

Chapter 13

By land and sea: Hispanic press at the southern borders of the United States

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In the short 200 year history of the United States 60 million immigrants have come from abroad either as slaves or as refugees. Before 1921 there was no limitation placed on migration to the U.S., and as a result of the «open door policy», 25 million people entered the country between 1881 and 1921. From 1921 until 1965, the rule was to admit Northern and Western Europeans, and exclude most others from any part of the world except the Western Hemisphere. These regulations represented a national origins quota system that was highly selective. However, there had never been any limitation placed on immigration from any country in the Western Hemisphere because there was little demand for entry by Central and South Americans. In the late 19th century, rather than restricting migration, American farmers, mining companies, and the railroads actively recruited Mexican labor. The United States had in fact developed two policies, one for admitting immigrants from our hemisphere, and another for all others. In 1965, for the first time, a numerical ceiling was placed on entry from Western Hemisphere countries, and visas could only be gotten after the labor department had agreed that the individual was not competing with American workers and that the terms of the employment would not effect prevailing wages and working conditions [20]. This was unlike the conditions of admission for all other nationalities, which depended instead on the individual's high level or unusual skills.

Since this law also provided for the reuniting of families, relatives receive 80% of the available visas, and this provi-

sion, although humanitarian in motive, defeated the intent to give preference to professionals, doctors, scientists, and artists. In choosing applicants from the Western Hemisphere, there is no occupational preference system, or any other procedure for choosing between individuals, and the demand for visa's now far exceeds the supply. This has resulted in at least a two and one half year delay in obtaining one of the 120000 available entry permits. Legal Mexican immigrants received 70000 of these visa's, and Cubans received 24000 [1].

The purpose of the 1965 Immigration Act was to upgrade the type of arriving immigrants in terms of occupational skills, but giving this kind of preference has resulted, for example, in there being more foreign educated physicians being admitted into the United States than were graduated from American Medical Schools [1]. Others maintain that what the U.S. needs instead are workers willing to fill the low status, low paying jobs that they believe most Americans will not accept. For opponents of a liberal immigration policy the heart of the issue is whether or not immigrants are in competition with Americans for the same jobs, and if they are not, whether their children will be. Do these foreign workers and professionals, legal and illegal, assist the economy of the host country, or increase unemployment? Are they a help or a burden? Attitudes towards migrants, an important factor in their adaptation, depends upon how these issues are perceived.

Recent migration trends

Tracing the changes in the stream of migration both into and within the United States, it is possible to see a response to political, social and economic developments. Up until the last half of this century the main thrust of migration has been toward the west, bringing both new arrivals from Europe and Easterners to the middle and far west. The movement from south to north began within the U.S., as blacks from the rural south moved to the large cities of the

north, east and midwest. In the last fifteen years we see a move of individuals and business to the south and south-east, as an alternative to the high taxes, and the high wages of union labor in the older cities of the northeast. Minor trends are a move to smaller cities and rural places.

The largest recent migrations into the United States are of Cubans to Florida, and the continuing migration of Mexicans, both legal and illegal into urban centers. In the past twenty years 1.5 million Puerto Ricans, half of their population of 3 million, have left the island for mainland cities. Although Mexico contributes about 60% of the Hispanic press at our southern borders, Peru, Columbia and Haiti, all of whom have small legal quota's, send a large, but difficult to document, number of illegals to the U.S. Two-thirds of recent immigrants have settled in just six states, New York, California, New Jersey, Illinois, Texas and Massachusetts. Chicago, for example, has a Spanish speaking population of 600 000, the nations second largest Mexican population after Los Angeles, the second largest Puerto Rican population after New York, and the third largest Cuban population after Miami and New York [18].

The U.S. has not one, but two virtually open borders. There are about 500 million border crossings each year as visitors come from both Mexico and Canada. Fewer than one percent arrive from overseas, and these people are counted as they enter, but not when they leave. Plane travelers are better documented. We know from VINING's [24] examination of U.S. international air travel statistics that the excess of arrivals over departures is very large, perhaps 500 to 700 thousand a year. Thus, about one-half million people a year have simply been overlooked by those who estimate the volume of illegal entry.

This chapter discusses the Mexicans and the Cubans, and describes the change in attitude toward both political and economic migrants as their numbers increase in proportion to both the established population, and to other minority groups. Attitudes harden as the resources of the cities become strained and as they struggle to deal with the overcrowding from internal migration as well. The immi-

gration and refugee debate is becoming increasingly unpleasant with anti-immigrant and anti-refugee sentiment growing and strident. The most recent national polls show that 91% of the sample supported an all out effort to stop illegal entry of the estimated one and a half million foreigners who do not have entry visas, and 80% were in favor of reducing the quotas for legal entry as well.

This has not always been so. The Mexican has always been recruited and encouraged during periods of economic expansion when labor was in short supply. Although once admitted, working class Mexicans suffer the same prejudice, and are held back by the same language and cultural barriers that made the lives of earlier European immigrants so difficult, and live in «barrios» that resemble the ethnic ghettos of the nineteenth century.

