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## TRUMP ADDS TO CONFUSION ON IMMIGRANTS: NO CITIZENSHIP, BUT 'WE WORK WITH THEM'

Critics say GOP nominee effectively is adopting amnesty policy that he blasted during primaries

By Reid Epstein and Janet Hook  
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JACKSON, Miss.—Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump proposed contradictory immigration policies, saying in a broadcast interview that it would be “a very, very hard thing” to deport illegal immigrants who have been in the country for decades.

During the primaries, he called for a “deportation force” to remove all 11 million undocumented immigrants, and a campaign aide said Wednesday his position hasn’t changed. He also said this to Fox News host Sean Hannity on Tuesday about people who have overstayed their visas: “We have to get them out.”

In a continuation of the interview broadcast Wednesday, he told Mr. Hannity that he opposed citizenship for those in the country illegally, but added: “Let me go a step further—they’ll pay back taxes, they have to pay taxes, there’s no amnesty, as such, there’s no amnesty, but we work with them.”

Mr. Trump said he has been persuaded to take this new position by people who have told him it is “tough” to remove law-abiding undocumented immigrants.

“Now, everybody agrees we get the bad ones out,” he said. “But when I go through and I meet thousands and thousands of people on this subject, and I’ve had very strong people come up to me, really great, great people come up to me, and they’ve said, ‘Mr. Trump, I love you, but to take a person who’s been here for 15 or 20 years and throw them and their family out, it’s so tough, Mr. Trump,’ I have it all the time! It’s a very, very hard thing.”

Aides to his defeated GOP primary opponents pointed out on social media that his comments amount to the “amnesty” that Mr. Trump and others have long accused moderate Republicans of supporting. On Wednesday, Tim Miller, the former spokesman for former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, said Mr. Trump’s statements amount to “basically Jeb’s position.”

Mr. Trump had planned to deliver an immigration policy address Thursday in Denver. That event was canceled, though the Arizona Republic reported Mr. Trump will speak about his immigration plans Aug. 31 in Phoenix.

Trump aides said his position on immigration has been consistent. “His position has not changed: American workers first, American security first,” said Julie Kirchner, Mr. Trump’s immigration policy adviser. “We are in the midst of a border crisis, a jobs crisis, and a security crisis.”

In the hours before Mr. Trump's interview with Mr. Hannity aired, he appeared at a campaign rally where he condemned other politicians and the media who, he said, pay no attention to illegal immigration.

"Our government, our leaders, and our media have lost touch with the people," he said. "Why do our leaders spend so much more time talking about how to help people here illegally, than they spend trying to help American citizens? The job of a public official is to serve and protect the citizens of the United States, not illegal immigrants, not foreign nationals seeking entry but the people living here lawfully today," he said.

He also attacked his Democratic rival, saying "Hillary Clinton is a bigot who sees people of color only as votes, not as human beings worthy of a better future."

Mrs. Clinton responded in a CNN interview: "He is taking a hate movement mainstream."

Even though Mr. Trump's hard line on illegal immigrants was central to his political rise, loyal backers at his Mississippi event Wednesday night said they were unfazed by his apparent change his tune.

Kevin McNeill, a retired doctor from Jackson, said Mr. Trump's position on immigration was important to him but that border security was more important than how to handle people in the U.S. illegally. "If we can secure the border, we can come to some reasonable solution for the honest and hard-working people her already," he said.

And Lori Lee, a Trump supporter from the Jackson suburb of Brandon, said she doesn't think that any of Mr. Trump's moves to moderate his profile affect his basic instincts.

"You throw the ball, and he's going to chase it," she said. On his softer rhetoric on immigration she said, "I'm OK with vetting people. It is what it is."

Mr. Trump's apparent shift on immigration policy is the latest primary position he has altered for a general-election audience. Though he once called for tax increases on hedge fund profits, his tax policy no longer include such a provision. And he has abandoned his pledge to self-fund his campaign, stumping in the safe Republican state of Mississippi because he held a fundraiser in the state earlier in the day.

Separately, Nigel Farage, leader of the populist movement that resulted in Britain voting to withdraw from the European Union in June, encouraged Trump supporters to follow Britain's lead in challenging the status quo. "I could not possibly tell you how you should vote in this election," Mr. Farage told the crowd assembled in Jackson's Coliseum. "But if I was an American citizen, I wouldn't vote for Hillary Clinton if you paid me."