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Hoover Essays No. 25

First printing 2003

Manufactured in the United States of America
09 08 07 06 05 04 03 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Martin, Philip L., 1949–
Making and remaking America : immigration into the United States /
Philip Martin and Peter Duignan.
p. cm. — (Hoover essays ; no. 25)
Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN 0-8179-4462-1 (alk. paper)
1. United States—Emigration and immigration. 2. United States—
Emigration and immigration—Government policy. I. Duignan, Peter.
II. Title. III. Hoover essays (Stanford, Calif. : 1992) ; no. 25.
JV6455.M37 2003
325.73—dc22 2003056666

Executive Summary

Continued immigration constantly reshapes the demography, economy, and society of the United States. As a country of immigrants, America must respond to three fundamental immigration questions: how many immigrants should be admitted; from where and in what status should they arrive; and how should the rules governing the system be enforced?

During the 1980s and 1990s, the U.S. Congress responded to growing gaps between immigration policy and immigration reality by making major changes in immigration laws and their administration. In 1986, the United States enacted the world's largest legalization program for unauthorized foreigners and introduced sanctions on employers who knowingly hired illegal foreign workers. Instead of slowing illegal immigration, however, this program allowed more foreigners to arrive legally and illegally, which prompted another round of reforms in 1996 aimed at ensuring that new arrivals would not receive welfare payments.

On September 11, 2001, foreigners in the United States hijacked four commercial planes. Two were flown into the World Trade Center towers in New York City, bringing them down and killing 3,000 people. President George W. Bush declared war on terrorists and the countries that harbor them, and Congress enacted legislation to fight terrorism. This includes new measures for tightening procedures for issuing visas to foreign visitors, tracking foreign students and visitors while they are in the United States, and giving immigration authorities new power to arrest and detain foreigners suspected of ties to terrorism. The Immigration and Naturalization Service was abolished, and its functions of preventing illegal immigration and providing services to foreign visitors and immigrants were separated in the new Department of Homeland Security.

However, anti-terrorism measures have not slowed immigration to the United States. America is poised to remain the world's major destination for immigrants, and as patterns in U.S. history suggest, most of

the newcomers will soon become Americans. However, past success in integrating immigrants does not guarantee that integrating newcomers will be easy or automatic. As immigrants continue to make and remake the country, the United States must develop an immigration policy for the twenty-first century.

MAKING AND REMAKING AMERICA

Immigration into the United States

About 88,000 foreigners arrive in the United States on a typical day. Most are welcomed at airports and borders, and most do not intend to stay in the United States. 82,000 nonimmigrant foreigners per day come to the United States as tourists, business visitors, students, and foreign workers. Another 2,200 arrivals are immigrants and refugees, persons that the United States has invited to join American society as permanent residents. The other 4,100 are unauthorized or illegal foreigners—some enter legally as tourists and then stay in the United States, but most enter the country unlawfully by eluding border patrol agents or using false documents to circumvent border inspectors.

Is the daily arrival in the United States of the equivalent of a small city's population something to be welcomed or something to be feared? There is no single answer, which helps to explain America's historical ambivalence about immigration. On one hand, the United States celebrates its immigrant heritage, telling and retelling the story of renewal and rebirth brought about by the newcomers. On the other hand, since the days of the founding fathers, Americans have worried about the economic, political, and cultural effects of newcomers.

Immigration and integration are contentious issues at the beginning of the twenty-first century, in which the debate risks being dominated

by the extremes of "no immigrants" and "no borders." At one extreme are organizations that want to reduce or stop immigration, such as the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), an organization founded by persons interested in reducing the population growth associated with immigration. FAIR says that, "With more than a million legal and illegal immigrants settling in the United States each year . . . it is evident to most Americans that large-scale immigration is not serving the needs and interests of the country. FAIR advocates a temporary moratorium on all immigration except spouses and minor children of U.S. citizens and a limited number of refugees."[1]

At the other extreme, the *Wall Street Journal* advocates a five-word amendment to the U.S. constitution: "there shall be open borders."[2] High levels of immigration, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, mean more consumers, more workers, and a larger economy with "new blood." Other organizations favor more immigration from a particular place, such as the Organization of Chinese Americans and the Emerald Isle Immigration Center, which favor the immigration of Chinese and Irish immigrants, respectively. Groups such as the Catholic church believe that borders artificially divide humanity, and others support high levels of immigration because they view immigration as a defining part of the American experience.

The three fundamental immigration questions—how many, from where, and in what status newcomers should arrive—raise difficult considerations with no easy answers. More foreigners want to immigrate to the United States than Americans seem willing to accept. But current U.S. policy prioritizes the allocation of immigration visas to the relatives of U.S. citizens and immigrants already here, which means that the United States is in effect favoring chain migration based on family ties. Because of this priority in immigration policy, the United States seems willing to tolerate higher levels of illegal immigration, since it is often said that many of the unauthorized foreigners are simply waiting for their immigration visas.

Many experts would like to give less emphasis to family unification

and instead select foreigners on the basis of personal characteristics likely to make them economically successful, as is the policy in Canada and Australia. Revising immigration policy raises fundamental economic, social, and political issues, contentious in part because resolving them requires Americans to make difficult trade-offs between competing goals.

U.S. Immigration Policies

U.S. immigration policy has historically passed through three major phases: laissez-faire or few limits on arrivals; qualitative restrictions, which did not limit the number of immigrant arrivals but excluded certain types of persons, such as communists and Chinese; and quantitative restrictions, which included numerical limits as well as qualitative restrictions.

Laissez-Faire: 1780–1875

During its first hundred years, the United States had a laissez-faire or open borders policy that allowed immigrants into the United States without restriction. At the time of the American Revolution, most colonists wanted more immigrants to help develop North America. In fact, one of the crimes imputed to George III by the Declaration of Independence was "Obstructing the Laws for the Naturalization of Foreigners" and "Refusing to encourage their Migration hither." Indeed, people in the United States, from the federal government to states, private employers, shipping companies, railroads, and churches, encouraged immigration. For example, federal and state governments encouraged immigration through railroad and canal construction subsidies because the companies that built the railroads and canals needed to hire laborers, who were most easily found in Ireland and Germany. Federal and state militias enlisted foreigners—immigrants represented a third of the regular soldiers in the U.S. army in the 1840s.[3]

Immigrants were generally welcomed in the late 1700s and early 1800s. Although there were fears, especially in the Federalist Party, that immigrants might alter the culture and customs of the United States, the match between Europeans seeking opportunity and an America in need of people left the immigration door wide open. The Naturalization Act of 1790 established the principle that an immigrant could acquire citizenship relatively easily.[4] Between 1783 and 1820, an estimated 250,000 immigrants came to America. After 1820, ship captains had to report on the immigrants they brought to the United States, and since then, 67 million immigrants have been admitted to the United States.

Immigration increased in the 1830s, but most were from Great Britain and Germany, and most were Protestants. The first major anti-immigrant reaction arose after the influx of Roman Catholic immigrants in the 1840s. The "Know-Nothing" movement, embodied by the American Party, included Protestant clergymen, journalists, and other opinion leaders who formed the Order of the Star-Spangled Banner. While they urged the restriction of immigrants from non-Anglo-Saxon countries, members of the Know-Nothing movement were instructed to answer any inquiries about the Order with the words "I know nothing about it." The American Party had considerable success: it was represented in northeastern state legislatures, and Know-Nothings won seventy House seats in the congressional election of 1854. However, Congress did not respond to the anti-immigrant feeling: one reason for inaction was the Civil War and reconstruction, which slowed immigration.

Qualitative Restrictions: 1875–1920

When mass immigration resumed in the 1870s, the United States was largely a rural and Protestant nation. Woodrow Wilson, later elected president, shared the popular pessimism toward newcomers in 1901:

> Immigrants poured in as before, but . . . now there come multitudes of men of lowest class from the south of Italy and men of the meanest sort out of Hungary and Poland, men out of the ranks where there was neither skill nor energy nor any initiative of quick intelligence; and they came in numbers which increased from year to year, as if the countries of the south of Europe were disburdening themselves of the more sordid and hapless elements of their population.[5]

The fear of foreigners reflected in Wilson's statement had begun much earlier and led to the imposition of qualitative restrictions aimed at reducing the number and changing the type of immigrant arriving in the United States. In 1875, qualitative restrictions barred the arrival of convicts and prostitutes. The Immigration Act of 1882 added to the list of those denied admission paupers and "mental defectives," and for the first time barred immigrants from a particular country: the Chinese. In the early 1900s, there was a "gentleman's agreement" with Japan—the United States agreed not to add Japanese to the excluded list, and Japan agreed not to issue passports to Japanese headed for the United States.

Many Americans wanted to keep out illiterate immigrants, and Congress approved literacy tests for arriving immigrants in 1896, 1913, and 1915 so that adult foreigners who could not read or write in any language would not be admitted. However, literacy tests were vetoed by three presidents, but the veto was overridden in 1917, so foreigners over the age of sixteen who could not read in any language were barred.

World War I virtually stopped transatlantic migration. When immigration revived in 1919 and 1920, the numbers were large, and the immigrants were still from the "wrong" part of Europe, the south and the east, which suggested that the literacy test did not achieve the goals of its proponents, viz., favoring immigration from northern and western Europe. However, the House of Representatives commissioned a study that concluded that immigrants from southern and eastern Europe had more "inborn socially inadequate qualities than northwestern Europeans,"[6] setting the stage for using national origins to select immigrants.

Quantitative Restrictions: Since 1921

In 1921, Congress passed the Temporary Quota Act, which set numerical restrictions on immigrant admissions, and in 1924, this was set at 150,000 per year, plus accompanying wives and children. Each country's quota was "a number which bears the same ratio to 150,000 as the number of inhabitants in the United States in 1920 having that national origin bears to the number of white inhabitants of the United States."[7] Since there were more Americans of English and German origin in the United States than of Polish or Italian origin, England and Germany had larger immigration quotas than Poland and Italy.

Immigration was also restricted administratively. For example, the Hoover Administration (1928–1932) instructed consular officials to strictly interpret U.S. laws prohibiting aliens likely to become public charges from obtaining immigration visas. Immigration fell to 97,139 in 1931 and then to the lowest level of the twentieth century—only 23,048 immigrants arrived in 1933 during the depths of the Depression. American immigration law made no special provision for refugees, with the result that only about 250,000 victims of Hitler's persecution of political opponents and Jews were admitted to the United States as immigrants in the 1930s and early 1940s.

During the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, over 80 percent of all immigrant visas were granted to people from northern and western European countries, 14 percent to eastern and southern Europeans, and 4 percent to people from other Eastern Hemisphere countries. There was no quota on immigration from Western Hemisphere countries such as Mexico, and there was no U.S. border patrol until 1924. During the 1920s, the number of Mexican-born U.S. residents tripled from 120,000 to 368,000.

After World War II, President Truman and congressional reformers sought to abolish the national origins system. They failed, and the McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) of 1952, which passed over Truman's veto, left the national origins system intact.

The INA left Western Hemisphere immigration unrestricted, but this migration was regulated by other means. For example, the Mexican Bracero Program (1942–1964) allowed Mexicans to work temporarily on U.S. farms under special legislation separate from that of the INA.