Mexican immigrants, and the first Cuban refugees differed markedly in social class membership, past history of migration, and in the nature of the community of earlier arrivals. Mexicans have traditionally come because of impoverished circumstances at home, and reasons for entry, as well as education and occupation status, are more likely to effect acceptance than ethnicity.

Social scientists have studied the social, emotional, economic, and health problems of immigrants, but what has received less attention is the motivation, and the social and emotional responses of established inhabitants, and the results of the interactive effects on both groups.

Both the primitive and learned responses of host populations need to be acknowledged, like the suspicion and dislike of strangers, and of those different than ourselves, protective feelings about the established culture, and apprehension that it may be altered, the fear of being outnumbered, or simply of population increases because of the higher fertility rate of some immigrant groups, and, the always present uneasiness about the envy of any underclass who might become powerful or aggressive.

When expatriates come in an atmosphere of benevolence or rescue, the receiving country, pleased with its own behavior, may have a more positive attitude. This would

be a fair overall statement about the reception of Cubans until the last decade.

The U.S. has a history of less than altruistic motives toward Mexicans and where entry policies have been based primarily upon self-interest, if not exploitation, newcomers have not been treated as well, or as highly regarded.

The Cubans

The modern population of Cuba derives from a migration of Spaniards from Andalusia, and to a lesser extent from the importation of blacks from West Africa. After Spain's occupation was challenged and the country became politically independent, economic ties between Cuba and the United States became close. However, the progress of Cuba as a republic was uneven and disappointing. There was a revolution against a corrupt president in 1933, and the adoption of a new and progressive constitution in 1940. Although Cuba was stable financially, political upheavals have been continuous. General Batista took over the government in 1952, but dissatisfaction was deep and revolutionary counterforces were continuously at work.

The mass immigration from Cuba to the U.S. which has now reached more than one million, did not occur until Fidel Castro seized power with the promise to restore the constitution and free elections. The immediate immigration of Batista's supporters was followed by the exodus of landowners, entrepreneurs, merchants, and professionals as soon as it became clear that they could not identify with the new regime. Thus, the Cuban migration of the 1950's and early 1960's was a direct result of political events.

RUMBAUT and RUMBAUT [19] view the culture of the United States as congruent, even though unlike the culture of pre-exile Cuba, and believe that this accounts for the resilience and success of the early Cuban expatriates. The stress of being uprooted, though not insignificant, may have been somewhat less for them than for earlier Europeans and for contemporary Mexican immigrants. The

adaptation of Cuban refugees was helped not only by positive attitudes in the U.S. but by the practical aid that was offered through federal and private agencies.

Despite a history of corrupt governments, there was in pre-Castro Cuba a large professional and middle class. The poor, mostly rural workers who had very low incomes, numbered about one million. It was not, however, this group who contributed to the mass exodus, at least not for the first fifteen years. However, even before the 1980 boatlift, there was an increasing number of workers leaving Cuba whose motivation was as much economic as it was political, but they were usually more skilled workers than a comparable group from Mexico.

The first wave of Cubans were the beneficiaries of a new U.S. policy that provided for the admission of special political refugees. This included 40,000 Hungarians following the failure of their anti-Communist revolution, and in 1979 accounted for the admission of one-half million Southeast Asians. In the case of the Vietnamese, the U.S. certainly had responsibility for the chaos and terrible agony in that part of the world.

Despite this, national opinion sampling now shows that there is an increasingly negative attitude toward migration of all kinds. It is likely that some of the change in attitude toward the Cubans was building over a twenty-five year period, and was related to both their concentration in the Miami area and to the very large numbers that continued to come and to bring their families. A crisis resulted in the spring of 1980 when Castro sent about 120,000 people to Florida, many of them sick, unemployed or unemployable or admitted criminals. The Cuban-American community sent out boats of all kinds to facilitate their arrival, and at first President Carter stated that he would accept the boatloads with «open arms and hearts». As it became clear that the Cuban government expelled those they considered undesirable, the U.S. Coordinator for Refugee Affairs declared that human beings were being used as a weapon in a new kind of warfare, «population warfare».

Unfortunately, Dade County, where Miami is located,

was already dealing with high unemployment and racial tensions. It is 40% white, 17% black, and 38% Hispanic. In 1979 the murder rate had climbed 70% and the police commissioner announced that «an absolute war is being fought in our streets at night» [22]. The sale of personal firearms increased dramatically, and many of those able to move away were going further north in response to the press from the south.

Public indignation at the strain on resources and community funds, resulted in the delivery of 12 000 letters to the President of the U.S. and a decisive vote on election day against further bilingual education in Florida.

Thus, acceptance of future refugees, especially in large numbers, will require a much narrower and more precise definition of «political expatriate». Such a category becomes problematic when hundreds of millions of the impoverished, also live under repressive regimes.

