

MANY VOICES, ONE DREAM:

*A Collection of Insights and
Recommendations for Achieving
Meaningful Immigration Reform*

The _____
Reform
Institute

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Introduction

Immigration has become one of the most contentious issues facing the United States. The highly-publicized failure to enact comprehensive immigration reform in Congress, along with the elevation of immigration as a major issue in the current presidential campaign, has vaulted the issue to the forefront of the national agenda. This complex topic touches on a number of critical issues, including homeland security, the economy, and the values that will influence America's future direction. While these are important concerns, what is often lost is the fact that at the heart of this debate is people – people with the sort of hopes and dreams that have built this nation. To that end, the Reform Institute has invited prominent leaders across a wide spectrum, including in the business, academic, and faith-based fields, to submit essays on any aspect of this multifaceted crisis as part of an anthology of opinions and observations. The goal is to act as a clearinghouse in order to bring together these different areas of expertise by revealing common themes and solutions.

By highlighting a diverse group of voices that approach the issue from distinctly different perspectives, the Reform Institute hopes to underscore not only the complex nature of this issue, but also the common threads that weave through immigration in America. What emerges is a picture of a badly broken immigration system that defies a simple fix. It becomes clear that a comprehensive solution is required that balances enhanced security with meeting our workforce needs and

honoring our heritage as a nation of immigrants.

The inability of Washington to address the issue represents a colossal failure of government. This breakdown has created a void that is being filled by a national debate filled with invective and ill-advised policies at the state and local level. The environment has become so poisoned that Congress has been unable to enact smaller steps such as the DREAM Act to provide educational opportunities for the innocent children of undocumented immigrants or AgJobs to provide temporary visas for needed agricultural workers. With significant federal action delayed until after the presidential election, the heated rhetoric and misguided local efforts will only intensify. As the problem continues to worsen with federal inaction, we must think forward and filter through the rhetoric in order to reveal the crisis that is upon us, and the compassionate solutions we must pursue for the sake of the economy while also considering the need to secure our borders.

In light of Congress' neglect, states and localities have taken it upon themselves to address this problem. We are now vividly seeing the inherent difficulties in allowing local authorities to tackle a federal issue. The result is a patchwork of laws across the country that have been bottled up in the courts and have created much uncertainty and anxiety among families and employers. There is also a growing realization that concentrating on enforcement threatens economic growth and will do nothing to fix the dysfunctional immigration system.

While the opponents of comprehensive immigration reform have been vocal and well-organized, poll after poll continue to show that most Americans support a pathway to legal status to allow undocumented workers to stay and work in America.

The following essays demonstrate the overwhelming need for comprehensive immigration reform *now*. Each contributor drew insight from his or her own personal experiences or areas of expertise, and emphasized the need to focus on the humanitarian aspect of the debate, the border fence, the economic impact of

immigrants, or how we move forward as a nation. In conjunction with the Reform Institute's efforts to promote solutions-based reform in critical areas of public policy and to better inform this important debate, we hope to continue developing our anthology as more prominent leaders and practitioners add their voices at this pivotal moment in our nation's history.

Dr. Juan Hernandez
Senior Fellow
The Reform Institute

Chapter 1

The Human Element in Immigration

Increased federal raids and punitive immigration laws at the state and local level are creating an environment where the basic human rights of U.S. citizens and undocumented workers are being violated. The enforcement-only approach undermines core American values such as compassion and openness towards strangers. The increased number of deaths at the border, the tearing apart of families through immigration raids and deportations, and the bigotry and racial profiling that this approach engenders are all signs that the United States is becoming enthralled in a humanitarian crisis reminiscent of what we consider darker times in our nation's history. **Albert L. Reyes**, the president of Buckner Children and Family Ministries makes a faith-based argument for mercy towards immigrants. **Marguerite Pryor**, the mother of Reform Institute Board Member Pam Pryor, reminds us through her personal story that concerns about immigrants taking jobs and assimilating into our society are not new, but they have been overcome.

One of the more overlooked aspects of the raids has been the families of undocumented immigrants, many spouses and children of undocumented immigrants are here legally. A recent study conducted by the Urban Institute and the National Council of La Raza estimates that there are five million U.S. children with at least one undocumented parent. Their study focuses on the psychological impact on these five million U.S. citizens. **Douglas Massey**,

professor of sociology at Princeton University, brings the seriousness of this issue to light in his essay on the undocumented children who suffer for their parents' decisions. **Xóchitl Castañeda**, Program Director for the California Policy Research Center at the University of California, discusses the health care needs of undocumented workers.

"We cannot say clearly enough that persons who enter this country without legal authorization are not stripped immediately of all their rights because of this single illegal act. The Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution provides that no State may "deprive any person of life, liberty or property, without due process of law; nor deny any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." U.S. CONST.amend. XIV § 1. (emphasis added). The United States Supreme Court has consistently interpreted this provision to apply to all people present in the United States, whether they were born here, immigrated here through legal means, or violated federal law to enter the country."

– United States District Judge James M. Munley, *Lozano et al. v. the City of Hazleton*, No. 3:06cv1586 (E.D. Pa. Jul. 26, 2007)

Albert L. Reyes

Does Jesus Still have a Mission to the Poor, the Prisoner, the Blind, and the Oppressed?

Toward a Biblically Informed Debate on U.S. Immigration Reform.

The current immigration reform debate should be informed by a question that goes to the heart of the issue: Does Jesus still have a mission to the poor, the prisoner, the blind, and the oppressed? The last time I checked my Bible, Jesus announced his agenda to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim freedom for those in prison, to give sight to the blind, and liberty to the oppressed (Luke 4:14). In fact, my Bible also tells me that Jesus was an international refugee within the first year of his life. His father and mother took him from Bethlehem to Egypt to flee infanticide as well as political and religious oppression. The bible does not specify whether or not Jesus' parents were required to present immigration documents when they reached the Egyptian border.

The core issue at the center of the immigration reform debate is justice. Is it right for the United States of America to continue to operate a dysfunctional border policy that criminalizes under-privileged and undocumented immigrants seeking to earn a living to provide basic subsistence to their family while allowing American businesses to employ these workers at lower wages? Can we honestly overlook the fact that the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 was never really enforced? Carlos Guerra has rightly noted that "In 1999, only 417 Notices of Intent to Fine were issued to errant employers, a number that dropped to

100 in 2001, and to three in 2004." We tend to enforce the law on those that may not break the law purposefully and we have a track record of rewarding those who ignore the law to generate wider profit margins. Our current laws put both the employer and the worker between the proverbial rock and a hard place, producing an obvious ethical dilemma. Have we thought about the impetus for migration to the United States, like American international business practice that employs workers in other countries to work for sub-standard wages to increase profit margins for shareholders? We can't have it both ways and maintain integrity with our own laws, much less the agenda of Jesus.

Buckner Children and Family Services (www.buckner.org) has been serving children at risk, orphans, and families for over 128 years across Texas, the USA, and seven nations around the world. We provide care for children, humanitarian aid, economic development, and immigration training to a wide network of congregations who exist to serve undocumented immigrants. ISAAC, Immigration Services and Aid Center (www.isaacproject.com), was developed in collaboration with the Baptist General Convention of Texas and Buckner Children and Family Services, Inc. in order to provide much needed training for congregations and ministries who seek to appropriately guide undocumented

immigrants to obey the laws of the land while avoiding deception and theft of their precious resources. The ISAAC Project was designed to assist congregations' development centers that assist undocumented immigrants who qualify to become legal residents or citizens.

The United States of America must have secure borders, a guest worker program, and a legal path for those who desire resident status or citizenship. We are a nation of laws, but we are also a nation of compassion. Secure the borders? Absolutely! Mistreat the poor? Absolutely Not!

Douglas Massey

America's Unfolding Human Rights Crisis

The United States is currently in the midst of an unfolding human rights crisis that has received scant attention in the press and even less from public officials. It involves a large population of innocent Americans raised in the United States who, through no fault of their own, have been assigned an outcaste status that relegates them to the margins of American society and places an impassible barrier on their path to social and economic integration.

Until that barrier is removed, these Americans will languish in poverty, live in constant fear, and endure constant assaults on their mental health and physical well-being. They will be denied access to education and health care. They will experience severe discrimination in the labor market and systematic exclusion from the housing market. They will be banned from congregating in public. They will be denied access to social services that most Americans take for granted.

As precarious as this existence may seem, even it may come to an end at a moment's notice through summary arrest and banishment to an alien land for the crime of simply existing. Unless something changes, these Americans can do nothing but live day-to-day to make ends meet, working at a menial job with no chance of advancement. Their plight is the most pressing civil rights issue in the nation today, and no one is paying any attention.

The people to which I refer are the children of undocumented migrants who were not born in this country. Of the

estimated 12 million undocumented migrants, some 2-3 million entered the nation as minors in the company of their parents, often as very young children. They have grown up in this country, attended public schools, speak English, and most have graduated from high school. They have broken no laws and are guilty of no crime except obeying their parents. They want to go to college and pursue the American dream. But they cannot as long as they remain undocumented. They are trapped in an underclass.

One such person is Dan-el Padilla, who came to United States with his parents at the age of four. As a child, he was steered toward a private school in New York City by a caring social worker. There he discovered an unusual gift for classic languages and literatures and quickly mastered Greek and Latin. Without mentioning his immigration status, he applied to Princeton University, which admitted him based on his outstanding qualifications.

Dan-el became one of a tiny fraction of fraction of undocumented children who was able to continue schooling beyond high school. Each year at least tens of thousands of such people leave high school with nowhere to go except into dead-end jobs at the bottom of the labor market. Dan-el was lucky, however, and in 2006 he graduated from Princeton as the Salutatorian of his class with a 3.9 GPA and a full scholarship to Oxford University.

