

# Defending Immigrant Rights

AN ACTIVIST RESOURCE KIT

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## Introduction

Welcome to *Defending Immigrant Rights*, the latest in Political Research Associates' series of Activist Resource Kits. The kits are designed to provide social justice activists with the information they need to counter attacks from the Right, in this case attacks on the human rights and dignity of immigrants in the United States.

The migration of individuals and entire populations is a worldwide phenomenon. Today, a major factor in the disruption and displacement of people is the economic globalization of world markets. In addition, many are forced to relocate because of war, famine, persecution or other intolerable conditions. Others hope to reunite with family members or seek educational and economic opportunities unavailable in their home countries. While the causes of immigration vary, one thing is clear. No one attempts to start anew, leaving everything that is familiar, without compelling reasons.

The motivations for immigration often have little to do with the laws governing it. Who attempts to control the movement of people across borders? How do our beliefs about others affect the rules and regulations governing the immigrants in our midst? What forces are working in opposition to the creation of a humane immigration policy? These are complicated questions that demand serious attention in a world of increasing influence by right-wing political forces. *Defending Immigrant Rights* aims to help the reader address these questions, and to counter those who promote fear and resentment of the immigrants among us.

When we began work on this kit last year, we could not have anticipated the terrible attacks of September 11, 2001 and the subsequent unfolding of geopolitical events. While we often hear that the world changed on September 11, the real meaning of that phrase will only be completely understood in the fullness of time. Yet for immigrants in the United States, changes in laws and regulations, as well as behaviors and attitudes, are having a direct, immediate and often deeply painful impact. The current backlash against immigrants, fueled by increased agitation from anti-immigrant groups, adds a new urgency to the defense of their rights. As stated within by the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights:

Creating new ways of talking about immigration, immigrant rights, and human rights is one of the primary challenges of today's immigrant rights movement, regardless of how current events may change the political climate. Ensuring the human and civil rights of all people, regardless of immigration status, involves more than just responding to anti-immigrant groups and policies. It means bringing immigrant rights into the larger movement for racial justice, labor rights, global economic equality, and human rights—something which is equally critical both during periods of increased support for immigrant rights, and during times of heightened nativism and anti-immigrant sentiment.

We hope you find the information in *Defending Immigrant Rights* useful and inspiring. As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions; they offer important feedback toward our larger goal: the advancement of an open, democratic and pluralistic society.

Kate Cloud  
*Director*  
*Political Research Associates*

## Acknowledgments

**T**his kit is a publication of Political Research Associates (PRA). Founded in 1981, PRA is an independent nonprofit research center, based on progressive values, that serves as a national information resource on antidemocratic, authoritarian, and other oppressive movements and trends.

This kit is the result of a team effort and could not have been created without the thinking and input of many individuals and organizations. Present and former PRA staff, consultants and interns all contributed in one way or another: Nikhil Aziz, Wendy Beauchamp, Chip Berlet, Pam Chamberlain, Stephanie Clark, Kate Cloud, Judith Glaubman, Jean Hardisty, Shelly Harter, Allen Jackson, Ana Perea, Mark Umi Perkins, Jesse Ward Putnam, Mitra Rastegar and Rebecca Sablo. Everyone lent their hands in some aspects of conceptualizing the project, researching, writing, editing and proofing the various components and promoting the kits. Pam Chamberlain and Mitra Rastegar coordinated the project.

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*Because foundation grants have covered most of the research and production costs, the Activist Resource Kit is modestly priced. You can help keep it that way. If you find the kit a valuable resource, please consider making a donation to PRA towards ongoing costs of updating, promoting and distributing the kit.*

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## How to Use This Kit

The kit consists of six sections:

- Overview
- Organizing Advice
- Issues and Views
- Primary Sources
- Secondary Sources
- Resources
- Index

In the **OVERVIEW** are five articles.

- ⇒ Doug Brugge’s updated version of “Pulling up the Ladder: The Anti-Immigrant Backlash;”
- ⇒ Nation Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights’ “Immigrant Rights: Striving for Racial Justice, Economic Equality and Human Dignity;”
- ⇒ PRA President Jean Hardisty’s “Corporate Desires vs. Anti-Immigrant Fervor: The Bush Administration’s Dilemma;” and
- ⇒ Articles on Nativism and Nationalism by PRA staff, Nikhil Aziz, Chip Berlet, Pam Chamberlain and Mitra Rastegar.

**ORGANIZING ADVICE** offers practical guidance for activists, including general do’s and don’ts in dealing with the Right.

The **ISSUES AND VIEWS** section is the heart of the Activist Resource Kit. Here, we try to examine some of the arguments the Right uses to support its anti-immigrant positions. Each topic in this section gives examples of such perspectives, which may distort the facts or capitalize on fear and prejudice. These are accompanied by factually based responses to the Right’s arguments that activists can use in response to right-wing positions.

**PRIMARY SOURCE MATERIALS** are materials generated by the Right. These are selections from our archives, including influential anti-immigrant publications and examples of direct mail campaigns that indicate the Right’s focus and how it develops its arguments. It is our hope that activists can use these materials to challenge the rhetoric and strategies of anti-immigrant organizing.

**SECONDARY SOURCE MATERIALS** are those written and published by progressive activists, journalists or organizations about the anti-immigrant Right. The selections included here provide analysis and more in-depth discussion of the Right’s attack on immigrants.

The **RESOURCES** section includes an annotated listing of major anti-immigrant organizations and ideologues and a listing of selected national immigrant rights organizations.

The **INDEX** is a reference guide to topics mentioned in this kit about the anti-immigrant movement. You might want to start here if you have a specific question about a strategy, an organization or an individual associated with the anti-immigrant movement.

In addition, please see our **WEBSITE**, [www.publiceye.org/ark/immigrants/im\\_main.html](http://www.publiceye.org/ark/immigrants/im_main.html) for links to related online materials and addenda to the kit.

*We want this kit to be a way for activists to share resources. We intend future revisions and our website to reflect your contributions. Please complete the evaluation included with the kit or feel free to contact us at any time with comments, additions, or any other advice.*

*Also, if your organization provides resources about challenging the anti-immigrant movement and would like to be included in future kits or on our website, please let us know.*

## OVERVIEW

This article first appeared in the Summer 1995 issue of *The Public Eye* and has been updated by PRA staff, with permission of the author, to reflect developments since that time.

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### **Pulling Up the Ladder The Anti-Immigrant Backlash**

*Many persons who have spoken and written in favor of restriction of immigration, have laid great stress upon the evils to society arising from immigration. They have claimed that disease, pauperism, crime and vice have been greatly increased through the incoming of the immigrants. Perhaps no other phase of the question has aroused so keen feeling, and yet perhaps on no other phase of the question has there been so little accurate information.* (Jenk and Lauck 1912)

By Doug Brugge

These words, written in 1912 by Jeremiah Jenks and W. Jett Lauck, who had been part of the United States Immigration Commission, sound surprisingly contemporary. Today there continues to be a popular argument that immigrants are responsible for many, if not all, of the problems facing our country. This theme has been struck before in U.S. history. It has arisen in recent years in part because many right-wing organizations have promoted immigrants as a group targeted for blame. For example, an organization prominent in this right-wing campaign, the American Immigration Control Foundation (AICF), in a 2000 mailing, lists immigrants as the culprits behind high taxes, wasted welfare dollars, lost jobs, high costs for education, and rising crime. AICF claims that immigrants are driving up health care costs by grabbing free care while also bringing disease into the United States. Interestingly, previous versions of this annual letter reduce their earlier claim of 13 million undocumented immigrants to 6-8 million, and finally to “an unknown number of illegal immigrants” in 2000. As Jenks and Lauck conclude in the above quote, the debate is still characterized more by angry talk than by documented facts.

An important ingredient in the success of the Right’s anti-immigrant campaign is its ability to deflect anger about any negative effects of the U.S. economic, environmental or cultural situation onto the scapegoat of immigrants. This tactic nests within a larger goal of capturing political gain by exploiting a popular issue. This is nothing new, but rather is a practice rooted in a long-standing history of reaction to immigration, nurtured in the recent past by a cluster of right-wing political organizations dedicated to this single issue.

With the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon apparently in part by undocumented foreign nationals, anti-immigrant groups and politicians have used



the heightened fear of terrorism to promote limiting noncitizens' civil liberties. The aftermath of this attack, in combination with the economic recession, will undoubtedly provide new fuel to the immigration restriction movement. At the time of updating, the repercussions of the September 11 attacks are still unfolding and will certainly require more analysis as the situation develops.

## History and Context

### *The History of U.S. Immigration*

It is impossible to understand the current wave of anti-immigrant sentiment without some historical perspective. Indeed, excepting the Native American population, it is often said that the United States is a nation of immigrants. Certainly, the role of cheap immigrant labor has been critical in building the U.S. economy. Immigration has been both voluntary and forced. In early U.S. history, territorial and economic expansion was a magnet for persons fleeing poverty and political repression. There was also forced immigration in the form of the slave trade and the annexation of one half of Mexico by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed in 1848, at the end of the Mexican-American War. This, not traditional immigration, is the reason that a significant number of Chicanos in the Southwest live in the United States rather than in Mexico.

By the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, territorial expansion was no longer a major force fueling immigration. The new magnet was the industrial revolution, which was in full swing and in need of labor. Today, as the United States is going through another economic shift to a service- and information-based economy heavily influenced by globalization, immigration is once again a factor.

The United States has historically had a complex reaction to immigration. On the one hand, immigrants have been crucial to U.S. economic progress at certain junctures in our economic development. On the other, there has been considerable hate and anger directed toward immigrants, based on xenophobia, religious prejudice, and fear that immigrants will take jobs from native-born workers. It is revealing to take a brief look at some of this history of immigration as told by Howard Zinn in *A People's History of the United States*.

In his description of the colonies in the 1700s, Zinn notes that the colonies grew quickly as English settlers and Black slaves were joined by Scottish, Irish, and German immigrants. Immigration was causing the larger cities to double and triple in size, but often urban poverty grew apace. "As Boston grew, from 1687 to 1770, the percentage of adult males who were poor . . . [and who] owned no property, doubled from 14 percent of adult males to 29 percent. And the loss of property meant loss of voting rights." Indeed this often-romanticized period of U.S. history was a time of far harsher immigration conditions than those of today.

Civil War era immigration occurred in an even more hostile environment. The Contract Labor Law of 1864 allowed companies to sign contracts with foreign workers in return for a pledge of 12 months' wages. This allowed employers during the Civil War not only to recruit very

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cheap labor, but also strikebreakers. Predictably, this resulted in conflict. “Italians were imported into the bituminous coal area around Pittsburgh in 1874 to replace striking miners. This led to the killing of three Italians, to trials in which the jurors of the community exonerated the strikers, and bitter feelings between Italians and other organized workers.”

At the turn of the century, the immigrant population had changed from largely Irish and German to Eastern and Southern European and Russian, including many Jews. Zinn again describes the impact well, citing the role of immigration of different ethnic groups as contributing to the fragmentation of the working class. He discusses how the previous wave of Irish immigrants resented Jews coming into their neighborhoods. At this time, there was also the added fear that immigrants would bring with them socialist ideas that would undermine the principles of this country (Zinn 1980).

While nationality, religion, and political ideology were the main basis for resentment of immigrants in urban areas during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, race was the issue when Chinese immigrants arrived, brought in to fill a labor gap and then later to work as construction workers on the railroads in the 1860s. Indeed the first anti-immigrant law, passed in California, targeted the Chinese. In 1882, the United States passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, which was not repealed until 1943. Even then, immigration quotas for Chinese were only raised above 105 per year by the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The late 1800s were difficult for Chinese in the United States—the growing trade union movement based part of its organizing strategy on advocating deportation of Chinese immigrants. Race riots on the West Coast were the response of angry Whites who blamed Chinese for their woes (Daniels 1988).

In 1917 and again in 1942, the United States initiated guest labor programs, commonly known as the Bracero programs, that brought Mexican workers into the Southwest to work as noncitizen farm workers and fill an alleged labor shortage. Up to half a million workers were enrolled in the program at its height. The flow of undocumented Mexicans grew during this time, prompting a government effort to stem the tide by “drying out the wetbacks”—an effort to convert undocumented immigrants into braceros. When that failed, “Operation Wetback” was launched with the deployment of a military style border patrol. The Bracero programs effectively exposed thousands of poor Mexicans to the wealth of the United States and contributed to immigration pressure. It also displaced Chicanos from rural agricultural jobs, fueling their exodus to urban centers (Briggs 1983; Garcia y Griego 1983).

The role of racism in anti-immigrant sentiment seemed to have dimmed by the late 1970s, at least according to Lawrence Fuchs, who served for two years as director of the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy. Commenting on responses to a 1984 survey, Fuchs stated that the immigration policy “had been transformed to one virtually free of considerations of color, nationality or religion” (Fuchs 1990). Fuchs attributed this decline in anti-immigrant racism to the Civil Rights Movement and an expansion of the spirit of pluralism that it forced. This optimistic reading of U.S. tolerance for ethnic, racial, and religious diversity parallels the optimism of that period.

Intolerance, however, was just below the surface of American politics. The appearance of a hospitable melting pot that had an accepting attitude toward immigrants proved illusory. It took only the arrival of immigrants who were politically unwelcome for government policies of exclusion to become explicit again.

*Immigration, Today & Yesterday*

Today there is a tendency to revise history, to extol the virtues of past immigration, specifically that which includes our ancestors, while saying that now the country is full and can hold no more. But as we have seen, the pattern of resistance to immigration was, if anything, more severe during earlier waves of arrivals. Indeed immigration today is about equal, in absolute numbers, to the peak of entries around 1910. And the rate of immigration as immigrants per 1,000 U.S. residents is several times lower than at any time during the period 1850-1930, because the U. S. population as a whole is so much larger (Simon 1992).

The current influx from Third World countries faces the added dimension of race, a powerful factor throughout U.S. history. Thus the current sentiment is as much the political twin of the racist history of exclusion of the Chinese as it is the resistance to White immigration.

Anti-immigrant groups have had to endorse historical immigration because the vast majority of U.S. citizens are descended from immigrants. What they do not state directly, but imply in cleverly constructed arguments, is the one thing that clearly is different today. In 1900, 85 percent of immigrants came from Europe (only 2.5 percent came from Latin America and Asia combined). By 1990, Latino and Asian immigrants accounted for more than two-thirds of all immigrants (Lapham 1993). Because recent immigrants tend to settle in five or six states, these increases have contributed to areas where people of color are in the majority. The population of Hispanics in the United States is projected to reach 96 million by the middle of this century, while the Asian population will rise to about 34 million. By 2050 about half the U.S. population will consist of people of color (Population Projection Program 2000).

The United States has been a majority-White country and immigrant labor in the early part of this century was White, although, as we have seen, ethnic, national, and religious distinctions were critical in that time as the basis for defining immigrants as different and threatening. The current influx from Third World countries faces the added dimension of race, a powerful factor throughout U.S. history. Thus the current sentiment is as much the political twin of the racist history of exclusion of the Chinese as it is the resistance to White immigration.