The events in Miami warn that changes in the structure and composition of human groups need to evolve and develop, because racism and violence can erupt when populations and human systems are abruptly altered. Makers of immigration policy need to be sensitive to people impact, especially in already crowded urban centers where delicate balances have often been achieved with much effort over time to contain a multitude of dormant tensions and antagonisms.

The Mexicans

The abundant natural resources of Mexico have never been of benefit to the ordinary Mexican. Each of the geologic ages left a wealth of mineral deposits, silver, gold, lead, zinc, copper, iron ore, coal and petroleum. This wealth has enriched the few in every era, as the Mexican people endured the Aztec class system, the Spanish occupation, massive and frequent revolutionary disorders, and a series of corrupt and dictatorial governments.

In pre-Columbian times almost all of the indigenous in-

habitants lived in the lower two-fifths of the country. By the sixteenth century at least five different groups had developed distinctive cultural patterns with their own religious and civilian hierarchies. There were skilled craftsmen of all kinds, a complex economic system, instruments for astronomical observation, and calendars more accurate than those of contemporary Europeans. There were beautiful public buildings, ornate attire and beautiful art objects. It is said that when Cortes arrived, the Aztec Montezuma II used his golden dishes just once and then had them destroyed. Like the Spanish rule that followed, these societies were also repressive and barbaric. The rich were rapacious and the lower classes were destitute.

To the Spanish conquerers, Mexicans were non-Christian heathens who deserved extermination if they resisted conversion. What the Spaniards and Aztecs had in common was the establishment of social systems with rigidly enforced class and economic distinctions, a problem that still exists in contemporary Mexico.

The scarcity of Spanish women at the time of the Spanish occupation is largely responsible for the composition of the present Mexican population. Concubinage, casual liaison, and marriage with Indian women produced the Mestizo, and the importation of African slaves introduced a third racial strain. The Castas, people of this tripartite background, outnumbered Europeans two to one by 1800, and the indigenous inhabitants had already diminished in size even more rapidly¹. Of the original native population of twenty million, about one million were left by 1650. When Europeans invaded formerly isolated societies, the

¹ Different ethnic groups who live side by side do meld, whatever their original historic or class positions, and despite strong taboos, and differences in color, race, and religions, but the same time schedule is centuries not generations. In *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City* by NATHAN GLAZER and DANIEL MOYNIHAN (M.I.T. Press Cambridge Mass., 1970), the authors note that the five or more ethnic groups in New York City have remained fairly discrete. However, the large in-migration from Europe only ended after the first World War.

military conquest was often less life threatening to the inhabitants than the unfamiliar pathogens that ravaged the virgin population². The Amerindians of Mexico were decimated by measles, small pox, and an influenza type infection in a series of epidemic cycles.

Mexico was plundered and exploited by Spain for three centuries. Hundreds of thousands labored under debt bondage, and other forms of forced labor. After the establishment of independence in the 19th century there were fifty different governments in fifty years, republics and dictatorships, rebellions, and continuous and violent internal struggles, war with the French, war with the United States, and through it all the Mexican worker remained in essentially the same situation he had been in for centuries. As late as 1910, in a country where the majority of people were agrarians, only two percent owned land, and peonage for debts was still widespread. The huge haciendas contained millions of acres and this unreasonable concentration of land in the hands of a few, and the vicious struggle between the clergy and the government kept Mexico in a constant turmoil, and the population in misery [9].

The Hispanic countries that are the source of most of the migration to the U.S. are becoming industrialized, but the wealthy classes continue the Colonial tradition, and neglect the rural development that would not only help the poor, but stop or slow the rural to urban migration. The drawing power of industrial development, in addition to the high birth rate, accounts for the projected doubling in population in twenty years in at least three Latin-American countries. Unfortunately, industrialization has not created the jobs that were supposed to take the place of lost livelihood in the country. Much of technology is capital intensive, and most standardized products can be made with less problem by expensive machines than by cheap

² Amerindians were extremely vulnerable to the disease organisms that Spaniards and Africans brought with them. See *Plagues and Peoples* by WILLIAM H. MCNEILL (Anchor Press, 1976) for a discussion of the effect of disease epidemics on politics.

labor. There is no sign, however, that labor intensive industry is being developed on any scale in Latin America, even though it would seem more appropriate in countries with huge and exponentially growing number of people out of work.

The escalation of the Hispanic press at the southern borders of the United States can be explained by the Mexican unemployment rate, which Mexican officials privately admit is about 50% [4]. Thus, impoverished individuals and families press into the United States, swimming, wading, and walking across a border so long that effective control has never been accomplished.

The extent of Mexican migration into the United States is unknown. From 1930 to 1977 eight times as many Mexicans were apprehended for illegal entry as were admitted legally. There were ten million *known* illegal entries during that time and one million two hundred legal entries. In 1977 almost one million illegal migrants were caught, and the actual number of illegal migrants living in the United States has been estimated at anywhere between two and twelve million. Cornelious, who has done extensive research on this subject for government study groups, believes that 13% of the Mexican labor force works for some period of time in the U.S. each year, and if each of them supports 5.8 dependents (as his data indicates), then about 21% of the population of Mexico is dependent upon money from the U.S. [4]. The Inner City Fund has estimated that about three billion dollars a year is sent home to families in Mexico. Even though most Mexican workers have jobs in the secondary labor market, success to them depends on whether or not they achieve what they came for.