But the realities of undocumented status eventually come home to roost, even for Princeton salutatorians. In accepting the fellowship, he had to come out as an undocumented migrant, and even Princeton with all its resources was unable to do anything to resolve his unauthorized status. He was a deportable alien, and by leaving to attend Oxford he became ineligible to re-enter the United States for ten years.

Although Dan-el's case is unusual and indicates the absurdity of U.S. immigration policies, it is emblematic of their broader injustice and inhumanity. In the current immigration debate, there is strong public resistance to legalization; but whatever one thinks of undocumented parents, those who

entered as children are blameless. We have a moral obligation to lift from them the burden of illegality and let them get on with their lives. They are Americans and no matter what we say or do the vast majority of them will stay in this country.

The sooner we put the children of undocumented migrants on the right side of the law, the better for everyone. It is only just that we offer immediate and unconditional amnesty to any undocumented migrant without a criminal record who can demonstrate entry as a minor in the company of relatives. The United States has a humanitarian duty to get out of the business of persecuting innocent children for the crime of obeying their parents.

Marguerite Pryor

Mangia Mangia

I am an 86-year-old first generation Italian American. I am the youngest and only living member of my family. I lived through the Depression, World War II, Viet Nam, Desert Storm. My parents came to America in the early 1900's. I never learned Italian because my mother would say in her broken English; "Hey – you in America now! Speak a de English."

My father worked, and worked hard. Employers loved the foreigners (as we were known) because we worked hard. Americans who didn't want to work so hard wanted us all sent back home.

They sure liked our food, though. Pizza parlors popped up everywhere and Italian food became a staple in the restaurant industry.

One time in high school, (I went, my older brothers and sisters didn't) I had to bear the name calling – Dago, Wop, Ginnie – most of the times the epithets came from the Polish kids or the Irish kids. We were all in the same boat – foreigners who came through Ellis Island looking for a better life.

And we found it.

After World War II, my husband, whose name had been changed from the Italian "proia" to the American "pryor"

decided to keep his Americanized name as signs popped up: "No Italian need apply." "No Irish need apply." "No Negro need apply."

Unlike the "negroes" we could simply change our name and we looked like everyone else. And so we got employed, sent our kids (the second generation) to colleges and we flourished. Italian Americans were singers, actors and actresses, politicians and corporate leaders. Many changed their names – whether it was Tony Bennett or Connie Stevens or Eddie Fisher or my husband, Stephen Pryor. Recently, my daughter attended the National Italian American Foundation dinner in Washington, DC. It was a huge event and now, everyone wants to be Italian.

As I look at the current immigration debate, I am sad. I am sad because I see the same thing happening now that happened when I was growing up. My parents came here, without papers – it might have been illegal or it might have been made legal on Ellis Island, but we truly wanted to come to America for the land of plenty and opportunity. It was a land free of Mussolini and land full of freedom. In America you could be what you wanted to be.

Xóchitl Castañeda

The Ills of Anti-Immigration Policy for Latino Health in the United States

According to various government sources, 33.5 million (about one in nine) people in the U.S. in 2003 were foreign-born. Overall, there are 40.4 million Latinos in the U.S., 11 million of whom reside in California and 64% of whom are of Mexican origin. Latinos have traditionally been concentrated in border states like Texas, Arizona, and California, where they are projected to constitute a majority by 2040. For now, they are increasingly locating further from the border, oftentimes in communities that may or may not be prepared to receive them. This year, state legislatures introduced 1,404 pieces of legislation related to immigration, much of it designed to prohibit immigrant access to essential social services and benefits, including health.

The growth of international migration, particularly that which is undocumented, has created complex dilemmas and debates on the provision of and access to public services for immigrants. For the most part, Mexican immigrants are not looking for a free-ride of U.S. social services. They are workers, individuals that serve as the basis for the U.S. economy's service sector, and families. Still, the trend in recent decades has been to pass restrictive laws governing health insurance coverage for immigrants based on arguments regarding the possible impact of health insurance costs on public finances and as a means of restraining migratory flows and encouraging immigrants to return to their home countries.

The rapid growth of Mexican immigration over the past 10 years shows that these measures have hardly discouraged migration. They have, however, hampered immigrants' integration into their host communities and served to foreclose on possibilities for improving their living conditions.

It is of particular concern that the health and well-being of Latino immigrants in general and of Mexicans migrants in particular are poor. Approximately a quarter of Mexican immigrants live in poverty, compared to 10% of the general non-Latino population. Mexican immigrants use fewer key preventive services than non-Latino whites, and have the lowest rates of flu shots, dental exams, and cancer screenings in the country. The disadvantage is due, in large part, to many having no health insurance coverage and no regular source of care—conditions that are exacerbated by the low-wage industries in which many Latinos are employed, where health coverage usually is not offered.

These disparities have important public health implications, not just for Latino immigrants themselves, but for their communities as well. Because Latino communities, even families themselves, are made up of individuals with varying immigration status and degrees of acculturation into the host country, immigration policy invariably has had negative health consequences for these

communities as a whole. The current state of immigration policy in the U.S. limits social integration for Latino immigrants by fencing them out of basic social benefits and preventing them from demanding and exercising their labor rights. While migration is a function of a transborder labor market that has proved more powerful than the border controls with which the authorities have attempted to contain it, the policy of discouraging migration through discriminatory treatment of immigrants has enormous costs for Latinos in terms of health and wellbeing. The existing tension between market forces and current immigration policies is being paid for by Latino communities. Even with comprehensive immigration reform, policy must go beyond ensuring a cheap labor pool and consider immigrants' social and health needs. The United States has been built upon the work of immigrants. Today, it is important that we all recognize the contributions of Latino immigrants and welcome them as full members of society.

Xóchitl Castañeda has been the Director of Health Initiative of the Americas (HIA, Former the California-Mexico Health Initiative), at the University of California Office of the President, since 2001. A medical anthropologist by training, Xóchitl was educated in Guatemala and Mexico. She did a postdoctoral fellowship in reproductive health at the UC San

Francisco. She also received training in social science and medicine at Harvard University and she is a Doctoral Candidate at Amsterdam University, The Netherlands.

For over seven years, she was a professor and researcher at Mexico's National Institute of Public Health, where she directed the Department of Reproductive Health. In 1999, she received the National Research Award on Social Science and Medicine. Xóchitl has published more than 70 works and has served as a consultant for more than 20 national and international institutions. She also has served on the boards and advisory committee of various organizations, including editorial boards, professional societies and community-based organizations.

Her leadership has been key in the creation of binational programs to improve the quality of life of Latino immigrants in the U.S. During the last seven years, under her direction HIA has coordinated the Binational Health Week events in California and in 231 cities throughout the U.S. with the participation of over 87 consulates of Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador and Colombia. Through these strategies, hundreds of thousands of Latinos have received medical attention and are referred to public and private agencies to obtain services. She was elected to be an advisor to the Institute for Mexicans Abroad (IME), for which she served as the National Coordinator of the Health Commission for the U.S.

Chapter 2

Securing Our Borders While Protecting Our Values

In the post 9/11 era, some see constructing a border fence as the silver bullet for ending illegal immigration and making the country more secure. However, a closer examination puts that claim into doubt. The vast majority of immigrants that cross the border are desperate to provide for their families and earnestly yearn for the opportunity that America possesses. As Americans, we should realize that no barrier will keep people from life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Fixing our broken immigration policy and creating an efficient process for more immigrants to come here legally will free up resources and manpower to allow border authorities to deal with the terrorists and drug smugglers who pose the real threat to our security.

The Congressional Research Service estimates that building and maintaining the proposed border fence between the U.S. and Mexico would cost \$49 billion. Many with knowledge of the border doubt that the fence will be effective enough to justify its huge cost. **Robert W. Kelly**, Founder and Managing Partner for CenTauri Solutions, LLC, offers his insight on the practicality and efficacy of the fence based on his personal experience. **Oscar J. Martinez**, Regents' Professor of History at the University of Arizona, proposes seeing Mexico as an ally instead as an enemy. He

argues that cooperation will be more effective than a costly fence that will strain relations with an important neighbor.

Besides the enormous monetary price tag, the fence could cost us even more. As the nation that has brought down walls and has promoted freedom and openness around the world, we risk losing our moral authority by fencing ourselves in. Earlier this year, the Reform Institute partnered with Brickfish, an online marketing company, to create a 'Design Your Portion of the Border Fence' campaign. The campaign opened the immigration debate to a new demographic by offering a innovative way for younger voters to engage in the border fence debate and creatively express the message they feel that the fence conveys about the U.S. by virtually designing a portion of the barrier. The campaign generated nearly 2,000 entries and initiated a passionate, yet respectful online debate, unlike the spiteful one emanating from Washington. There were four winners: the grand prize winner for best artistic entry, the passion prize winner for most passionate stance, and the best American and Mexican side winners chosen by the winner's peers. The winning entries and associated posts provide a glimpse into the constructive discussion the campaign precipitated.