When President John F. Kennedy was elected in 1960, he pledged to change the national origins system in a manner that would treat the nationals of all countries equally. In 1965, Kennedy's vision became law under Lyndon Johnson's administration: the INS was amended to favor family unification, not national origins. Immigration from the Eastern Hemisphere was limited to 170,000 a year with a maximum 20,000 per country. A seven-tiered preference system set U.S. priorities for entry, e.g., adults and sons of U.S. citizens received a higher priority for admission than spouses and children of U.S. immigrants, and professionals with needed skills received priority for admission over unskilled workers. The Western Hemisphere was given a quota of 120,000 immigrants per year, and in 1978, the Eastern and Western Hemisphere quotas were combined into one system with a worldwide ceiling of 290,000.

Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) asserted that the 1965 amendments would not change the number or characteristics of immigrants arriving in the United States. He was wrong. Immigration shifted from a mostly transatlantic movement from Europe to the United States to a Latin American and Asian phenomenon. Between 1955 and 1964, 50 percent of the immigrants were from Europe, 20 percent were from Latin America, and 8 percent were from Asia. Between 1975 and 1984, 13 percent of immigrants were from Europe, 44 percent were from Latin America, and 43 percent were from Asia.

Immigration Reforms: 1980–2000

Until the 1980s, U.S. immigration policy could be described as a complex system that changed once a generation, e.g., 1880s, 1920s, and 1950s. However, the accelerating pace of global change affected migration patterns, and Congress responded with a series of reforms that

sometimes closed and sometimes opened immigration doors. Many of these reform efforts did not have their intended effects, and the continued arrival of foreigners made immigration an ongoing congressional concern.

1980–1990

In the Refugee Act of 1980, the United States switched from a Cold War conception of refugee to a United Nations definition. Until 1980, the United States had defined a refugee as a person fleeing communism or the Middle East; after 1980, a refugee was an individual outside his or her country of citizenship and unwilling to return because of a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

The United States halted the Bracero Program in 1964, and Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers union won a 40 percent wage increase for California grape pickers in 1966, in part because Mexican workers were not available. However, by the early 1970s, illegal immigration from Mexico had increased, and the House of Representatives approved employer sanctions, imposing fines on U.S. employers who knowingly hired illegal alien workers. However, the Senate, at the behest of farmers, refused to agree. Instead, Presidents Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter appointed commissions to study the causes and consequences of illegal immigration. In 1981, the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy (SCRIP) concluded that (1) immigration was in the U.S. national interest, but the United States needed to reduce back-door illegal immigration to prevent nativist sentiments from halting front-door legal immigration; and that (2) illegal immigration adversely affected unskilled American workers and should be reduced with a new federal employer sanctions law. The Select Commission recommended that illegal immigrants who had established roots in the United States should be given amnesty and allowed to stay and then sponsor their families for admission.

The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 embodied this historic bargain, instituting employer sanctions to deter future illegal immigration and legalizing 2.7 million unauthorized foreigners. The legalization program was considered a success, in that most eligible aliens became legal immigrants, but it also attracted more illegal immigrants who hoped to obtain legal immigrant status. Employer sanctions did not prevent additional illegal migrants from arriving.

Under the assumption that IRCA would deter illegal immigration, Congress responded to the requests of U.S. employers for easier access to skilled foreign workers with the Immigration Act (IMMACT) of 1990. IMMACT raised the worldwide annual ceiling on immigration from 270,000, plus immediate relatives of U.S. citizens, to 675,000 including relatives. IMMACT also added a provision that, hearkening back to the national origins system, permitted up to 55,000 "diversity" immigrants each year, drawn from countries that would otherwise have comparatively few immigrants. For the first three years, 40 percent of these visas were reserved for Irish immigrants.

Immigration Changes in 1996

In 1996, Congress approved three major laws that aimed, respectively, to expedite the deportation of criminal immigrants, reduce the access of immigrants to welfare, and step up efforts to reduce illegal immigration. The Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act made it easier to detain without bail aliens convicted of crimes committed in the United States and exclude foreigners who arrive at airports without proper documents and seek asylum in the United States. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act aimed at finding savings to balance the federal budget and did so in part by restricting the access to welfare of immigrants arriving after August 22, 1996. At the time the new welfare law was passed, it was expected that 45 percent of the projected $54 billion in welfare savings would come from denying welfare benefits to legal immigrants. However, the savings have fallen

short of that projection because the eligibility of immigrants for some welfare benefits was restored.

The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) aimed to reduce illegal immigration by doubling the number of border patrol agents to 10,000. Because of fears that increased enforcement inside the United States would result in increased discrimination against minorities, it seemed more effective to prevent unauthorized foreigners from entering the country, rather than preventing them from applying for and obtaining jobs once inside the borders. Thus, IIRIRA supported the policy of using more agents, fences, and lighting on the border to deter entries, as implemented in Operation Gatekeeper in California.

RESPONSES TO TERRORISM: 2001–2

In response to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack, the United States heightened security measures, which included revising immigration policy. After four commercial airplanes were hijacked by foreigners in the United States, who flew one into the Pentagon and two into the World Trade Center towers in New York City, bringing them down and killing 3,000 people, President George W. Bush declared war on terrorists and the countries that harbor them, and Congress enacted legislation to fight terrorism.

The behavior of the hijackers demonstrated that the United States did not have effective systems for checking applicants for visas overseas, checking persons seeking entry to the United States against criminal databases, and tracking foreigners inside the borders. Several of the hijackers had obtained driver's licenses and identity cards because states did not require proof that the applicant was legally in the country. Finally, even though the hijackers had entered the United States legally, it was emphasized that they could have slipped into the country with unauthorized foreigners over the Mexican or Canadian borders.

Congress approved anti-terrorism legislation that affected immi-

grants, including the Uniting and Strengthening America Act by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act (USA PATRIOT) of 2001, which expanded the government's ability to conduct electronic surveillance, detain foreigners without charges, and penetrate money-laundering banks. USA PATRIOT provided additional funds for border security and granted the U.S. Attorney General the power to detain any foreigner who he or she certifies is a danger to U.S. national security. The federal government detained and held in secret some 1,200 foreigners in the aftermath of September 11. None were found to have terrorist links, and most were deported for violating immigration laws.

The Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act (EBSVERA) of 2002 added 3,000 immigration inspectors and investigators, required universities to keep better track of foreign students, and heightened scrutiny of visa applications from applicants of countries deemed sponsors of terrorism. The Student Exchange and Visitor Information System (SEVIS) aims to track students in the United States and tighten requirements on the schools that allow foreign students to enter the country by admitting them for study. Visas to visit the United States are issued at U.S. consulates abroad, but applicants from most Middle Eastern countries must have their information sent to Washington, D.C., to be checked against databases operated by the FBI and the CIA.

One major change after September 11 involved the INS. There had been many calls in the late 1990s to reorganize and restructure the agency, which enforces immigration laws and provides immigration benefits, such as work authorization and naturalization. The INS was moved into the fifteenth cabinet agency, the Department of Homeland Security, and enforcement was separated from services.

Recent Immigration Patterns

During the 1990s, more immigrants arrived in the United States than in any previous decade: between 1990 and 2000, the number of foreign-

born U.S. residents rose by thirteen million to total thirty-two million. According to the best estimates of demographers, about nine million of these newcomers were legal immigrants. If two million emigrated, as the Census indicates, then the number of unauthorized foreigners rose by six million in the 1990s.

Three major types of foreigners arrive in the United States: immigrants, nonimmigrants, and unauthorized foreigners. By U.S. law, immigrants are persons entitled to live and work permanently in the country and, after five years, become naturalized U.S. citizens. There are four major types of immigrants:

- By far the largest category includes relatives of U.S. residents; 63 percent of the one million immigrants admitted in 2001 had family members already in the United States who petitioned the U.S. government to admit them.
- The second-largest category was employment-based, 179,000 immigrants and their families admitted for economic or employment reasons.
- The third group was refugees and asylees, 108,000 foreigners granted safe haven in the United States.
- The fourth group is dominated by diversity and other immigrants, persons who applied for a U.S. immigrant visa in a lottery open to those from countries that sent fewer than 50,000 immigrants to the United States in the previous five years.

Nonimmigrants are foreigners who come to the United States to visit, work, or study. There are no limits on most types of nonimmigrants; the United States is willing to accept far more than the twenty-nine million foreign tourists and business visitors who arrived in 2001.

Foreign workers are more controversial. The 991,000 foreign workers admitted in 2001 represented almost 50 percent of the net growth of U.S. employment, which expands by about two million a year. About two-thirds of the foreign workers were professionals who received H-1B

Table 1. Foreigners Entering the United States, 2001

Category	*Number of Persons*
Immigrants	1,064,318
Immediate relatives of U.S. citizens	443,035
Other family-sponsored immigrants	232,143
Employment-based immigrants	179,195
Refugees and aslyees	108,506
Diversity immigrants	42,015
Other immigrants	59,424
Estimated emigration	220,000
Nonimmigrants	32,824,088
Visitors for pleasure/business	29,419,601
Foreign students	688,970
Temporary foreign workers	990,708
Illegal immigration	
Apprehensions	1,387,486
Deportations	176,984
Estimated illegal population (2000)	8,500,000
Additional illegal settlers per year (1995–2000)	700,000

SOURCE: Immigration and Naturalization Service, 2001 Statistical Yearbook. Estimates of emigration and illegal immigration are not official and are from Jeff Passel, Urban Institute.

visas that allow them to stay in the United States for up to six years, and become immigrants if they can find a U.S. employer to sponsor them for an employment-based visa by showing that qualified U.S. residents are not available to fill their jobs. A sixth of the foreign workers were unskilled workers who did jobs that ranged from harvesting tobacco to cleaning hotels in resort areas.

The H-1B program illustrates the controversies that surround foreign worker programs. On one side are those who argue that the United States must scour the world for the best computer programmers, for instance, in order to remain globally competitive and that there should be few immigration barriers between U.S. employers and the workers they want to hire, for example, from India. On the other side are those

Table 2. Unauthorized Foreigners in the United States: 1980–2000

Year	*Millions*	*Annual Average Change*
1980	3	
1986	4	167,000
1989	2.5	−500,000
1992	3.9	467,000
1995	5	367,000
2000	8.5	700,000

SOURCE: Jeff Passel, Urban Institute

who argue that U.S. employers should do more to train and retrain U.S. workers to fill vacant jobs. Making it too easy to fill jobs with foreigners, they argue, will increase employer dependence on immigrant workers over time.

Unauthorized foreigners, also known as undocumented workers and illegal aliens, are foreigners who enter the United States without inspection at ports of entry or who enter legally but then violate the terms of their entry by, for example, going to work after admission as a tourist or not departing as scheduled. The number of unauthorized foreigners is not known, but the best estimates indicate that the number rose from three million in 1980 to four million in 1986, just before 2.7 million foreigners were legalized under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. The number of unauthorized foreigners fell in the late 1980s, rose sharply in the early 1990s, rose at a slower rate in the mid-1990s, and then rose very fast in the late 1990s.

Immigration and Population

Immigration is a major factor changing the size and composition of the U.S. population. The most recent population projections were made in 1995, when the U.S. had 263 million residents, including 193 million non-Hispanic whites (74 percent), 31.5 million blacks (12 percent), 26.9 million Hispanics (10 percent), 8.7 million Asians and Pacific

Table 3. U.S. Population by Race/Ethnicity: 1990–2050

	1990	*2010*	*2030*	*2050*
Total Population (millions)	249,402	297,716	346,899	393,931
Non-Hispanic White (percent)	76	68	61	53
African American	12	13	13	14
Asian	3	5	7	8
Hispanic Origin	9	14	19	25
TOTAL (excludes American Indians)	99	99	99	99

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population Projections of the United States*, Middle Series, February 1996.

