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Iowa congressman compares immigrants to dogs

by Tom Gallagher

NCR Today

Bloomberg News is reporting:

President Barack Obama is winning the opening round in the battle over immigration, according to a Bloomberg poll released today, putting Republicans on the defensive with his decision to end the deportations of some illegal immigrants brought to the U.S. as children, Sixty-four percent of likely voters surveyed after Obama's June 15 announcement said they agreed with the policy, while 30 percent said they disagreed. Independents backed the decision by better than a two-to-one margin.

The results underscore the challenge facing Mitt Romney and Republicans as they try to woo Hispanic voters, who are the nation's largest ethnic minority and made up 9 percent of the 2008 electorate, according to a Pew Hispanic Center analysis of exit polls. Obama won the Hispanic vote 67 to 31 percent over Republican John McCain in 2008, according to exit polls.

"In that Republican Party, there is a tolerance problem," said Carmen Nieves, 27, of Albany, New York, who is of Puerto Rican heritage and participated in the Bloomberg June 15-18 survey.

"These are things that have to be done, and I'm expecting them to be done," said Nieves. "I see a person who is doing his job."

The Republican bishops and their U.S. conference staff will probably go mute when the knee-jerk reaction to what Obama does is to file lawsuits is now being promised by Catholic Republican U.S. Congressman Steve King, a member of St. Martin's Parish in Odebolt, Iowa, in the Diocese of Sioux City under Bishop Walter Nickless. You can bet King will roll out some bastardized view of Catholic social

teaching a la Congressman Paul Ryan in support of his bizarre immigration views. Stay tuned for that one.

The Bloomberg story continues:

The executive order angered the anti-immigration wing of the Republican Party. U.S. Congressman Steve King, an Iowa Republican, said he intends to sue Obama to suspend the order. At a May 21 town-hall meeting, King compared immigrants to dogs, saying the government should select those to award legal status in the same way that owners choose the "pick of the litter."

That's the sort of reaction Obama's team will seize on as it seeks to position the Republicans as being against young immigrants raised in the U.S. -- a position that could alienate swing voters whose life experiences counter that position.

"At first I was really against it, but after sitting down and thinking about it, a lot of kids here are good kids," Loretta Price, 65, a retiree and undecided independent voter from Ocala, Florida, said in a follow-up interview. "I think it was the right thing to do."

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