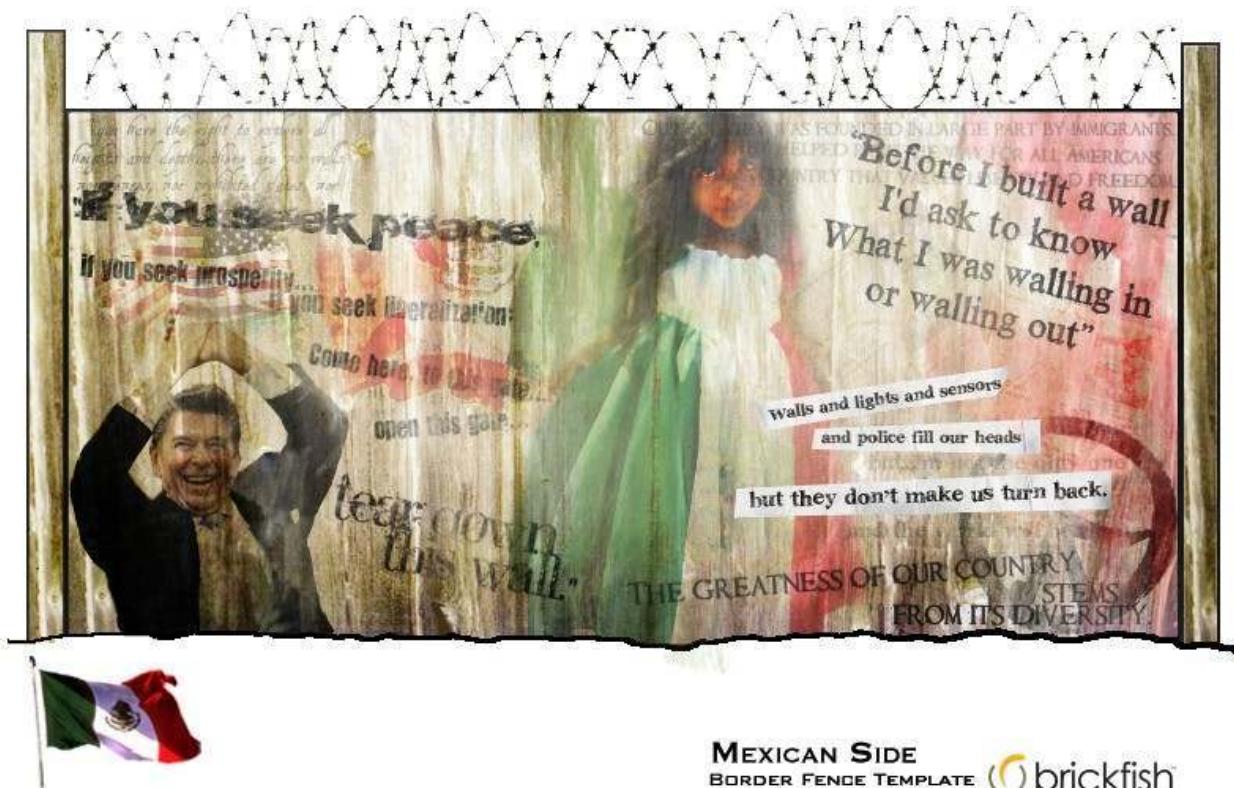
Grand Prize

"What am I walling out?" by Dan Mitteer

Description

Throughout history, mankind has acknowledged the ideas that walls and fences, or any boundaries really, create when erected. Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, Robert Frost, and others have all made objections to the ideological foundations

that walls are built upon. Our nation is attempting with a fence something similar to placing a hand over a water leak--if people are determined enough to get to America, they will regardless of a simple structure in their paths. Let's "tear down this wall," America.



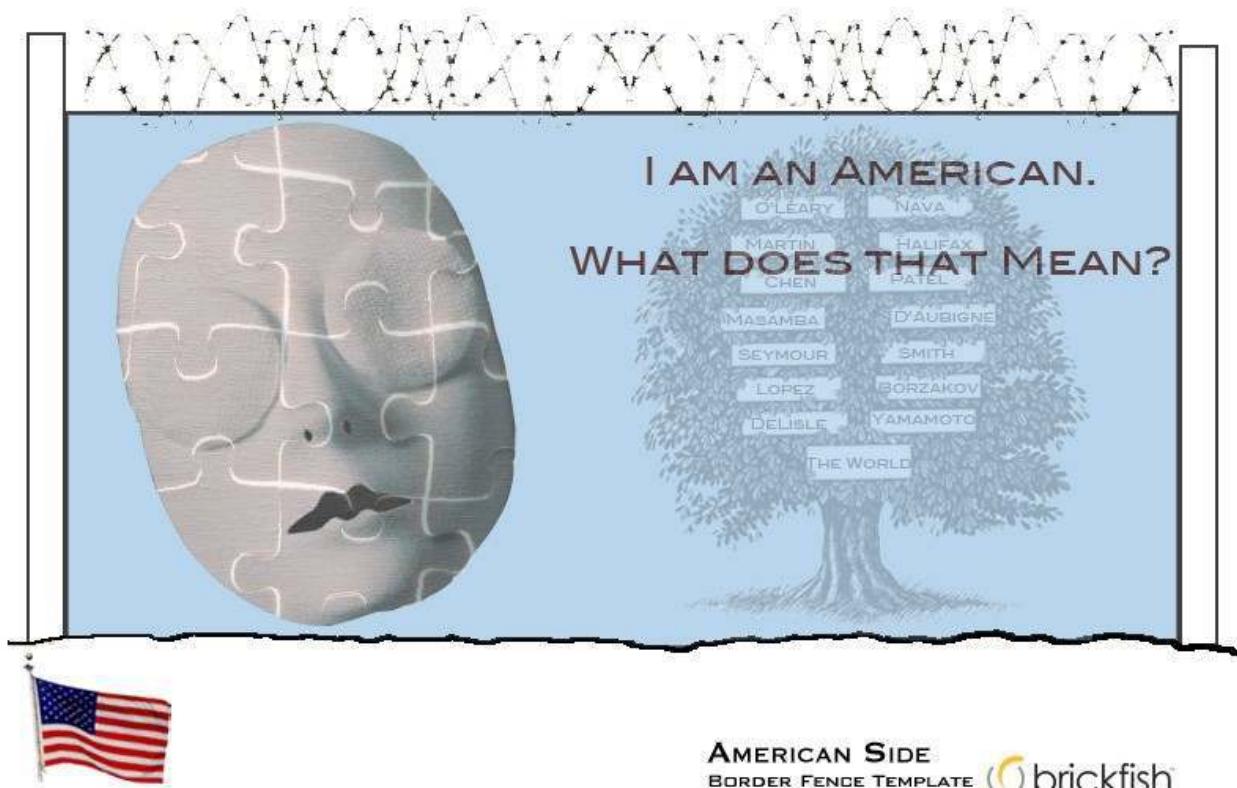
Passion Prize

"What does it mean to be an American" by Lierin Martin

Description

I chose to pose a question. What does it mean to be an American? I used a blank mask that was super imposed over puzzle pieces. Each person is made up of different nationalities, different characteristics, talents, and so much more. I wanted to focus

more on a familial aspect and ancestry. Beneath the statement and question, I included a family tree written with the surnames of different nationalities from around the world: O'Leary, Patel, Smith, Nava, etc. We shouldn't forget about where we came from.



rathena

8/13/2007 10:04 PM PST

wow!! i really like this one - great design - i like how you handled the mask too!! very creative and the tree with the names all stemming from "the world" is great cuz this country was founded on the immigration - on people seeking a better, more free life - this is great!!! i have to say that i think your concepts are some of the most creative and artistic in this campaign!! awesome - here's my support! and thanks so much for supporting me :)

The Urge To Sneeze

8/17/2007 4:36 PM PST

I could not vote for this enough. I really wanted to find a way to put "We are All Americans" in a design but you did it brilliantly.

Michelle

9/3/2007 10:57 AM PST

Can never forget our roots... Great

Michelle

9/9/2007 5:54 PM PST

what were the names of our founding fathers?... and don't we all seem to have a shirt tail tie to immigrants... well done

rathena

8/26/2007 11:09 PM PST

so true - the roots of america are buried deep in other's soil...

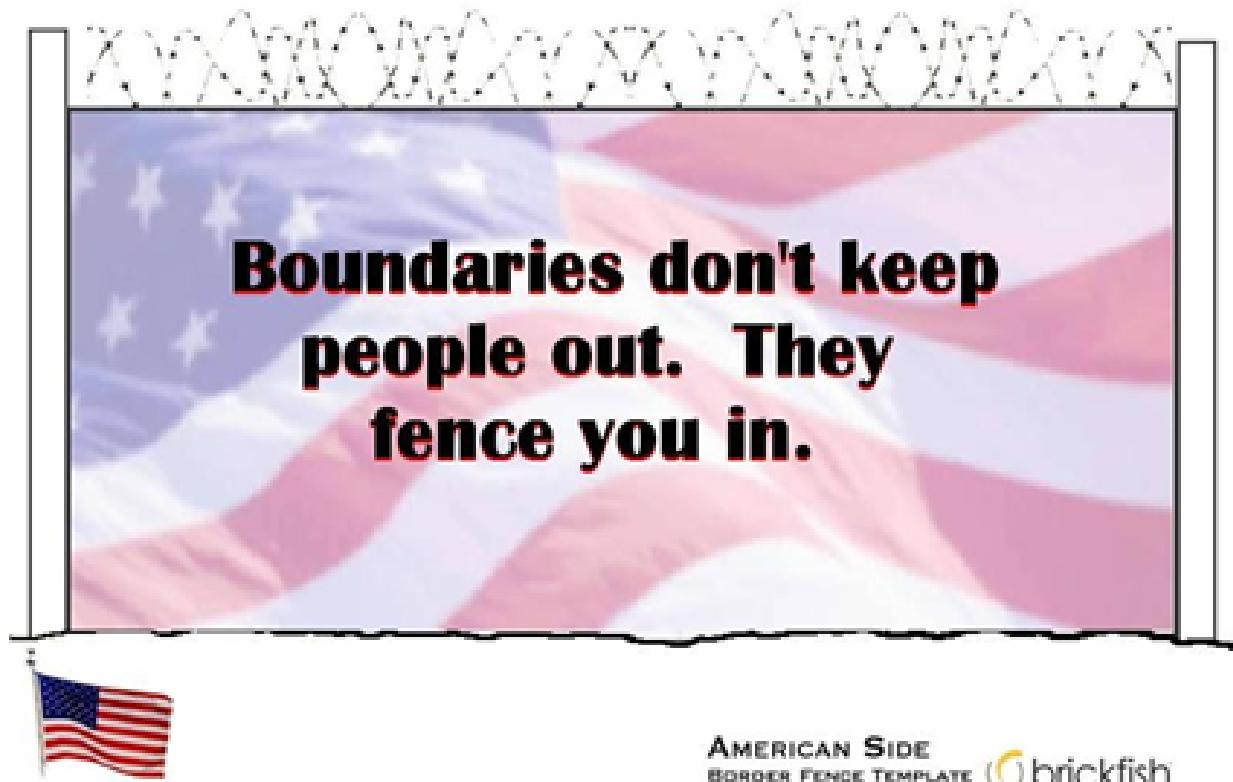
Best American Side

"Don't Fence Me In" by Kristin Ahonena

Description

American Border..... Art is a vehicle for the expression or communication of emotions and ideas. Although I have my own stance on this issue, my purpose is to create a

design which can be taken in different context. A true work of art is one that makes you think and allows you to form your own interpretation.