Unlike the Cubans, most of whom were never in the United States before, there have always been Mexican workers, visitors, and «illegals» going back and forth over the 2000 mile border between the United States and their country. This great distance makes it impossible to patrol as a practical matter, and it was, before 1929, open and without restriction in fact, if not as a matter of policy. Therefore, it has always been difficult to determine the ex-

tent of Mexican migration, and during certain periods, like the depression of the 1930's, there were far more Mexicans going home, than coming to the U.S.

Both CORNELIUS [7] and BACA and BRYAN [3] content from their survey research that a majority of the illegal Mexican workers are unwilling to relinquish their Mexican citizenship, and would continue to live in both countries; that is, continue to travel back and forth between the U.S. and Mexico, even if they were granted legal alien status. The fact that they do not sever ties or stop living in the homeland, makes the Mexican, and to a lesser extent other Hispanics, different from the European immigrant of the past.

It is likely that Mexicans who work in cities in the southwest and west tend to travel back and forth between Mexico and the United States, while those who come from deeper in the interior of Mexico are the ones most likely to settle in American cities far from the border.

Economic adjustment

Successful adaptation in a group of first generation immigrants might be a satisfactory economic and social adjustment, and a low rate of depression. There is some evidence that such success or lack of it is determined by the immigrants' expectations, the attitude of the host society, the ability to maintain an identity, and the support of a community of earlier arrivals.

No research has been done comparing rates of depression in Mexican and Cuban immigrants. This kind of information would be difficult to obtain, since the condition would have to be severe enough to require hospitalization, or at least outpatient treatment in order to be counted as a case. Studies of immigrants to other receiving countries (Israel and Singapore), indicate that where new arrivals find a large community from the home country, mental hospitalization rates are low, and where immigrants are isolated, mental hospital rates are high [14]. Social adjust-

ment is also difficult to measure, although it is generally conceded that both the immediate and extended family, and community affiliation is a strength in both Mexican and Cuban sub-societies.

Economic adjustment is pivotal to the entire processes of adaptation. It should not be overlooked that economic well-being has clear psychological and symbolic meaning in terms of being cared for and receiving both nourishment and love [15]. Therefore, it is just as well that a measurable factor like economic status is the variable studied in the only research that compares the adjustment of Cubans and Mexicans.

Portes and his associates have contributed two major studies, the first compared the aspirations and attainments of both Mexicans and Cubans in the United States [17]. In a second study PORTES and BACH [16] selected differences in income between Cuban and Mexican immigrants as an objective and fundamentally important indicator of their situation. They established education, occupation, age, and income aspirations upon arrival compared with actual occupation and income as determined by a follow-up interview three years later. This work finds the expectations of both groups realistic, and soundly based on their past occupational and educational status, as well as their knowledge of English. Cubans, however, often worked for Cuban employers and for this reason they had some protection from the vicissitudes of the open labor market.

CORNELIUS [7] reported that Mexicans join the open U.S. labor market and become scattered in many locations in the same way as domestic workers. They are employed mainly in what has been called the secondary labor market, that is in small scale, labor intensive kinds of businesses such as small farms, restaurants, small construction firms, and greenhouses, or in businesses with a low profit margin, or in competition with low priced foreign manufacturers. He believes that both the conditions and the wage scale of these jobs make them unappealing to most American workers. In general, the income of the Mexican worker was more dependent on the segment of the econo-

my in which he worked than upon his education, skills or occupational experience.

The Cubans, on the other hand, are not as dispersed over the country. About 97% live in Miami where at least 10% of business is Cuban owned [17]. Here, Cuban migrants at first enjoyed protection and sponsorship, and used the whole network of formal and informal kinship ties found in this cohesive community.

Although the achievements of first generation Mexicans and Cubans are generally in accordance with their aspiration level, expectations change from one generation to the next, and the social and economic aspirations of the children and grandchildren of immigrants resemble more and more the expectations of the children of established residents. Until recently little attention was paid to the adjustment of second and third generation Hispanics, perhaps because it was believed that they would do as well as the children of earlier European immigrants. Prejudice because of color may be one reason for the slower economic progress of dark-skinned people, but there is little understanding about why both Mexican and Puerto Rican children³ have so much difficulty with the English language. Mexican children often begin school with no knowledge of English, and this is one of the disadvantages of self-contained subsocieties. There are very large Spanish speaking communities, in urban centers, where it is possible to both live and work without ever needing to know English, or have much contact with Anglo society. Children who speak Spanish as their mother tongue cannot function at age six in a classroom where school is conducted in another language. English must first be learned, and until it is mastered, the curriculum and the teachers need to be bilin-

³ GLAZER and MOYNIHAN note that this difficulty persists despite the fact that «probably no public school system has ever spent so much money and devoted so much effort to the problems of a group of minority school children as the New York Public school system has to the Puerto Ricans.» These authors speculate that the children who could not master English forty years ago, simply left school before their learning difficulty became too noticeable.

gual. The experience of failure, and the development of a sense of inadequacy in the early school years is undoubtedly a major contributor to a resistance to education, and to the often difficult process of acquiring knowledge and skills. Mexican-Americans have the highest school drop out rate of any ethnic population in the country [2].