Islanders (3 percent) and about two million Native Americans.[8] If current fertility, mortality, and immigration patterns continue, the Census Bureau projected the U.S. population will be 394 million in 2050 and the composition of the population will have changed over the half-century to 53 percent non-Hispanic white, 14 percent African American, 24 percent Hispanic, and 8 percent Asian. The Census Bureau assumed a net influx of 820,000 legal and illegal immigrants annually in making these projections.[9]

Public Opinion

Most Americans, although descended from immigrants, worry that immigration is increasing the size and changing the composition of the U.S. population. Public opinion surveys show that a majority of Americans want both legal and illegal immigration reduced. Polls suggest that, from 1965 to 1993, the proportion of Americans favoring increased immigration has been stable at about 7 percent.[10] The debate over immigration became very heated in the mid-1990s, especially in California, which was the destination of 25 to 35 percent of U.S. immigrants. Factors contributing to the increased visibility of immigration include the recession of 1990–91, which was especially severe in California; the debate over the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA),

which went into effect on January 1, 1994; and the continued search for ways to balance the federal budget. Other factors that focused attention on immigration included well-publicized terrorist attacks by immigrants, especially the World Trade Center bombing in 1993 and the 2001 attack, and 1996 welfare reforms that reduced cash benefits for all poor U.S. residents.

Today, most polls suggest that Americans are almost evenly divided over the benefits and costs of immigration, with about half believing the benefits outweigh the costs and half who think that the costs outweigh the benefits. One poll with contradictory findings showed that 64 percent of respondents want immigration to be decreased, while 78 percent agree that many immigrants work hard and often take jobs that Americans do not want. Furthermore, 55 percent say that the diversity brought by immigrants to the United States threatens American culture, while 60 percent insist that immigrants improve the United States with their different talents and backgrounds.[11]

Many politicians and researchers dismiss public concerns about immigration by pointing out that fears voiced in the past that the United States was accepting too many and the wrong kinds of immigrants were not borne out by the course of events. For example, Benjamin Franklin worried that German immigrants could not be assimilated: why, he asked, should "Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a colony of aliens, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us, instead of our Anglifying them?"[12] Less than two centuries later, a descendant of these immigrants, Dwight Eisenhower, was elected president of the United States. Franklin did not forsee the outcome: the Germans did not become Anglicans or British; they became Americans, and the British immigrants also became Americans. Immigrant integration means that both newcomers and established residents change.

The United States celebrates its ability to welcome newcomers and integrate them into an ever-evolving country. America commemorates both immigration and the founding of the United States with mass naturalization ceremonies on July 4. Politicians everywhere remind

Americans that they share with each other the memory that they or their ancestors left their homes and moved to the United States. This immigrant heritage puts the burden of proof in debates about the proper level of immigration on those who want to reduce it. Restrictionists normally make one or more of four arguments:

1. Immigration adds to U.S. population growth and, therefore, to environmental and congestion problems.
2. Immigrants depress wages and working conditions in the labor markets where they are concentrated and where some Americans are forced to compete with them.
3. Immigrant workers willing to work at low wages may slow the modernization and competitiveness of the U.S. economy.
4. Large numbers of Hispanic and Asian immigrants are arriving in a society that is not sure on what terms they are to be accommodated and integrated. Will integration further strengthen America, or will it lead to the balkanization or "dis-uniting" of America along racial and ethnic lines?

Immigration and integration are linked issues—the fortunes of immigrants, as well as their impact on the economy, the political system, schools, and society, affect attitudes toward further immigration.

Naturalization and Politics

At its founding, the United States established two important principles: all persons in the United States are to have full and equal rights, and all persons born in the United States are automatically citizens of the United States. The United States is still striving to undo the effects of the major exception to these rules—slavery—with anti-discrimination measures and preferences for minorities that apply to immigrants as well as the descendants of slaves.

For most of the past 200 years, there have been few distinctions

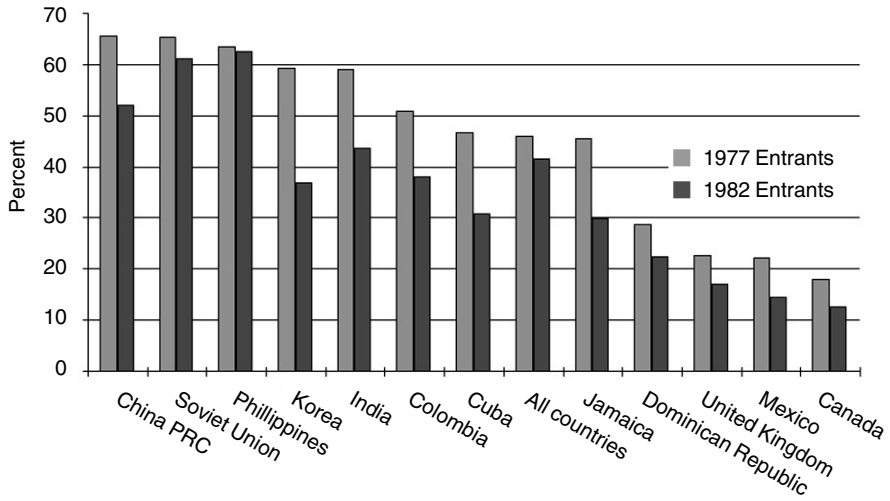

Figure 1. Percent of Immigrants Admitted in 1977 and 1982 Who Naturalized by 1995

between citizens and noncitizens. Legal immigrants have been able to live where they please, seek jobs (except for government jobs restricted to U.S. citizens) on an equal footing with U.S. citizens, and buy a house, land, or business without restriction. Both legal and unauthorized immigrants have basic constitutional rights, including the right of free speech and the free exercise of religion. Non-U.S. citizens can vote and hold office in U.S. unions and other private organizations such as churches, foundations, and fraternal groups.

To become a naturalized U.S. citizen, a legal immigrant must be at least 18 years old, have lived in the United States at least five years (or three years for spouses of U.S. citizens), and pass a test of English and civics, which includes such questions as "Where is the White House located?" and "Name one right guaranteed by the First Amendment." Historically, fewer than half of immigrants to the United States have naturalized. For example, of the immigrants admitted in 1977, most became eligible to naturalize in 1982. However, by 1995, only 46 per-

cent had naturalized. Of those admitted in 1982, 42 percent were naturalized by 1995.[13]

Mexicans, like Canadians, have historically had low rates of naturalization. Many Mexicans in the United States expect to return to Mexico someday. Before changes in Mexican law in 1996, Mexicans who became naturalized U.S. citizens were denied certain rights granted only to Mexican citizens, such as the right to own and inherit land in Mexico. In general, the probability that an immigrant in the United States will naturalize increases with age, education, income, and English-language ability. The fact that Mexican immigrants are younger, poorer, and less likely to speak English than immigrants from some other countries also helps explain why relatively few Mexicans naturalize.

In the mid-1990s, the number of immigrants electing to become naturalized U.S. citizens surged as a result of

1. the approval of Proposition 187 in California by a 59 to 41 percent vote in November 1994, widely regarded as a symbol of rising anti-immigrant attitudes
2. rising levels of immigration and the fact that the 2.7 million unauthorized foreigners who were legalized in 1987 and 1988 became eligible to naturalize beginning in 1995
3. the INS's Green Card Replacement Program, launched in 1993, which required holders of legal immigrant visas to pay the INS $75 for a new counterfeit-resistant card; the cover letter noted that, for $20 more, immigrants could become naturalized U.S. citizens
4. enactment of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, which made some legal immigrants ineligible for federal welfare programs, thereby creating an incentive to naturalize in order to continue to receive benefits
5. the Mexican government's approval of dual nationality in 1996,

which permits Mexican nationals who become citizens of another country to retain their Mexican passports and enjoy many of the rights of Mexican citizens in Mexico

Immigrant Integration

How are immigrants integrated into American society? During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the leading metaphor for the incorporation of newcomers to America was a fusion of peoples in a "smelting pot" (Ralph Waldo Emerson), "cauldron" (Henry James), or "crucible" in which "immigrants were Americanized, liberated, and fused into a mixed race, English in neither nationality nor characteristics."[14] The hero of Israel Zangwill's popular play of 1908, *The Melting Pot*, proclaimed: "Germans and Frenchmen, Irishmen and Englishmen, Jews and Russians—into the Crucible with you all! God is making the American!"

American attitudes to immigration differ from European perspectives. In Britain, for example, a naturalized foreigner may achieve high honors as a "British subject." However, he or she will never be regarded as "English" (or, for that matter, as Scottish or Welsh) because the British tend to define ethnicity by ethnic descent, as do Germans. A Volga German, despite speaking broken German, is legally entitled to German nationality, but the German-born and German-speaking son of a Turk, even if resident in Germany for many years, remains a Turk. By contrast, once a foreigner takes the oath of allegiance in the United States, he or she is accepted as an American, even if the new citizen speaks English with an accent as did former secretary of state Henry Kissinger.

Integrating immigrants is far more complex and marked by tensions that arise from the immigrants' desire to keep alive the culture and language of the community they left behind, and their need and wish to adapt to new surroundings and another society. Three general principles have guided U.S. immigrant integration in the past:

- America is generally open to all kinds of immigrants. In the words of George Washington, "the bosom of America is open to receive not only the Opulent and respectable Stranger, but the oppressed and persecuted of all Nations and Religions; whom we shall welcome to a participation of all our rights and privileges."
- No ethnic group may establish a formally recognized political identity in the United States. American citizens act politically as individuals, not as members of officially defined ethnic groups.
- Regarding culture, laissez-faire was the rule: no group would be required to give up its character and distinctiveness, thus allowing each immigrant group to maintain some of its institutions for a time.

Today, the debate over integration is framed by two extremes: assimilation and multiculturalism. Immigrants from Mexico or China may consider themselves to be Mexican or Chinese. The assimilationist perspective argues that such ethnic boundaries should be erased as soon as possible and that the immigrants should quickly become Americans. The multiculturalist, on the other hand, argues that the immigrants should continue to see themselves as Mexican or Chinese, that the U.S. government should support their efforts to maintain their ethnicity, and that Americans should learn about and value Mexican, Chinese, and other cultures.

Assimilation versus multiculturalism, or integration versus pluralism, is a debate is played out throughout U.S. society, often aiming to resolve existing conflicts. For example, how should children who are learning English be taught? Should they be taught in English in order to speed up their integration or taught in their parents' language in order to help them appreciate their parents' culture?

There is no easy way to find the "right" immigrant integration policy. In 1984, the historian John Higham proposed a system of "pluralistic integration," in which immigrants and the native-born would share common core ideas and culture and then minorities would be free to

preserve and enhance their own cultures. Higham argued against Canadian and Australian policies of providing tax funds to promote multiculturalism, arguing, "No ethnic group under these terms may have the support of the general community in strengthening its boundaries, [but] ethnic nuclei are respected as enduring centers of social action."[15]

Immigrant integration can be regarded as a glass half-full or half-empty. On one hand, many immigrants have succeeded in becoming very prominent Americans. On the other, studies find relatively little interaction between immigrants and the native-born in many cities, which suggests that immigrant children may grow up in a culture that is in part transferred from abroad into the United States.

LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION

The 2000 census reported that forty-seven million residents older than age five, that is, 18 percent of the U.S. population, spoke a language other than English at home, fifteen million more than in 1990. Some 28.1 million spoke Spanish at home, while two million spoke Chinese, 1.6 million spoke French, 1.4 million spoke German, 1.2 million spoke Tagalog, and one million each spoke Italian and Vietnamese (see Table 4).

The shift from another language to English has usually occurred over three generations. Immigrants in the early 1900s rarely learned English well during their lifetimes. Their children were often bilingual, using their parents' language at home and English at school, with English becoming their dominant language as they entered the workplace. The grandchildren of immigrants—the third generation—were typically monolingual speakers of English.[16]

Today, the three-generation shift to English may be shrinking to two generations for most immigrants but not shifting at all for others.[17] Most immigrants settle in U.S. cities, where they are more likely to be exposed to English than were workers in farms and mines earlier in the century. One survey found that, even though most Mexican-born U.S.

Table 4. Language Spoken at Home, 2000

Population 5 years and over	262,375,152
Speak only English	215,423,557
Speak a language other than English	46,951,595
Spanish or Spanish Creole	28,101,052
Chinese	2,022,143
French (incl. Patois, Cajun)	1,643,838
German	1,383,442
Tagalog	1,224,241
Vietnamese	1,009,627
Italian	1,008,370
Korean	894,063
Other	9,664,819

SOURCE: Census 2000

residents spoke Spanish at home, almost two-thirds of all U.S.–born persons of Mexican ancestry used English at home.[18] On the other hand, those living in ethnic enclaves may be slower to learn English.

The fact that immigrants and their children may be acquiring English as fast or faster than in the past does not mean that they are learning English at the "right" pace. The penalty of lower earnings for those who do not know English has increased. Earlier immigrants could farm or work in factories or build railroads without knowing English. But in today's service-dominated economy, it is hard to achieve adequate earnings without understanding and speaking English. An early 1990s analysis found that "among immigrant men who spoke a language other than English at home, those who were not fluent in English earned only about half as much as those who were."[19]

Most immigrants want to learn English. A survey of U.S. residents of Mexican, Cuban, and Puerto Rican origins found over 90 percent in agreement with the proposition that "all U.S. citizens and residents should learn English."[20] But acquiring a new language is a big undertaking for an adult, particularly for an adult working long hours. Help is often hard to come by. There are frequently long queues for classes for

adults who want to learn English. There is no federally financed program aimed at teaching English to adult speakers of other languages, although states use federal adult education grants along with their own funds to provide English instruction.

MEXICO–U.S. MIGRATION

About one-fourth of the immigrants arriving in the United States today are from Mexico, the country from which the United States had recruited temporary workers in the past. Under a series of Bracero programs, the U.S. government approved the admission of over 4.5 million Mexican farm workers between 1942 and 1964. Mexican workers were eager to come to the United States for higher wages. However, migration is a dynamic process. What began largely as the U.S.–approved or U.S.–tolerated recruitment of Mexican workers has become a far more complex migration relationship that is moving rural Mexicans into the customary farm jobs, as well as into new industries, occupations, and areas of the United States.

The best estimates suggest that there were 8.8 million Mexican-born U.S. residents in 2000, including 4.5 million who were not authorized to be in the United States.[21] Most of the Mexicans living in the United States are from rural areas in west central Mexico, the areas in which the United States recruited braceros, and increasingly from southern Mexico, an impoverished area of Mexico with the largest indigenous population. Most Mexican migrants follow networks to particular places and jobs in the United States. Few Mexicans simply "go north for opportunity"; instead, most have a telephone number or address in their pocket that will take them to relatives, friends, and employers in the United States. The network, anchored by settled migrants in the United States, provides information about U.S. jobs, financing and advice on how to cross the border illegally, and often housing and job placement after a migrant arrives.

After continued migration for decades, a process termed "cumula-

tive causation" may begin to operate in both emigration and destination areas, making both sides of the border more dependent on the U.S. labor market that links them.[22] For example, business decisions may be made in the United States on the assumption that immigrant workers will be available when they are needed to harvest apples in remote areas or staff hotels in resort areas with little housing for workers.[23] The Mexican government, for its part, could and did neglect its west central states because so many of its residents earned money in the United States.

Are there mutually beneficial ways to break the migration networks and reverse the cumulative causation that brings rural Mexicans to the United States? The U.S. Commission for the Study of International Migration and Cooperative Economic Development concluded in 1990 that freer trade and investment were the most effective policies for promoting economic growth and thus eventually detering emigration: "expanded trade between the sending countries and the United States is the single most important remedy" for unauthorized Mexico–to–U.S. migration.[24] Mexico's President Salinas surprised the United States when he proposed a free trade agreement in 1990, and on January 1, 1994, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) went into effect.

The purpose of NAFTA was to reduce trade and investment barriers, thereby stimulating economic and job growth in Mexico, the United States, and Canada. All three member countries were expected to have bigger economies, more jobs, and higher wages because of NAFTA, and this economic growth would in turn reduce migration. Eventually, in the words of President Salinas, "more jobs will mean higher wages in Mexico, and this in turn will mean fewer migrants to the United States and Canada. We want to export goods, not people."[25]

However, the U.S. Commission and most migration researchers warned that "the economic development process itself tends in the short to medium term to stimulate migration." In other words, policies that accelerate economic and job growth in Mexico, including privatization,

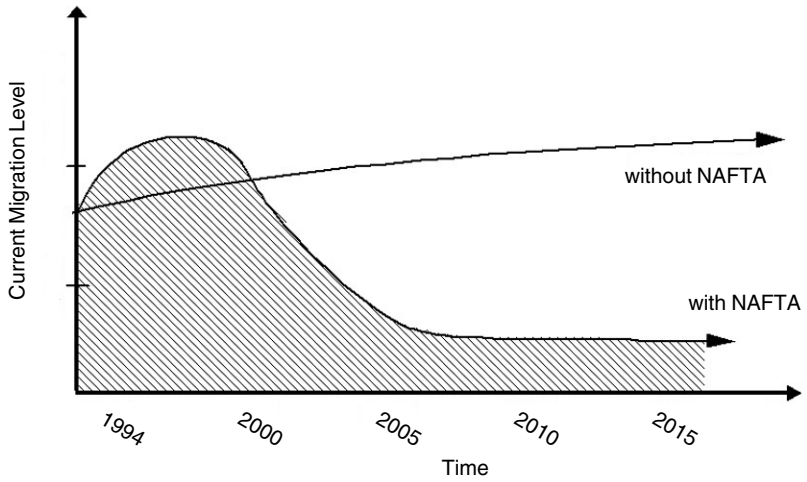

Figure 2. Mexico–U.S. Migration with and without NAFTA

land reform, and freer trade, produce a migration hump—a temporary increase in migration. However, over the longer term, the economic and job growth associated with NAFTA may be expected to reduce Mexico–to–U.S. migration. The additional migration in the short term may thus be a reasonable price to pay for speeding the adoption of economic and trade policies that have elsewhere effectively turned emigration countries such as Italy, Spain, and Korea into immigration destinations.

The Debate over Immigration

American ambiguity with regard to immigration is reflected in constant vacillations over legislation affecting immigrants. Periods marked by a massive influx of foreigners have traditionally been followed by an anti-immigration backlash.

In November 1994, in the midst of the current fourth wave of immigration, California voters approved Proposition 187, the "Save Our State" initiative, by 59 to 41 percent. Proposition 187 had five major sections, but perhaps the most controversial was the first section,

which would have required unauthorized children to pay tuition in order to attend kindergarten to grade 12 public schools. The requirement that public schools would have to verify legal status in addition to residence was a challenge to the 1982 *Plyler v. Doe* U.S. Supreme Court decision, which declared that the equal protection clause of the fourteenth amendment protects all residents within a state's borders, regardless of immigration status. The majority in this 5 to 4 decision held that "equal protection" for illegal alien children included the same education available to U.S.–citizen children, largely because education is especially needed to prevent the development of an underclass.

The Commission on Immigration Reform (CIR, 1994–97) called for reducing the number and changing the mix of immigrants to favor skilled and professional newcomers. It urged for the establishment of a registry system to make it easier to prevent the employment of unauthorized workers. However, Congress did not accept the CIR's recommendations, opting to allow immigration to continue at mid-1990s levels and prioritizing family unification. Congress also rejected a new system for verifying authorization to work in the United States, opening the doors for large-scale immigration, both legal and illegal, in the late 1990s.

Many critics worry that the failure to deal with immigration in the 1990s will change the United States ethnically, culturally, and politically. They emphasize that about 80 percent of immigrants are Asian or Hispanic and their presence may threaten the United States' historically European traditions. Some critics might cite the transformation of Miami. In 1960, non-Hispanic whites were 80 percent of residents; by 1996, they were less than 50 percent. Cubans and other Latins revived and expanded Miami's economy—but their presence may not be welcomed by an elderly Anglo pensioner who complains of hearing Spanish spoken all around her.

Furthermore, critics argue that many immigrants come to the United States "for a hand out, not a hand up," that is, for welfare benefits rather than a chance for upward mobility based on hard work. At the

same time, they argue that the hiring of unskilled immigrants depresses wages and increases unemployment rates for similarly disadvantaged natives, who are often women and minorities.

On the other side are those who remind us that past fears of "unassimilable foreigners" have proved to be groundless. Whereas pessimists fear that the United States has already lost control of its own borders, optimists deny these complaints and argue that immigrants add value to the United States. They create jobs and wealth; they do work Americans do not want to do at low salaries; and they keep the population growing and youthful, allowing steady economic growth. Fears that Italians or Poles would be unable to become good Americans were proven false during the twentieth century. Those who favor continued immigration argue that America remains ready to accept and integrate foreigners.

Immigration is thus a highly contentious issue that brings forth strong assertions while leaving many questions unanswered. Should immigrants be eligible for welfare benefits? Do immigrants take jobs from Americans or create jobs? What are the costs of illegal immigration?

How Many, From Where?: Evaluating Policy Shifts

When the United States attained independence, no restrictions were placed on the arrival of newcomers. Newcomers came and left as they pleased. The state made no provision either to hinder or help. For assistance, immigrants, as well as native-born Americans, called on kinfolk, friends, neighbors, their respective churches, or welfare societies (commonly made up from persons born in the same region of the old country, or *Landsmannschaften* in German and Yiddish). Immigrants were generally welcomed to offset what Alexander Hamilton called "the scarcity of hands" and the "dearness of labor."

After World War I, however, the United States retreated into isolationism. There was a new dread of crime and political subversion

supposedly instigated or supported by foreigners. There were new fears aroused by racist and eugenicist theoreticians who maintained that Slavs and Latins (not to speak of brown-, yellow-, and black-skinned people) would fail to meet the genetic standards set by British, German, and Scandinavian immigrants. During this period, the United States set up a national quota system through the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), which passed over the veto of President Truman. Also known as the McCarran-Walter Act, it allotted to each foreign country an annual quota for immigrants based on the proportion of people from that country present in the United States in 1920.