**The Immigration Debate & the Issue of Race**

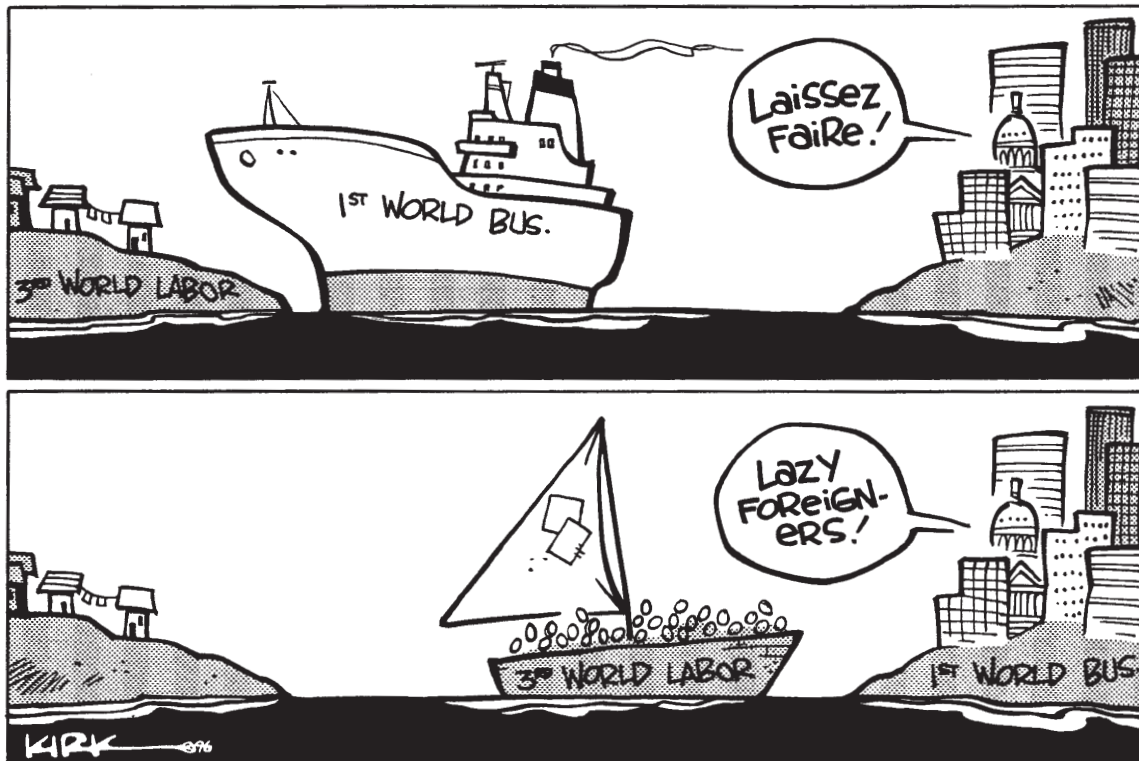
It is helpful to take a step back and consider the development of race as a concept. Race is intimately associated with both the development of the United States and with immigration policy. This is not surprising since this country was built on dislocation of the indigenous population and the enslavement of Africans. Such deeds are hard to justify against persons that you hold as equals. In the 19<sup>th</sup>-century, the dominant view was that Africans, Asians, and Native Americans were separate and inferior species. This was based variously on interpretation of the Christian scriptures and on “scientific” comparisons of cranial capacity.

“Louis Agassiz, the greatest biologist of mid-nineteenth-century America, argued that God had created blacks and whites as separate species” (Gould 1977). On the other hand, head meas-

urements “matched every good Yankee’s prejudice—whites on top, Indians in the middle, and blacks on the bottom; and, among whites, Teutons and Anglo-Saxons on top, Jews in the middle, and Hindus on the bottom” (Gould 1981). Most scholars now identify race as an artificial construct. Andrew Hacker writes, “There is no consensus when it comes to defining ‘race;’ the term has been applied to a diversity of groups.” For example, racial designations sometimes include Hispanic as an option and at other times include it as an ethnicity under “White.” On another level, for most Asians and Hispanics, “images of their identities are almost wholly national”— Chinese or Japanese, Puerto Rican or Mexican for example (Hacker 1992).

In the early part of this century, the terrain of defining racial differences shifted to measurement of IQ, and this was used to justify differential restriction of peoples in immigration. In the 1970s, the Pioneer Fund underwrote research by William Shockley and Arthur Jensen, who set the next stage for the modern IQ and race issue. They proclaimed that Blacks have lower IQs than Whites. It is not surprising to note the resurgence once again of this idea in the publication of *The Bell Curve* in 1994 by conservative social scientist Charles Murray and the late Harvard Professor Richard Herrnstein. The book develops an argument that intelligence is largely hereditary. Since Blacks score below Whites on such tests, this leads the authors to draw conclusions in favor of, “ending welfare to discourage births among low-IQ women, changing immigration laws to favor the capable and rolling back most job discrimination laws” (Lacayo 1994).

It is bitterly ironic that this was published in the same year that the movie *Forest Gump* became a smash hit by showing the basic humanity and common sense wisdom of a low IQ White man. *The Bell Curve* has been reviewed by sociologist Christopher Jencks as “highly selective in the evidence they present and in their interpretation of ambiguous statistics.” And



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psychologist Richard Nisbett states that their work “wouldn’t be accepted by an academic journal—it’s that bad” (Beardsley 1995).

### *Immigration and Globalization*

Another significant factor in the immigration debate is globalization, as it affects regional economies and migration patterns. Immigration has often followed a pattern of growth from parts of the world in which the United States is heavily involved militarily or economically, often developing countries. In recent years, immigration has increased from South East Asia, Eastern Europe and the Central America/Caribbean region. This sometimes results from granting entry for persons fleeing official enemies of the United States, such as Cuba or Vietnam, but also draws people from countries allied with the United States, such as the Philippines, Hong Kong, or El Salvador. As global trade relationships have grown through treaties such as NAFTA and FTAA, so has immigration increased.

The Right wing has organized and manipulated such anger and resentment, turned it away from corporations, and directed it against the government, decrying high taxes and the inability of the state to solve problems such as social deterioration, homelessness, crime, and violence. In addition to the target of “failed liberal policies,” immigrants make a convenient and tangible target for people’s anger.

These agreements have also allowed U.S. business to move freely without being tied to local labor forces; consequently, corporations are relocating overseas to find cheaper labor and lax environmental laws. The rise of an information and service-based economy has contributed significantly to the dislocation of U.S. workers (Mead 1994; Bernstein 1991). It generates far more low-paying jobs that new immigrants are willing to take but are unacceptable to middle-class workers who are seeking jobs that allow a more affluent and secure lifestyle.

Between 1983 and 1995, the bottom 40 percent of households lost 80 percent of their net worth, adjusted for inflation, while the top 1 percent increased theirs by 17 percent. In 1999 even after nine years of economic growth, average workers were still earning less, adjusting for inflation, than in 1970. In contrast, the top 1 percent of households have more wealth than the entire bottom 95

percent (Collins, Leondar-Wright, and Sklar 1999). Displaced workers, along with others who fear for their livelihood, are fertile ground in which to sow anti-immigrant sentiment, since angry and frustrated people often seek some target on which to blame their problems. The Right wing has organized and manipulated such anger and resentment, turned it away from corporations, and directed it against the government, decrying high taxes and the inability of the state to solve problems such as social deterioration, homelessness, crime, and violence. In addition to the target of “failed liberal policies,” immigrants make a convenient and tangible target for people’s anger. Racial prejudice is often an encoded part of the message.

Right-wing populist themes are particularly effective at attracting working people disenchanted with the system. A February 1996 issue of *Border Watch*, a publication of the American Immigration Control Foundation, argues that “Immigration is enriching the business elites that



seek cheap labor” and creating “unpleasant low-paying jobs that do not sustain an American standard of living.” The article concludes, “for ordinary middle-class and working-class Americans, immigration has brought alienation, culture-clash, and loss of jobs.” An anonymous letter in *Border Watch*, identified as from a worker, captures the anti-immigrant sentiment: “[w]hen the Mexicans get powerful enough in a job situation, they kick out the ‘gringos’ so their buddies can take over” (1993).

Patrick Buchanan, in his 2000 presidential candidacy on the Reform Party ticket, softened his anti-immigrant rhetoric while continuing to blame immigrants for the problems of the least skilled native-born workers. In a January 18, 2000 speech, “To Reunite a Nation,” Buchanan proclaimed that many immigrants’ “contributions to Silicon Valley are extraordinary,” but that most immigrants are unskilled and are bringing wages down. He claimed, “Americans today who do poorly in high school are increasingly condemned to a low-wage existence; and mass immigration is a major reason why.” He also blamed mass immigration for threatening the country’s “common language,” “common culture,” and “common identity” (Buchanan 2000). Buchanan’s anti-globalization stance goes hand in hand with his xenophobia and White supremacy. In 2001, under Buchanan’s leadership, the Reform Party voted to support a ten-year moratorium on immigration (Bottorff 2001).

## The Modern Anti-Immigrant Movement

In the 1980s and 1990s right-wing anti-immigration groups placed the 1965 Immigration Act at the center of a campaign to promote anti-immigrant sentiment and built upon it. In the 1965 Act, Congress repudiated the infamous 1952 McCarran-Walter Act, which followed 1920s-era legislation in parceling out immigrants’ visas based on country of origin. Under the banner of humanitarian values, Congress decided to allocate visas primarily on the grounds of kinship. Its provision that exempts spouses, dependent children, and parents of U.S. citizens from any numerical limits particularly drew the wrath of the Right (Gillespie 1994).

In the 1980s, anti-immigrant sentiment grew during the debate over immigration reform. Supporters of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 argued that immigrants were stealing jobs and draining the economy and that political turmoil in Mexico and Central America would spill over into the United States. Defenders of immigrants argued that immigrants were, in fact, a positive force in the American workforce and that the United States is historically a nation of immigrants.

The final law was intended to shut the door on the further flow of undocumented immigrants, while ostensibly supporting immigrants by offering legalized status to undocumented immigrants already in the United States. The Immigration Reform and Control Act contained sanctions against employers who hire undocumented immigrants and included provisions for guest workers who are allowed to work in the United States, but are denied rights or benefits. (The “guest worker” provisions were touted by Pete Wilson, then a Senator from California.) Although many immigrants entered the legal citizenship process, despite significant obstacles, the law laid the basis for the 1996 debate over how to effectively seal the border. Further, the guest worker program, which George W. Bush is currently seeking to expand, contributed to the flow of immigrant workers to the United States who have no possibility of becoming citizens.

In 1996, the Republican-controlled Congress responded to the economic downturn and heightened anti-immigrant sentiment by passing three laws that seriously diminished immigrant

rights (*Discussed further in this paper under “The Republican Party’s Use of Anti-Immigrant Themes.”*) Although the family-based immigration preferences so maligned by the Right survived, they were fettered by new economic sponsorship requirements, and the laws were a decisive victory on other fronts for the anti-immigrant cause.

### *The Messages of the Right Wing*

To attract different constituencies, the anti-immigrant movement uses multiple messages that focus on a range of issues, from economic and environmental to cultural and social. For example, Dan Stein, Executive Director of the Federation for American Immigration Reform, claims that a public consensus has emerged “in the face of Haitian boats, the [1993] World Trade Center bombing, Chinese boats, international immigrant-smuggling and crime syndicates, persistent illegal immigration from Mexico and high profile tales of immigrant-related welfare rip-offs.” Stein states that in the face of this assault we need to cut the total number of immigrants, documented and not: “the country needs a break to absorb and handle its critical social and internal problems. . . . We have to limit immigration significantly to preserve the nation” (Stein 1994).

In an advertisement that ran in *Mother Jones*, FAIR claims that “mass immigration has become America’s most environmentally destructive policy” (Federation 1999). On the other hand, an advertisement in the conservative news weekly *Human Events* says “Immigration is the common ground for those who want to undermine our values and undermine the middle class!” (Federation 1997). In a brochure, FAIR writes:

Today’s challenges are very different from those faced by earlier generations. We no longer have a vast frontier to tame. In fact, we must protect shrinking forests, wetlands and farm lands. . . . We no longer need to encourage an influx of new workers as we did to fuel the industrial revolution. (Federation n.d.)

Overall, the message of the anti-immigrant forces is that things have changed. At one time immigration was a good thing for this country, but no more. There is, in this view, no longer enough to go around and immigrants are cutting into the share of what could be had by good patriotic Americans.

Furthermore, anti-immigrant advocates raise the specter of new immigrants failing to assimilate and forcing their culture on everyone else—a prospect that, they argue, could lead to separatist scenarios resulting in the “Balkanization” of the United States. For instance, *Chronicles*, a rightist monthly cultural magazine, devoted its June 1993 issue to the subject of cultural breakdown in the United States resulting from immigration. The cover, a cartoon depiction of the Statue of Liberty, features immigrant characters (with pointed ears to indicate their demon status) clawing their way to the top of the statue, whose face is grimacing in pain and alarm. The thrust of the article is the dual threat of cultural adulteration of the Anglo-Saxon American heritage and the overwhelming inferiority of Third World alternative cultures. Feature writer Thomas Fleming writes, “Arab and Pakistani terrorists, Nigerian con artists, Oriental and South American drug lords, Russian gangsters—all are introducing their particular brands of cultural enrichment into an already fragmented United States that increasingly resembles Bosnia more than the America I grew up in.” This message not only pervades right-wing anti-immigrant rhetoric, but also can be found in the mainstream media and the rhetoric of both political parties.

### *Eugenicists Fund Anti-Immigrant Groups*

FAIR, is directly tied to more virulent racists by the funding it has received from the Pioneer Fund. Between 1982 and 1996, the Pioneer Fund gave over \$1 million in grants to FAIR, and \$183,000 to the American Immigration Control Foundation (Institute for the Study of Academic Racism 2001). FAIR clearly had no qualms about receiving such funding from a group that has funded segregationists, eugenicists and much of the research cited in *The Bell Curve*.

It is also of note that heiress Cordelia Scaife May supports FAIR, U.S. English, the Center for Immigration Studies, and others to the tune of \$2.5 million. May's political agenda is made clearer by her foundation's underwriting in 1983 of the distribution of *The Camp of the Saints* by Jean Raspail, a book in which immigrants from the Third World invade Europe and destroy its civilization. Raspail's novel has fueled anti-immigrant sentiment on the Far Right since its distribution in the United States by the American Immigration Control Foundation. It is instructive to read even a short passage from that book. It describes the masses threatening the White, and naturally civilized world as:

All the kinky-haired, swarthy-skinned, long-despised phantoms; all the teeming ants toiling for the white man's comfort; all the swill men and sweepers, the troglodytes, the stinking drudges, the swivel-hipped menials, the womanless wretches, the lung-spewing hackers. . . . (Raspail 1987)

These "five billion growling human beings" are threatening the "seven hundred million whites" (Raspail 1987). Although this fear of "brown hordes" overrunning Whites is an undercurrent in the rhetoric of most anti-immigrant groups, it is rarely so explicitly stated.

Anti-immigrant advocates raise the specter of new immigrants failing to assimilate and forcing their culture on everyone else—a prospect that, they argue, could lead to separatist scenarios resulting in the "Balkanization" of the United States.

### **The English Only Movement**

Language is a key issue in the immigration debate. At the same time that there is concern that students are not learning second languages, there are attempts to make sure that young immigrants do not retain their native language. A plausible explanation is that immigrants have the wrong language: Spanish, rather than French or German. The opposition to "other" languages seems to reflect both disdain of foreign cultures and fear of the loss of English as the dominant U.S. language and is closely associated with the racist aspects of immigrant bashing.

The language issue is often falsely framed as a concern that immigrants are not learning English and are not integrating into society. In fact, immigrants today are learning English as rapidly as previous generations of immigrants, despite longer and longer waiting lists for adult English classes due to government cutbacks. The hidden political agenda of English Only advocates is clear in their attacks on bilingual education and bilingual ballots. When English Only laws have passed, it has emboldened employers to restrict non-English languages at work and cities to outlaw commercial signs in various languages. It has fueled anti-immigrant sentiment,



extending to citizens, legal residents, and the undocumented alike, as long as they “look like immigrants.”

The danger of official English initiatives comes from their subtlety and ability to win over middle Americans who are unaware of the larger agenda. In fact, U.S. English is a flagship organization of the Right’s anti-immigrant campaign. Because U.S. English is occasionally characterized as seeking to designate a state or national language that is no more threatening than an official bird or flower, liberals are sometimes puzzled or shocked to read claims that the English Only movement is racist.

The opposition to “other” languages seems to reflect both disdain of foreign cultures and fear of the loss of English as the dominant U.S. language and is closely associated with the racist aspects of immigrant bashing.