The children of legal Mexican immigrants are at least able to attend school, and twenty-four percent, about one quarter of all students in the Houston Texas School system, for example, are Hispanic. In the barrios (Mexican neighborhoods) are thousands of children belonging to illegal aliens, and the tax supported schools until recently were not permitted to admit these students without charging tuition, a regulation which effectively excluded them⁴.

The controversy over whether it is appropriate for Americans to be taxed to provide for the education of children of citizens of another country who are here illegally, is an ethical and legal question which will probably be debated for some time.

Cuban refugees have not been here long enough for a study of several generations, but the children and grandchildren of Mexican immigrants, despite their educational limitations, are not satisfied with what they have achieved.

ALVAREZ [2], a Chicano scholar, believes that the children of migrants, whom he calls the Mexican-American generation, took pride in being a part of the United States, and saw that their status compared favorably to that of their parents. The Chicanos (third generation) have returned to an ethnic consciousness and to militancy because despite their acculturation, they do not have any realistic prospect of escaping virtually complete lower and working class status. They believe they have been excluded from the benefits of American society, and blame inferior schools and racism.

Although there are real pockets of poverty in the United States, where people live at well below subsistence levels,

⁴ Churches and other private groups have sponsored some alternative schools.

the demand for upward mobility comes in the main from other segments of the population. Poverty is also very relative in this country. There has been a marked improvement in the last 25 years in the standard of living for all socio-economic groups, and although it is true that there are as many people today at the bottom as there were twenty-five years ago, the bottom is much more adequate than it once was. The children of immigrants are sufficiently sophisticated to know that there are other solutions to poverty than low status, arduous work, and they exercise these options in the same way as the native poor white and black underclass. Welfare payments in California, for example, are higher than the earnings of a typical agricultural migrant worker⁵, so that these and other jobs with similar pay and status are often disdained by the native born unemployed [23]. Having the necessities of life does not seem to change a feeling of being poor and underprivileged if middle class status has not been achieved. Currently Mexican-Americans join native Whites and Blacks, and almost every one else in lower socio-economic positions in seeking upward mobility, and as rapidly as possible. All groups in the United States seek to wrest from society, by political and other means, more of the material and symbolic rewards to which there seems to be a universal sense of entitlement.

If, as CORNELIUS [7] argues, nonrestrictive migration policies serve the best interests of American and Western European economies because of the need for workers in the secondary labor market (jobs he claims established residents won't take), this solution is for one generation only. It is necessary then to accept the prospect of a continuous stream of new immigrant labor. Receiving nations evidently want the benefits of migration, but balk at the hidden costs in the long term.

⁵ Welfare payments in Texas are extremely low. Less than 1500 Mexican families received the main form of public assistance (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) in 1978 in Harris County, Texas.

Motives and responses to migration

Attitudes of Americans toward immigrants vary with cultural congruence between host and newcomer and this is frequently more a function of social class than ethnicity. Formerly affluent, educated Cubans from the upper and middle classes, who were English speaking upon arrival, were well accepted. Mexicans and South Americans of similar status in their own country do not usually emigrate, and the Mexican peasant who does press at our southern borders is valued for the contribution of labor rather than for other characteristics.

There were personality as well as class issues that accounted for a more positive attitude toward the early Cubans than toward Mexicans. Cubans tend to be active, open and effusive. They are usually direct, and although the culture and mores are complex, they are fairly transparent about their likes and dislikes. Americans find this easier to relate to than the Mexican personality which is more masked, subtle, and outwardly passive. Perhaps the greatest problem between Mexicans and Anglos has to do with the apparent agreeableness of the Mexican that may have little relationship to actual feelings or intentions.

There is some resistance to the notion of national character because it tends to create stereotypes and foster unwarranted generalizations about individuals, but cognitive processes are derived, at least in part, from the cultural organization of groups. If one is willing to assume that socialization can create a modal personality, then the Mexican Catholic is fatalistic and mystical, and the Protestant American is compulsive, and literal minded. These polar traits can and do create mutual misunderstanding and antagonism.

Most studies of migration emphasize the importance of identifying who the migrants are, examining motives for migration, charting the stages in the adaptation process, and evaluating how the migrant is affected by the move. As might be expected, investigations of motivation find multiple causes, social, political, economic and personal — all

that individuals are willing to reveal, or that can be inferred from objective information. At least equal in importance are personal motives that are intentionally hidden, or beyond awareness.