Until the 1960s, the United States' policy therefore favored northern Europeans immigrants—British, German, Scandinavian, and Dutch, most of them Protestants. This policy kept out many Catholics, except those who could enter under the Irish and German quotas. There were equally severe restrictions on countries such as Italy, Poland, Lithuania, and Russia, from which most Jewish immigrants came. The coalition calling for immigration reform thus consisted of the traditional New Deal supporters—liberals, Catholics, and Jews.

The major change to immigration policy came in 1965 during the heady days of President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society. In a message to a predominantly liberal Congress, Johnson vowed to abolish the national origins quota system, which he considered "incompatible with our best American traditions" and which also conflicted with the assumed solidarity of the nations in the Western Hemisphere. Instead, the new legislation would give preferential admissions "based upon the advantage to our nation of the skills of the immigrant, and the existence of a close family relationship between immigrants and people who are already citizens or permanent residents."[26] Subsequent amendments established a ceiling of 20,000 immigrants per country and a ceiling of 290,000 persons to be admitted every year. (The 1980 Refugee Act, however, exempted refugees from the preference system, giving new powers to the president to establish the annual limits of the refugees to be accepted.)

This was a major policy reversal whose importance was not fully understood when it was made. The traditional preference given to Europe disappeared, and because this coincided with a time when the member states of the European Community (EC) were themselves experiencing a new prosperity, henceforth, Spaniards, Greeks, Portuguese, and Sicilians looked for jobs in Germany, France, and Britain rather than in the United States. In due course, the Mediterranean states of the EC would in turn attract newcomers—mainly from North Africa and the Near East.

Although the 1965 immigration law was debated at the time, its consequences were unforeseen. Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), its main proponent, predicted its effects:

> First, our cities will not be flooded with a million immigrants annually. Under the proposed bill, the present level of immigration remains substantially the same. . . . Secondly, the ethnic mix of this country will not be upset. . . . Contrary to the charges in some quarters, [the bill] will not inundate America with immigrants from any one country or area, or the most populated and deprived nations of Africa and Asia. . . . In the final analysis, the ethnic pattern of immigration under the proposed measure is not expected to change as sharply as the critics seem to think.

Kennedy was wrong. Immigration levels rose to one million per year, and immigrant origins shifted from Europe to Latin America and Asia.

As immigration increased and the origins of immigrants changed, U.S. policies also changed with the launch of a War on Poverty in the 1960s that enlarged the welfare state and increased protections and remedies for victims of discrimination. Many of the immigrants, who had not been victims of U.S. government discrimination, nonetheless, became beneficiaries of affirmative action and other programs. Also, even though immigrants had to pass an English test to naturalize, the 1965 Voting Rights Act, as amended in 1975 and thereafter, required multilingual ballots in jurisdictions with linguistic minorities.[27]

Making immigrants eligible for remedies for discrimination, such as affirmative action, may have contributed to the demise of such programs. In a 1995 *Washington Post* survey, 75 percent of respondents—81 percent

of whites and 47 percent of blacks—opposed preferences on the basis of past discrimination. Michael Tomasky, a committed liberal, argued, "a policy of affirmative action for diversity's sake cannot for long coexist with a policy of open immigration."[28] Multicultural ideals proclaimed by progressive churchmen and academicians were greeted with equal hostility. Traditional notions regarding America as a "melting pot" may have seemed passé to the elites but not to the mass of voters who expressed their hostility to bilingualism and multiculturalism in various state initiatives calling for English to be recognized as the "official language."

Americans' openness to immigrants generally rises with education and income—wealthy Americans are those most likely to encounter immigrants who make their life easier, whether taking care of their children or gardens, or serving them in restaurants. Thus, the elites who support calls for amnesty for illegal workers mounted by churches and ethnic groups must often overcome the opposition of unions and other representatives of labor. The 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) included both sanctions to stop future illegal immigration and several legalization programs for foreigners who had developed an equity stake in the United States. The sanctions passed easily, but legalization was far more contentious.

IRCA failed to stop illegal immigration. Instead, legalization helped to spread undocumented workers throughout the United States. Newly legalized farmworkers left the fields of California for better jobs and were replaced by newly arrived illegals, who waited for their turn to be legalized. Even if there was no immediate second legalization, the family preference policy allows settled family members to sponsor their admission.

Debate across Party Lines

The arguments regarding immigration cut across traditional party lines and traditional distinctions between liberals and conservatives. This has always been the case. Even during the nineteenth century, the Know-

Nothing movement bitterly opposed immigrants, especially Catholics, who supposedly plotted with the pope to subvert Protestant liberties, spread drink, and entrapped innocent maidens for servitude in nunneries. Yet the Know-Nothings also strove for social reform and Negro emancipation.

For good economic reasons, employers of labor, libertarians, humanists, and ethnic spokespeople are united in favoring immigration. They are opposed by an equally heterogeneous alliance made up of old-style barroom patriots, environmentalists, cultural conservatives, trade unionists, and Zero Population Growth activists who want to keep out or restrict the influx of newcomers. The Carrying Capacity Network puts the case against immigration on ecological grounds. By contrast, Molly Ivins, a liberal columnist, will have nothing to do with such arguments: "It's not Irish secretaries or French restaurateurs who are about to cut down the last great stands of redwood on private property in California."[29] Liberal Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) wants to cut down on immigration, including legal immigration, while conservative Senator Phil Gramm (R-Tex.) censures Feinstein for abandoning the United States' liberal heritage of welcoming strangers.

The Pro-Immigration Case

Defenders of immigration remind us that the United States is a nation made up of immigrants and their offspring. From its beginnings, the United States stood indebted to the newcomers' skills. Pro-immigration advocates thus embody traditional American optimism. As they see it, Americans need not worry about immigration.

Natural resources and the environment are not at risk from immigration, according to notable scholars such as Milton Friedman and Julian L. Simon. They point to past forecasts predicting ecological disasters and show that these were either exaggerated or mistaken altogether. For example, a report known as *Global 2000*, prepared in 1980 by a group of leading scholars at President Jimmy Carter's initiative,

predicted global crises. Famine and disease would spread; the plagues of Egypt would be nothing compared with the wrath to come. But, in fact, the world is getting richer, not poorer.[30] Ecological disaster does not necessarily stand around the corner. There is no apparent correlation between poverty and a high population density. (Singapore and Hong Kong, two densely crowded urban communities, are far more prosperous than, say, Angola or Mozambique, both of them huge countries with plenty of acres to spare.) The world is not running out of food; urban sprawl does not wipe out prime agricultural land; the world's resources are not "finite." There is indeed "a funding incentive for scholars and institutions to produce bad news about population, resources and the environment." But the world is, in fact, much better off than the doomsday sayers prophesize.[31]

As U.S. population and income have increased, natural resources have not declined; the environment has improved rather than deteriorated, despite massive immigration. The Zero Population Growth movement dreads the arrival of immigrants lest the newcomers have too many children, consume too many resources, and pollute the land. But modern industry, while causing new ecological problems, also creates the means for dealing with them. In fact, immigration keeps the population growing and the economy developing, which accelerates the positive trends in the availability of natural resources and cleaner air and water.[32]

In any case, argue the optimists, demographers have a bad record in forecasting anything—be it the future size of specific populations, the long-term availability of natural resources, or other potential disasters. Demographers have made egregious errors by extrapolating existing data into the distant future. Economists have done no better. In the 1970s, for instance, West German chancellor Willy Brandt put together a distinguished commission to study the future of global resources and worldwide development in decades to come. The commissioners published a pessimistic report. The report was brilliant, but the forecasts were all wrong.

The fact is that the free market, if allowed to operate, will take care of most of these concerns. Immigrants tend to be more motivated and, therefore, more apt to succeed than their stay-at-home counterparts or even native-born Americans. Thomas Sowell, a U.S. economist, has found that blacks who migrate to the United States from the West Indies have higher average earnings than native-born black Americans. European immigrants do equally well. Barry Chiswick, another economist, has ascertained that, despite language and cultural barriers, European immigrants on the average earn more than white native-born Americans within fifteen years after arriving in the United States.[33] Asian immigrants also do well. For example, Chinese and Koreans have helped to revive the economies of Los Angeles and New York.

Immigration in economic terms represents a transfer of skills to the receiving country without cost to the recipient but at the expense of the immigrant's country of origin, which developed the immigrant's mind and muscle. Newcomers create work both for themselves and others as immigrants need housing, shoes to wear, cars to get to work, meat and poultry to eat, books to read. Furthermore, in many cases immigrants do jobs that Americans will not or cannot do. How many Americans want to pick beans or apples or do housekeeping chores or restaurant work? Without immigrant labor, Americans could not so readily afford the grapes, oranges, lettuce they buy in the supermarkets, although the savings here to farm wages held down by immigrants are minuscule. Prices in service industries and restaurants are also kept lower than they otherwise would be because of low-paid labor, most of which is done by new immigrants.

Immigrants may, in some cases, increase the rate of unemployment among native-born Americans with low skills, especially minority and female workers. However, if cheap immigrant labor were not available, some jobs would likely move offshore, or there would be technological or other changes to get work done, from self-service gasoline to mechanical grape harvesters. The effect of immigration on wages, Simon con-

cludes, is negative for some special groups but positive for most, and the overall effects are small.

Some unskilled Americans—mostly blacks and women but also Mexican Americans—do suffer from the competition of foreigners because the newcomers work for less. But native-born workers in the United States should not complain too much; they enjoy a competitive advantage over newcomers because they usually already know the language, the culture, and the job. Nor are American workers simply helpless victims of circumstances. Faced with competition, they have new incentives to find better employment or acquire further training. To the extent that the wages of unskilled men and women fall, the benefits of additional training grow. Consequently, immigration may lead to greater self-investment in education.

In the late 1990s, during one of the greatest immigration waves in U.S. history, unemployment was below 5 percent and fell as low as 4 percent. According to the research of Stephen Moore, a Cato Institute expert on immigration, U.S. cities with a high proportion of immigrants do not suffer from higher rates of unemployment, crime, poverty, or high taxation than cities with low rates of immigration. In fact, cities with high rates of immigration gain wealth faster and increase their respective per capita incomes more quickly than cities with few immigrants. (Ironically, cities with the most immigrants—New York, Houston, Los Angeles—are the least anti-immigrant.) Immigrants created jobs, increased productivity, and did jobs that Americans did not want.

Ron Unz, an economist and Silicon Valley entrepreneur, concedes that job competition from foreigners may hurt native borns and lead to unemployment but he argues that this is true for all economic policies in American society. Overall, Unz and most free market economists conclude that foreign workers benefit Americans and the economy—and even those hurt temporarily—by lowering consumer costs, which raises productivity and, in turn, increases the number of jobs.

As for those who would restrict foreigners' access to U.S. graduate schools, Simon argues that educated immigrants benefit us and their

native countries and are one of our best exports. Immigrants do not merely perform menial jobs. On the contrary, the melting pot concept helps American high-technology industries attract talented people here who were educated elsewhere at someone else's expense. The United States should not, therefore, make it difficult for talented people to come here, as it does now.

Skilled people add significantly to gross domestic product (GDP), whereas unskilled ones add less than 1 percent, according to George Borjas of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.[34] Borjas notes that, with regard to immigration, two primary questions we have yet "to address are how many and who?" Efforts led by Alan Simpson (R-Wyo.) in the 1996 Senate to reduce the number of skilled immigrants were defeated, and no efforts were made to limit the total number of legal immigrants other than skilled ones. Although that debate came up again during the Clinton administration, Congress raised the number of H-1B visas for skilled workers several times.