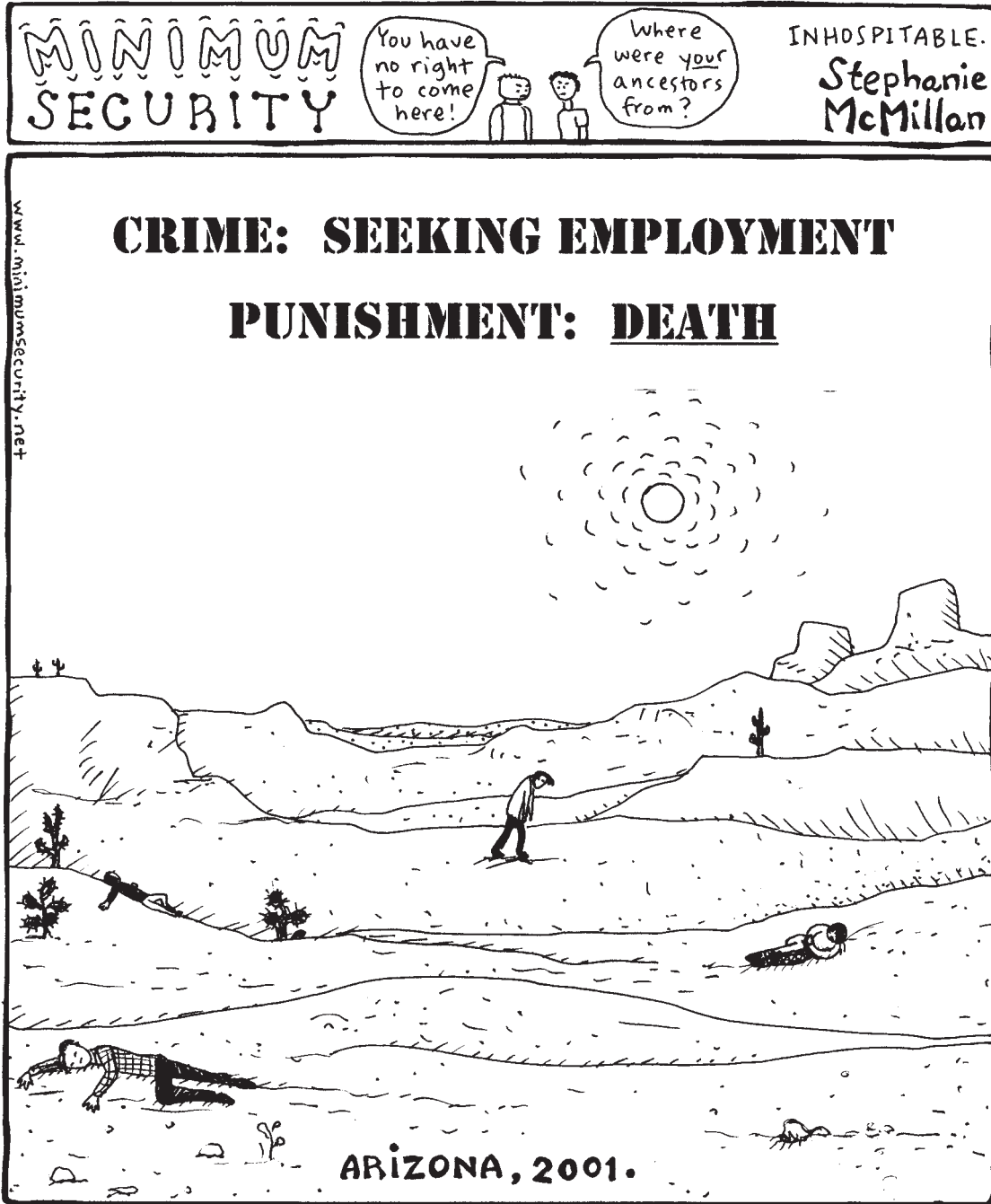
Then U.S. English Chairman John Tanton wrote a memo in 1988 that dirtied the clean public image that the organization had sought to maintain. In the memo, Tanton wrote, “[a]s Whites see their power and control over their lives declining, will they simply go quietly into the night?” And, “[o]n the demographic point: perhaps this is the first instance in which those with their pants up are going to get caught by those with their pants down!” (Tanton 1986). The ensuing uproar led to the resignation of then-director Linda Chavez and board member Walter Cronkite.

U.S. English has made a strong comeback in the wake of that crisis. They have over a million members across the United States thanks to their ability to reach huge numbers of persons through mass mailings and advertisements, and they can point to some 26 states that have passed official English laws, 10 since 1990. Their prime objective today is to change the U.S. Constitution and they have legislation that has gathered some support in Congress. In addition, they have continued to oppose transitional bilingual education and Puerto Rican statehood.

### *Public Opinion Is Against Immigrants, But Also In Flux*

In the mid-1990s, public opinion was swayed by the arguments and the enormous media access of anti-immigrant organizations. A *Business Week*/Harris Poll in 1992 found that while 59 percent of those surveyed thought immigration has been good for the United States historically, 69 percent of non-Blacks and 53 percent of Blacks thought present-day immigration was bad. Among the reasons cited were taking jobs away from American workers (over 60 percent) and using more than their fair share of government services (about 60 percent) (Power 1992).

More recent polls though indicate a shift in public opinion about immigration. Throughout the 1980s and the early 1990s a majority of those polled favored decreased levels of immigration. In March 2001, however, only 43 percent preferred a decrease. In 1993, 56 percent said immigrants cost taxpayers too much but by 2000 this number was down to 40 percent (Gallup New Service 2001). Factors influencing such shifts include the economic boom of the late ‘90s and the decreasing need for scapegoats, the success of the 1996 anti-immigrant legislation, which may have satisfied some anti-immigrant fervor, and a liberal backlash against Proposition 187.



Not surprisingly, a Zogby poll released by the Center for Immigration Studies and conducted within two weeks of the September 11 attacks found most respondents disagreeing that “the government is doing enough . . . to control the border and to screen people allowed into the country,” and agreeing “that a dramatic increase in resources devoted to border control and enforcement of immigration laws would help reduce the chances of future terrorist attacks” (Center for Immigration Studies 2001).

## Milestones of the Anti-Immigrant Movement

### *Proposition 187 in California*

The Republican Party scapegoated immigrants for some time, but in the mid-1990s immigration moved to the center of the party's agenda and became a platform to advance its political fortunes. David Nyhan, writing in *The Boston Globe*, points to California Governor Pete Wilson's reelection campaign as the flash point of the rise of immigrants as an official enemy in the Republican's electoral strategy. Nyhan writes, "Wilson looked done in by a combination of recession. . . defense cuts, population growth, job loss. . . and a plague of natural calamities. . . and the Los Angeles riots." Then Wilson found a way to invigorate his political prospects. "He pursued an increasingly harsh policy toward illegal immigrants and was reinforced at nearly every turn of the media page by the increasingly polarized electorate" (Nyhan 1994).

Closely linked to the 1994 gubernatorial election in California was Proposition 187, a statewide referendum that was a paradigm of the state-level strategy of the anti-immigrant movement. When the voters of California approved Proposition 187 by a margin of 59 to 41 percent, they mandated that teachers, doctors, social workers, and police check the immigration status of all persons seeking access to public education and health services from publicly funded agencies, and deny services to those in the United States without documentation. Those who voted in the 1994 election were 80 percent White, despite the fact that 45 percent of California's potential voters were people of color, and despite widespread protests from the Latino community.

The proposition, championed by an organization called Save Our State (SOS), was promoted as a cure-all that would reverse the many crises facing California and enjoyed widespread support. While Governor Wilson staked his successful reelection bid on endorsing the initiative, prominent Democratic elected officials voiced only muted opposition, and offered up their own plans to strengthen the Border Patrol.

After the passage of Proposition 187, reports of discrimination against Hispanics became rampant.

Elizabeth Kadetsky found that SOS was "a ragtag movement replete with registered Greens, Democrats, Perotists, distributors of New Age healing products and leaders of the Republican Party." There is little question that SOS had a grassroots base that "right-wing figures have shown up to exploit." Among key financial backers were Rob Hurtt, a millionaire who helped bankroll the Christian Right's campaign for the state legislature, and then-state legislator Don Rogers, who was associated with the White supremacist Christian Identity movement. But SOS raised most of its modest budget from small donations. While FAIR and SOS did not work together, FAIR did endorse the measure and was linked to the issue by Alan Nelson, a former INS director under Reagan, who later wrote anti-immigrant legislation in California for FAIR before writing Proposition 187. Kadetsky found that, "SOS's visible advocates personify either fringe populism or cynical manipulation of public sentiment for political gain" (Kadetsky 1994).

After the passage of Proposition 187, reports of discrimination against Hispanics became rampant. The Hispanic Mayor of Pomona was stopped by the INS and told to prove his citizenship. In Bell Gardens, a teacher asked students for their immigration papers. In Los Angeles, a bus driver yelled at passengers that they could no longer speak Spanish or Armenian. And a

car accident victim was denied emergency services when he couldn't prove his legal status, to name just a few examples. Columnist Jose Armas called this "one of the most hate-charged laws ever passed" and called for support of the growing boycott of California products and tourist and convention visits (Armas 1994). Proposition 187 was struck down in the courts by U.S. District Judge Mariana R. Pfaelzer based on a 1982 Texas decision, *Plyler v. Doe*, that undocumented children have a right to public education under the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Despite this setback, the proposition's ultimate impact was felt in the Republican Congress that in 1996 responded to frustrations and fears exploited in the Proposition 187 campaign with a series of laws that placed severe restrictions on the rights of all noncitizens.

Groundwork for Proposition 187 was laid in 1986 by Proposition 63, a successful referendum to make English the official language of the state. A local affiliate of U.S. English, the California English Campaign, led the campaign in California. U.S. English provided the campaign with between \$800,000 and \$900,000 for the initial signature drive, and continued to heavily fund the campaign. Other national organizations collaborated to coordinate the campaign, with U.S. English taking the lead. It was an early use of the statewide referendum to tap anti-immigrant sentiment and was a precursor to 187 (Colorado Coalition, n.d.).

### *The Republican Party's Use of Anti-Immigrant Themes*

Nyhan accurately predicted that Wilson's reelection "will nationalize the anti-immigrant debate, which is becoming the most incendiary issue in presidential megastates like Texas, Florida and New York" (Nyhan 1994). Indeed, Wilson briefly ran as a candidate for the 1996 Republican presidential nomination, promoting California's anti-immigrant policies as a national "solution." And after the 1996 elections, the Republican-controlled Congress, rallying behind the "Contract With America," took up the issue of immigration. Over the course of five months it enacted three laws that severely infringed on immigrants' civil liberties and access to a public benefits.

The Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, enacted in April 1996, resulted in the indefinite detention of deportees from particular countries, the long-term detention of some asylum seekers, the deportation of legal immigrants for sometimes very old non-violent offenses, and the dramatic increase in the incarcerated immigrant population. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) or the Welfare Reform Act, enacted in August, which made citizenship an eligibility requirement for a range of federal benefits, allowed states to discriminate against noncitizen immigrants in administration of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and Medicaid and greatly reduced eligibility for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and food stamps. Cutting benefits to immigrants accounted for \$23 billion or half of the savings the act was expected to generate. One month later, Congress passed the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) with the stated aim of decreasing "illegal" immigration. It increased Border Patrol and penalties for immigration violations while also increasing the earning requirements of those legally sponsoring new immigrants and requiring them to sign legally-binding Affidavits of Support.

While previously the laws had seen the primary distinction as between documented and undocumented immigrants, in 1996 a harsh distinction was also drawn between citizens and noncitizens in relation to their access to public benefits, their due process rights and other civil liberties. It put into effect many of the provisions that California's Proposition 187 had sought, but

ultimately failed, to enact.

Advocates sponsored the Fix '96 campaign in an attempt to roll back the harshest components of the '96 laws. One important victory came in June 2001 with three Supreme Court decisions which barred indefinite detention for those who cannot return to their home country, ended the deportation of noncitizens convicted of crimes before 1996 and restored judicial review to those facing deportation. After the September 11 attacks, the USA PATRIOT Act (standing for

After the 1996 elections, the Republican-controlled Congress, rallying behind the "Contract With America," took up the issue of immigration.

"Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism") gave broad powers to the Attorney General to detain and deport noncitizens with very limited judicial review. For example, the Attorney General can detain a noncitizen if he certifies that he has "reasonable grounds to believe" that the person would endanger "the national security. . . or the safety of the community." Someone charged with an immigration or criminal offense can be held indefinitely if the Attorney General reviews the detention every six months. The law also defined a new crime of "domestic terrorism" that can be applied to civil disobedience that results in violence

and greatly expanded the governments' surveillance powers eliminating much of the legal checks created after the McCarthy era. In addition, George W. Bush signed an executive order allowing for noncitizens, including U.S. residents, to be tried by secret military tribunals which need not meet constitutional standards. For example, the tribunals may use evidence gained by hearsay or torture. On Dec. 6, 2001, Attorney General Ashcroft told the Senate Judiciary Committee that those who criticize the administration's measures "aid terrorists" and "give ammunition to America's enemies."

### **The Ambivalence of Liberals**

Republicans and Democrats are not cleanly divided on the issue of immigration. Ideological positions on the issue are murky, among other reasons because both dominant political parties created the economic and political problems we are facing; thus, a popular scapegoat is useful to both. Gregory Defreitas, writing in *Dollars and Sense*, identifies an example of ideological divergence within conservatism: nativist Republicans want to curtail or stop immigration, while conservative libertarians endorse open borders. On the liberal side, a significant number of unionists and environmentalists have seen immigration as a threat to jobs and the environment (Defreitas 1994).

The issues of jobs and the environment make liberal organizations susceptible to the Right's anti-immigrant campaign. For example, within the Sierra Club, a six-year battle culminated in a 1998 referendum seeking to change the Club's neutral position on immigration (which the organization had reached in 1996) to a position of immigration restrictions as part of a national population program. Although the referendum was defeated by a 20 percent margin, the campaign was extremely divisive, further alienating people of color from the mainstream environmental movement. Sierrans for U.S. Population Stabilization, a leading proponent of the new policy, simplistically argued that reducing immigration levels was more feasible and

broadly popular than reducing overconsumption or average U.S. birthrates. More recently, efforts by anti-immigrant groups to blame suburban sprawl on immigrants have tempted some environmentalists to accept the scapegoating.

Conversely, conservative organizations have used liberal arguments to take advantage of this ambivalence and attract a liberal constituency. The Center for Immigration Studies has put out numerous position papers expressing concern that immigration is harming African Americans and the poor. One article pulls together quotations from various 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century civil rights activists to “remind us of the logic underlying black Americans’ heritage of protest against mass immigration as a fundamental impediment to black economic progress” (Center for Immigration Studies 1996). Blaming immigrants for the widening wage gap, CIS also argues that labor’s support of immigrant rights mean that workers “have lost the support of the most effective champion they ever had” (Briggs 2001).

The ambivalence of liberals over the issue of immigration has allowed the views of the political Right to become mainstream. As has been said earlier, liberals were part of setting economic policy, and can no more explain away what they have done than can the Right. Upper-level workers, primarily White and unionized, are often a base for liberalism’s themes of tolerance and diversity. Despite union campaigns to recruit immigrants, which silenced some anti-immigrant sentiment among the rank and file, such workers are not immune to lapses of racism, and have blamed immigrants for their own economic problems. Others have created unnecessary divisions in designing what they hoped would be winnable strategies on immigrant advocacy questions. For instance, during the Proposition 187 campaign, liberals split and many scapegoated undocumented immigrants while claiming to support documented immigrants. Because relatively few recent immigrants are voters and immigrants do not have their own PACs, they hold limited influence in the electoral arena, despite lip service from Democrats.

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Finally, the George W. Bush administration has offered some Democrats a way to “support” undocumented workers by allowing them to remain in the United States through proposed guest worker programs. These programs were also part of an attempt to counter the anti-immigrant image of the Republican Party and to attract Latino voters. With the recent terrorist attacks it is unclear what will come of these guest worker programs, but it is

unlikely that legalization proposals will have enough support to pass. At the same time the Bush administration’s pro-immigrant message has gotten lost as the focus has shifted toward increasing the appearance of security and immigrants of Middle Eastern and South Asian descent become the primary scapegoat. Unless liberals call for protecting the civil liberties of citizens and noncitizens alike and discourage blaming immigrants en masse for the actions of a few dozen people, then again immigrants will suffer as the country seeks to assign blame.

## Final Words

An atmosphere of fear, a competitive mentality and a sense of increasingly scarce resources create a fertile soil for anti-immigrant advocates who raise the alarm that newcomers will take your job, your home, and your culture, or worse threaten your sense of safety. Fear is very



real, and the decline in the economic position of the average American and the threat of violence are understandable motivators of fear. But to blame immigrants as the source of these problems is to scapegoat an easy, unpopular target and, at times, divert responsibility from more culpable parties. Unfortunately, the message that immigrants are the problem has been all too successful.

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## **Immigrant Rights: Striving for Racial Justice, Economic Equality and Human Dignity**

by the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

Over the last two years, the possibility of a broad legalization program for undocumented immigrants living and working in the United States has emerged as not only a potentially achievable goal for the immigrant rights movement, but as a political issue taken up by anti-immigrant groups, employers hungry for profits, and high profile political figures. Legalization itself has always been a long-term objective for many immigrant rights groups, some of which fought for more than a decade for the 1986 legalization that had allowed more than two million undocumented immigrants to gain legal status. Preparing for this newest struggle, immigrant rights activists anticipated strong and well-funded opposition from the anti-immigrant movement, which was expected to invest hundreds of thousands of dollars in media campaigns to influence public opinion. Over the years, immigration restrictionists have attempted to drive wedges between groups of immigrants based on differences such as legal status or national origin; have argued that legalization and family reunification would contribute to harmful population growth; and have opposed even limited guest worker programs.

