance, that certainly is not the case these days. More likely, we see weak-kneed politicians pandering to the least-informed and loudest voices they hear, then echoing back even louder with even less logic.

We had a true example of political courage Tuesday in Longview, though, as state Rep. David Simpson [told his constituents](#) the plain truth about the situation of immigrant children flooding our southern border.

As might be expected, the loudest voices in the room did not want to hear the truth. We can't be sure they even listened to what Simpson had to say. Those with closed minds rarely have ears to hear.

But they have mouths to speak, and speak they did:

"It's an invasion."

"They are all criminals."

"These people have leprosy and polio."

None of those are true. To the last point, polio hasn't been an issue in this hemisphere for decades. That anyone would seriously say immigrant children are bringing it across our border shows the level of ignorance in this debate.

This issue is complex and, unfortunately, too many of our East Texas, state and national elected officials apparently are not willing to take the time to deeply understand the issues at hand — or honest enough to acknowledge the truth. That would take too much time and not make for a good sound bite.

Simpson is an exception in this case. We hope he isn't depressed by the cacophony because what's important is that he is speaking the firsthand truth about the situation.

Simpson went to the border not as a politically self-serving photo op (see: Perry, Rick; Gohmert, Louie; or Patrick, Dan) but to actually learn what is going on. Simpson took his children with him. It was a family experience, and it obviously made an impact.

This is what we want from our leaders.

During Tuesday's public meeting, one person told Simpson his first priority should be to do what his constituents want.

Well, no.

Simpson's first priority — as with all elected officials — should be to do what is right.

Simpson explained these young immigrants are in need of serious help, and the United States — the richest nation on Earth — should step forward to do what is necessary. He also said, correctly, that calling a special session of the Legislature to address the situation would be wasteful and nonproductive.

The children crossing our border are fleeing countries like Honduras, which has a homicide rate of 90 per 100,000 population, and Guatemala, where the rate is 40 per 100,000. Compare that to a combat zone like Afghanistan, with a rate of 28 per 100,000.

Beyond such data, Simpson met with the children and learned firsthand that their stories of brutal violence are true.

What's not true is that these children are fleeing their home countries because of U.S. policies that give a "free ride." If it were, Costa Rica and Mexico would not be seeing the same spike in applications for asylum. In the past few years, the increase was at 712 percent.

But loud voices often do not care about such matters; they just want what they see as best for themselves or their political goals.

Simpson always has worn his Christian beliefs on his sleeve for all to see, and we commend him for that. His views on what should be done obviously come directly from Christian teachings. A few of his louder constituents may feel he has not been true to them, but he has a more important allegiance: Christ, Jesus.

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This is what we have come to expect from Rep. Simpson -- compassion and independent political leadership. And, yes, this is a complex issue but we agree that getting to solving the problems starts with compassion. Many thanks for all you do Rep. Simpson, including teaching your own kids the right way. Also, our thanks to the editorial board of this newspaper for your objectivity and understanding.

PS Our international trade policies also need to be in the mix of changing how the US impacts, often negatively, on the economies of other countries. It's complicated! Linda Curtis, [League of Independent Voters of Texas](#)

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Angela Breeze · Top Commenter · Ore City, Texas

"United States — the richest nation on Earth" - Not so sure of this anymore. At one time, maybe. But we are seriously in debt, have MANY of our own who are homeless and hungry, the jobs are NOT there for the many unemployed, and low wages that we cannot survive on. 33 percent of the 'children' crossing the border illegally are 16-17 year old males. Hmm.....one must really think about this! It's not like the children coming in here are 3-4 years old. AND JUST HOW did these youngsters make it ALL THE WAY through Mexico on their own without being killed or hired by the drug lords/gangs and mafia? The whole thing smells bad and NO WE SHOULD NOT TAKE THEM IN! I don't believe in the polio, leprosy crap, but they DO BRING other medical problems as their countries ARE NOT big on immunizations for other things. We already are ex...

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