Skilled workers also play an important part in those new industries where the United States is the world leader—computers, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, information, and entertainment. Thus, T. J. Rodgers, president and CEO of Cypress Semiconductors, a leading firm in San Jose, California, notes that the major *Fortune* 500 companies have reduced employment. By contrast, smaller, innovative, and more flexible firms have expanded and hired more staff. Indeed, firms such as Cypress cannot find enough qualified people. Cypress is not alone in its predicament. The eleven semiconductor companies that make up the Sematech chip consortium have thousands of open requisitions that they are unable to fill. Cypress itself is so short of skilled engineers that the company has started to move design centers abroad. Critics such as Norman Matloff of the University of California at Davis accuse the high-tech industries of hiring foreigners to keep down the wages of native-born experts. But this is not so. Recruiting a person from overseas may itself be a costly and time-consuming undertaking when it involves relocating both the foreign expert and his or her family to the United

States. Keeping out skilled newcomers may have the perverse effect of forcing U.S. high-tech firms to export jobs.

As old industries decay, new forms of enterprise such as American Express, MCI, and Sun Microsystems have created new work. Rodgers also observes that "our $600,000,000 Silicon Valley company [Cypress] is run by ten officers. Four of them are immigrants."[35] Far from taking work from Americans, such skilled workers have made American industry stronger. In any case, because the U.S. population is aging, the United States needs a constant influx of young, new, skilled workers for the economy to keep expanding. Without them, there will not be enough young people to pay for the social benefits destined for an ever-growing army of elderly or help America remain competitive in high-tech industries.

In general, traditional notions concerning immigration may have to be revised altogether in considering a new character on the high-tech scene, the "electronic immigrant." Imagine an East Indian programmer, a resident of Bombay, who jointly works as a programmer with a team in California. His work centers on California; his wages derive from California; he communicates electronically with his California colleagues on personal as well as professional matters. Indeed, he knows his California associates better than his Indian neighbors, but he is not an immigrant in the physical or legal sense. Although in many ways he resembles an immigrant to the United States with regards to both his economic function and his mind-set, he lives in a world where visas, quotas, and their like have ceased to count.

From economic issues, we pass to questions of social concern. Do immigrants contribute to U.S. crime? It appears to some that the United States' underworld has expanded, with new Vietnamese, Russian, Israeli, Mexican, Columbian, Chinese, Korean, and other mobsters terrorizing their fellow citizens. Inner-city gangs have changed their ethnic composition, but so have the law-abiding segments of the population in the inner cities. According to Joe Cobb, an expert at the Heritage Foundation, the number of noncitizens in prison is about the

same proportion as the number in the general population. Of the states with the largest proportion of alien prisoners in 1992 (California, New York, Florida, Illinois), only New York had a greater share of aliens in jail than in the general population. There is no reason to think that crime would necessarily diminish if immigration were stopped. Big-time crime has become globalized; some of the most formidable rackets in the United States are run from places such as Hong Kong or Lima or Mexico City.

The bulk of immigrants are law-abiding, and more than 80 percent are employed; in fact some do remarkably well in meeting American family values. Some 40 percent of immigrant households consist of four or more people, compared with 25 percent of native-born American ones. Immigrants are more likely to be married and less likely to be divorced or separated than native-born citizens. A typical immigrant is less likely to have finished high school, but if he or she did receive higher education, he or she is twice as likely to have a doctorate. The immigrant is a little more likely to do paid work than a native-born but less likely to work for the government.[36] Contrary to widespread stereotypes, the bulk of the "new immigrants" learn English with as much dedication as did the "old immigrants." English self-study courses, massively advertised by private enterprise on Hispanic television stations, do a flourishing business. Immigrants are, in fact, remarkably well attuned to the American tradition of self-help and enterprise. They relish consumer goods; they have an even greater interest than native-born Americans in quality products and brand names. They like to keep up with modern lifestyles and fashions. The majority do not feel alienated from their work or popular culture. The immigrants like to make their own decisions without reference to what their neighbors prefer.[37]

Some restrictionists believe that immigrants should be specially selected so that the United States will attract and accept only winners. Peter Brimelow, a journalist for *Forbes Magazine*, argues even further that the United States does not need *any* immigrants. The economic expansion of the 1990s, however, would not have been possible without

the annual arrival of one million or so new immigrants. But who can predict with certainty any newcomer's economic future?

What are the costs inflicted on the United States by immigrants? According to some polls, they are enormous. True enough, welfare expenditure, if narrowly defined, is greater for immigrants—21 percent compared to 14 percent for native-born Americans. Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and supplemental security income (SSI) pay more to immigrants than natives—on the average $404 per immigrant as opposed to $260 for the average native-born. Refugees, in particular, obtain more welfare than native-born citizens. Immigrants also receive, on average, more food stamps or Medicaid because they are poorer.

In any case, welfare expenditures are only a small fraction of total government outlays on immigrants and natives. Schooling costs and payments to the elderly represent the bulk of government expenditures, Simon argues, and natives use more of these programs. Immigrants, on average, are younger than the native-born, and they usually arrive healthy; thus, they receive less than the native born of Social Security and Medicare. Of these most expensive government programs, it is the native-borns who are the principal beneficiaries. The welfare expenditure on immigrants, if narrowly defined, is but a "red herring."[38]

By contrast, costs of schooling and unemployment compensation are about the same for native-born citizens and immigrants. Education is a long-term expense but a necessary one if the United States is to remain competitive in the global economy and avoid creating an underclass of poorly educated Americans. Overall, economist Simon concludes, immigrants contribute more to the public coffers than they receive. In fact, because of the increase of skilled workers, the immigrants' relative contribution of late may have increased rather than diminished.

Pro-immigrationist groups, such as the National Immigration Forum, the National Council of La Raza, and the American Immigration Lawyers Association, conclude that U.S. immigration policy should not

hinge solely on a cost-benefit analysis. Politics should also have a moral dimension. To reinforce its claims to be the world's bastion of liberty, the United States has a general obligation to admit political refugees from tyrannies wherever these exist.

Furthermore, such groups advocate that the United States should continue to open its borders to its close neighbors. In particular, because the United States has had close relations with Mexico, it should lower the obstacles on legal immigration from that country, which were put into place with the creation of the North Atlantic Free Trade Area (NAFTA) in 1994. Although NAFTA greatly benefits the United States, its initial costs to Mexico may be high. While some Mexican peasants may be able to produce fruits and vegetables at a lower price and thus increase their trade with the United States, most cannot compete against agricultural imports from the United States and Canada. Mexican village traders may thus be unable to hold their own against great trading corporations such as Walmart. Hence, more and more rural people may have to look for jobs in towns—in the United States, as well as Mexico. Emigration to the United States, therefore, is a social safety valve; some argue that the United States cannot afford to shut it too tightly, lest the Mexican boiler explode.[39]

The Case against Immigration

Whereas the advocates of immigration are optimists, their opponents tend to pessimism. Massive population growth, in their opinion, will burden the United States with a wide range of insoluble problems. In 1930, the population of the United States was 123,000,000 people; by 2000, it had more than doubled to 280 million. Census Bureau projections for the future vary, but they keep rising. In 1989, statisticians calculated that, by the year 2050, the United States would have 300,000,000 people; in 1992, the estimate increased to 383,000,000 and, in 1993, to 392,000,000 because of increased immigration and amnestied illegals who, in turn, brought in relatives.

Whatever the value of such projections, the United States will continue to face enormous pressures. The United States shares a 2,000-mile border with impoverished, underdeveloped Mexico and a maritime frontier with the Caribbean, whose people exist on a much lower living standard than that of the United States. A growing number of Haitians, Jamaicans, Dominicans, Cubans, Mexicans, Central Americans, and others will therefore wish to come to the United States for jobs they cannot find at home. These pull-push pressures increase as the cost of travel further declines and would-be immigrants increasingly count on help from friends and kinfolk already established in the United States. Furthermore, the presence of an unlimited supply of cheap, unskilled labor keeps wages low, takes jobs from native-born people, and curtails the modernization of the agricultural industry, say critics of immigration.

In this view, immigration is, in part, a response to trade restrictions. Therefore, freer trade would reduce the incentive to immigrate. If the United States were to open up trade in sugar and apparel, the Caribbean economies would benefit, and many would find work in their home countries and choose to stay at home.

Besides Caribbean counries, the most important source of newcomers is Mexico. No other industrial democracy has a 8 to 1 income difference with a neighbor that is a traditional source of migrants. For Mexicans and Central Americans, the United States is often El Dorado, the place where migrants and their children can achieve their economic dreams, as well as enjoy political stability, constitutional government, and freedom from corruption.

Demographic and environmental factors add to emigration pressures. In 2001, Mexico had 100 million residents, and there were nine milllion Mexican-born U.S. residents. The Mexican population is growing by 2 percent per year, while the U.S. population grows by 1 percent per year. Mexico needs to create about one million net new jobs per year just to employ those who come of age each year. But the country averages only about 400,000 formal jobs per year, which include only those accounted in the Mexican social security system, and in 2001, it

is expected to lose 400,000 jobs. Conditions similar to those in Mexico exist throughout much of Latin America, and Mexico itself has to cope with numerous illegal immigrants who are much more harshly treated in Mexico than they are in the United States. "Obviously, enormous pressures are building throughout the less developed world for emigration, legal or illegal."[40]

The number of immigrants from Asia is also striking. Between 1971 and 1990, the Hispanic population of the United States increased by 141 percent, while the Asian population grew by 385 percent. Asians in the United States now consist of many nationalities: Filipinos, Japanese, East Indians, Koreans, and Vietnamese, with the largest group being the Chinese. A gigantic additional reservoir of migrants would open up if the U.S. drive for a democratic world order were even partially successful. Imagine a world in which the dictatorships that now run the People's Republic of China, Vietnam, and North Korea were to liberalize and permit free emigration. Untold more millions would wish to come to the United States if given the opportunity.

This country is also a destination for migrants from other parts of the world. Africa is a strife-torn continent from which many wish to escape. Additional claimants for refuge in the United States might include Russians, Ukrainians, Slovaks, Croats, Serbs, Bosnian Muslims, and Kosovars, whose respective homelands are devastated or could again be stricken by economic slumps, political turmoil, or war.

Zero population advocate Paul Ehrlich does not want to close the "golden door" of immigration but desires to limit population growth by having Americans produce on average fewer than one child per couple. Immigration, according to Ehrlich, should be limited to less than the sum of deaths plus out-migrants.[41] But, for most restrictionists, the solution is simpler: limited immigration. Polls show that the majority of the public consider that there are too many immigrants, especially according to the citizens of California, Florida, Texas, and New York, who mostly think the gates should be closed for at least a few years.[42]

Some restrictionists argue that, for ecological reasons alone, the

United States will not be able to cope unless it can radically restrict immigration. No matter whether the newcomers arrive with or without proper papers, their mere presence in the United States erodes the quality of life by increasing demand on U.S. natural wealth—water, soil, timber, energy. The immigrants likewise make new demands on public services—housing, schools, hospitals, and welfare agencies. Since the United States presently consumes natural resources at a much greater rate than any other country, such pressure will exacerbate existing problems. Do Americans want to live in a country with 400 or 500 million people and endure even greater traffic snarls, more urban congestion, and more nationwide pollution than at present?