What the immigrant rights movement could not anticipate was the severe backlash against immigrants, particularly the undocumented, that occurred in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11. In the days and weeks following the national tragedy, the anti-immigrant movement seized this “opportunity” to bring longstanding arguments, particularly those labeling immigrants as criminals, to the forefront of “breaking news.” In this moment of shock and terror, in which thousands of lives were lost, including immigrant workers from around the world, anti-immigrant groups moved quickly to blame “illegal aliens” for not only this act of violence, but for a host of social ills. Unfortunately, such anti-immigrant and anti-immigration arguments resonated with a growing audience. Immediately following September 11, racist vigilante activities began to target Arab Americans and people perceived to be of Middle Eastern descent, including threats and attacks on mosques, temples and schools, harassment by police and security guards, and other acts of racist violence. Despite official statements against such violations, rapid federal enactment of anti-terrorism legislation fixated on immigrants, particularly noncitizens and the undocumented, establishing new and potentially permanent restrictions on civil liberties.

### **Moving Forward after September 11, 2001**

In this changed climate, the immigrant rights movement, while still working to ensure that issues of legalization and expanded rights for immigrants remain on the national agenda, clearly faces new challenges, especially when coupled with the economic downturn, historically a breeding ground for anti-immigrant hysteria.

We must create new strategies that address the current context and which work towards long-term goals, such as creating immigration policies that uphold the civil and human rights of all immigrants, regardless of status. For example, the aftermath of Sept. 11 has reinforced the need for immigrant rights activists to build or strengthen alliances to address anti-immigrant violence, hate crimes, and racial profiling against Arab Americans, people of Middle Eastern



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descent, and other immigrants of color. Activists have also been confronted with immediate concerns arising in the wake of the attacks, and some have moved to the forefront of emerging peace/anti-war movements, efforts to fight fast track legislation, such as the USA PATRIOT Act, that sacrifice civil rights to “fight terrorism,” and growing resistance to increased scapegoating of immigrants, such as the new acceptance of racial profiling as a “counter-terrorism” measure. At an international level, U.S. attacks on Afghanistan have displaced hundreds of thousands of people, creating even more refugees with few places to go. Through all of this, immigrant rights groups must walk a careful line between challenging U.S. policies and prac-

Ensuring the human and civil rights of all people, regardless of immigration status, involves more than just responding to anti-immigrant groups and policies. It means bringing immigrant rights into the larger movement for racial justice, labor rights, global economic equality, and human rights – something which is equally critical both during periods of increased support for immigrant rights, and during times of heightened nativism and anti-immigrant sentiment.

tices, and dealing with the very tangible effects of the events of September 11.

The violent and widespread anti-immigrant response to the attacks, however, is no surprise. For years, the conservative Right has helped create a climate in which immigrants—particularly the undocumented—are seen as undeserving of human rights. Immigrants have been portrayed as criminals, terrorists, and welfare cheats—and accused of everything from increasing crime and invading communities to stealing the jobs of hard-working citizens to destroying the environment. At the same time, the movement for immigrant rights in the United States has faced serious obstacles in developing effective strategies to resist or transform either the public debate or its policy impact.

Creating new ways of talking about immigration, immigrant rights, and human rights is one of the primary challenges of today's immigrant rights movement, regardless of how current events may change the political climate. Ensuring the human and civil rights of all people, regardless of immigration status, involves more than just responding to anti-immigrant groups and policies. It means bringing immigrant rights into the larger movement for racial justice, labor rights, global economic equality, and human rights—something which is equally critical both during periods of increased support for immigrant rights, and during times of heightened nativism and anti-immigrant sentiment.

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### **Framing Immigration—Where We Are Today**

The impact of the anti-immigrant Right on the current immigration debate cannot be over-emphasized. In fact, up to this point, the immigration debate has largely been shaped by the anti-immigrant movement. Relying on a number of appealing and exclusionary arguments, the anti-immigrant Right has tapped into the public imagination in a way immigrant rights activists have yet to match. Because of this, discussions around immigration have centered around the themes of race relations and conflict, economic displacement, environmental destruction and overpopulation, urban sprawl, and crime.

During the past few years, these arguments have had less impact, and during this time, immigrant rights organizers and advocates have been able to steadily build up alliances and engage greater numbers of immigrant community members around direct issues.

But the real impact of anti-immigrant arguments is evidenced in the drastic shift in the discussion of legalization proposals since September 11. Some policymakers and advocates have

begun to argue that legalization is a way to improve national security—reasoning that by bringing people out of the shadows, their activities can better be monitored. Unfortunately, such arguments deflate the need for legalization as a means of providing safety and security for all people.

In a period dominated by national security concerns and the presumed sacrifice of civil liberties, there is all the more reason to ensure that the most vulnerable are provided with basic protections. The United States will hardly be “safer” by locking out those who have migrated to the United States for a safe and secure life, to work, to go to school, to be reunited with family. Legalization programs embedded in a national security framework actually threaten to create a new class of noncitizens who, while documented, are nevertheless ineligible for the same civil rights protections as citizens and who are subject to the same violations legalization proposals were intended, at least by immigrant rights groups, to prevent. Challenging this framework raises many issues, including what the ultimate goal of the immigrant rights movement is, what we expect to gain from legalization, and the role of immigrant rights in a larger struggle for civil and human rights for all people. While such issues and conflicts are not new, they must be vigorously questioned to avoid compromising our overall vision for immigrant rights.

### *Immigration as a Racial Justice Issue*

Whether proposing that there be a moratorium on immigration because of crime or urban sprawl or national security, anti-immigrant groups have relied strongly on racist arguments and sentiment to boost their position. Rapid demographic changes in the United States have played a significant role in defining the recent wave of anti-immigrant sentiment. Migrants from Latin America, Asia, and Africa now comprise the majority of newcomers to the United States. Today, 85 percent of arriving migrants are people of color. In four of the country’s five largest cities—New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and Houston—Latinos and Asians already collectively form a majority of the population, while in California, people of color are now the majority. The changing demography of the United States, particularly in regions with increased immigration, has aroused racial anxieties in many White communities and some communities of color. While some communities have responded positively to these changes, there are an even greater number of highly publicized incidents of tension and hostility between newcomers and other residents.<sup>1</sup>

Immigrant rights groups must also begin to reach out to communities with which they have not previously worked, including Arab, South Asian and Muslim communities which have recently become the targets of both racist and anti-immigrant policies and violence.

The immigrant rights movement has faced several formidable obstacles to forging a successful alliance with a broad movement for civil rights and racial justice. At an institutional level, White supremacy continues to define access to education, employment, community resources, and other opportunities for communities of color. Within the movement, distrust and/or lack of relations among and between groups of color remain principal obstacles to building a broad



anti-racist movement inclusive of an immigrant rights agenda. With a lack of meaningful communication, points of conflict and tension often erupt over the allocation of material resources among economically marginalized groups of color. In order to expand and preserve civil and human rights for immigrants, the immigrant rights movement must build a strong base of multiracial support and articulate a distinctly anti-racist agenda. Immigrant rights groups must also begin to reach out to communities with which they have not previously worked, including Arab, South Asian and Muslim communities which have recently become the targets of both racist and anti-immigrant policies and violence.

### *Pitting Workers against Each Other*

Economic arguments against immigration often rely on racist ideologies to justify immigration restrictions, as well as to divide workers and prevent a unified movement for economic justice. Fueled by racial, ethnic, and economic tensions, anti-immigrant sentiment has been extremely effective at pitting low-wage workers of color against each other. Many communities have also been divided around the question of immigration and its impact on job availability for native-born people of color. In response to such concerns, the immigrant rights movement has often dismissed the possibility of job displacement impacting established communities of color, particularly African Americans. This approach has only exacerbated existing tensions. Instead, the immigrant rights movement needs to support research examining the structural conditions limiting access to decent jobs and resources for all workers.

The labor movement itself has also been divided on its position in regards to immigrant workers. Some progressive unions, such as the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union (HERE), have supported immigrant workers and opposed policies such as employer sanctions, and in the process have proven to be crucial allies for immigrant rights advocates. Until recently, the AFL-CIO itself had supported employer sanctions in an effort to “protect” the jobs and interests of U.S.-born workers. In early 2000, however, the AFL-CIO shifted its position, speaking out strongly in support of immigrant workers rights and calling for a broad legalization program and an end to employer sanctions. Such action may help broaden support for immigrant workers on a number of levels, from the workplace to the political arena, and is now all the more critical, considering both the national security framework being applied to immigrants and the economic downturn. The AFL-CIO recently reaffirmed its support for immigrant rights in a post-September 11 resolution acknowledging the increased scapegoating of immigrants following the terrorist attacks.

### *The Specter of Population Explosion*

In recent years, some anti-immigrant groups and population restrictionist advocates have promoted surprisingly effective claims that population increases due to migration pose the greatest threat to the environment. Arguments blaming immigrants for dwindling resources can be very powerful to people frustrated with traffic jams, overcrowded classrooms, and long unemployment lines in their communities. More recently, restrictionists have played to environmental concerns over urban sprawl, citing immigration as a major source of urban over-crowding. Such arguments have generally not swayed the environmental movement to side against immigration. However, they have not helped to build better relations between the environmental movement and immigrant communities.

While there has been some progress in breaking down the barriers between the predominantly White traditional environmental movement and communities of color through the environmen-

tal justice movement, these attacks threaten our ability to address serious environmental issues in immigrant communities. In the United States, communities of color, including immigrant communities, have overwhelmingly been the victims of environmental degradation, not its cause. Furthermore, if immigrants and other people are unable to exercise their human and civil rights, they cannot be equal partners in defending and shaping a safe and healthy environment for the benefit of all people.

### *Criminalization of Immigration*

Finally, whether at the U.S.-Mexico border or in the interior of the United States, immigration has been framed as an issue about breaking the law, not about participation in a global economic system. Linking immigration and crime justifies a heightened law enforcement approach to immigration control, as demonstrated in the fact that immigrants are now the fastest-growing incarcerated population. Portraying immigrants as criminals has proven to be an effective public relations strategy for the INS and for anti-immigrant groups, making it easier to deny basic rights of privacy and due process, as well as human and civil rights, to immigrants. This practice has recently been taken to a new level with the labeling of immigrants as terrorists and has included such violations as secret detention and the creation of military trials for non-citizen civilians.

Although the stated aim of U.S. immigration policy is to control immigration, that policy framework fails to address the root causes of international migration, including economic pressures, ethnic and social conflicts, and environmental degradation.

In the United States, debates around the question of immigration usually do not take into account its global dimensions. Restrictionists and immigrant advocates alike have often failed to consider the sources and patterns of international migration when formulating policy and strategy. A global perspective sheds light on the limitations of restrictive immigration policies. Although the stated aim of U.S. immigration policy is to control immigration, that policy framework fails to address the root causes of international migration, including economic pressures, ethnic and social conflicts, and environmental degradation. Significantly, the United States has often played a central role in creating the global conditions which lead to migration, from Structural Adjustment Policies that ravage national economies and social systems, to U.S.-based corporate policies, and to military intervention.

### **Messages of the Immigrant Rights Movement—A Closer Look**

Recognizing the impact of the anti-immigrant movement on the immigration debate, however, is not enough. Because the anti-immigrant Right has been very skillful in convincing the public that immigrants cause social and economic problems, it is easy to name the anti-immigrant arguments: “there are too many immigrants;” “they take away jobs;” “the United States can’t take in all the world’s poor;” “there are too many Mexicans;” “we are losing our culture.” In contrast, the immigrant rights movement has often failed to clearly articulate what *our* message is.<sup>2</sup> Of course, those who advocate for immigrant rights have advanced certain arguments to defend against changes in immigration law or increases in enforcement. Advocates have often resorted to quick defenses without opportunity to analyze the implications of some argu-

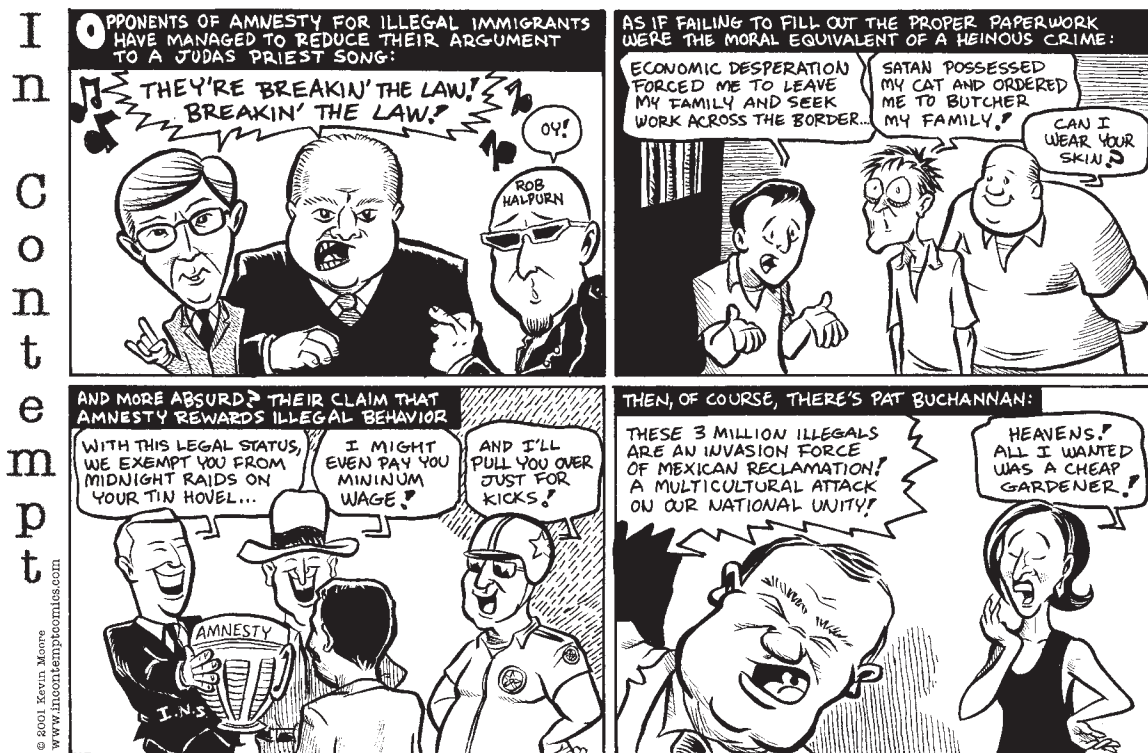
ments that are commonly employed. For example, following September 11, some advocates for legalization have argued for a legalization program to help national security, disregarding the possible impact such a “legalization” may have on the civil and human rights of all noncitizens. By examining the limitations of some of these arguments, we can lay the groundwork for some more effective ways to reframe the debate—and also to avoid falling into similar traps in the future.

*Splitting “Illegal” and Legal Immigration*

In the past, Washington-based political negotiations have sometimes pushed advocates to compromise their position on what many see as an untenable or politically vulnerable stance—the defense of the undocumented. Scrambling to win public support in a period of heightened nativism, some advocacy groups have conceded to the rhetoric of anti-immigrant lawmakers. By agreeing that illegal immigration is a problem, some advocates had hoped to preserve at least a few rights for immigrants, even if only for a limited constituency.<sup>3</sup> In their view, energies need to be focused on portraying legal immigrants as hardworking, law-abiding, and deserving of rights, in contrast to their undocumented counterparts.

However, some of the concessions made in the name of political pragmatism have only served to further demonize and criminalize undocumented immigrants. In the absence of any visible public defense of their rights, the undocumented have become scapegoats for both the anti-immigrant and “pro-immigrant” agenda. The media further portrays undocumented immigrants as underground drug dealers, criminals, and lazy welfare cheats.

The danger of such negative characterizations of undocumented immigrants became apparent in the debate over Proposition 187 in California. Some advocates projected that stopping illegal immigration was necessary, but that the proposition was a misguided strategy. Playing on



the fears of many White voters, anti-187 ads evoked the dangerous threat of disease spreading among “illegals” who “handle your food supply,” the possibility of gangs of youth roaming the street after being expelled from school, and the bureaucratic costs of implementing the measure.<sup>4</sup>

Emphasizing the difference between “legal” and “illegal” immigrants also perpetuates a false divide in immigrant communities. Many immigrants exist in “transnational families” which include members of varying legal status.<sup>5</sup> One household may include U.S. citizen children, permanent resident parents, and an undocumented cousin, sibling, or grandmother.

Conceding to the documented/undocumented divide obscures the very reasons why people are forced to migrate without documents. While violent conflict and repression exist in many parts of the world, only migrants from certain countries have been granted refugee status in the United States. This distinction usually reflects the bias of U.S. foreign policy: migrants from countries considered to be U.S. adversaries such as Cuba have gained refugee or asylee status far more easily than Salvadorans or Guatemalans fleeing U.S.-backed military repression. In addition, long waits for family visas make it very difficult for migrants from countries such as the Philippines or Mexico to obtain legal entry to the United States. For poor immigrants without a sponsoring relative who meets certain income requirements, the chances of obtaining a permit for legal entry are even more slim. In contrast, a millionaire can obtain residency in the United States with few obstacles. Because of such biased policies, there are few avenues open to migrants from certain areas—particularly Latin America and Asia—other than to migrate without authorization.

