

Community-Interview

Attorney German Castillo on Immigration Issues

By BETH DAE JOSON

The following is a recent interview with German Castillo, an immigration attorney who is already known to many in the community. He has now opened his own independent law firm in Sugar Land. These are some of his views and goals.

Q: Mr. Castillo, the immigration topic has been all over the news. There are those who blame immigrants for job shortages and waste of government benefits. What is your response to those views?

A: Unfortunately those views are largely based on misinformation and incorrect assumptions. No one can dispute that America is a nation of immigrants and that if we are a strong nation today it has had very much to do with the hard work of many past immigrants. For a lot of us, even as citizens, we owe today's success to the sacrifice of our immigrant parents, grandparents, or other forefathers.

Where the dialogue on immigration breaks down is often with the unspoken belief that today's immigrants are somehow less willing to bear their U.S. civic duties and to earn an

honest living. There are misconceptions that immigrants do not pay taxes and present a drain on government coffers.

The truth is that generally no one can avoid paying their sales taxes, their payroll taxes, other special taxes on items like cigarettes and gasoline, and, directly or indirectly even their property taxes (since the landlord will pass them on to the tenants).

The misconception that immigration was good in the past but bad today is exposed as an error when one considers past anti-immigrant cycles against the very groups we now acknowledge as having helped fuel America's rise in the 20th century. In spite of today's praises, each wave of European immigrants caused backlashes and fomented fears of crime, the loss of the English language, and even the mixing of the races.

With proper dialogue, the immigration debate should come to a rational conclusion and hopefully a comprehensive immigration reform bill will emerge from the house and senate.

In this climate what do you feel you can offer the new im-

migrant?

The practice of law is not an exact science. No one can honestly guarantee results, particularly where issues are gray and open to some level of discretionary interpretation. However, past experience with a wide range of fact patterns, adjudicating officers, and analysis of the law is the best basis for providing counsel to a prospective client. As such, I seek to offer solutions one case at a time — just as I have been privileged to have done hundreds of times in the past.

Some of your clients have noted that you use the strength of the law to champion their interests. What do they mean by this and is not possible that connections to key government personnel can further a client's interest with more guarantee of success?

What clients mean by their statements is best answered by them. However, I believe they refer to how I research and analyze the law and apply it to their case in the most beneficial manner possible within the limits of the law.

Political connections come and go; however, the funda-

mental precepts of the law do not vary much. When an immigrant benefit is gained through favoritism it often happens that the benefit can be lost upon future review or investigation.

Most immigrants to the U.S. come seeking a better life where the rule of law is paramount. The last thing most immigrants want to hear is that our system is no better and that they must contribute to perpetuate the same ills they sought to leave behind. In that vein, I do what is within my means to see the rule of law is followed in each client's case.

Most case adjudications have several levels of checks and balances. There are almost always proper channels accessible to all to see that justice is done to a case. Therefore, what matters most is largely the will of the client and the attorney, to carry through to the end. I am reminded, particularly now with India's Independence Day near, of a quote from a famous attorney, Mahatma Gandhi: *Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.*"

Those are very impressive ideals. I hope you are able to

carry them out. But to close out this interview, can you give us a quick summary of the focus areas in your practice.


I have dealt with literally hundreds of cases in the area of employment immigration: investors (E-2); business executives and managers (L-1A & EB-1-3); H-1B professionals; individuals of extraordinary ability or exceptional ability with a national interest waiver; religious workers (R-1 & EB-4) and even some million dollar investors (EB-5).

I am also a registered patent attorney who worked on several high technology patents in the Silicon Valley.

In conclusion, we endeavor to provide professional legal services to the community.

Attorney German Castillo is practices Immigration Law and Patent. His law office is located at 14090 SW Freeway, Suite 300, Sugar Land, TX 77478. For a free evaluation of your case, call 281.980.1385 or visit www.gcastillolaw.com or email questions@gcastillolaw.com

—Credit: Beth Dae Joson AA-Times Contributing Writer



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