Restrictionists further blame massive immigration for destroying agricultural lands, degrading natural settings, and polluting the environment. Continual immigration, they argue, will exceed the carrying capacity of the environment, observing that access to rural and wilderness areas is already declining. Do American taxpayers want to pay for huge additional outlays on schools, hospitals, freeways, bridges? Surely not, say politicians such as Richard Lamm, a former governor of Colorado and a presidential nominee of the Reform Party in the U.S. presidential campaign of 1996. Time to call a halt, the ecologically-minded restrictionists shout.

Other restrictionists propose that only the elites want large-scale immigration, whereas the masses do not. Such is the argument put forth by anti-immigrationist Peter Brimelow in his book *Alien Nation*.[43] He suggests that economic elites need immigrants for cheap labor—house cleaners, nursemaids, busboys, grape pickers, laborers, gardeners. Roy Beck also argues, in *The Case against Immigration*,[44] that immigration is against the interests of working people, especially those with low or outmoded skills. In addition, immigrants also indirectly hurt the middle class by lowering wages. An increase in the labor supply tends to lower wages, but a shortage of workers raises wages, states a 1988 General Accounting Office report. The presence of cheap labor from Mexico has kept wages low in California agriculture, for example. Immigrants

are responsible for most of the population growth in the United States. If immigration continues at current levels, by 2050 there will be some 400 to 500 million people. To slow population growth and its subsequent economic damage, almost all immigration should be stopped, Beck asserts.

Harvard economist George Borjas agrees with Beck that immigration does lower wages in some sectors of the economy, such as agriculture, service industries, and construction. Both argue that low-priced migrant labor has been largely responsible for the growing economic inequality in the United States.[45] Economist Robert Dunn of George Washington University states that a large supply of labor from Mexico willing to work for less has hurt the incomes of less-skilled Americans even as economic growth has increased. However, Borjas rejects the economic argument against immigration, which, he believes, must only be defended on political grounds.

Restrictionists such as Beck and Brimelow also contend that the United States does not need foreign investors or entrepreneurs. The United States has enough American workers, professionals, and graduate students in the sciences and high-tech industries. Nor are large numbers of immigrants necessary to keep the Social Security system solvent, as some argue. In the United States, the rich are getting richer, while the poor are getting poorer and growing in number because of massive legal and illegal immigration.

According to Brimelow, imported labor of any skill level is not necessary for economic development or technological innovation. He points to Japan as having achieved economic prosperity without immigration: only 1.4 million or so resident foreigners live in Japan, whereas the United States has 25 million.

Brimelow forcefully argues the political case for a much regulated and reduced immigration. In *Alien Nation*, he makes numerous recommendations, some of which came to pass in 1996, namely, doubling the size of the border patrol and increasing the size of the INS. But most of his recommendations have not yet been accepted, and many—a

national identity card, a new "operation wetback" to expel illegal aliens—are not likely to be accepted soon. In 1997, Congress failed to address major immigration problems or whether a literacy and skill level would be imposed on immigrants. Instead, Congress revised the welfare reform bill to restore rights to legal immigrants, especially the elderly and disabled on supplemental security income. In the future, however, Congress may well follow some of Brimelow's suggestions and limit family reunification to members of a nuclear family, cut legal immigration from its current one million or so annually to 400,000 or 500,000, reduce the number of refugees, and lengthen the time of legal residence for naturalization to ten years.

Immigration has numerous unintended social consequences. The old-style immigrant was usually a European. The new-style immigrant mostly comes from Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean, countries whose political and social traditions greatly differ from those of the United States. Moreover, as in previous waves of immigration, the new immigrants have higher birthrates than the natives, which increases the effects of immigration on population growth. The old immigrants, however diverse, all derived from the Judeo-Christian tradition, whereas the new immigrants include Muslims, Confucians, Buddhists, and adherents of Shinto. Such cultural multiplicity, anti-immigrationists argue, may split the United States linguistically and spiritually in the future.

Does this matter? Did not the United States, in the olden days, successfully absorb Irish, Germans, Poles, Jews, and many other nationalities? True enough, argue the anti-immigrationists. But the position has now changed. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the United States had a confident core culture. The United States insisted that newcomers assimilate and learn English—and so they did; there was no bilingual education.

By contrast, the new immigrants come at a time when the United States' cultural self-reliance has eroded. Mexican and Asian activists have learned from the civil rights struggles conducted by black Americans and thus demand bilingual education and seek "brown pride" and

restoration of "brown dignity," while rejecting assimilation and Western culture. The new immigrants, or rather their self-appointed spokespeople, now desire official recognition as groups and proportional representation—requirements incompatible with the operation of a free market. Group rights are demanded in the makeup of electoral districts, employment, the awarding of official contracts, education, and every other sphere of public life. Opposition to such programs is seen as yet one more proof of white America's inherent racism.[46]

Latino immigrants today cluster in large neighborhoods to a greater extent than those foreigners who came here a century ago. Such clustering slows down assimilation and the learning of English, according to Hoover Institution economist Edward P. Lazear, as does the provision of welfare. Poor people who receive welfare benefits have fewer incentives to learn English and adjust to the demands of the new society.

Latino immigrants, in particular, now also make political demands of a kind not made by Sicilian or Greek immigrants a century earlier. As Peter Skerry, a U.S. political scientist, puts it, Mexican Americans "are being seduced by the new American political systems into adopting the not entirely appropriate, divisive, and counterproductive stance of a racial minority group."[47] Mexican Americans, Central Americans, and other Latinos are now classed as part of a new "Hispanic" minority. The leaders who claim to speak on their behalf demand privileges similar to those claimed for the black minority by bodies such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and by white liberals.

Ethnic leaders, organized in bodies such as the National Council of La Raza, Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA), and the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund (MALDEF), favor immigration because it will strengthen their respective ethnic constituencies. Liberal elites—pastors, entertainers, journalists, academics—derive pleasure from the cultural diversity allegedly created by exotic foreigners. These liberal elites equally enjoy a sense of moral superiority derived

from their claimed status as spokespersons for the underprivileged and as moral role models for the nation at large.

Many Americans are also troubled by the political shifts occasioned by mass immigration. Cubans, who occupy a powerful position, especially in New Jersey and Florida, tend to vote Republican, as do Koreans and Chinese, while Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Arab Americans, and other ethnic groups, by contrast, more often support the Democrats. Vice-President Al Gore, therefore, organized the Citizenship USA Program to speed up the naturalization of legal immigrants in time for the 1996 presidential election. The White House even pressured the INS to lower standards for the language and history tests for naturalization before the November election. The Welfare Act of 1996 also had the unintended effect of encouraging many more legal immigrants to apply for naturalization so as not to lose accustomed benefits. The new citizens (ca. 1.2 million), in all probability, mainly voted (85 percent) for Democrats, with striking effects on the politics of states such as California and Florida.

Should this matter to ordinary Americans who want to preserve their country's existing institutions? Not as far as the mass of new voters are concerned. Few of them are radicals; most of them like their adopted country as it is. These generalizations, however, do not apply to Latino and Chicano activists. Ordinary Americans are offended when Chicano militants deny the United States' right to control its borders or when activists call for the recognition of the mythical nation of Aztlán in the Southwest. Most Americans equally dislike the sight of Mexican demonstrators waving the Mexican flag on U.S. soil. Others complained when the INS in 1996 allegedly devalued standards for citizenship "to the point where naturalization is no longer a meaningful experience."[48]

In rejection of the melting pot concept, multiculturalists want to preserve immigrant cultures and languages, not absorb or assimilate the American culture. Immigration opponents counter that the United States must restrict immigration and at the same time promote cultural assimilation. Otherwise, multiculturalism will lead to political fragmen-

tation and fragmentation to disaster. They present the picture of the United States as a Bosnia of continental proportions—without a sense of common nationhood, common culture, or common political heritage, with dozens of contending ethnic groups and a population of half a billion. These political problems will be even harder to face as immigration exacerbates income inequalities within the United States, worsens the economic prospects of some black Americans and recent immigrants, disrupts local communities, and, through sheer force of numbers, further devastates the environment. Nativists are accused of hysteria when they talk about a threatened Mexican *reconquista* of California and incur equal censure when they charge foreign-born activists with holding in contempt the *anglo-sajones* and their values. But nativist fears merely reflect the ethnic propaganda common in campus rallies held by ethnic militants. The United States, argue critics such as Brimelow, will in the long run cease to be a mainly white nation; its ethnic character will be transformed—without proper policy discussion and against the declared will of America's overwhelming majority.

IMMIGRATION POLICY FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Immigration, as we have seen, is a controversial subject and an important one, for who we are as a people helps to determine what we are as a nation. The U.S. debate over immigration is increasingly driven by extremes, those who advocate no immigrants at the one end and those who advocate no borders at the other.

Who has the better case—the advocates of the status quo or more immigration, or those urging less immigration? There can be no definitive answer because there are too many unknowns about current conditions, and it is hard to predict the future. For example, we do not know how many aliens reside illegally in the United States, their average incomes, or the taxes they pay. What exactly is the role of immigrant entrepreneurship? How will any individual immigrant succeed once he

or she arrives in the United States? No immigrant selection board could have predicted that Andrew Carnegie, a youthful Scottish immigrant employed in a U.S. cotton factory, would ever become a rich man. Yet Carnegie turned into one of the United States' greatest industrial magnates, a man who created employment for a huge army of workers and vastly influenced the U.S. economy for the better.

Nevertheless, agreement can be reached, perhaps, on a number of specific issues. In the past fifteen years the U.S. labor market has been transformed: the demand for skilled labor has increased while the demand for unskilled labor has diminished. High technology and the export trade have revolutionized the American workplace—with stark implications for U.S. immigration policies. The United States probably will find jobs for skilled people for some time into the twenty-first century. However, as globalization continues, the United States does not require as many unskilled workers and in the future will need even fewer. Yet, because of the family reunification priority, the INS continues to let in mostly unskilled or semiskilled people and the elderly. Only nuclear families, i.e., father, mother, children, should be reunited. Reuniting families (other than nuclear members) is not a sufficient reason to burden the U.S. economy and welfare system with elderly, unskilled, semiliterate, non-English speakers.

Under international as well as domestic law, the United States, as a sovereign power, has the right to control who enters and settles in the country. Every sovereign country claims the right to control its own borders—including Mexico, which often treats illegal migrants from Central America harshly. Georges Vernez, in a 1996 report of the Rand Corporation, "National Security Migration: How Strong the Link?" argues that there are two immigration-related threats to national security. One is potential loss of credibility in the federal government's ability to protect its citizens from such unwanted elements as illegal immigrants, drug traffickers, and terrorists. Inaction or ineffectiveness in reestablishing and maintaining this credibility could become a serious threat to internal stability and confidence in the government.

The second threat is the possibility of a massive, uncontrolled flow of migrants across the Mexican border. If Mexico's relatively peaceful political transition were to be interrupted and its economy were to collapse, the flight from Mexico to the United States might become uncontrollable. Moreover, the continued concentration of migrants in the western regions of the United States might lead to a divergence of interests between the eastern and western parts of the country. In the East, English would continue to dominate, as the East would still see its future tied to Europe's. In the West, by contrast, English and Spanish would compete for dominance, while the region as a whole would see its future linked to the Pacific Rim. This divergence would grow over time as an ever-increasing share of the population would have its roots in Mexico, Central and South America, the Philippines, Japan, Korea, and China.