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The attempt to maintain public support by contrasting one set of immigrants to another has weakened the immigrant rights movement. Not only has it alienated mainstream advocacy and lobbying groups from the grassroots, but it has failed to maintain a reasonable degree of protection for either undocumented or legal immigrants. For example, the strategy to “split the bill” (into provisions dealing with undocumented and “legal” immigrants) adopted by many advocates in the 1996 round of legislative negotiations may have proved successful in its short-term goal of derailing Congressional proposals to reduce legal immigration. But it also guaranteed the passage of a bill which contained numerous damaging provisions—and by no means spared legal immigrants from harm. Now, immigrants intending to apply for political asylum must do so at the airport, often without the aid of an attorney. Many longtime legal permanent residents who have been convicted of crimes (including minor drug offenses) are now immediately subject to deportation, even if they have resided in the United States since infancy, and have no family or other ties to their native country. While the 1996 legislation initially made it easier for the U.S. government to deport permanent residents for their political beliefs and affiliations, in June 2001 two Supreme Court rulings determined that deportation provisions in the law could not be applied retroactively and that the INS could not indefinitely imprison immigrants.<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, in the wake of the events of September 11, such moves to uphold the civil and human rights of immigrants have been challenged once again, this time in the name of anti-terrorism measures, leaving all noncitizens, including permanent residents, additionally



vulnerable to rights violations. The combined impact of these laws on many immigrant families is devastating.

### *The Perils of Cost-Benefit Analysis*

The question of whether immigrants are a net fiscal benefit or drain to the United States often distorts the debate with reports quantifying immigrants' contributions and costs cited by both immigrant-rights advocates and those opposed to immigration. These arguments are deeply problematic on both empirical and moral grounds.

The debate over Proposition 187 in California provides a good example of how cost-benefit arguments result in confusion. Supporters of the measure often cited Donald Huddle's 1993 report, "The Net Costs of Immigration to California," which argued that immigrants incurred \$18.1 billion more in public assistance costs to California taxpayers than the \$8.9 billion immigrants paid in taxes. This figure includes \$4.2 billion for costs of assistance to 914,000 California residents who were unemployed "because of immigration."<sup>7</sup> However, the Urban Institute report *Setting the Record Straight*, more often cited by immigrant rights activists, reported that immigrants in California contributed \$30 billion in taxes and received only \$18.7 billion in government services, resulting in a \$12 billion net contribution in taxes to California.<sup>8</sup>

As these comparisons demonstrate, cost-benefit arguments ultimately become a confusing numbers game. By crafting arguments that evaluate the contributions of immigrants as opposed to their costs, immigrant rights advocates have engaged in a slippery battle. While highlighting the positive role that immigrants can play as economic actors, the immigrant rights movement cannot rely on cost-benefit arguments as a main argument. One study's data on the costs and taxes paid by immigrants can easily refute another's, and the accuracy of such data is difficult to ascertain.<sup>9</sup> Subtle methodological distinctions between various studies often fail to translate into effective arguments. They usually boil down to ideological differences in the sponsoring organizations' or authors' perspectives.<sup>10</sup>

Some cost-benefit studies have determined that immigration is a benefit to the economy because immigrant workers provide a supply of cheap labor. The problem with this aspect of the cost-benefit strategy is that it has sometimes conflated the immigrant-rights message with the interests of big business. Is the real message of the immigrant rights movement that immigrants are willing to work for cheap?

During the legislative battle over immigration in 1996, national and local immigrants rights organizations forged tactical alliances with business interests to defend employment- and family-based legal immigration. The Silicon Valley computer industry, for example, rallied around the protection of high-tech jobs as part of the "split the bill" strategy championed by some immigrant rights groups. Although some industry representatives were specifically working to relax restrictions on mobility for educated, professional immigrants, many immigrant advocates saw this as an opportunity to build a case on behalf of immigrants in general.<sup>11</sup> Other advocates, even if they did not actively ally themselves with business interests, tacitly accepted involvement of these powerful firms as confirmation of their claims that immigrants are vital to the U.S. economy. Today, a similar dynamic has emerged in the debate over legalization, as business interests have allied themselves with efforts to create an expanded guest worker program under the guise of "legalizing hard-working Mexicans." In reality, businesses are more interested in developing new opportunities to legally exploit workers and increase profits, though it is

unclear how this agenda may play out in the current climate focused on national security and economic decline.

In 1996, the weight of large business interests like Microsoft and the National Association of Manufacturers undoubtedly bolstered the split-the-bill strategy. But their high-profile defense of immigration has cost the immigrant rights movement other allies: namely, some who are concerned about protecting the interests of American-born workers. Author Michael Lind, for example, has argued that the immigrant rights movement is actually working to protect the interest of big business at the expense of U.S. workers. Lind claimed in a *New Republic* editorial that reducing immigration “is a perfectly legitimate liberal cause—if ‘liberal’ means protecting the interests of ordinary wage-earning Americans.” He writes that those truly concerned about the interests of the working poor should note that the greatest income gains for both Black and White Americans have been noted during periods of immigration restriction.

Part of evaluating the “cost-benefit” strategy is to ensure that immigrant-rights advocates do not perpetuate the notion that immigrants are “good for the economy” because they are easily exploitable, low-wage workers. In other words, just because the *Wall Street Journal* calls for open borders does not mean that it is a natural ally of a progressive immigrant rights movement.

He also asserts that union membership is disrupted when “mass immigration produces a workforce divided by ethnicity.”<sup>12</sup> Similarly, a 1997 brief issued by the progressive Institute for Policy Studies encourages labor advocates to give serious consideration to a national worker identification card and to guest worker programs to fill “jobs that U.S. residents don’t want.”<sup>13</sup>

Some of the economic benefits immigrants bring are rooted in the fact that they are often a cheap, and pliable labor force. Organized labor and many working people understandably bridle when immigrant rights activists speak in this vein. We should instead point out that the real goal of restrictive legislation is to keep immigrants, and others, from gaining labor rights they deserve by maintaining an underground workforce. Big business’ interest in protecting immigration in order to maintain a cheap, pliable labor force is distinct from an agenda which advances labor

and civil rights for all workers, regardless of immigration status, in the interest of economic justice. Part of evaluating the “cost-benefit” strategy is to ensure that immigrant-rights advocates do not perpetuate the notion that immigrants are “good for the economy” because they are easily exploitable, low-wage workers.<sup>14</sup> In other words, just because the *Wall Street Journal* calls for open borders does not mean that it is a natural ally of a progressive immigrant rights movement.

Even more fundamentally, by relying on cost-benefit arguments, the immigrant rights movement remains rooted in a framework that construes immigration policy narrowly as a matter of what is “good for the United States” according to simple numeric calculations. We lose an opportunity to focus attention on the global economic phenomena that affect immigrants and native-born residents alike.

We also lose a chance to challenge assertions about standards used to determine human and labor rights. If rights are simply accorded in order to correspond with economic success or contributions, what does that say about the elderly, the disabled, or children? Should they not have rights because they may not contribute economically? All people make contributions in different ways at different times to the communities and societies they live in. Our focus should not be whether an individual has earned certain rights, but why basic standards for human rights should apply to everyone, regardless of immigration status.

Do cost-benefit arguments have any place in the arguments advanced by the immigrant rights movement? Clearly, there is a need to refute erroneous accusations about the drain immigrants pose to society. However, instead of relying on simple cost-benefit calculations, we need to point out who really benefits when immigrants are denied rights: unscrupulous employers seeking profit while ignoring occupational, and frequently, environmental standards. The deep conflict of interest in such positions is evident in the recent debate around legalization and employer sanctions. Some employer interests have actually expressed support for legalization and an end to employer sanctions as part of a move to advocate for expanded temporary worker programs. Employers are increasingly willing to make concessions that workers may eventually become permanent residents in exchange for what is essentially a captive and exploitable work force.

### *The “Nation of Immigrants” Argument*

Appealing to a long and rich history of immigration to the United States, many voices in the struggle for immigrant rights have used the argument that the country has always been “a nation of immigrants” in order to build support for immigrant communities today. Indeed, a majority of the U.S. population can trace its ancestry to immigrant roots. Cartoons depicting Native Americans asking, “Who’s the Illegal Alien, Pilgrim?” highlight the fact that the first European settlers didn’t obtain authorization before arriving and decimating the indigenous population.

Appeals to a history enriched by immigration are effective. The Statue of Liberty, which has historically served as a symbol of welcome to immigrants, is an icon of national importance. However, anti-immigrant factions have also used its symbolism to argue that the United States can no longer afford to be so generous. A 1996 cover story in the *Atlantic Monthly* depicting a weary Lady Liberty asked, “Can We Still Afford to be a Nation of Immigrants?” The article implied that the country has reached its limit of how much immigration it can absorb, and even more insidiously, that today’s immigrants are “mostly Mexicans” whose ethnic separatism threatens traditional patterns of assimilation.<sup>15</sup> In light of post September 11 national security concerns, this issue has been re-raised and expanded to include other ethnic groups, and will likely continue to be a growing thread in both anti-immigrant arguments and “anti-terrorism” discussions.

In reality, immigrants have always been present in the United States, and an accurate historical perspective reveals that periods of nativism and anti-immigrant sentiment almost always reflect economic trends and are rooted in racist ideology. The Chinese Exclusion Act, enacted in response to fear of Chinese competition and the Depression-era deportation of more than 500,000 people of Mexican descent (including U.S. citizens) through “Operation ‘Wetback’” are just a few examples.

Finally, the notion that the United States “was built on immigrant labor” should be expanded

to account for the roles of non-immigrant (or forcibly migrated) groups like Native Americans and African Americans. To simply assert that immigrants constructed the nation obscures the fact that U.S. colonizers and settlers stole Native American lands, practiced genocide, and through the enslavement of Africans, built the foundations of a U.S. economic empire. A more effective alternative should acknowledge the exploitation and sacrifice of many groups, including immigrants, who are deserving of rights, protection, and recognition.

### **Conclusion: Creating Arguments that Work**

Many of the arguments used by immigrant rights advocates are not effective tools for advancing our long-term goals. Cost-benefit, documented-undocumented, or “nation of immigrants” arguments are limited in that they are reactive, rather than proactive. They are rooted in a framework which still sees immigration as a law enforcement problem, and not as an issue about human rights. This is even more evident in the current move to sacrifice civil liberties, particularly those of noncitizens, for national security.

Looking at the state of the debate, it is clear that we can learn some important lessons from our adversaries: the anti-immigration movement is a broad coalition which encompasses sectors of the Far Right, population groups, politicians, lobbyists, and community-based anti-immigrant organizations. Their messages are simple and rhetorically compelling. Their strategy has been to build effective local, grassroots alliances in order to tap into key concerns in communities and channel frustration or dissatisfaction into anti-immigrant sentiment. For example, in 2001 Sachem Quality of Life, a local, Farmingville, New York based anti-immigrant group, utilized the backing and support of the nationally-recognized FAIR, combined with on-the-ground community organizing to not only defeat a local proposal to create a hiring hall for immigrant day laborers, but to construct Farmingville as representative of the national immigration debate and its impact on middle-class, suburban communities.

While the immigrant rights movement also needs to formulate simple and convincing messages that reflect the concerns of a broad, grassroots base, our challenge is more formidable. Rather than urging people to scapegoat an already vulnerable population, we need to encourage people to think outside of the current confines of the debate. We must work consciously and collaboratively to avoid falling back on arguments that do not support the rights of all immigrants or that divide immigrants based on legal status or national origin. In order to do this,

The immigrant rights movement needs to develop strategies that help us to reframe our messages based on a shared set of principles which uphold the rights of all people. We must work to defend and expand human rights (which include labor, cultural, civil, social, environmental, and economic rights) for everyone, regardless of immigration status, and to recognize racial equality and justice as critical to expanding a progressive immigrant rights movement.

the immigrant rights movement needs to develop strategies that help us to reframe our messages based on a shared set of principles which uphold the rights of all people. We must work to defend and expand human rights (which include labor, cultural, civil, social, environmental, and economic rights) for everyone, regardless of immigration status, and to recognize racial equality and justice as critical to expanding a progressive immigrant rights movement. We need to assert that wealth should not determine a person's ability to move across borders and that, in a globalized economy, the concept of the "equality or mobility" is key to creating equity for working people. The immigrant rights movement should also defend full and equal access to education and public benefits, and to other rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and international law, for all immigrants. Finally, we must continue to pursue coalition politics that link challenges faced by immigrants to other sectors, including welfare recipients, low-wage workers, police accountability groups, prison reform groups, and communities of color.

Messages and objectives based on these principles can be formulated and utilized in a number of ways. For example, by offering a critique of global economic restructuring and its impact on migration, groups can call attention to migration as an issue intrinsically related to inequities in wealth and power. Similarly, we can challenge the framing of immigration as a law enforcement problem by explaining how approaching immigration exclusively as an issue of enforcement is not only inhumane, but ineffective because it fails to address the root causes of migration. As we continue to strive to integrate our struggle with a struggle for racial justice, the immigrant rights movement should also be both on the front lines of building a movement against racism, and encouraging civil rights leaders to promote immigrant rights in their own work. By framing migration as a labor issue, we can build active alliances with labor, expose how immigration law promotes sweatshop conditions, and link our efforts with emerging movements for immigrant workers' rights. Finally, we should not only actively integrate a human rights framework into our own work, but promote alliances with other sectors who use a human rights framework as a tool to analyze conditions in the United States and to achieve racial, economic, and social justice. This means building alliances with groups focused on issues such as police accountability, environmental justice, labor rights, civil rights, and women's rights. Fundamentally, these principles are inseparable, and are crucial to developing an international movement against racism, which is influenced by globalization, migration, and changing demographics.

Pursuing alliances and developing messages based on these basic principles, however, doesn't mean disengaging from the discussion over current policies and practices. In fact, engagement with legislative threats and policy debates is essential to ensure that immigrants' rights are not further compromised. Legislatively-focused strategies can also contribute to movement-building and immigrant community empowerment, and can be the basis for establishing crucial, long term alliances. Recent xenophobic measures have already catalyzed formidable mobilizations, with recent restrictions on noncitizens in particular highlighting the links between struggles for immigrant rights and movements for racial justice and human rights. As a movement, we have the potential to galvanize significant efforts by immigrant community groups and larger enti-

Immigrants, people of color, and working-class people together form a majority in the United States—and have the power to change both popular opinion and public policy.



ties, such as the labor movement and civil rights institutions. Immigrants, people of color, and working-class people together form a majority in the United States—and have the power to change both popular opinion and public policy. If we can frame immigrant rights as an issue about human dignity, economic parity, and racial justice, then we can begin to lay the groundwork for transforming the immigration debate.