Ray

9/10/2007 3:33 PM PST

You have my support in any way! I really love your wall, since it has a concept I never thought about. After viewing all the entries, yours is the only one that made me stop and think," yeah, that's true." SUPPORT!!!

~Carolyn B.~

9/7/2007 3:42 PM PST

It is simple but the statement says a lot.... a lot that no one really thinks about.... so thatnk you for putting it out there.

Kimberly

8/12/2007 6:28 PM PST

You know, when I took this literally, it didnt make sense, but figuratively, it makes perfect sense. We Americans are being absolutely ignorant about what goes on beyond the United States soil. We're the ones who need to see beyond the fence. We're definitely fenced in. Slim chance the wall between the U.S. and Mexico will go down, but hey, there's hope. Here's my support, Kristin! ;]

karina

8/30/2007 6:46 AM PST

imagine if we were even more fenced in..i wouldn't be able to listen to foreign music...i love FRENCH!!! hahaha, there would be no such thing as French Kissing...hahahaha! but on a serious note!..i wouldn't be able to express my different cultures, and speak my languages..(español and un petite de Français)

Kara

8/29/2007 4:35 PM PST

They don't fence you in. There are obviously ways around a fence: boat, airplane, ladder, pole vaulting. If an American wanted to travel to Mexico, they have all clearance to do so. This isn't about keeping Americans out of Mexico, it's keeping illegal Mexican immigrants out of America.

Kevin

8/22/2007 5:15 PM PST

HEY KRISTIN! EXCELLENT BORDER DESIGN! IT SHEDS LIGHT ON THE DIFFERENCE FROM BEING CLOSED MINDED AND OPEN MINDED! I MEAN THAT'S REALLY WHAT DIVISIONS AND BOUNDARIES BOIL DOWN TO ANYWAY! WE CONSIDER THE STATES WE LIVE IN TO BE GEOGRAPHIC SITES ON THE MAP, BUT WE REALLY JUST LIVE IN "STATES OF MIND", OPEN OR CLOSED! STOP BY AND SUPPORT MY SONG! kEVIn

caitlin

8/22/2007 9:52 AM PST

i never want to be fenced in

Dora

8/20/2007 1:38 PM PST

I certainly like the stated phrase about fencing one in...YOU realise that the fenced one is the US population. ANd this I say because US asked Canada to tighten the border and oblige Canadians to have a passport while traveling 2wards US. Congratulation on your entry.

Jessica

8/19/2007 11:57 AM PST

I really like your slogan, beacause they just put a fence up around our school for homeland security. Then of course we had a fire, and there was only exit. So the firemen had to come in the door while 600+ people where trying to get out. They sure fenced us in!!!!!! Any way absolutly love your fence!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Lierin

8/17/2007 11:22 AM PST

Wonderful statement. I think there was some stupid joke somewhere, with a genie and 3 different races of men. It ended up that the American wished to build a wall around America, and one of the other guys wished to fill the resulting enclosure with water. Thus, Americans were screwed. I really like you message. Have some support!

Dora

8/20/2007 1:38 PM PST

I certainly like the stated phrase about fencing one in...YOU realise that the fenced one is the US population. ANd this I say because US asked Canada to tighten the border and oblige Canadians to have a passport while traveling 2wards US. Congratulation on your entry.

Livin Irie

8/21/2007 11:29 AM PST

Umm I see where your going with this and I like the concept..but I do think boundaries are needed or else everyone would run a muck!

Craz4life

8/23/2007 4:21 PM PST

Thank you very much for your continued support. I'm happy to return it. This is a great border design. Nobody's trying to fence us into the US, so why are we fencing them into their territory? Your border design just opened my eyes to so much I've been negligent and blind to as an American Citizen.

Guest #4271894

8/24/2007 3:04 PM PST

Gee, Disneyland has fences, walls, and gates. I wonder why Disney would have any kind of restrictions to fence people in....shouldn't everyone just be able to get

into Disneyland whenever they want? In fact, I should have a basic human right to get into Disneyland without following their rules or procedures....

Solve this issue with Disneyland, and you solve the issue with the whole immigration issue.

Ashley

8/24/2007 5:38 PM PST

You seem to be doing pretty well on your own, but I'll support this entry. I do think that boundaries attempt to do both, but the truth is probably in the fact that only one side of any fence is going to respect that boundary. The "problem" which inspired said fence is still going to try to go about its pre-fence business. I don't need to tell you that, though. Good luck to you and in whatever you may do if you win.

karina

8/25/2007 9:14 AM PST

yup..we would be fenced in, literally and mentally..we need to live with our neighbors and create alliances..why not invest in Mexico instead of throwing their cries for help in the garbage..

karina

8/26/2007 8:15 AM PST

support! btw, i meant that we could make money off Mexico, and help them out at the same time..we could make companies over there and pay them for their labor..etc..anyways,thanks for your support as well.. ^_^

Kara

8/29/2007 4:35 PM PST

They don't fence you in. There are obviously ways around a fence: boat, airplane, ladder, pole vaulting. If an American wanted to travel to Mexico, they have all clearance to do so. This isn't about keeping Americans out of Mexico, it's keeping illegal Mexican immigrants out of America.

Linda

8/31/2007 9:40 PM PST

The fence seems rather pointless to me--therefore I can easily support this. Imagine the irony if this message were chosen to remind everyone of what a silly idea it was ;]

Best Mexican Side

“Living on the Other Side” by Jasmine Florencio

Description

I decided to do a part of Mexico's side to warn them... Do they really want to come to America illegally when they're just going to be criticized for it? Life isn't going to be much better in America if you constantly have to worry about getting sent back to

Mexico because you're not a legal citizen. It'd be far better to come over legally...and maybe then the grass really would be greener over here. (everything in this image is done via Photoshop, no images used((except the basic wall outline provide)))



Ted

8/18/2007 8:07 PM PST

The grass is greener on the other side! But after closer inspection, you realize it's just spray painted astro-turf!

Nancy

8/21/2007 1:41 AM PST

Very interesting idea! Completely different from the other posters! Many people focused on the narrow-minded views of some, and although yours does that, it also speaks to the people involved. This poster reminds us, Americans, of the small pinhole we sometimes see through, and that perhaps the proclamation that we continue to spout out about being "the land of the free" is a harsh understatement. Good entry! Really gets the mind going. Sorry about my rambling! Support! Btw, thanks for your support! It was much appreciated! I hope you will continue to support my entries! Thaaaaanks! :)

Guest #4713162

9/10/2007 4:47 PM PST

GHUT46 SAYS" I dont know if the grass is always greener on this side. The grass can go yellow here too. People immigrate from America not to be in the war.

Gabe

8/27/2007 8:20 AM PST

I want to say that you have no idea what it is like being a Mexican in Mexico, or being a Mexican in America for that matter and thus in no place to judge what is "better"... but then again, I have no idea who you are. But let's not forget that it isn't exactly easy to get in legally.

Erica

9/12/2007 5:46 PM PST

You are amazing! You actually seem to "get" the whole dilemma behind the illegal immigration instead of being one of those who just want to chalk it all up to racism and hatred. Also -- OMG Thank you for actually DOING the artwork on your piece. So many people just copy and pasted that... well.. I just couldn't bare to vote for them no matter how much I liked their stance/message. So even though it's ending today, you've got my vote. :)

eric

9/12/2007 12:31 PM PST

In addition to the Mexicans crossing the border, there is the chance the terrorists would get a flight into Mexico and try and find a quick place to cross over to cause trouble and pain to Americans. Not that this is necessarily the most prominent reason for border security, but it is a reason.

Oscar J. Martínez

Smarter Alternatives to Building a Border Wall

I agree with those who point out that sealing the border with a gigantic wall would be exorbitantly expensive and would not stop undocumented migration. With or without such a barrier, poor Mexicans will continue to enter the United States as long as their economy is unable to produce enough good jobs.

So how can the anxiety of Americans concerning immigration and border security be alleviated? If a wall is not the answer, where do we go from here?

First, if we want real solutions we need to change our approach. We need to stop using the border as a political football and we need to stop acting unilaterally on issues that concern both countries. We need to acknowledge partial responsibility for border problems. It is in our best interest to work with Mexico and not against it.

Let's try using serious, good faith diplomacy for a change. Let's recognize that we need Mexico to resolve the immigration problem and to fight terrorism. Let's be willing to meet our neighbors half way in formulating solutions to border challenges.

On immigration, we need to acknowledge that both countries are responsible for the creation and institutionalization of the northward human flow. In reality, Mexican immigration is a product of long-standing interdependence and integration between the two economies.

The United States has benefited enormously from that relationship. Mexican workers have contributed massive amounts

of labor to U.S. agriculture, industry, and infrastructure. Mexican investors have poured tens of billions of dollars into U.S. businesses and real estate. And U.S. corporations have been great beneficiaries of exploding purchases of U.S. goods by people throughout Mexico, but especially along the border. There are now more Wal-Marts in Mexico than any other country except the United States.

