Twitter Thread by Hamed Aleaziz



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NEW: DOJ IG releases report on the zero tolerance policy -- aka the family separation policy -- finding that the Attorney General was the driving force behind it, failed to prepare for it, and that Jeff Sessions knew it would lead to children being separated from their fams.

Notes from US Attorneys across the country on a call that Jeff Sessions held in May 2018.

“we need to take away children; if care about kids, don’t bring them in; won’t give amnesty to kids; to people with kids” (strikethrough in original)."

"We concluded that the Department’s single-minded
focus on increasing immigration prosecutions came at the
expense of careful and appropriate consideration of the impact of family unit prosecutions and child separations."

Link to the report. It is INSANE how much more thorough the DOJ IG is as opposed to the DHS IG. The reports don't even compare.

https://t.co/1AvpFa6z6N

Report confirms the reporting of @shearm @ktbenner @nytmike from last year:

https://t.co/d2r249I8ee

DOJ official in TX emailed concerns about the pilot program:

"We have now heard of us taking breast feeding defendant moms away from their infants, I did not believe this until I looked @ the duty log & saw the fact we had accepted prosecution on moms with one and two year olds"

"The next issue is that these parents are asking for the whereabouts of their children and they can’t get a response, the courts are turning to us for help with providing contact information to defense counsel."

Rod Rosenstein told the OIG "that he did not think he saw the draft of the policy before it was issued on April 6 and that zero tolerance was 'just [an issue] that the AG
and his staff were intimately involved in.'"

Crazy. Prosecutors didn't know the policy would include families.

"USAOs did not understand the zero tolerance
policy to apply to family units & US Attorneys expressed surprise when they learned in early May 2018 that DHS would begin referring family unit adults for prosecution"

DOJ didn't communicate with HHS, the government agency that took custody of children who had been separated;

"we did not find evidence that DOJ leadership had discussions about the zero tolerance policy or family separations with HHS prior to the announcement."

"In a follow up interview conducted after Rosenstein reviewed a draft of this report, Rosenstein noted: “The government was not prepared to deal with [family separations]. And [the change to DHS’s policy on family unit referrals] should not have been implemented.…"

One of the weird moments in this whole saga was the fact that Sessions announced it at a presser w/o DHS Sec. Nielsen.

"according to Hamilton, DHS unexpectedly withdrew Nielsen from participating in the event “to protect Secretary Nielsen from bearing the wrath of the policy.”

"We were therefore out there on our own, and somehow we ended up announcing their decision for them…. It was kind of weird, but Sessions didn’t care, because he thought it was the right thing to do.”

What a mess.

On May 22, 2018, the Southwest border U.S. Attorneys had a conference call with Rosenstein. Following this call, Bash summarized Rosenstein’s guidance to the USAOs in an email to WDTX supervisory AUSAs:

> I just spoke with the DAG. He instructed that, per the [Attorney General’s] policy, we should NOT be categorically declining immigration prosecutions of adults in family units because of the age of a child. In other words, our directive is that if [the Border Patrol] refers a single parent of a child of any age to us (or both parents of a child of any age), we should not decline prosecution absent case-specific special circumstances (e.g., the child is seriously ill, the child speaks only a native language, etc.). I had understood that [the Border Patrol] itself had a policy of not referring parents to us when doing so would separate children under 5 from the parents. But apparently [the Border Patrol] did so yesterday in El Paso in two cases, and we declined per our understanding of the policy. Under the directive I just received from the DAG, however, those two cases should not have been declined.

Wow.

Hamilton told us that he thought families would be immediately reunified by DHS after the parent received a sentence for time served for a misdemeanor illegal entry violation. Hamilton stated:

> It was our understanding that prosecution would happen in an afternoon or in days, [that a child would remain] in DHS custody and then there would be reunification with the children.... We didn't ever imagine DHS would lose track of the kids and their location. Like sending children off to a shelter in New Jersey. That was not our understanding at all.[61]

One thing to read about the breakdown throughout government, especially w/in DOJ, on this policy & it is another to see how it actually impacted families.

The beginning episodes of 'Immigration Nation' document the family separation policy & they are necessary viewing for all.