## End Notes

1. For examples of positive instances of intergroup organizing, see Julia Teresa Quiroz, *Together in Our Differences: How Newcomers and Established Residents are Rebuilding America's Communities*, (Washington DC: National Immigration Forum, 1995).
2. It is on precisely this point that organizations like the Federation for American Immigration Reform are able to base their strategies. See FAIR, *How to Survive Win the Immigration Debate*, (Washington, DC: by the author, 1997).
3. A DC-based lobbying organization, for example, took the explicit position that “legal immigration is not the same as illegal immigration” and asserted that “the American people want the federal government to take decisive and effective action to control illegal immigration.” National Immigration Forum, “What’s Wrong with the House Immigration Bill,” November 1995.
4. Quotes from Arturo Vargas, co-chair of Taxpayers Against 187, from “Beyond Proposition 187: Strategies for Community Change” conference, Northeastern University, Boston, MA, March 31, 1995.
5. Leo Chavez, “Proposition 187: The Nationalist Response to the Transnationalist Challenge” (Paper presented at Ernesto Galarza Public Policy Conference, Riverside, CA, January 1995).
6. The Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act (AEDPA) was largely responsible for these changes.
7. Donald Huddle, “The Net Costs of Immigration to California,” Carrying Capacity Network, November 4, 1993; Rafael Alarcón, *Proposition 187: An Effective Measure to Deter Undocumented Migration to California?* (San Francisco: Multicultural Education, Training, and Advocacy, October 1994).
8. Michael Fix and Jeffrey S. Passel, *Immigration and Immigrants: Setting the Record Straight* (Washington DC: Urban Institute, 1994); and Passel, Clark, and Griego, *How Much Do Immigrants Really Cost?* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, February, 1994). A 1997 study by George Vernez and Kevin F. MacCarthy of the Rand Corporation suggests that certain groups of immigrants benefit the economy more than others, and that a point system should be used to evaluate an immigrant’s potential contribution versus his or her cost.
9. In testimony before a House of Representatives subcommittee on human resources, economists Michael Fix and Jeffrey Passel refuted studies which attribute high economic costs to undocumented immigrants by arguing that such studies have been produced by government agencies interested in “recovering” the costs of immigrants and receiving economic compensation. Their review found that, although such studies vary in quality, the results frequently overstate the negative impacts of immigrants in several ways; they systematically understate tax contributions of immigrants, overstate service costs for immigrants, and exaggerate the impacts and costs of job displacement. Most importantly, Fix and Passel claimed that these studies inflate the size of the immigrant population, particularly the undocumented immigrant population. See Fix and Passel, *op. cit.*
10. Some studies diverge from the taxes and services balance-sheet approach by trying to distinguish the fiscal impact of immigrants (in terms of their use of government resources) from their net impact on the economy (or their overall impact on wages and productivity). But even these reports, which seem to draw positive conclusions about immigrants, can sometimes work against the long-term interests of the immigrant-rights movement. The National Academy of Sciences issued a 1997 report, which concluded that immigration produces “substantial economic benefits for the United States as a whole” but nevertheless “slightly reduces the wages and job opportunities of low-skilled American workers, especially high school dropouts.” The report assessed the costs “imposed” by immigrants, including public education and social services. Its authors concluded that most Americans are enjoying a healthier economy because of the benefits of immigration, including an increased supply of labor and resulting lower consumer prices.
11. Some think tanks developed studies of their own to support such arguments. A 1997 study by the Rand corporation, for example, lauded the benefits of immigrant business executives proposed changing the family-based visa system and instead developing a point system to favor skilled and well-educated workers. “How to Make Immigration Better for America: Favor Aliens with Job Skills,” *U.S. News and World Report*, Dec. 29, 1997-Jan. 5, 1998.
12. Michael Lind, “Huddled Excesses,” *The New Republic*, vol. 214 no. 14 (April 1, 1996): 6. In fact, the most restrictive period for immigration was World War II when wartime conditions upset usual migration patterns. The U.S. economy was enhanced by massive government investment in creating employment and enhancing industry. The fact that U.S. workers experienced great income gains in this period had to do with government investment in the domestic infrastructure, not with immigration levels.

13. David Stoll, "In Focus: The Immigration Debate," *Foreign Policy in Focus* (an internet publication of the Interhemispheric Resource Center and Institute for Policy Studies), vol. 2, no. 31 (March 1997). <http://www.igc.org/info-cus/briefs/vol2/v2n31imm.html>. This argument echoes demands from growers who have called for a revitalized Bracero Program to bring temporary workers from Mexico to the United States legally during harvest season. Some immigrant advocates have argued that under such a program, temporarily authorized workers would be afforded some rights because of their legal entry. This argument needs to be turned around to expose that industry and capital's interest is not in providing rights for certain migrants, but in allowing agribusiness to legally shuttle workers back and forth from Mexico without providing for the social needs of the workforce.
14. See Lowell Sachs, "Traacherous Waters in Turbulent Times: Navigating the Recent Sea Change in U.S. Immigration Policy and Attitudes," *Social Justice*, vol. 23 no. 3 (Fall 1996): 129.
15. "The Price of Immigration: Can We Still Afford to Be a Nation of Immigrants? A View from the Perspectives of History and Economics," *Atlantic Monthly*, November 1996.

## Corporate Desires vs. Anti-immigrant Fervor: The Bush Administration's Dilemma

Jean Hardisty

George W. Bush accomplished a near-miracle when he united the various factions of the Republican Party behind his candidacy in the 2000 presidential election. To do so, he convinced them to put aside their differences in order to recapture the White House from the “Clintonites” and to finish the Reagan revolution. But holding that fragile coalition together, while recruiting enough new voters to actually win the 2004 presidential election, is a tough challenge. This issue illustrates the political box that Bush now must negotiate.

The neophyte Bush took office with a parochial immigration agenda based on his familiarity with the Texas-Mexico border and his political affinity with Mexico's new neoliberal President Vicente Fox. Both are free-market enthusiasts who understand that the border tensions that extend from California to Texas are problems begging for reform. Bush speaks some Spanish and has used it in his courtship of the Latino vote in Texas. A serious program of immigration reform, especially if it appeared to favor the acceptance of Mexican workers, presumably would bring Bush Latino votes.

This bid for votes seemed to be as far as Bush's thinking had progressed when he began floating the idea of a qualified amnesty, more appropriately known as legalization, for undocumented Mexican workers who are not registered with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). His seemed to advocate funneling them into “guest worker” programs and then sending them back to Mexico when their contracts expired. He and members of his administration also held out the possibility of citizenship at the end of guest worker service for those who have been long-time residents. This idea was popular with Vicente Fox, some Latino groups, and Bush's agribusiness and other corporate supporters, who'd been lobbying for years for expanded agricultural and high-tech guest worker programs.

Bush only belatedly recognized the strength of organized anti-immigrant sentiment within his party's right wing. Since legalization of undocumented immigrants is anathema to this sector, they oppose it with political passion.

### Legalization for the Undocumented

After taking office and floating his idea of temporary amnesty for undocumented Mexican workers, coupled with expanded guest worker programs, Bush soon began to back away from his initial proposals, despite President Fox's enthusiasm for the plan. On September 5, 2001, as President Fox visited the White House, he referred to the need for the two presidents to reach “an agreement on migration” within the year. The next day, as he addressed Congress, Fox reiterated his call for “regularization” of illegal immigrants from Mexico in the United States. Bush, for his part, spoke about immigration in general terms, making no promises.<sup>1</sup> It seems that Bush only belatedly recognized the strength of organized anti-immigrant sentiment within his party's right wing. Since legalization of undocumented immigrants is anathema to this sec-



tor, they oppose it with political passion.

Americans for Better Immigration (ABI), a website that produces “immigration scorecards” on politicians and opposes immigration and “forced population growth,” complained about the vagueness of Bush’s statements on immigration and rated him as a supporter of legalization — a damning accusation. On their website, ABI said that Bush “showed a basic lack of knowledge” and “appeared embarrassed about being so obviously ignorant about an important policy issue.”<sup>2</sup>

Rightist anti-immigrant groups repeatedly raised several arguments in opposition to amnesty:

- Because guest workers will not return to Mexico, as stipulated in current guest worker proposals, temporary amnesty linked to a guest worker program will permanently increase the number of immigrants who remain in the United States.<sup>3</sup>
- Amnesty for undocumented immigrants rewards the “lawlessness” of their entry into the country. Instead, the INS should be strengthened so as to be able to identify and prosecute all undocumented immigrants.<sup>4</sup>
- Amnesty will provoke a backlash among White voters because the costs of supporting immigrants’ health care and education fall largely to White taxpayers, who, on average, earn higher incomes and therefore pay more in taxes.
- Any newly legalized Mexican workers will have primary loyalty to Mexico, not to the United States. This “dual loyalty” presents a threat to U.S. sovereignty because these new residents might place the interests of Mexico ahead of those of the United States.<sup>5</sup>
- When the federal government encourages population growth through relaxed immigration policies such as amnesty, it works directly against the interests of a clean and safe environment. Anti-immigrant groups point to immigrants’ “larger families” and “lower living standards,” which, they claim, explain immigrants’ role in disproportionately polluting the environment and increasing the U.S. crime rate.<sup>6</sup>
- Immigrants take jobs from native U.S. workers, adding to the number of unemployed U.S. workers.
- Immigrants slow innovation in technology because they provide low cost manual labor. If employers were forced to hire more costly workers, they would feel increased pressure to develop new technologies to replace those more costly workers and also increase productivity.<sup>7</sup>

### **The Republican Courtship of Latino Voters**

Could Bush have been ignorant of the opposition his amnesty proposal would arouse within his own party? Perhaps he was compelled, if ever so temporarily, by his desire to win support within the Latino community. The Bush presidential campaign understood that immigration has powerful symbolic resonance within the Latino community. As an indicator of respect and accountability, politicians must take up the issue of immigrant rights and show appreciation for the contributions made by Latinos to the U.S. economy and culture.<sup>8</sup> During the campaign,

Bush's nephew, George Prescott Bush, worked tirelessly to reach out to and win over Latino voters. "P," as he is called, is the son of Florida Governor Jeb Bush and his Mexican-born wife, Columba Garnica Bush. His flawless Spanish and good looks made him a virtual rock star within the otherwise stodgy campaign team. He embodied a message the Bush campaign was intent on communicating: there is a place in the Republican Party for Latino voters and here is an example of a young Latino who is fiercely loyal to the Bush Republicans.<sup>9</sup> Both the presidential candidate and his nephew took pains when campaigning in California in April, 2000 to distance themselves from Governor Pete Wilson's anti-immigrant positions.<sup>10</sup>

The combination of the Bush campaign's rhetoric and George W. Bush's interest in immigration reform early in his presidency raised hopes within immigrant rights groups. So it was especially disappointing to those immigrant rights advocates who had seen hope in Bush's proposals when he began to back away from those proposals after the Right's anti-immigrant forces mobilized.

Several rightist groups that oppose increased immigration argued that the amnesty proposal would not help Bush with Latino voters.<sup>11</sup> For example, in a 2001 Center for Immigration Studies study, "Impossible Dream or Distant Reality? Republican Efforts to Attract Latino Voters," James G. Gimpel and Karen Kaufman argue that because Latinos vote overwhelmingly Democratic, the amnesty and guest worker programs would only increase the number of Latino voters, but not the percentage of them who vote Republican. They argue that, with increased education and tenure in the United States, Latino immigrants, with the

exception of Cubans, become more, not less, Democratic. Further, Gimpel and Kaufman argue that there is no indication that a political party's position on immigration influences Latino votes. They conclude, "most Latinos join with other Americans in the belief that the current level of immigration is too high."<sup>12</sup>

Immigrant rights groups have countered with their own statistics. The Tomás Rivera Policy Institute published a statement in 2001 that critiques the Center for Immigration Studies report. According to an Institute survey, 41 percent of Latino voters say that their party affiliation is "not strong." The authors argue that the Bush administration could take Latino support away from Democratic candidates by acting on issues of key concern to the community, especially amnesty for immigrants.<sup>13</sup>

The Bush presidential campaign understood that immigration has powerful symbolic resonance within the Latino community.

### **The Role of Senator Phil Gramm**

While President Bush is often seen as the architect of the administration's policy proposals on immigration and immigrants, especially because of his "special relationship" with President Vicente Fox, in reality the driving forces behind immigration policy are three legislators: Rep. Howard Berman (D-CA), Sen. Gordon Smith (R-OR), and especially Sen. Phil Gramm (R-TX). At the end of the 2000 Congressional session, Berman and Smith proposed a bill that provides for guest workers to be put on a track to permanent residency and possible citizenship, if they work a certain amount of time in the fields. In exchange, growers would not be required to provide housing for guest workers and minimum wage requirements would be relaxed. The

proposal was opposed by Gramm and, with the inauguration of George W. Bush, it was scrapped. Gramm, though he is often vilified by the most extreme of the anti-immigrant voices as too pro-immigrant, is actually the most influential right-wing voice among immigration policy-makers.<sup>14</sup> Before the events of September 11 halted the debate over immigration reform, it was Gramm who worked most closely with the administration and appeared to wield strong influence over administration positions.

Gramm opposes legalization, saying that it would pass only “over his dead body.” Instead, he favors a guest worker program that would issue temporary visas to Mexican workers when they enroll, then would send them back to Mexico after a specified length of time. Gramm’s plan does not include an option for providing permanent legal status for workers.<sup>15</sup> His policy would both satisfy agribusiness’s desire for cheap labor and give a nod to President Fox’s desire for Mexican workers to have legal access to U.S. jobs and continue to send billions of dollars back to their families in Mexico. It would also create a tighter system of INS surveillance of Mexican farm workers, which would presumably allow for more accurate tracking of their movements and greater control over their repatriation to Mexico. In 2001, Republican Senator Larry Craig of Idaho proposed a Gramm-friendly guest worker bill with no amnesty provision. It would allow permanent resident status for undocumented farm workers who work for 150 days of the year for each of five years, a difficult demand for seasonal workers. Only work in the fields would count.<sup>16</sup>

Sen. Gramm has announced that he will be leaving the Senate when he completes his term in 2002. A number of legislators will most likely vie for leadership on this issue when Gramm departs, such as: Sen. Zell Miller (D-GA) (Vidalia onion fields), Sen. Gordon Smith (R-OR) (tree growers), Sen. Bob Graham (D-FL) (sugar cane), and Sen. Pete Domenici (R-NM), Sen. Larry Craig (R-ID), Sen. Jim Bunning (R-KY), Sen. Mike Crapo (R-ID), Rep. Sanford D. Bishop, Jr. (D-GA), Rep. Richard Pombo (R-CA), and others from states with strong agricultural interests.

### Earlier Guest Worker Programs

The guest worker program that Gramm supports is similar to those proposed in an August 2001 meeting by the Bush administration in high-level talks between the Fox administration and Attorney General John Ashcroft and Secretary of State Colin Powell. At that time, Ashcroft, Powell, and their Mexican counterparts announced a “shared commitment” to some form of guest worker program.<sup>17</sup> Public statements issued after this meeting and one the following month between Fox and Bush make no mention of the history of guest worker programs in the United States. Because past guest worker programs are seldom discussed by policy-makers, many people are unaware that the United States has had a very large guest worker program in the past, and it currently has a fairly modest one for farm workers and high-tech workers.

Since the time of Alexander Hamilton, U.S. policymakers have recognized the value of cheap and willing immigrant

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labor, and throughout most of the 19th century, U.S. legislation was designed to encourage immigration. Employers complained of a decline in the labor supply during the Civil War, a pattern that repeated itself during subsequent times of war.<sup>18</sup>

The Bracero Program, a system of formal and informal agreements to bring contract workers from Mexico to work in the United States, began in 1942. It was augmented in 1943 by the H-2 guest worker program. Both programs were intended to replace workers who had left farm work and railroad jobs to enter military service or take better-paying production jobs related to World War II. In 1951, Public Law 78, a formal Bracero labor-contracting scheme to replace farm workers during the Korean War, was passed and implemented. The Bracero and H-2 programs lasted until 1964, and were consistently characterized by problems of worker exploitation and employer abuse.

U.S. agribusiness grew along with the Bracero program, and between 1942 and 1960 it increasingly took over farming. Acreage was consolidated into larger and larger “farms” during the early years of the Bracero movement. Describing California during this period, researcher Ernesto Galarza writes, “The holding and management of land was increasingly dominated by large units as the small, multiple-crop family farm withered.”<sup>19</sup> As a result, the political clout of agribusiness interests steadily increased during this period.

Growers manipulated farm workers, especially with the ever-present threat of deportation, and used them to undercut unionization efforts in the 1940s and 1950s. Although on paper no bracero could replace a U.S.-born worker, that rule was openly flouted. Braceros were used to harvest cotton, sugar cane, sugar beet, grapes, lettuce, and other fruits and vegetables. In each case, this was very hard physical labor under brutal conditions of heat and exposure to

pesticides. Under U.S. law, 10 percent of their wages were to be sent by their employers to a bank in Mexico while they were under contract as braceros, to be paid back to them when they returned to Mexico. On March 1, 2001, four former braceros filed a class action suit in San Francisco, alleging that the money was never paid and that they are owed the withheld money plus interest. Even if this suit is successful, in 2002 only one million of the five million affected braceros are still alive to benefit.<sup>20</sup>

Congressional hearings on the conditions of braceros, held from 1953 until 1958, demonstrated the divide between those who supported the Bracero Program and those who wanted it shut down. Supporters of the program included many agricultural and growers' associations and argued that Mexican agricultural workers were needed as a result of a labor shortage created by the Korean War and changes in employment patterns following WWII.<sup>21</sup> They also argued that braceros were highly motivated, excellent workers, who by law, were provided better living conditions than other workers, and that the Bracero Program was a method of helping the Mexican people because employment put money into the hands of Mexican workers.<sup>22</sup> Those who were opposed the program, included a number of Democratic Congressmen, the National Catholic Welfare Committee, and the American Friends Service Committee.<sup>23</sup> They countered that no scarcity of labor existed, that international braceros were exploited through low pay, high company store prices, and arbitrary firings, and that foreign aid for Mexico would be a better method of aiding Mexicans.