It makes abundant good sense for the United States to pursue comprehensive immigration reform. We should create a workable guest worker program and make more visas for legal residency available to Mexicans. Americans should understand that large-scale migrations from Mexico will not last forever. With Mexico's rapidly declining birth rates, the desired economic-population equilibrium in that country will be reached in perhaps two decades. At that time few Mexicans will have a need to migrate to the United States.

On border security, the United States needs to think differently about how to best stop potential terrorists from entering the country through Mexico. A wall at the border will not stop folks who wish to do us harm because they will be able to go over, around, through, and under it. The wall will also offend and alienate ordinary Mexicans and officials, and they will be less inclined to assist us with terrorism control. We absolutely need Mexico's cooperation in keeping terrorists from distant lands out of Mexican territory,

where they can then make their way to the United States.

One thing we could do is work closely with Mexico to safeguard its airports, seaports, and coastlines. In addition, we could propose to Mexico that it consider establishing a “security line” along the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, the narrowest stretch of land (125 miles) in that country. It is infinitely easier to monitor a 125-mile corridor than a 2,000-mile one. Checkpoints in Southern Mexico would greatly facilitate the interception of potential terrorists traveling north via Central America toward the United States.

Addressing immigration and security problems with Mexico’s full-fledged participation makes much more sense than building a flawed border wall that will only make matters worse. Let’s be smart. Let’s construct a true, fair, respectful, and mutually beneficial relationship with Mexico that will produce genuine solutions to border problems.

Martínez is a Regents’ Professor of History at the University of Arizona and author of several books about the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, including Troublesome Border (revised edition, 2006).

Robert W. Kelly

Reality on the Border

In 1992 I was serving as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Drug Enforcement Plans and Support) and, as such, I was responsible for overseeing the execution of the then \$1.2B Department of Defense (DoD) Counternarcotics program. Reporting to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs who was “dual hatted” as the DoD Drug Coordinator, I was charged with seeing that the myriad of support that DoD provided to federal, state, local and foreign drug enforcement agencies (“DLEAs”) was effectively and efficiently carried out. The support provided by DoD spanned a wide range from the providing of military equipment, aircraft, training and construction to the actual conducting of counterdrug intelligence collection missions and the analysis of raw and processed intelligence products. A sizeable portion of the support was to the federal DLEAs – The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the then U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (USCS), the then Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), the Marshal Service and the Department of State’s then Bureau of International Narcotics Matters (INM).

During this period, the DoD counterdrug mission was still in its infancy; having only begun during 1989. It was a controversial mission area within DoD with many in the Pentagon taking the view that “we are warriors...not police officers.” Others embraced the mission.....sometimes with unsettling fervor. Fortunately, there seemed to be a large middle ground that was

comfortable with the notion “I may not be crazy about the mission...but I will salute smartly and help make it a success.” Members of Congress, also not surprisingly, viewed this new program from a variety of perspectives. A vexing problem took the form of many attempts by ‘helpful’ Members in earmarking pet projects to be funded out of the DoD Counternarcotics budget. They included the National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC) to be located in that hot bed of illicit drug activity – Johnstown, PA and the Gulf States Counterdrug Initiative destined for an underutilized Naval Air Station and to be named after a venerable Member of Congress from the same locale.

Several members of the Congressional delegation from Southern California offered up a hypothesis – not entirely supported by the evidence – that large quantities of illicit drugs were being transported (on foot) across the Southwest Border in the Otay Mesa area south of San Diego. Ergo, it would be a legitimate use of DoD counterdrug funding to reconstruct the border fence from Imperial Beach across Otay Mesa and into the mountains southeast of San Diego. Some skeptics (me included) theorized that perhaps the Members were less concerned with the flow of illegal drugs across the border than with the more visible and politically sensitive issue of illegal migrants.

The Members were successful in earmarking funds requiring DoD to rebuild the fence – an interesting notion since in

much of this area there was no existing fence to rebuild. When faced with this dilemma, our staff canvassed the globe for suitable DoD materiel with which to build a credible barrier. We learned that there were about 35,000 sheets of perforated steel plating (PSP) in depots around the world (typically used to construct runways in the absence of a normal airstrip). These large squares of steel (perforated for drainage) could be welded together and supported by pipes sunk in concrete. It seemed like we had a workable – albeit aesthetically challenged – solution and began the lengthy process of placing military engineers on the border to assemble the fence.

Not long after construction began I visited the border area and drove the border road with the then Sector Chief of the Border Patrol's San Ysidro Sector, which encompassed – then and now – the busiest international port of entry on Earth. We approached the border heading south on I-5 past the yellow highway signs – which displayed an outline of a family of three – and urged caution since pedestrians could often be found darting across the freeway. We drove the border road, parallel to the “new fence,” where I often spotted young Mexicans peering over the top of the fence; apparently the perforations provided handy footholds. As we approached a point where the fence intersected the Tijuana River – a generous description since the “river” consisted mostly of a trickle of water in an arid streambed with concrete banks and strewn with all manner of debris – we encountered several young Mexican males congregated around the end of the fence. I asked the Sector Chief, “Now let me get this straight. These guys are all headed north and they are not coming back? Right?” He offered “Would you like to talk to them?” I responded “I would love to.”

We approached the group and notwithstanding the Sector Chief's uniform,

badge, gun and vehicle they made no effort to move back around the Mexico side of the fence. The Sector Chief greeted them in Spanish and asked them where they were going. They responded that they were heading to Los Angeles. When asked why, they responded that the economy was bad in Mexico and they were going to Los Angeles to get jobs. When asked as to when they intended to commence this journey they motioned toward a U.S. Border Patrol unit that was parked in the nearby river basin and responded “As soon as those guys go to lunch.”

This comical story graphically illustrates the challenges that we face along our Southern border. As long as there continues to be the perception of a better life in the U.S. than what is offered in Mexico and parts of Central America we will continue to see people doing whatever is necessary to enter the U.S. – whether legally or otherwise. Our inability to deal with our porous border as well as our failure to realistically address the issue of what we do with the millions of illegals already here is irresponsibility of the highest order.

I have been to the border recently and my fence, in all of its hideous glory, still stands. Although it never provided the barrier sought by the politicians, in fairness, it did force illegal migrants, the “coyotes” that facilitated their journeys as well as smugglers, to be pushed toward several canyons where it was easier for Border Patrol officials to intercept them. There are other more robust fences currently being erected along other sections of the Southern border, particularly in parts of Arizona. All that these fences will accomplish will be to cause the illegal border crossers to select different, more remote areas of this vast and desolate landscape to cross. Sadly, until we as a nation address the core problems driving illegal migration, that is probably the best that we can hope for.

Chapter 3

Sustaining Economic Growth Requires Maintaining Our Commitment to Immigration

Immigration has always been critical to our economic growth, and will be even more so in the coming years. The aging of America and the impending retirement of the baby boomers will result in there not being enough workers to satisfy the needs of the economy. While economic anxiety is causing some Americans to believe the contention that immigrants are stealing American jobs and exhausting health care and other social services, the facts state otherwise. Immigrants are a net benefit to our economy. They come here to work, not to consume public services. Our dynamic economy requires the energy and entrepreneurship that immigrants bring to this country. We are already beginning to feel the effects of the immigration crackdown in the vast shortage of agricultural workers. Businesses are moving outside of the U.S. in order to fill jobs that Americans are not taking. Visa limits are creating a reverse brain drain by forcing American-educated immigrants to take their skills and knowledge overseas. In order to maintain its competitive edge in the global economy, America must continue to be the land of opportunity.

Phillipe Legraine, visiting fellow at the London School of Economics' European

Institute and a journalism fellow of the German Marshall Fund of the US; **Francisco Miravel**, Founder and President of Project Vision 21 and director of Project LEARN; **Dowell Myers**, a professor of policy, planning, and development at the University of Southern California and author of *Immigrants and Boomers: Forging a New Social Contract for the Future of America*; **George Diaz, Jr.**; and **José A. Pagán, Ph.D.**, Professor of Economics and Director of the Institute for Population Health Policy at the University of Texas-Pan American and Adjunct Senior Fellow at the Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics at the University of Pennsylvania, discuss why immigrants not only benefit our economy, but are actually essential to sustaining it.

"I can't think of any laboratory that shows better why you need a stream of immigrants than New York City. [...] If that isn't example enough as to why you need immigrants coming in, I don't know what to tell anybody [...] If they don't believe that immigrants add a heck of a lot more than they cost they just aren't looking at the numbers."

- Michael R. Bloomberg, August 14, 2007.

Phillipe Legrain

The US needs immigrants because they are different, and that something extra they add to the mix enriches the economy, culture and society. For a start, they tend to be enterprising and hard-working, because it takes courage to uproot yourself in search of a better life and because those with most grit have most to gain from doing so. Those who come from countries that offer fewer opportunities to their citizens than America does are more willing to do the low-skilled jobs that America's ageing and increasingly wealthy society relies on, but which its increasingly well-educated and comfortable citizens are unwilling to take - essential services, such as caring for the young and the old, and cleaning homes, offices and hospitals, that cannot readily be mechanized or imported. Others bring exceptional individual skills that American companies need if they are to compete in a global marketplace. And immigrants' collective diversity and dynamism helps spur innovation and economic growth, because if people who think differently bounce ideas off each other they can solve problems better and faster. Just look at Silicon Valley: Intel, Yahoo!, Google, eBay and many others were all co-founded by immigrants.

