

## **A wall with Mexico might work**

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Donald Trump's frustration with Democratic congressional leaders over their refusal to approve funding for his Mexican border wall is understandable. Walking out, as he did, on what was supposed be to be a meeting with House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate minority leader Chuck Schumer aimed at finding a compromise on the wall that would end the debilitating government shutdown in Washington may not have been the best negotiating tactic. But Mr Trump has a point when he argues the Democrats are being unreasonably obstructionist in declining to help him impose tighter border controls.

Ms Pelosi and Mr Schumer may not like the idea of a border wall, having described the President's plans as "immoral". But the reality is Mr Trump's recent Democratic predecessors in the White House including Barack Obama sought to significantly strengthen migration controls along the Rio Grande, and doing so specifically by building a wall was a core election promise made by Mr Trump in 2016.

As our Washington correspondent Cameron Stewart reports, there are divergent views about whether the "national security and humanitarian" crisis over illegal migration from across the Mexican border is as grave as Mr Trump portrayed in his first formal address from the Oval Office.

In 2017 the number of undocumented migrants apprehended for crossing into the US was just over 300,000, the lowest number in 46 years. In a year, however, that figure has jumped to 400,000. A Morning Consult/Politico poll shows 42 per cent of Americans believe there is a "crisis" on the border, 12 per cent perceive it as "a problem" and only 12 per cent see nothing amiss; Democratic leaders would be wise not to ignore those numbers.