As the Bracero Program grew, some unions, such as the National Farm Labor Union (NFLU), and its successor, the National Agricultural Workers Union (NAWU), opposed it, undoubtedly because the growers used braceros to lower wages of farm workers and to break strikes whenever unionized farm workers staged a strike.<sup>24</sup> But it was Edward R. Murrow's 1960 CBS documentary "Harvest of Shame," a moving account of the exploitation and degradation of farm workers that brought the Bracero Program out of the shadows and heavily influenced public opinion against it. In 1964, Congress rescinded the Bracero law.

### **Current Guest Worker Programs**

Although the Bracero Program was closed in 1964, the H-2 visa program, initiated in the early 1940s primarily to secure sugar cane workers and heavily backed by the U.S. Sugar Corporation, continued, and remains a government program to this day. The H-2 visa program, which applies to workers from all countries rather than Mexico alone, allows employers to hire "foreign" workers on temporary visas. In the 1980s, the H-2 program was split up into the H-2A program, initially for agricultural guest workers, and the H-1B and H-2B programs for non-agricultural workers. Under H-2A, not only farm workers are given temporary visas, but also workers in the fast food industry, taxi drivers, nursing home attendants, janitors, construction workers, housecleaners, restaurant and hotel workers, cannery workers, and employees of poultry and meat processing plants. H-2A workers must work for one specific employer, who must document that a U.S.-born worker is not available to fill the job, and workers must leave the country after 11 months.

The H-1B guest worker program gives temporary visas to various categories of workers in "skilled specialty occupations," including professional and high-tech workers. Employers favor this program for its ability to attract very highly skilled workers from other countries to work in the United States. without conferring the right to apply for citizenship. In the 1990s, the high tech sector was booming in the United States and unemployment in it was low, but since



2001, when the United States entered an economic recession and many high-tech workers began to be laid off, anti-immigrant organizations such as the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) began calling for H-1B workers to be deported.<sup>25</sup>

The H-2B guest worker program gives temporary visas to permit a worker to perform a specific job. The employer must request the worker and obtain certification from the Department of Labor that U.S. workers are not available. H-2B workers are allowed to stay no more than one year and their job must have an end date. By law, the worker must be paid a wage equal to, or exceeding, the minimum prevailing wage (set by the state where the work is done) for workers in the same position.<sup>26</sup>

In 1986, when a shortage of farm workers was predicted, Congress passed the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). This Act contained a provision assuring growers of a continuous supply of agricultural workers and established the Commission on Agricultural Workers (CAW) to assess its outcome. The legislation was intended to slow illegal immigration, improve the lives of agricultural workers, and protect the interests of U.S. farmers. In fact, it has succeeded only in protecting the interests of farmers.

All in all, the conditions of past and current guest worker programs, especially those applying to agricultural workers, resemble forms of indentured servitude, a practice supposedly long repudiated in the United States. H-2A, H-1B, and H-2B workers must work for one specific employer and are not eligible to remain in the United States beyond their specified periods of employment. If fired or laid off, they cannot seek other work, but must go back to their country of origin. An H-2A worker must be careful not to be identified as a “problem worker,” or he or she won’t be brought back the next year. Also, H-2A workers are not entitled to disclosure of the terms of their employment during recruitment, to safe transportation, or to access to federal courts. Although the H-2A program provides some protections regarding wages and housing, exposés published in *The Charlotte Observer* and *Mother Jones* magazine paint a grim picture of desperate farm workers who must endure abuses in silence or flee to an underground life as an undocumented person.<sup>27</sup>

A 1997 Department of Labor survey found that three out of five of all farm workers live below the poverty line.<sup>28</sup> Contemporary guest worker proposals do nothing to improve farm workers’ wages and working conditions. The GAO and the Congressional Research Service have reported that farm workers have at least twice the average national unemployment rate.<sup>29</sup> According to the Sacramento Bee, in 2001 the California Central Valley counties, where most California farm workers live, had an “enormous oversupply of labor,” with an unemployment rate of 13.5 percent in Tulare County and 9.5 percent in Kern County.<sup>30</sup> Farm workers have not shared in the benefits of global trade. Many federal and state laws designed to protect workers exclude them from coverage or subject them to special exceptions. Examples include overtime pay, occupational safety and health protections, unemployment compensation, collective bargaining rights, and child labor protections. Farm workers often do not even attempt to appeal to the justice system for fear of being fired. Minimum wage laws often are not enforced.<sup>31</sup>

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After the passage of IRCA in 1986, the practice of growers using farm labor contractors (FLCs) to supply farm help accelerated. Because the FLCs act as middlemen between the grow-



ers and the workers, growers now do not directly hire farm workers and are rarely any longer responsible for their housing. In most cases, the FLCs, rather than the growers, have been made solely liable for immigration violations under IRCA. With intense competition among FLCs, they underbid each other, and growers are drawn to the lowest bid and thus the lowest pay and benefit cuts for workers.<sup>32</sup>

## The Future of Guest Worker Programs

Because existing guest worker programs are characterized by these abuses, farm workers' advocates have in general opposed the renewal or expansion of guest worker programs. But in 2000 they and their Congressional allies agreed to a program that would lead to permanent residence for guest workers in the United States. However, when some Republicans, led by

The ongoing political struggle over immigrant rights and guest worker programs is not likely to occur along strict party lines. Among both Democrats and Republicans, there are those who oppose and those who support guest worker programs, as well as immigrant rights.

Senator Gramm, objected, the plan died in Congress. Then, with the arrival of the Bush administration, the debate over guest workers and undocumented immigrants revived in Congress and within the administration. George W. Bush quickly experienced first hand the conflict over this issue within his right-wing political base. Corporate employers, as well as individual rightist libertarians, support the practice of laborers crossing borders into the United States, in part because it increase the quantity and/or "productivity" of workers available to U.S. business. But cultural conservatives oppose immigration, claiming it profoundly alters the "American cultural character," which they believe to be based solely on so-called Anglo-Saxon values and practices. Two associations of business interests that favor expanded guest worker programs are the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Essential Worker Immigration Coalition (EWIC). Opposing them are large anti-immigrant groups such as the Virginia-based American Immigration Control Foundation and the Washington, D.C.-based Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR). The strength of the culturally conserva-

tive groups within the Right, and therefore within Bush's constituency, is bound to hamper the administration's efforts to accommodate its corporate supporters.

As a result of these ideological splits, the ongoing political struggle over immigrant rights and guest worker programs is not likely to occur along strict party lines. Among both Democrats and Republicans, there are those who oppose and those who support guest worker programs, as well as immigrant rights.

On the workers' rights side, immigrants' rights groups are generally ambivalent about guest worker programs, usually favoring them only when they provide workers with protections and access to permanent legal residency. These groups advocate for increased rights for immigrants and actively oppose the mistreatment of guest workers. Occasionally groups that tend to be liberal on related political issues will align with anti-immigrant groups in opposing guest worker programs because they "take jobs from native workers" or "harm the environment"



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by producing increases in population.<sup>33</sup> For example, a conservative caucus of Sierra Club members, known as Sierrans for US Population Stabilization, has tried repeatedly to force a change in Sierra Club policy in favor of greater limits on immigration into the United States. They argue, unsuccessfully to date, that to protect the U.S. environment, both birth rates and immigration must be reduced.<sup>34</sup>

Immigrants' rights advocates believe that in order for a guest worker program to be a just program, it must meet a number of requirements. The United Farm Workers, for example, insists that, in any acceptable and fair guest worker program, workers must always be allowed to accrue time toward obtaining permanent resident status. Further, "foreign" workers should have the same workers' rights as those guaranteed to U.S. citizens, such as the right to choose an employer, organize in unions, and voice and pursue grievances. Immigrants rights groups also oppose the separation of families through guest worker programs that do not allow spouses and children to accompany a guest worker, who may be in the United States for two or more years. Preserving family unity has always been a major goal for immigrant advocates. And finally, legalization programs and fair and just guest worker programs must apply to all nationalities.

Labor unions are usually not supportive of guest worker programs because they allow employers to hire workers at sub-union wages and use immigrant workers to break strikes. But as U.S. unions have turned their attention to organizing immigrant workers, they have become sensitized to the needs of these workers. As a result, it is now more common to see labor unions supporting legalization for immigrant workers who are here in the United States, but still rare for unions to advocate for expanded guest worker programs.<sup>35</sup>

None of the guest worker programs currently under consideration would provide guarantees of full rights for immigrant workers. As Charles Kamasaki, a senior vice president of the National

Council of La Raza, has said about guest worker programs, “We think workers are inherently exploitable if they don’t have freedom to move and freedom to quit.”<sup>36</sup> Even a conservative publication such as *The National Review* acknowledges that, although most proposed guest worker programs include an impressive number of protections for workers, because those protections are rarely enforced, these programs are unlikely to alter the history of constricted rights for guest workers.<sup>37</sup>

### The Effect of September 11

Immigrant rights groups have been seriously harmed by the events of September 11. The association between the attacks and immigrants in the minds of voters has created a complex shift in public sentiment about immigrants. On one hand, many leaders, including many political leaders, urge tolerance for immigrants, especially Arabs or those mistaken for Arabs, who might be unjustifiably blamed for September 11 or associated with terrorism or terrorists. On the other hand, there is a new wariness of all “outsiders” and a circling of the wagons to protect U.S. safety and security. Phyllis Schlafly is just one of the many right-wing voices calling for the closure of U.S.

borders on the grounds that both legal and “illegal” immigrants “endanger America” because they bring terrorism, disease, and advance Mexico’s “longtime goal to open the U.S. border.”<sup>38</sup> The anti-terrorism legislation pushed through Congress by the Bush administration in 2001 contains new restrictions on immigrants. The very name of Bush’s counter-terrorism office, the Office of Homeland Security, expresses an inward-looking nationalism.

Meanwhile, George W. Bush is temporarily free of the tensions between his agribusiness and other corporate supporters and his supporters in the anti-immigrant sector of the Right. In this atmosphere, legislation that truly addresses the needs of immigrants seems unlikely to pass. Even agribusiness, with its heavy-handed lobbying for cheap labor through guest worker programs, will garner little support in a declining economy in which unemployment among U.S. workers grows weekly.<sup>39</sup> And in the case of high-tech workers, the collapse of that sector of the economy, which deepened the 2001 recession, has led to a backlash against the H-1B program.<sup>40</sup> So long as expanded guest worker programs and legalization programs for undocumented immigrants are unlikely to be advanced in Congress, the Bush administration won’t have to resolve its internal contradictions, leaving immigrants in their current marginalized and vulnerable position within U.S. society. As Cathi Tactaquin of the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights says, “We are now having to address a re-invigoration of the ‘national security’ framework on immigration. This not only delays much-needed reforms, but puts a number of issues back on the table, including increased border enforcement, lack of due process, racial profiling, and a resurgence of harassment and hate crimes against Arabs, South Asians and others.”<sup>41</sup>

During nearly every national crisis, immigrants have faced scapegoating, harassment, and intolerance in many forms. But immigrant rights groups are strong, well networked, and increasingly sophisticated, and they have some important allies in Congress.

Immigrant rights groups have been here before. Not only after the Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor in 1941, but during nearly every national crisis, immigrants have faced scapegoating, harassment, and intolerance in many forms. But immigrant rights groups are strong, well networked, and increasingly sophisticated, and they have some important allies in Congress. They understand their work as a long-term project and will not be defeated by the setback to their progress that has resulted from the September 11 attacks.

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38. Phyllis Schlafly, "Security Starts at Our Borders," *The Phyllis Schlafly Report*, vol. 35, no. 4 (November, 2001).
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## Nationalism

Nikhil Aziz and Chip Berlet

“Nationalism is one of the most powerful forces in the modern world,” say social scientists John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith. This is true even in these times of globalization when one might think we have a weakened nation-state system. If anything, the real and perceived effects of globalization on peoples across the globe have reinforced nationalism—as much in the United States as in Iran or India.

The tragic attack in New York on September 11, 2001 witnessed a groundswell of nationalism within the United States, gripping the political leadership as well as common people. Political leaders quickly attempted to mobilize support for their agenda through the use of nationalistic rhetoric and imagery. From the President on down, politicians, pundits, and pollsters portrayed the conflict in simplistic and stark terms of good versus evil. This us/them dichotomy saw the “them” sometimes explicitly identified as particular individuals or organizations, and at other times saw people of Middle Eastern or South Asian descent and immigrants being tarred collectively with the terrorist brush. Flying the U.S. flag and wearing red, white, and blue became rallying points around which people were mobilized, and nationalism and patriotism were proudly displayed. Yet, there were those who for all the flags they might have flown and the national colors they might have worn still were made to feel, or were seen as, less than “real Americans.” Most of them were immigrants and most were also Middle Eastern or South Asian.

### The Nation as an Imagined Community

Nationalism is an ideology grounded in the allegiance to one’s nation. It is crucial, therefore, to understand what the nation is to be able to understand nationalism. What is the nation? Benedict Anderson calls the nation an “imagined community,” meaning it is more imagined than real, limited in its scope, and can change over time. Why is the nation imagined? After all, it exists in very concrete and real terms. It has defined territorial boundaries, governments, populations, flags, anthems, histories, and all the trappings of what one believes to be the essential ingredients of a nation. We live in it. And we feel it. This perception is even more real in times of celebration or disaster. Anderson argues that the nation is an imagined community because “the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.” An individual often feels an immediate kinship with another based on nothing more than that they are from the same country, or because they happen to speak the same language or speak it in the same accent.

Anderson says a nation, “is imagined as *limited* because even the largest of them, encompass-

Anderson argues that the nation is an imagined community because “the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.”



ing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations.” There is always a “them” where the “us” ends. A nation is imagined as *sovereign* because it was conceived in the crucible of the enlightenment and revolution that dethroned absolute monarchs who claimed the divine right of kings. In the minds of its members the nation became the ultimate political authority. And, “it is imagined as a *community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.” Class, gender, race, sexuality, religion, and ideological beliefs that indicate difference can and often do get smothered within the common idea of nationality, usually on terms set by the dominant group. These differences also serve to exclude other individuals or groups, including recent entrants, from the imagined community.

It is precisely because the nation is imagined as limited and sovereign that it is inherently exclusive. Imagining the nation as a community does not erase this exclusivity. Certain categories of people are included within its self-construction based on particular and narrowly

defined criteria, and many others are excluded. This is true for all nations. Further, these boundaries are both materially and mentally constructed—the barbed wire fences, the deep moat-like ditches, and the armed and uniformed guards exist as much in our minds as they do on the ground.

A nationalism that promotes the belief that immigrants are not just outsiders but inferior or potentially harmful... contradicts our democratic principles of equality, diversity and pluralism.

While nationalism is inherently exclusive in that it excludes others, many nationalists are also exclusive in that they imagine their nation as the “chosen” one. The belief in the United States as the exceptional nation, without whose leadership the world system would not function, is sacrosanct not only on the U.S. Right but is prevalent across the political spectrum. And it is manifested in the baton-wielding role of global economic, political, and social policeman the United States has assumed.

### Implications for Immigrant Rights

Like their counterparts elsewhere, nationalists in the United States look nostalgically at a past that never was to provide a model for the future. Although they often pay homage to their predecessors and past immigrants, recent immigrants and other vulnerable groups are portrayed as different and become the locus of all the present ills. This is a pattern that has repeated itself consistently throughout U.S. history. The groups of people that have been excluded from the U.S. imagined community have included, American Indians, women, African Americans, Catholics, Irish, Southern and Eastern Europeans, Asians, Latinos, Middle Easterners, Haitians, lesbians and gays, and throughout this time, immigrants. Recent demographic changes and economic restructuring in the United States have led to another rise in nativism and nationalism fuelling anti-immigrant sentiment and an attack on immigrant rights. Each economic downturn, societal change, and wave of immigration causes a backlash and a vain move to reimagine the community along more homogenous lines. Although nationalism in the United States professes diversity as an ideal, it negates it in practice.

What are the implications of nationalist ideas for the work of U.S. immigrant rights advocates?



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It is clear that we need to work against the negative expressions and effects of nationalism. Recognizing that the nation is imagined helps us to challenge nationalism on different levels. A nationalism that promotes the belief that immigrants are not just outsiders but inferior or potentially harmful, helps justify policies that regulate their entry, whereabouts, length of stay, and access to services and legal rights. But it also contradicts our democratic principles of equality, diversity and pluralism. We can try to redefine the U.S. nation on more inclusive terms, so that recent immigrants, people of color and other frequently marginalized groups are included in the nation without having to pass a higher bar than others do. This approach reaffirms a commitment to the fundamental goals of a democratic state.