More broadly, immigrants broaden the range of cultural experiences available in the US, and this mingling of cultures leads to distinctive innovations. As John Stuart Mill rightly said: "It is hardly possible to overrate the value, for the improvement of human beings, of things which bring them into contact with persons dissimilar to

themselves, and with modes of thought and action unlike those with which they are familiar... there is no nation which does not need to borrow from others."

Fears that immigrants threaten American workers are based on two fallacies: that there is a fixed number of jobs in the economy, and that foreign workers are direct substitutes for American ones. Just as women did not deprive men of jobs when they entered the labor force in large numbers, foreigners don't steal American's jobs – they don't just take jobs; they create them too. When they spend their wages, they boost demand for people who produce the goods and services that they consume; and as they work, they stimulate demand for Americans in complementary lines of work. An influx of Mexican construction workers, for instance, creates new jobs for people selling construction materials, as well as for interior designers. Overall, immigrants don't cost Americans jobs: While the number of immigrants has risen sharply over the past 20 years, the unemployment rate has fallen.

Low-skilled immigrants tend to do jobs that American shun: virtually no Americans pick fruit, for instance. Even when immigrants do work in similar lines of work, they tend to compete only indirectly with American workers: a Mexican with little education and English is scarcely a substitute for an American high-school graduate. Even when Mexican construction workers work for lower wages than American ones, they don't necessarily harm them: if construction work is cheaper, more

people can afford to have their house done up, so employment in the building sector rises; and Mexican builders tend to do the low-end tasks, while Americans generally do the more lucrative higher-end work. Indeed, immigrants' labor often complements that of American workers, and thus boosts their wages: a foreign child-minder may enable an American nurse to go back to work, where her productivity may be enhanced by hard-working foreign doctors and cleaners.

Study after study fails to find evidence that immigrants harm the job prospects of American workers. Harvard's George Borjas claims otherwise, but his partial approach is flawed because it neglects the broader complementarities between immigrant labour, native labour and capital. A recent NBER study by Ottaviano and Peri

finds that the influx of foreign workers between 1990 and 2004 raised the average wage of US-born workers by 2%. Nine in ten American workers gained; only one in ten, high-school dropouts, lost slightly, by 1%.

Philippe Legrain is a journalist and writer. He is a visiting fellow at the London School of Economics' European Institute and a journalism fellow of the German Marshall Fund of the US. He was previously trade and economics correspondent for The Economist and special adviser to WTO director-general Mike Moore. He is the author of Open World: The Truth About Globalisation (Ivan R Dee, 2004) and Immigrants: Your Country Needs Them (Princeton University Press, 2007).

George Diaz, Jr.

It appears our nation is poised to ignore the mistakes of the past and continue with an environment that facilitates fraud, exploitation and discrimination.

The hostile tone of anti-immigrant sentiment continues to be discreetly and overtly fed by racist sentiment towards Latinos generally and Mexicans specifically. Simply put, hate sells. Just as it did in 1882 with the Chinese Exclusion Act and as it did again in 1942 with Executive Order 9066 that interned tens of thousands of Japanese-Americans.

Anti-immigrant sentiment has grown so hostile policy makers are reluctant to consider rational solutions. Those who dare to attempt comprehensive reform, like Sen. John McCain, Sen. Jon Kyl, Rep. Ed Pastor and Rep. Jeff Flake, are vilified by a community so virulent their attempts still consume their hateful forums.

The widespread hostility and racism surrounding immigration purveys simplistic ideas and poor solutions. Despite being outside of their purview and with little to no additional funding, states and municipalities have begun to consider and implement their own solutions.

These statutes and ordinances are poorly enforced, are a distraction from the enforcement agency's primary mission and divert resources away from needed services. Their enforcement is driven by vague stereotypical profiles and fascist-like methods of reporting.

A popular solution for many jurisdictions is targeting the employers of unauthorized workers. However penalties

for these offenses were created without any concern for displacing authorized employees and the consequences to suppliers and customers. These penalties are of particular concern for industries that cannot be outsourced overseas.

A death sentence for employers is only a solution if you care to gut your local economy. Arizona's economy is built on growth. Slow that growth and the impact to our quality of life and the economy will be devastating. Anti-immigrant sentiment notwithstanding, our industries have grown directly, and indirectly, reliant on a pool of labor that includes unauthorized workers.

According to an August 17, 2007 press release from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Arizona's unemployment rate is 3.7 percent. Many economists consider unemployment this low to be frictional or full employment. So if the United States were to accomplish the impossible and remove every unauthorized worker from their jobs, who would take those jobs no one else seems to want?

If the federal government continues to enforce existing laws, or implements new laws that focus on credentials, the only industries that will thrive are those related to fraudulent documents and identity theft. There will also be greater exploitation of unauthorized workers. I expect little sympathy for that however.

The Tucson Citizen
(<http://www.tucsoncitizen.com/daily/frontpage/62137.php>) recently reported that in the last 11 months, the Tucson sector of the U.S. Border Patrol found the remains of 186

suspected undocumented immigrants. You would think the slow painful death of dehydration, starvation and or exposure would bring some expressions of sympathy, instead the website commentary contained the following, “These 186 illegals will be replaced by millions of anchor babies”, “DON’T COME! DON’T DIE!” and “I have ZERO sympathy or tolerance (sic) for ANYONE who breaks our laws and enters our country illegally. If they kill themselves in the process of being law breakers, they got the reward they deserve...”

The idea of reinforcing the border to thwart terrorist incursion is a farce. The last “terrorist” that invaded the United States from its Southern border was on a horse -

Pancho Villa’s raid on Columbus, New Mexico in 1916.

The hostility and misrepresentation directed at undocumented immigrants continues to spill over to those whose roots in the United States go back generations. Many Arizona transplants are ignorant that Hispanics/Meztisos have been in the Southwest United States for the last 500 years and believe every Hispanic they see is undocumented or newly arrived.

Finally, I will never advocate for an open border or an immigration system that operates without accountability. But I do pray we will see the error of our ways and realize the issue of immigration is lost in bigotry and is not seated in sensible public policy.

Francisco Miravel

A major benefit of immigration, seldom mentioned in the current debate, is the creation of profitable international commerce opportunities for America-based companies, especially small businesses, thanks to entrepreneurship of successful immigrants who, being already acculturated to the American way of life, never severed their ties with their homelands.

Recent research shows that immigrant entrepreneurs in the United States are helping to promote global businesses, because they know how to take advantage of the American entrepreneurship spirit and also because, at the same time, they still have solid connections and good contacts in their native countries.

Based on statistics of the U.S. Census Bureau, and on research done by the Kauffman Foundation and by Duke University, Intuit – the company that provides accounting software – released earlier this year a report about “Demographic Trends and Small Business.” (More information at www.intuit.com/futureofsmallbusiness).

One of those trends, the report says, is that, “Immigrant entrepreneurs will help drive a new wave of globalization.” However, “U.S. immigration policy and the outcome of the current immigration debates will effect how this segment performs over the next decade.”

The report explains that for many immigrants it is easier to open a business than to get a job. Once the business is open, thanks to foreign contacts and high-speed communications tools, these immigrant

entrepreneurs have the opportunity to create businesses linking those international markets.

“The Internet and other connective technologies enable these businesses to be both global and local, and to source materials and goods in one market to sell in another,” the report says. The result is the creation of “broader and deeper economic links across the globe.”

According to Intuit’s report, these entrepreneurs are bilingual and bicultural, educated in the United States – many of them with advanced degrees from American universities – and ready to take advantage of local and global opportunities.

Another company, TrendWatching (www.trendwatching.com, April 2003), calls this phenomenon “immi-merce,” that is, “the increasing flow of money linked to selling and buying goods in, or from, immigrants’ countries of origin.”

These global entrepreneurs, being bilingual, bicultural, American-educated, and with corporate contacts and experience, are increasingly becoming the “bridge” between American companies wanting to do business in foreign countries, and foreign companies trying to enter the American market.

In this process, these global entrepreneurs generate billions of dollars in international trade, creating wealth both for the United States and also for their courtiers of origin.

An example of this global entrepreneurship attitude is Maria Segura-Page, 40, who ten years ago came from

Bogota, Colombia, to Denver, Colorado, to complete her master in public relations at the University of Denver.

Her initial idea was to receive her degree and then return to Colombia. However, a decade later, Segura-Page lives both in Denver and in Bogota, going back and forth between the two cities several times per year.

Segura-Page has opened consulting offices both in Denver and in Bogota to help Colombian companies to enter the American market, and American companies to learn how to do business in Colombia.

Unfortunately, this global attitude and this dual (and sincere) patriotism are often misunderstood and thought to be a “threat” to the American way of life or to America’s national security.

Quite the opposite, these “global immigrants” are in many cases the best ambassadors the United States will ever have, because they understand “often better than the natives, that America is entrepreneurial heaven” (Intuit report).

There is no way to tell these immigrants to “Go home,” because for them “home” is both here and there, and they care very much for the well-being, the progress, and the future of both countries.

Francisco is a philosopher, writer and journalist. Born in Argentina, he lives in the United States since 1994 and since 2004 is an American citizen. He is the Founder and President of Project Vision 21, a bilingual news and information service agency, with main offices in Aurora, Colorado. He is also the director of Project LEARN (Latino Educators Assisting Residents in Neighborhoods), a non-profit foundation providing quality, informal learning opportunities for monolingual Spanish-speaking adults.

In addition to his business and professional obligations, Francisco volunteers at different schools, churches, and non-profit organizations. Currently his is the Director of Communications for the Chamber of the Americas and a member of the Media Advisory Board of The Denver Foundation. He has been a bilingual tour guide at the Denver Arts Museum, and a volunteer business teacher at Guadalupe Small Business Group, as well as a member of the Board of Directors of the Hepatitis C Connection and the Better Business Bureau Foundation.

He is also frequently invited to make presentations at community organizations, colleges and universities, and to speak at community events. He has appeared many times as a guest in many local radio and television programs.