What kind of a United States do Americans want for the future? Most Americans feel somewhat ambivalent about immigration—their own forebears may, after all, have come from abroad—even as they tell pollsters they want immigration reduced. Americans are particularly opposed to illegal immigration, although not to undocumented aliens as individuals. Statisticians in the Census Bureau forecast that, by 2050, Caucasians will barely form a majority and Hispanics will be the largest minority in the country, exceeding black Americans. But these forecasts may be called into question. For instance, such predictions take little or no account of lower birthrates for immigrants or of intermarriage with other social groups. The intermarriage rate is high both for Latino and Asian people in the United States; the rate, moreover, increases from one generation to the next. The United States will certainly be more ethnically and racially mixed in future than at present. It is not sure, however, how this amalgam will be composed, especially as future immigration patterns may change in an unexpected manner. If the number of immigrants is reduced, bilingualism eliminated, and Americanization encouraged, there will be little danger to U.S. unity.

No economist or social planner can specify with confidence the

ideal number of immigrants that the U.S. economy should accept each year. But if it is the United States' political aim to assimilate immigrants into a single nation, annual immigration must be kept in bounds. We suggest not more than two per thousand of the population during any one year. This would reduce the current level of immigration from one million annually to about 500,000 annually, not including refugees and skilled immigrants—still a generous quota. For political reasons, the United States should also ensure a diversity of immigrants, not allowing too many (perhaps not more than 10 percent of the total) from any one country in every single year. Regular immigration could be supplemented once again by a bracero or guest-worker program to assist agribusiness in the Southwest if a real labor shortage were to occur.

Furthermore, Congress should reform the policy for legal immigrants, as Congress has already done for illegals. Amnesties for illegal immigrants need to be halted to make clear that this is not a viable route to U.S. citizenship. Affirmative action programs should be terminated. Census categories such as "Hispanic" and "Asian" should be replaced by national origin classifications. English only should be required in the law, government, schools, and the political system. No long-term bilingual education programs should be mandated. A transition year or two can be provided for those who do not speak English; then English only must be required in all academic courses, but training in foreign languages as a second language should also be encouraged. "Becoming proficient in the language of America is a price that any immigrant should want to pay."[49]

As has been the case throughout American history, most immigrants do not become naturalized citizens but rather live as permanent residents, keeping the nationality of their homeland. Since 1996, when Congress penalized that behavior by denying some benefits previously available to permanent residents and instead reserving them for citizens, the naturalization rate has increased. In any case, the fact that all U.S.-born children are citizens at birth prevents any accumulation of a foreign population through the generations, as is occurring, for example, in

Germany. As during past periods of mass immigration, there is a great deal of immigrant isolation, often reinforced by housing and job segregation and language barriers. However, there are many examples of cooperation between native-born Americans and immigrants, and some signs that this generation of immigrant children may be acquiring English faster than previous immigrants.

AN UNFINISHED NATION

The United States is a nation of immigrants that first welcomed all newcomers, later excluded certain types of immigrants, and, since the 1920s, has limited the number of newcomers with an annual ceiling. The number of fourth-wave immigrants arriving in the United States has been rising since the early 1980s. Most Americans want the federal government to take steps to reduce immigration, while others are comfortable with current levels of immigration. Immigrants and refugees arrive through America's front door, which was opened wider in the 1990s to accommodate more relatives of U.S. residents and professionals. But the fastest growth in entries over the past decade has been through side and backdoors, such as applicants for asylum whose request for refugee status is denied but who nonetheless remain, and through the steady flow of unauthorized immigrants.

People migrate because demand-pull factors draw them into destination areas, supply-push forces encourage them to leave their homes, and intervening variables or networks turn potential into actual migration. All three variables have been evolving in ways that suggest immigration will increase rather than decrease in the 2000s. Even though most people never migrate, a growing world population means that even the 2 percent who are migrants makes the "migrant nation" equivalent in size to the world's tenth largest country. Freer trade, which can be a substitute for migration in the long run, may have the opposite effect in the short run and increase migration.

The United States is not alone in worrying about immigration. As

the world economy integrates, tourists and business visitors flock from one industrial country to another, like the Japanese to Hawaii, while immigrants move from developing to industrial countries, as do Mexicans to the United States. European nations that do not plan for immigration have adopted policies to slow the influx, and less developed countries are ambivalent about the migration of some of their most energetic and talented people. Japan and the "Asian Tiger" economies are trying to manage migrant workers in a manner that discourages their settlement, while the United States and Canada intend to preserve an open door for immigrants—but with more controls at the portals.

Research on the economic, social, and political effects of immigrants does not provide clear guidelines for U.S. immigration policy. Most immigrants are better off in America than they were at home, but many arrive with minimal education and skills, and they have a hard time climbing the American job ladder. State and local governments, meanwhile, point out that most taxes paid by immigrants go to the federal government, even though state and local governments bear the costs of providing services such as education, health care, and prisons. However, overall, immigrants have small effects—for better or worse—in the huge American economy and labor market.

For the foreseeable future, America seems likely to remain the world's major destination for immigrants. Our history and traditions suggest that, within a few decades, most of today's immigrants will be an integral part of a revised American community. But past success does not guarantee that history will repeat itself. There are concerns about the size and nature of today's immigration, especially about arrivals through the side and backdoors. As the nation searches for an immigration policy for the twenty-first century, America—and the immigrants who are on the way—are embarked on a journey to an uncertain destination.

NOTES

1. FAIR's purpose. http://www.fairus.org/html/fair.htm, accessed 8/23/01.
2. A *Wall Street Journal* editorial on July 3, 1986 first made this proposal, which was repeated in an editorial on July 3, 1990.
3. Vernon J. Briggs, *Mass Immigration and the National Interest* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1992), p. 45.
4. The 1790 Act permitted white persons of "good moral character" to acquire citizenship after two years of residence. The period was briefly extended to fourteen years in 1798 and has been five years since 1800.
5. Woodrow Wilson, *A History of the American People*, vol. 4 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1901), pp. 212–13.
6. Quoted in Oscar Handlin, "Memorandum Concerning the Origins of the National Origin Quota System," Hearings before the President's Commission on Immigration and Naturalization, 82nd Congress, 2nd session. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1952), p. 755.
7. House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary, *House report 1365*, 82nd Congress, 2nd Session, February 14, 1952, p. 37. Each country was guaranteed at least 100 visas, so that 154,477 visas were available annually.
8. Hispanics may be of any race: in responding to the census, about 90 percent of Hispanics designated themselves white.
9. U.S. Census Bureau, 1996.
10. In 1953, for the only time in the past 70 years, more than 10 percent of the public favored increasing immigration. Julian L. Simon, *The Economic Consequences of Immigration* (New York: Blackwell, 1989), p. 350.
11. "Immigration," *American Enterprise*, Jan.–Feb. 1994, pp. 97–100.
12. Quoted in Carl N. Degler, *Out of Our Past: The Forces That Shaped Modern America*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), p. 50.
13. Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1995 *Statistical Yearbook*, pp. 137–38.
14. Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt, 1920), pp. 22–23.
15. See "Multiculturalism and Universalism: A History and Critique," *American Quarterly* 45, no. 2 (June 1993).

16. Francois Grosjean, *Life with Two Languages: An Introduction to Bilingualism* (Cambridge, Mass. and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1982), Chapter 2.
17. Calvin Veltmann, *The Future of the Spanish Language in the United States* (Washington, D.C. and New York: Hispanic Policy Development Project, 1988), Chapter 8.
18. Rodolfo O. de la Garza, Luis De Sipio, F. Chris Garcia, John Garcia, and Angelo Falcon, *Latino Voices* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1992), p. 42.
19. Joseph R. Meisenheimer II, "How Do Immigrants Fare in the U.S. Labor Market?" *Monthly Labor Review*, December 1992, p. 17. This conclusion is echoed by other studies: "[T]hose in the United States who speak English 'well' or 'very well' have 17 percent higher earnings than those with less fluency . . . The analysis suggests that spoken dominant-language proficiency is an important determinant of earnings and presumably other measures of economic success among immigrants." Barry Chiswick and Paul Miller, "Language in the Immigrant Labor Market," in *Immigration, Language and Ethnicity: Canada and the U.S.*, ed. Barry Chiswick (Washington, D.C.: AEI Press, 1992), p. 277.
20. de la Garza, p. 98.
21. "Census: 13 Million, 8.5 Million," *Migration News* 8, no. 9 (September 2001), http://migration.ucdavis.edu/
22. Douglas S. Massey, Joaquin Arango, Grame Hugo, Ali Kouaouci, Adela Pelligrino, and J. Edward Taylor, "Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal," *Population and Development Review* 19, no. 3 (September 1993): 431–66.
23. Varden Fuller argued that the structure of California agriculture—its system of large farms dependent on seasonal workers—developed because workers without other U.S. job options, that is, immigrants, were usually available. In his words, the assumption was "that with no particular effort on the part of the employer, a farm labor force would emerge when needed, do its work, and then disappear—accepting the terms and conditions offered, without question." Varden Fuller, *Hired Hands in California's Farm Fields* (Berkeley: Gianinni Foundation, 1991), p. vii.
24. U.S. Commission for the Study of International Migration and Cooperative Economic Development, 1990, p. xv.

25. Quoted in President Bush's letter to Congress, 1 May 1991, p. 17. In a September 10, 1992 speech to the Detroit Economic Club, President Bush said that the economic growth accelerated by NAFTA should "cut down on the cross-border flow of illegals that I think is burdening a lot of our country, particularly California."
26. "President Johnson's Message to Congress," *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 20–27 September 1995, p. 21083.
27. Cited by George Will, "Discomforting Truths about Bilingual Ballots," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 2 May 1996.
28. Michael Tomasky, "Reaffirming Our Actions," *Nation*, 13 May 1996, pp. 21–23.
29. *The Immigration Briefing Book* (Washington, D.C.: Carrying Capacity Network, 1994); Molly Ivins, "Our Problems Aren't Caused by Immigrants," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 26 April 1996.
30. Interview with Herman Kahn, *Conservative Digest*, September 1983, pp. 36–38. "False Bad News vs. Truly Bad News," *Public Interest* 65 (fall 1981): 71–89. For a detailed discussion of *Global 2000 Report to the President*, see "The Global 2000 Juggernaut" (Washington, D.C., Institutional Analysis, the Heritage Foundation, 1983).
31. Julian L. Simon, "Resources, Population, Environment: An Oversupply of Bad False News," *Science* 208 (27 June 1980): 1421–37. See also Simon, *Economic Consequences of Immigration.*
32. Julian L. Simon, *Immigration and Economic Facts* (Washington, D.C.: Cato Institute, 1995).
33. Thomas Sowell, *Ethnic America: A History* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), p. 220; and Barry Chiswick, "The Effects of Americanization on the Earnings of Foreign Born," *Journal of Political Economy* 11 (October 1978): 879–922.
34. George H. Borjas, "Immigration and Welfare: A Review of the Evidence," in *The Debate in the United States over Immigration*, eds. Peter Duignan and Lewis H. Gann (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1998), pp. 121–44.
35. Letter from T. J. Rodgers, president and CEO of Cypress Semiconductor, to Senator Spencer Abraham (R-Mich.), 26 February 1996, communicated to us by the author.
36. "The Best Americans?" *The Economist*, 26 November 1994, reporting on

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