



Whose Principles?

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Partisan contest! You may start with principles, but—if you are careless—end up fighting, instead, for the things your opponent *only thinks* you stand for. You become the strawman your enemies put up as the dumb-down version of your position.

This happens a lot: Democrats have long denied being socialists, but have accepted leadership from socialists; Republicans have long denied being authoritarian, but routinely *act* like authoritarians.

Case in point: the deportation of “criminal illegal aliens.”

This is not an authoritarian position as such; right or wrong, it *can* be done in a legally sane way.

But Donald Trump and Republicans have embraced an extremely authoritarian manner of deportation.

How? By denying the principle I [defended](#) in April: *due process*. Writing about the Abrego Garcia case, I made this simple point: “whether a dangerous criminal or an innocent, hard-working family man, Garcia’s status is hardly the issue. This is about whether our government must follow its written Constitution.”

Now we are learning a lot more about who has been sent to El Salvadoran dungeons: *the innocent*.

According to [an informative Cato article](#), “of the 90 cases where the method of crossing is known, 50 men report that they came legally to the United States, with advanced US government permission, at an official border crossing point.”

This is important: “Dozens of *legal* immigrants were stripped of their status and imprisoned in El Salvador.”

We are, today, shocked to read of how the ancient Athenian democracy would expel citizens from the *polis*. But Trump’s deportations are much worse: they’re being done without constitutionally required due process ... without any chance for the accused to defend themselves.

And the innocents are being sent to a hell-hole prison, not merely banished.

Trump and his willing government functionaries are conforming not to their principles, but the ones imputed to them by Democrats.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.