Francisco has a Bachelor in Education (San Justo College, Buenos Aires) and a Professorship (Bachelor and Master) in Philosophy (University of Buenos Aires). He also has certificates in Hebrew (University of Buenos Aires) and Theology (Centro Bíblico del Gran Buenos Aires), and History of the Church and Advanced English (University of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada). Currently Francisco is a Ph.D. Candidate in Philosophy at Columbus University (Mississippi).

In February 1997, Francisco established Project Vision 21, a minority certified company provides services for several local corporations and non-profit organizations, and also distributes daily stories and information in English and in Spanish for local, regional and national media outlets.

Francisco and Karin (a Realtor and also owner of Taxes21), have been married for 19 years. They have a daughter and a son, both still in grade school. Francisco and his family live in Aurora, Colorado.

José A. Pagán, Ph.D.

Immigration Reform and Health

The contribution of immigrants to the U.S. economy is large and growing. Immigrants not only help ease employment shortages in key economic sectors but they also help U.S. businesses to stay competitive in the global marketplace. Immigrants also pay more in taxes than what they use in government benefits—to the tune of \$80,000 per capita over their lifetimes. Immigrants work hard; yet, many of them do not have access to health care either because they are undocumented or because they are non-citizens. This needs to change.

The vast majority of immigrants do not have health insurance coverage, and this has important consequences not only on their individual access to health care but also in the way in which they use local health care facilities. Immigrants are less likely to use recommended preventive health care services than non-immigrants and they are forced to resort to emergency health care services whenever they need help. Thus, the effectiveness of our health care system is compromised when a large segment of the population is not able to use health care services appropriately.

Comprehensive immigration reform is necessary if we want to improve the way in which immigrants access health care resources. Mainstreaming immigrants into the U.S. health care system will improve the functioning of our health care system by allowing immigrants to access the services they really need more effectively. Improving access to health care for immigrants has the added benefit of

increasing the quality of care that we all receive, particularly if we reside in communities with relatively large uninsured immigrant populations. Uninsurance forces many immigrants to reduce the quantity and quality of health care demanded, which in turn reduces health care quality and availability for everyone else residing in communities where immigrants concentrate.

It is important to point out that the overall burden immigrants place in our health care system is rather small. About half of documented immigrants are uninsured and the proportion of undocumented immigrants who are uninsured is certainly much higher. Immigrants' lack of health insurance implies not only lower rates of overall health care utilization, but also a less efficient use of the health care system.

There is a general perception that many immigrants come to the U.S. to utilize social and health programs. This could not be further from the truth. The reality is that immigrants come to the U.S. to work. Most of them toil in industries which typically do not offer any type of health insurance coverage, such as in construction, agriculture and services. Many immigrants also work in jobs with a high rate of occupational injuries—for example, as day laborers—and those injured at work have to get by without adequate health care treatment because they are uninsured and/or do not have a medical home.

The adoption of a comprehensive immigration reform legislative initiative is necessary for both moral and economic reasons. Access to quality health care is a fundamental human right and having a large segment of the U.S. population without health insurance coverage because of their immigration status not only reduces our labor market productivity, but it also leads to inefficiencies in how our health care system operates. Undocumented immigrants need to have a clear path towards becoming permanent residents with access to the health care benefits that everyone else enjoys. A guest worker program with

portable social security and health insurance benefits will allow the U.S. to fulfill its labor needs while providing immigrant workers with the flexibility to move in and out of the country without being a threat to national security. Now is the right time to act.

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Dowell Myers

Who Needs Immigrants for a Better Future?

Recent debates have focused on immigrants and ignored how the rest of us are changing. Surprising to some, but immigrants are part of the solution—not the problem—to avoiding a great demographic train wreck.

With the Baby Boomers on the doorstep of retirement, we face the long-expected crisis in social security, as well as a health care dilemma, and along with that the prospect of sustained labor force losses and a depletion of our middle class taxpayer base. At the same time, massive numbers of elderly home sellers will flood an already weakened housing market.

Immigrants can't help, can they? Not according to a majority of both Democrats and Republicans (51% and 56%) who believe instead that "Immigrants today are a burden on our country because they take our jobs, housing and health care," according to a poll by the Pew Research Center. Who wants them and who needs them is a frequent sentiment. No wonder sensible immigration reform has shaky support if that is the public's belief.

Really this is a controversy about the future of America, so let's get down to it. Immigration reform is not about the past, but instead about the decade ahead, a future with real people working hard and getting older.

Our senior ratio is poised to skyrocket, after decades of stability. From roughly 24 seniors per 100 working age residents, the ratio will surge in the coming decade to 32 and in the decade after that will hit 41. Absorbing this sudden 30% jump in the

senior ratio in a single decade will be a terrific jolt, but the jump is repeated in TWO consecutive decades, testing America like never before.

The quality of life for our elderly and their supporting families is in jeopardy. Who will join the ranks of taxpayers to help shoulder this substantially greater burden of seniors with their much-deserved benefits? How much will we be forced to cut retirement benefits if we are to survive the double decades of growing burden? And who will actually care for so many more of our eldest citizens, given that homecare workers are often immigrants?

Truly one of the best ways to avoid drastic cuts in Social Security and Medicare benefits is to accelerate into the mainstream the millions of immigrants already in our country.

Another benefit is that these immigrants could be crucial in boosting house values. Already in the last decade immigrants doubled their nationwide presence in home buying, accounting for one-third or better of the increase in homeowners in California, New York, Illinois, Texas, and Florida. After 20 years of US residence, more than 50% of Latinos also have advanced into homeownership and, with better education and incomes, they could offer sellers an even better price.

We need to think about the real role immigrants can play in the future of America. If we just do the math of adding 10 or 20 years to all our ages we can figure how much more we will need immigrants

for a better future. But those immigrants can't be recruited all in a rush. They need to be brought on line thoughtfully and steadily, in preparation for our growing needs.

This top-heavy increase in retirees is like nothing we have seen before, requiring more workers, taxpayers, and home buyers. Squeezing extra value out of all our residents, we need to cultivate our neglected minority youth, ask our elderly to work longer, and, yes, embrace the immigrants

who have come to work in America. We need them, and anyone who would reject our immigrant workers is also rejecting the needs of 77 million retiring Baby Boomers.

*Dowell Myers is a professor of policy, planning, and development at the University of Southern California and author of *Immigrants and Boomers: Forging a New Social Contract for the Future of America* (Russell Sage Foundation, 2007).*

Chapter 4

Moving Forward

The current immigration debate is characterized by extremist sentiments and high emotions on both sides of the issue. U.S. Representative Rahm Emanuel has commented that immigration has replaced Social Security as the “third rail” of politics – a topic that politicians touch at their own peril. In the present environment there is little hope of producing any real solutions that consider the needs of our economy, as well as the necessity for securing the borders. The atmosphere is so poisoned that some speculate that Washington may not make another attempt at comprehensive reform until the second term of the new president. Meanwhile, states and local authorities will continue to pursue a patchwork of quick fixes that only contribute to the problem.

As we move forward, we must continue to ask ourselves what kind of

country we want to be. **Tamar Jacoby**, Senior Fellow at the Manhattan Institute; **Martha Steinkamp**, Florida Director of the National Council of Hispanic Women, and **Howard Duncan**, Executive Head of the Metropolis Project, add thoughtful discourse based upon what kind of country we have been in the past and have developed into today.

“And it would be even better for Congress to try again to settle a matter that is ripping at the heart of the nation. America needs immigrants; immigrants need America. And we are doing a lousy job of reconciling those truths with ad hoc immigration policies and laws.”

-Opinion Editorial in The Virginian-Pilot,
July 29, 2007.

Tamar Jacoby

The dozen women in the focus group had nothing but complaints. There were too many people speaking Spanish in the supermarket. There were too many new kids in their kids' classrooms. The emergency room was so crowded, patients with emergencies couldn't see doctors – and all of these problems created by people who weren't even paying taxes in the first place.

But something surprising happened as the focus group wore on. It took about 15 minutes – no more. Grumpy as all the women were, many of them grasped right away that there was something different about the big blonde at the head of the table. She wasn't just angry at circumstances, as they were. She didn't like foreigners, period – particularly, it started to seem, a certain kind of foreigner. And unhappy as the other women were about the immigrants arriving in their town, this made them uncomfortable – very uncomfortable. Nobody used the word "bigot"; maybe they didn't even think it. But watching the group from the other side of a mirror, I could almost see the other women inching their chairs away from the blonde.

With comprehensive reform dead in the Senate, we're heading into a difficult stretch in the immigration debate. It's unlikely that Congress will take up the issue this fall except perhaps to appropriate money for stepped-up enforcement. State and local governments are sure to press ahead with their own punitive crackdowns. The politics of '08 aren't going to help matters. It's going to be easier for candidates on both sides of the aisle to play

to voters' fears than to talk about how they would solve the problem. And there will be plenty of voices like the big blonde – loud, angry, anti-immigrant voices.

The one small shred of hope – the little bit of string reformers have to work with – is the way the other women in the focus group distanced themselves from the blonde and her ugly talk. How to take advantage of their unease? Personally, I don't think it will help to call her and others like her names. Hitting back with the r-word – "racist" – only polarizes the debate, and it's not a particularly effective way of winning over the undecided.

Conventional wisdom, particularly since the Senate defeat, holds that the mood has shifted and the public – an overwhelming majority of the public – has turned virulently anti-immigrant. But polling doesn't bear this out. More likely, today as in the past, no more than 20 to 25 percent of Americans are truly anti-immigrant, determined to build a wall and send 12 million foreigners home. Another 20 to 25 percent is fundamentally favorable to newcomers. And most are somewhere in the middle: frustrated, anxious, irritable, but also potentially pragmatic – like the majority in the focus group. Bottom line: most voters could go either way, depending on which side makes the most effective appeal. In 2007, the naysayers carried the day, fanning the public's fears and igniting its anger. But that doesn't mean reformers can't find a way to win – can't find a more persuasive way to speak to the silent majority who think like most of the women in the focus group.