However, the adaptation of migrants is, after all, a result of the interaction between themselves and the receiving society. In much that is written on the subject, it is as if the receiving society provided a stable and consistent structure for the immigrant to accommodate to. Actually the social climate in a receiving society is very variable, and attitudes, both official and unofficial, towards immigrants are in a constant state of flux. The range of responses from accepting to rejecting can depend on the number of immigrants and their visibility, as well as the congruence of their behavior and attitudes with the host culture. Social, economic and political issues that are not directly related to the newcomers can also have a part in their reception [14].

It is often overlooked that immigrants can cause conflict and stress in societies they enter. Immigrants are not always political or economic refugees who become minorities both numerically and ethnically in fairly powerful and established cultures. European immigrants have been invaders who destroyed or enslaved indigenous inhabitants on every continent. Americans took over the land, and overpowered the culture of the American Indian and the Hawaiian, and examples of intrusion and imposition of culture are part of the history of almost every group. The fear of «invasion» in the social or psychological sense can also be experienced by sophisticated people in modern nations. There is also no reason to expect the educated or the technologically advanced to be free of tribalism and tribal loyalties.

Systems theory offers some productive ways of thinking about the impact of immigrants upon societies they enter. Migrants in small numbers are like guests who can be treated benevolently when they do not disturb the ongoing processes, and in effect, know whose house it is. Thus, small numbers of newcomers can be absorbed into the

«family» so long as the homeostasis is not challenged. At some critical point the number or impact of outsiders can be potent enough to threaten the majority, and certain predictable exclusionary actions follow. These are often met with active or passive resistance and hostility which in turn escalates the conflict.

Interactive effects are always part of the picture, and it is doubtful that immigrant groups are completely naive about the effect of their behavior, and in fact, are simply doing what they have always done in their home country. As the study of acculturation and adaptation indicates, the legal immigrant, especially in a democracy, has many defensive and aggressive weapons at his/her disposal. The difficulty with advanced societies who take in newcomers, especially the impoverished, is that they, like parents except gratitude. This is not possible because those with less power are usually angry, perhaps even more so when apparently submissive.

In order to deal with these issues it is essential that there is a recognition of just how emotionally loaded the subject of territory and boundaries are to established residents, and how critical the matter of acceptance and exclusion is to the immigrant. The group and personal psychodynamics involved, the pain, anger and apparent irrationality results from arousing core issues of identity and belonging on both sides.

As a result of legal and illegal migration from Mexico, the one million refugees from Cuba, and other migration from Central and South America, the United States has become the fifth largest Spanish speaking nation in the world. It is interesting that this has taken place in the last ten to fifteen years and is unrelated to the fact that the U.S. took half of Mexico's territory in the U.S. Mexican War, (some of Texas, all of what is now California, most of New Mexico, Arizona and Utah, and part of Colorado and Wyoming). The present pervasiveness of Hispanic language and culture is recent, paralleling and exponential increase of migration from the south since the early 1970's.

The impact of the Hispanic press at our southern bor-

ders can be seen, for example, in the industrial city of Houston, Texas. From 1949 until 1979, Houston has grown from 250 000 to 1 500 000 people. Now Spanish surname residents number about 225 000⁶ and the illegal Mexican who is, in effect, an underground group whose true size cannot be known, is estimated by the Catholic Diocese to number 300 000. Thus, the overall Hispanic population is at least 500 000, one-third of the inhabitants, and is twice as large as the population of the entire city thirty years ago.

Thus, the composition and the overall ambiance of the fifth largest city in the United States has changed markedly, especially in the last five to ten years. Rapid growth has probably been as important a contributor to the change as ethnic composition, but faced with accelerating traffic problems, and all the other pressures of high population density that were not well planned for, the immigrant, especially the illegal immigrant accounts for some proportion of the problem, and is a convenient and identifiable target. Even if CORNELIUS is correct, and a large number of Mexican illegals go home, others come to replace them and have at least the same impact as a permanent group. In fact, constant new arrivals may be even more costly to schools and medical care facilities.

In 1980, testimony before the Congressional Select Committee on Migration documented the soaring public school costs associated with bilingual programs. In Denver the number of non-English speaking students rose 700% in nine years.

Yet to be done is a thorough study of the effects of large numbers of non-English speaking students on the public schools country-wide. Immigration, plus busing to achieve racial integration, has resulted in a movement of Anglo's and English language speakers out of the city centers into

⁶ In 1976 the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service estimated that there were between 250 000 and 500 000 illegal Mexicans in Houston, and that Mexicans whose status was not in question, either citizens or those with proper papers contributed 12 to 20% of the total population.

the suburbs, and a turning to private schools by the middle, as well as upper classes.

Since a strong and first class system of public education has in the past provided the vehicle for the upward mobility of both immigrants and the American poor, it serves nobody's best interest to foster the creation of a dual system of public and private education.