Nevertheless nationalism's coercive influence, which requires allegiance to an idealized nation, can be difficult to oppose, especially in times of national distress. To effect long term change, an alternative to nationalism may be necessary. We can challenge the nation as the primary means of identification, encouraging people to think of themselves as part of a global community and to identify with people all over the world. This will help us to advance human rights everywhere, over and above national rights.

Finally, we can see that believing in the uniqueness and superiority of the United States, as well as placing U.S. interests above all others, affects not just immigration policy but foreign policy as well. This suggests necessary coalition work, especially in the aftermath of the attacks on September 11, that can strengthen both the immigrant rights and international human rights movements. All in all, gaining a better understanding of nationalism and other factors that affect anti-immigrant initiatives can help activists forge more effective responses.

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## Nativism

Chip Berlet, Mitra Rastegar, and Pam Chamberlain

### Introduction

Since the September 11 attacks, there has been a surge in nativist and anti-immigrant sentiment as commentators on the Right have called for increased vigilance to root out the enemy within U.S. borders. They define the enemy as Muslims and Arabs whose allegiances to Islam, to their ethnic communities, and allegedly to their nations of origin are said to be a direct threat to the United States and its citizens. Even when acknowledging that a majority of Muslims or Arabs are not seeking to subvert or destabilize the United States, commentators refer to a significant minority of “Islamists” or militants who have seamlessly integrated themselves into those communities. Daniel Pipes, Director of the Middle East Forum and frequent TV talk show guest, says that this “Islamist” element of 10 to 15 percent of the total Muslim population may seem “. . . peaceable in appearance, but they all must be considered potential killers.”<sup>1</sup> Quoting Pipes, James Fulford, on the White Nationalist forum VDARE.com, proclaimed, “That’s an army of about 750,000 already present in the US.” He also cited a study alleging that most Muslim immigrants and one-third of Muslim converts felt greater allegiance to another country than to the United States.<sup>2</sup>

John Podhoretz in the *New York Post* and Martin Peretz in the *New Republic* both warned that the United States houses a “fifth column,” hidden groups sympathetic to outside threats, most likely of Middle Easterners. As Peretz put it, “these killers are not randomly distributed throughout the population. They are disproportionately located in certain religious and ethnic communities.”<sup>3</sup> Debbie Schlüssel on the conservative website TownHall.com, spoke of her home community in southeast Michigan, which she (incorrectly) says has the largest concentration of Arabs outside the Middle East, as “Ground Zero for those who aid and abet the perpetrators.”<sup>4</sup> She also said that leaders within the Arab and Muslim American communities have stood up for known terrorists by opposing the use of secret evidence and racial profiling.

This heightened scrutiny of the loyalties and allegiances of Middle Eastern and South Asian Americans has corresponded to an increase in hate crimes and racial profiling against these and other groups. Hate crimes have been reported in over thirty states all over the country, against people who are Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Arab, Pakistani, Afghan, Indian, Iranian, Turkish, Greek, Latino and Native American.

The recent rise in suspicion of people from the Middle East and South Asia is not an aberration within the context of U.S. history. In fact, this country has a long history of distrust, persecution and exclusion of those seen as having foreign ties and questionable allegiances. Major social movements have been based on the belief that certain ethnic, racial or political groups are by definition disloyal. These movements are commonly described as nativist.

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## What is Nativism?

Nativism, combining xenophobia, or a fear of outsiders, with chauvinistic nationalism [see *article on nationalism*, p. 45 of this kit], or a belief in the superiority of one's homeland, is a potent ideology that has found roots in various societies around the globe. In nativism, the xenophobia appears as a fear of or disdain for people or ideas that are seen as foreign, strange, or subversive, though not all foreign-born are targeted. This finds expression in a form of nationalism that doubts the suitability for citizenship (or even residency) of those suspected of being unable or unwilling to function as loyal and patriotic citizens.

In the United States, the term nativism was first used to describe several political and social movements that flourished between 1830 and 1925. When it emerged in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, nativism marshaled a backlash against newly arrived immigrants who did not fit the mold of the “ideal” citizen or “real” American, which was essentially someone who was White (Anglo-Saxon) and Protestant. Nativism, however, is not simply the dislike of immigrants but an “intense opposition to an internal minority on the ground of its foreign (i.e., ‘un-American’) connection.”<sup>5</sup> Thus, “real” Americans must protect the nation from these “alien” intruders. The nativist litmus test can use race, country of origin, religion, language, loyalty to foreign regimes, or dissident political philosophy. Popular Protestant bigotry toward Catholics and other religious traditions simultaneously integrated with and inspired nativism, especially through some interpretations of Protestant Fundamentalism.

While nativism as a major mass movement collapsed in the late 1920s, it continues to flourish both thematically and in small subcultures. Anti-immigrant and “English-Only” groups that gained popularity in the 1990s represented a revival of nativist sentiments, though many shied

away from the most baldly chauvinist rhetoric that characterized the earlier movements. These anti-immigrant groups have had significant successes, but it is debatable whether they have achieved the same national status as earlier nativist movements. Whenever Protestant Evangelicals call for the defense of a Christian nation under attack, there are echoes of nativism. A racial-nationalist form of nativism resides in the contemporary Extreme Right, including various Ku Klux Klan units and neonazi groups such as Aryan Nations, The World Church of the Creator, and the National Alliance.

## Forms of Early U.S. Nativism

American nativism emerged as three varieties, each with roots planted before the Civil War: anti-Catholicism, antiradicalism, and Anglo-Saxon racialism.<sup>6</sup> Various strains of Protestantism have embraced one or more of these tendencies at points in their history.

### *Anti-Catholicism*

Richard Hofstadter called early American anti-Catholicism “the pornography of the Puritan.”<sup>7</sup> Early Protestant settlers saw a “great war going on in the Western world between political reaction and [Catholic orthodoxy] on one side and political and religious liberties on the other;” while a common view was that “America was a bastion of freedom, and hence an inevitable target for popes and despots.”<sup>8</sup> Similar rhetoric after September 11 claims the United States was attacked for its belief in freedom.

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Scholars have documented that many colonies passed laws restricting the rights of Catholics. By the end of the American Revolution, “seven states, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Connecticut, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia insisted on Protestant office holders and other states inflicted additional liabilities on Catholics in their constitutions.”<sup>9</sup>

In the opinion of many Protestant nativists, “Catholic traditions continued to look dangerously un-American partly because they did not harmonize easily with the concept of individual freedom imbedded in the national culture.”<sup>10</sup> The authoritarian hierarchy of Catholicism also seemed wedded to feudal or monarchical governments of Europe. The influx of Catholic immigration in the 1800’s exacerbated this conflict.

### *Anti-Radicalism*

A longstanding fear that subversive radicals were conspiring to undermine the nation posed a special problem for U.S. nativism because it had to overcome the positive image of the American Revolution where colonial patriots were pictured as heroes for overthrowing the tyrannical rule of a European power. How could contemporary radicals be denounced for being revolutionaries? Anti-elitist European radicals were cleverly portrayed as anarchist and



socialist rabble-rousers threatening the stable republican form of government created by colonial Patriots. As John Higham explained, a “persistent contrast between a generally hopeful psychology of mobility in America and the more desperate politics born in class-ridden Europe has fostered the belief that violent and sweeping opposition to the status quo is characteristically European and profoundly un-American.”<sup>11</sup>

### *Anglo-Saxon Racialism*

Those who believed in Anglo-Saxon racialism argued that superior “White” racial stock birthed the people responsible for all the major advances of Western culture; and conversely that inferior racial types were diluting superior bloodlines and harming the future of civilization. In the 1800s, unlike today, someone who was Irish, Italian, or Polish was not considered “White.” Racialism moved from diffuse ideas of ethnic pride and a homogenous national character in the late 1700s to a pseudoscientific theory of supremacy that predominated in the late 1800s.<sup>12</sup>

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In this period, the idea of scientific racism was not only popular but was also taught in biology and genetics courses at major universities. When parents hoped their children married someone “with the proper breeding” they meant that in the literal, genetic sense. A nativist “eugenics” movement encouraged people with “good” genes to procreate, while those with “bad” genes were targeted for programs discouraging “dysgenic” reproduction. Sometimes this included forced sterilization.<sup>13</sup>

### **Nativism: Early Roots and Branches**

The roots of U.S. nativism can be traced to the 1790s and fears of subversion in the early days of independence. In 1798 John Adams secured the passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts which reflected the fear that foreigners on U.S. soil would not be loyal to the newly formed country.<sup>14</sup> When the anti-Federalist Thomas Jefferson became President, these acts fell into disfavor. Yet even Jefferson at one point suggested barring citizenship from any man “who took a title or gift from European powers.”<sup>15</sup>

A widespread anti-immigrant backlash fueled nativism during much of the nineteenth century. While we often think of the great waves of immigration taking place at the end of the nineteenth century, the U.S. population was expanding quickly between the 1820s and 1860s. In the mid 1830s distrust of immigrant foreigners was so intense that native-born Protestant political activists in New York formed the New York Native Democratic Association. Their primary targets were Irish Catholic immigrants. In New England, Samuel F. B. Morse warned that the “evil of immigration brings to these shores illiterate Roman Catholics, the tools of reckless and unprincipled politicians, the obedient instruments of their more knowing priestly leaders.”<sup>16</sup>

Another wave of nativism crested in the mid 1850s with the appearance of the Order of the Star Spangled Banner known popularly as the “Know Nothings” because the secretive group

told its members to say they “knew nothing” about the organization. From its base in New York State the group eventually recruited hundreds of thousands of members nationwide. The Know Nothings’ appeal was based on their ability to name immigration as the single cause of the structural changes in industry that were making skilled positions obsolete.<sup>18</sup>

The Know Nothing movement collapsed as quickly as it had emerged, and by 1857 was rapidly disappearing from the national political scene. Nativism retreated but did not vanish. After the Civil War, nativist themes were woven into the “middle-class reform movements” of the late 1800s, and “crusaders for temperance and for women’s rights assailed the immigrant’s subversive, European attitudes on these problems.”<sup>19</sup>

The passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act resulted from nativist organizing. Chinese immigrants were also targets of violence from the West Coast to the Rocky Mountain States. Antipathy toward Chinese, Japanese, and Indian immigrants flourished nationwide well into the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The threat of Bolshevism and anarchism emerged as a major nativist issue after World War I. Beginning in late 1919, the Palmer Raids, a series of arrests and deportations by the federal government that targeted Russian and Italian immigrants, were justified as needed to block anti-American plots. This countersubversion hysteria was often racialized, with deportation ships carrying immigrants and their “alien” ideas back to Italy and Russia. The trial and execution of Sacco and Vanzetti, two anarchist immigrants in Brockton, Massachusetts, took place at the height of this wave of nativism. The 1924 National Origins Act set immigration quotas favoring Northern Europeans over people from Southern Europe, Asia, and Africa. At the same time, a nativist “Americanization” campaign sought to teach the remaining immigrants the proper character traits for true citizenship.

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The popularity of Americanization helped reinvigorate the Ku Klux Klan, which in the 1920s attracted somewhere between 2 to 5 million members. KKK supporters captured political control of Indiana, and influenced state politics nationwide. The Klan’s “attacks on Catholics and foreigners and the vows to protect imperiled American women” tied it to earlier nativist movements.<sup>20</sup>

## 20th Century Nativism

World War II saw a wave of nativism directed against Japanese Americans, most vividly manifested in the internment of 127,000 Japanese Americans, both U.S.-born citizens and immigrants legally barred from naturalization. After WWII, the distaste for European Fascism and Nazism made it difficult for nativist activists to build a mass base, although the McCarthy period Red Scare contained elements of nativist countersubversion. White anti-integration groups in the 1960s, such as the Citizens’ Councils, revived nativist themes in attacking the Civil Rights Movement, and KKK terror had murderous consequences. Yet no national nativist movement emerged, civil rights legislation was passed by Congress, and the 1965 Immigration Act ended the discriminatory quota system installed in 1924. Ironically, it was this legislation

that fueled the modern anti-immigrant movement. Reviled by anti-immigrant groups, this Act made family reunification the primary rationale for admitting immigrants, resulting in many more newcomers of color.

With *The Bell Curve*, by Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray, the 1990s saw a renewal of the biological determinist claim that genetic racial differences accounted for social and economic inequalities.<sup>21</sup> Though these claims were refuted,<sup>22</sup> racist arguments remained the subtext for many policy debates over street crime, welfare, and immigration, as well as political campaigns by David Duke and Patrick Buchanan. Anti-immigrant organizing garnered national headlines with the 1994 passage of California's Proposition 187 barring undocumented immigrants from many public services. Voters in several states passed popular initiatives and referenda promoting English as the only proper language for education, documents, or signage.

### September 11, 2001

As we have already seen, many commentators have perpetuated nativist fears of people of Middle Eastern and South Asian descent because of what is presented as their conflicting allegiances to “un-American” forces, most prominently Islam. Whether presented as passively complicit in terrorism or as a functional “fifth column,” the message is that these communities are harboring traitors. Clearly, these sentiments have their roots in a long history of suspicion and animosity towards those seen as foreign, an entity that has changed forms but continues to have some consistent features. One of these is that the group under suspicion must overcome great obstacles to be seen as patriotic or trustworthy. Calls to the Muslim and Arab communi-

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ties to more forcefully denounce terrorism, or to reclaim Islam from those who have perverted it, imply that failure to do so indicates support for the attacks. Despite the Bush administration's symbolic (and important) attempts to show solidarity with select Muslim communities, the long-standing demonization of Islam and of Middle Eastern and South Asian cultures in general has continued.

The anti-immigrant movement found its most recent opening into the national conversation following September 11. Their portrayal of recent immigrants as threatening on multiple levels could now find its expression in a very concrete and horrifying event. Groups such as Federation for American Immigration Reform, Center for Immigration Studies (CIS), and Negative Population Growth implied that if their

proposed immigration policies had been adopted, then the attacks might have been averted.<sup>23</sup> Glenn Spencer of the small but outspoken California group, Voices of Citizens Together, put out emails calling on supporters to contact their elected officials and demand that all noncitizens leave the country immediately.<sup>24</sup> Nowhere in this barrage of scapegoating was an acknowledgement that substantial numbers of people killed in New York were themselves immigrants and people of color.

While some of the more mainstream anti-immigrant groups have joined the Bush administration in denouncing those who blame immigrants specifically (CIS said, “we must be careful not

to seek scapegoats among the foreigners who live among us”<sup>25</sup>), they have also contributed a nativist tone to the current political discussion. For them, scapegoating immigration is an acceptable response to virtually every social, economic and environmental problem, including attacks from abroad. Whether they are criticizing the immigration policy or the immigrants themselves, the goals of these groups are the same: to keep immigrants, 85 percent of whom are people of color, out of the United States. Only then will they feel that the nation can be safe from harmful influences that exist within our borders and are inevitably linked to the external forces that threaten the country. The real threat, however, is that nativism’s basic beliefs obstruct a vision of democracy for this country that attempts to embrace all people. Looking at the history, organizational structure and the relative success that past nativist movements have had in institutionalizing restrictionist attitudes can help us understand the current cycle of nativism and its potential harm.

## End Notes

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5. John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism 1860–1925* (New York: Atheneum), 4. See also, Chip Berlet and Matthew N. Lyons, *Right-Wing Populism in America: Too Close for Comfort* (New York: Guilford Press, 2000); David Brion Davis, ed., *The Fear of Conspiracy: Images of Un-American Subversion from the Revolution to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1971); Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab, *The Politics of Unreason: Right-Wing Extremism in America, 1790-1970* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970); Leo P. Ribuffo, *The Old Christian Right: The Protestant Hard Right from the Great Depression to the Cold War* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983).
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7. Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays* (New York: Knopf, 1965), 21.
8. *Ibid.*, 19.
9. Ray Allen Billington, *The Origins of Nativism in the United States 1800-1844* (New York: Arno Press, 1974), 39.
10. Higham, *Strangers*, 6.
11. Higham, *Strangers*, 7-8. The roots of this fear of subversion trace back to the 1790s when a series of books and pamphlets (first published in Europe) warned that a conspiracy of the secret Illuminati society operating within the Freemasons was plotting to overthrow all world governments. This echoes apocalyptic themes in the Biblical book of Revelation which contains prophesies of an End Times conspiracy to build a One World Government in league with the Satanic Antichrist. This prophetic vision continues to influence many Fundamentalists today.
12. Key texts include the 19th century works of Gobineau, Frances Galton’s 1870 *Hereditary Genius: An Inquiry into Its Laws and Consequences*, and Madison Grant’s 1916 *The Passing of the Great Race*, which gained renewed popularity when reprinted in the 1920s. See for instance, Madison Grant and Henry Fairchild Osborn, *The Passing of the Great Race: The Racial Basis of European History* (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1923, 4th rev. ed.).
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