How? If 2007 taught us anything, it's that we reformers spoke too much to people's heads, with arguments based on rationality and common sense, while the other side appealed to something much deeper and more visceral. So the question we have to answer now is where's the emotional power in our case and how do we drive it home more effectively?

Is it a deeper, more hard-hitting version of our economic argument: pointing not to the nation's labor needs but to consumers' pocketbooks and to the possibility that without immigrants, the vital, vibrant, growing America we take for granted will become a thing of the past? Is it a blunter, more muscular appeal to pragmatism: hammering home that we can't deport 12 million people and need, for our own safety's sake, to bring them under the rule of law? Or is it perhaps a case that draws more deeply on voters' values:

showing that immigrants want to learn English and become part of their new nation, that far from freeloaders seeking something on the cheap – whether government benefits or “amnesty” – they're here to work and build a stronger America?

Which of these arguments is likely to be most persuasive? Which – or which combination – will be strong enough to counter the firepower on the right? We don't know – and we urgently need to find out.

But even in this, our darkest hour, I take heart from the discomfort of the women in that focus group. They and voters like them will be tested – sorely tested – by the inflammatory rhetoric of the '08 campaign. But I'm still betting that in the end their instinctive decency and pragmatism will win out. And we reformers have to be ready to take advantage of it when it does.

Martha Steinkamp

During the 107th Congress Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) introduced an amendment – S.1545 – co-sponsored by Sen. Durbin (D-OH). The name of this Amendment is the *Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors* – better known as the DREAM ACT.

As a member of the U.S. Senate Task Force Committee on Hispanic Affairs and the Education Subcommittee, I was asked, along with 6 other members, to visit with senators and others – both in Washington and in our hometowns - in an effort to encourage full support of this bill.

The purpose of the bill is to provide an avenue for unauthorized alien students to pay for higher education by changing their immigration status. Under the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, as amended, they are ineligible for federal financial aid, they are also ineligible for state financial aid and may even ineligible for in-state tuition.

The original bill was quite simple – “Will permit the states to determine residency requirements for higher education purposes and to authorize the cancellation of removal and adjustment of status of certain alien students who are long-term residents of the U.S.”

This bill only refers to giving the states the freedom to decide how to deal with these special groups of students and to give the privilege of earning the right to continue their education only to those students who meet certain requirements. Those requirements include a six year conditional residence period for those attaining 16 years of age at the time the law is enacted. These

students must have lived in the US for at least 5 consecutive years, stayed away from all crimes, and earned a high school degree or gained acceptance to college. During the conditional 6 years, individuals can earn the right to permanent residence by serving in the military, obtaining an associate’s degree or trade school diploma, or completing two years of a bachelor’s degree or graduate degree.

Beneficiaries would not be eligible for Pell Grants or any other benefit that does not require repayment. At no time was it implied this would be an amnesty, or that it would “open the flood gates.” It was far from being “easy street.”

In the 109th Congress, Senator Durbin introduced the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act of 2005 or the DREAM Act of 2005 (S.2075) in the Senate. At the same time Representative Diaz-Balart (FL) introduced the American Dream Act (HR 5131) in the House. Both bills had bipartisan cosponsors.

Since it was first introduced there were more senators against this bill than for it. In some instances quite unexpected, as was the case with Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA). Later, however he did come on board and in June 2007 introduced for himself and Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA) a version of the DREAM Act included in a bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform bill (S.1639). The bill was pulled from the Senate floor and it will not be reconsidered. No surprise.

This bill has been modified, introduced, re-introduced, in the House, in the Senate, moved from committees and over the years, traveled more than a veteran airline pilot. Some in Congress who have supported it in the past are now against it and vice versa. Others have never taken a position.

The most absurd argument against this bill is that which states that rather than make these students eligible for assistance as a reward for breaking the law, they and their families should all be “rounded up” and sent back to their countries.

Those who advocate such a measure do not propose a plan indicating how this would be done or what the cost of such an operation would be to the taxpayers, nor the repercussions to our economy or to these families. They are just throwing sand in the air.

They fail to realize what a famous politician remarked – “it’s the economy stupid”.

Right now taxpayer’s money is spent educating these students for 12 years. Rather than throw this money away, if a

student is afforded the possibility to continue on to higher education - this is a student who will be gainfully employed, pay taxes and contribute to the community during his lifetime.

When the possibility of higher education is denied, there are few avenues to pursue. One is to work at a fast food or similar place for life, earning minimum wage and being condemned to live in poverty.

Politics on both sides make for an impossible situation. Elected officials are not looking for a solution based on knowledge of the immigrant population and how they can benefit our communities, taking action that involves the governments of other countries or looking at examples of success.

While the discussion continues, our elected officials can claim they are trying to do something knowing full well nothing will be accomplished. When the discussion continues indefinitely the status quo remains and no one is truly forced to take a position that makes sense and benefits everyone.

Howard Duncan

Societies and governments in many developed countries have grown more accustomed to immigration in the recent past, even within the past ten years. Although many such countries have pursued policies to prevent the entry of immigrants, many of them now have substituted policies of managed entry for policies of prohibition. This acceptance of immigration as a potentially valuable economic and demographic contribution has allowed these countries to broaden their attentions beyond an exclusive interest in border controls to a concern over the integration of immigrants within their economies and societies. This change in perspective has brought a significant shift in how these societies regard the presence of immigrants, a presence that now must be seen as a permanent feature of social life and not merely a temporary characteristic. This permanent presence of immigrants, who often now constitute significant proportions of the national population, is prompting people to examine the nature of their societies in so far as their populations are now inherently, and not merely contingently and temporarily, diverse.

Past integration failures, manifest as segregated and economically polarized populations, are now seen to present social problems that must be attended to, both to achieve a stronger measure of social justice and to prevent social instability. The suburban riots in France in 2005, for example, prompted calls, not for reduced immigration or deportations, but for measures to strengthen social order among

the people of France, including those of immigrant origin. Many countries of Western Europe are paying considerable attention to immigrant integration and are going well beyond the conditions that support their entry into the workforce to conditions that foster a cohesive society. Accepting that immigrants are full members of one's society goes hand in hand with recognizing the potential that immigrants have to alter the nature of the society, perhaps even to the point of affecting social cohesion.

The concept itself of social cohesion is itself controversial, implying as it does something stronger than what we tend to use the term 'integration' to refer to. Social cohesion implies a concept or set of concepts in relation to which the members of a society cohere. The specification of this concept and the means by which social cohesion is to be achieved are difficult waters to navigate. The articulation of the concept might be strongly definitive of a nation and prescriptive of its citizens' characteristics and beliefs. Alternatively, it may be weakly definitive of a national identity, substituting for this a set of values. Examples include multiculturalism, which puts a premium on diversity and pluralism, or a set of expectations regarding loyalty and respect for the constitution and other aspects of a framework of social order. Furthermore, the orienting concept might be cast in terms of support for what might be called 'national projects' which might include a way of conducting political life (democracy), of managing an economy

(capitalist or welfare state), specific projects such as warfare, major sports events, major capital investment projects, or projecting a set of social values throughout a society.

How to achieve social cohesion is exceptionally complex, both from the point of view of effectiveness and social justice. Achieving social cohesion requires that members of the society adopt certain behaviours, attitudes, or beliefs that conform to the concepts through which social cohesion is defined. Such social engineering is not only controversial, but in a modern society that is marked by strong and diverse transnational communities, can simply be difficult to achieve. The search for core values often ends up in a search for the values that determine the historic identity of a population, something that flies in the face of the diversity of populations that arise through immigration. Achieving social cohesion in a diverse society is not likely to be achieved effectively in 2007 in the same manner as might have been possible 50 years ago because of this very diversity. The features of transnational life that we associate with globalization create challenges that were simply not present in the past to the development of homogeneous societies. Our thinking about social cohesion must seriously take into account the actual nature of diverse societies and the disparate influences on the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours of their members.

Otherwise, our thinking will be naïve and

our actions counter-productive. Achieving social cohesion is a different enterprise now than it was in the past, but not for that reason any less important to pursue.

Howard Duncan received his Ph.D. in Philosophy in 1981 from the University of Western Ontario where he studied the history and philosophy of science. He was a post-doctoral fellow there and subsequently taught philosophy at the University of Ottawa and the University of Western Ontario. In 1987, Howard turned to consulting in strategic planning, policy development and program evaluation. In 1989 he joined Health Canada in Ottawa where he worked in evaluation, planning, and policy. His final year at Health Canada was spent managing the department's extramural policy-research program. In 1997, Howard joined the Metropolis Project as its International Project Director and became Deputy Head in 2000. He succeeded Meyer Burstein as Executive Head in 2002. He has concentrated on increasing the Project's benefits to the policy community by creating effective opportunities for direct and frank exchanges between researchers, practitioners, and policy makers, increasing Metropolis' geographic reach, and expanding the range of issues it confronts. He is also the head of the Metropolis International Secretariat.

Conclusion

The preceding collection of essays highlights the many frames to this important issue and underscores the complexity in finding a comprehensive solution. It is our hope that these voices for reform will inspire new thinking and ideas for reform, and will better inform this critical debate.

This anthology is by no means complete. The opinions on this multifaceted issue are as diverse as the country is.

However, we have striven to introduce the reader to perspectives and opinions that have been given little audience in the midst of the boisterous debate.

The task of fixing our broken immigration system is daunting. In the end, solving the problem will require the kind of unity and shared commitment that have served us so well in the past and have made this nation the shining beacon that it is.

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