It is not surprising then that indigenous inhabitants are often angry and resentful, although earlier arrivals from the same country are often the most threatened by newcomers, and Mexican-Americans and legal immigrants may sense correctly that they will be effected by a mounting exclusionary sentiment toward the large numbers entering illegally.

Protests of every kind against migration are as old as the country's beginnings. In the eighteenth century, George Washington and Thomas Jefferson warned about the massive entry of people supposedly less experienced in free government, and in the 1940's there was considerable alarm that Protestants would be outnumbered by the large influx of Catholics, or that a combination of recently naturalized citizens and political bosses would take control of the cities. The objections to free migration were ineffective in the main as long as the new arrivals provided a source of cheap and willing labor.

Unlimited entry into the United States was finally ended during the time organized labor began the long struggle to improve conditions of work and the level of wages. The first successful exclusion act, in addition to an earlier prohibition against admitting paupers and convicts, was directed against the Chinese in 1882. Then, following the increase in immigration after the first World War, the Congress put numerical limits on total migration, and established special quota's for each country. These restrictions were not put into effect easily, since a whole array of opposing forces made this one of the most intensely debated domestic issues in the country's history.

The exploiters of migrant labor have often been on the same side of the conflict as those who, for humanitarian

reasons, wanted the United States to continue to be «an asylum for the oppressed of all lands». Factions interested in limiting migration, even at the present time, include both the bigoted, as well as those who believe that it is not in the best interests of the country or its present and future citizens to try and absorb substantial numbers of newcomers.

Currently two groups in the U.S. are in favor of a more restrictive migration policy, representatives of organized labor who claim immigrants compete with Americans for jobs, and those in the environmental movement who view population increase as one of the most important sources of environmental degradation. They point out that the United States took in more people legally in 1979 than all the other developed nations combined, and that immigration is a substantial component of the two million persons per year population increase [8]. This view was advanced as early as 1972 in a comprehensive study by the *Commission on Population and the American Future*⁷ authorized by Congress. This report stated that no substantial benefits would result from continued growth of the nation's population . . . and that stabilization of the population would contribute significantly to the nation's ability to solve its problems.

There has been no official government recognition that the poor air and water quality, the shortage of energy, the recreational overuse of national parks and forests, the traf-

⁷ According to the National Center for Health Statistics, in 1978 the birth rate per thousand was 15.3, the death rate 8.8 leaving a natural increase of 6.5. Add net legal migration of 1.8 for a population growth of 8.3. This is known growth of about two million people a year. The U.S. Dept. of Justice estimates that 500 000 illegal immigrants of all nationalities enter each year and there are from three to five million illegal immigrants residing in the U.S. at the present time. Probably $\frac{2}{3}$ of the illegal migrants are Mexican. See: DAVID S. NORTH, MARION F. HOUSTON: The characteristics and role of illegal aliens in the U.S. labor market: An exploratory study. Report prepared for the Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Dept. of Labor, Contract No. 20-11-74-21, Linton and Co., Inc., Washington, D.C., 1976.

fic and other congestion problems in the cities are related in any way to migration policy.

It has been argued that environmental problems may accompany population increase because of the energy intensive way we live rather than because of the weight of sheer numbers. However, it is unlikely that this country will give up the production of increasing amounts of goods and services and the demand for natural resources and land in order to accommodate a higher population density.

In 1979 the population of the United States was about 220 million, with a growth rate of at least one percent a year [8]. This growth is unevenly distributed. Contemporary migrants, with the exception of agricultural workers, move to the cities where the jobs are, and existing ethnic communities continually attract others from the same country. Population problems appear to be mainly urban problems, but as the cities extend into the countryside, farmland is often lost as it is sold to developers of housing and industrial sites.

The social significance of population growth is far more complex than it would appear from simple comparisons of density between regions, the so-called man: land ratio. There has been too little systematic research on social organization and the carrying capacity of various types of regions. ALICE DAY and LINCOLN DAY [10] believe that although government officials and other policy makers recognize the existence of limits to population size and the numbers of immigrants that can be accommodated, inaction results from a fear of the economic consequences of a non-growing society, and the political implications of the steps necessary to slow or halt growth.

The Hispanic press at the southern borders of the United States is a result of the growing population of Mexico (and the other South American countries) which escalates the economic inequality between the regions. Worldwide the yearly increase of new poor is about 60 million⁸. GARRETT

⁸ Fertility is apparently less related to culture or ethnicity and more related to the state of technology. The technologically advanced countries have lower birth rates, and the fertility of immigrants tend, over time, to approximate fertility of the adopted country.

HARDIN [13] calculated that if the United States decided to solve this problem by permitting all the poor to immigrate to this country, it would have to accommodate two thousand million poor people, or forty people for every family in the U.S. Obviously this is an absurd suggestion, but even if this were possible, the solution would only be temporary because the high birth rates of underdeveloped countries would soon replace those who had emigrated.

Rather than being helpful to less developed countries, migration appears to encourage population growth. Kingsley Davis cites convincing data that countries which export a large proportion of their excess population postpone inevitable changes in birth rates. There are more landless peasants in Mexico today than before the 1910 Mexican revolution which was fought over the issue of land reform [21].

TANTON [21] points out that the major food-exporting countries are also those that are the major immigrant receiving nations. He worries that the food exporting capability of these nations will be drastically reduced because of the requirements of a larger population at home. He says, «If certain regions of the world are over-populated and food deficient, others must remain relatively less populated and have a surplus of food for export. The massive movement of persons from food deficient regions to food sufficient regions is, therefore, not a solution to third world problems.»

The short-term benefits that developed nations get from the comparatively cheap and willing labor of the imported poor last for one, occasionally two, generations, and the children and grandchildren of these immigrants are handicapped by prejudice and a variety of social and economic barriers.

In lieu of more lasting solutions, better temporary solutions are possible than the present illegal migration. The labor needs of the United States, as well as the need for work on the part of the poor Mexican can be achieved by a «guest worker» program that would eliminate the onus of illegality. The «guest workers» would not be hidden or

afraid of deportation, and would not be as susceptible to exploitation. The children would be enrolled in school, and appropriate health care and other programs could be arranged if their numbers were known, and their presence planned for.

EHRlich [11] suggests that migration from Mexico could be slowed down by importing more goods from there, thereby creating more jobs.

The general problems of adaptation, acculturation, integration and assimilation are dealt with by STOLLER (see this volume p. 27) and are in principle the same for Mexicans and Cubans. It may be added, however, that the Mexicans in the southwest and west are such a large group that they will exist for a long time as a parallel but certainly not equal subsociety. They are also likely to be contained for at least three generations by their unicultural nature, i.e., where religious sanctions are interwoven with birth, death, marriage, food habits and ways of behaving in the family and the community. The future of the Cuban refugees as a subsociety is less certain, and is likely to be shorter for the business and professional classes who came as political refugees.

Toward a rational immigration policy

The Mexican worker, here legally or illegally, certainly contributes to the U.S. economy with his/her energy and productivity. The objection to giving the right of citizenship to the very large number already here, as well as to those who will continue to come, is that a very strong case can be made for restricting population growth. In addition, this country is not now providing the kind of educational and social development necessary to help the children and grandchildren of its own underprivileged citizens achieve the kind of middle class status they aspire to. What will happen to the children and grandchildren of Mexican migrants? There is some evidence that the Chicanos (3rd generation Mexican) are as dissatisfied with their position in

American life as the rest of those with lower social status. We have not been very successful in helping the less privileged improve their situation, and this is as much a matter of not knowing how, as being unwilling to do so.

If the consensus is that the U.S. wants to restrict population growth, but permit Mexican workers to come here, they should be given «guest worker» status, and should not have to live in fear of being picked up and deported by the immigration service. The temporary worker program administered by the Department of Labor admits 1000 Mexicans a year claiming that there aren't any more jobs than that. This is obviously absurd. This department is the logical one to undertake the legitimizing of Mexican workers.

Unfortunately, many factions are opposed to a rational immigration policy. Some employers benefit from the precarious position of the illegal Mexican, and some segments of organized labor view the availability and productivity of Mexicans as a threat to their bargaining power.

Migration can indeed rescue temporarily the sending nation from the consequences of its own governance.

A position paper written by Otis L. Graham, Jr. for the Federation for American Immigration Reform makes the following comments about this issue:

«Large scale immigration may be seen as a sort of individually activated and unconscious triage, in which the interests of a few mobile young people are protected at the expense of those less able to move, who stay behind and make what peace they can with oppressive social systems . . . those seeking individual and family solutions come to our attention and gain a natural sympathy, while the losers in sending societies far outnumber the few gainers who solve individual problems by escaping. Deeper and more candid thought needs to be given to the extent to which migration in the 20th century (at least) has always acted within and among nations, as a conservative force delaying social reconstruction» [12].

Despite the inscription on the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor, immigration policies have not been a product of altruism in the main, but the result of a decision by influential groups that the rate of entry was to their best interests. In the case of Cuba, we received at first their most talented productive, highly skilled and motivated people. The United States also received good marks for providing

refuge to a politically persecuted group. In the case of Mexico, our policy over the years has been aimed more frankly at satisfying this country's need for manual labor. Since this also coincided with the needs of impoverished Mexicans, it is problematic whether they have been exploited by the United States, or whether the relationship has been symbiotic.

Altruism toward those outside of the group or tribe has never been characteristic or even expected behavior, and whether a national policy of deliberate altruism could or even should be carried out is debatable. Some argue that Americans benefit from the ambiguous status of the undocumented foreign worker, but those helped most by illegal migration are employers in the secondary labor market, a relatively small group.

Responses to the Mexican and Cuban immigrant, the formulation of migration policy, the restriction or ease of entry, the way in which the immigrant is helped or rejected, is usually more related to what politicians perceive about the attitudes of their constituents, than to quantifiable or objective data about economics or jobs. But this time it is different. As the popular response to the 1980 Cuban boatlift shows, elected officials now seem to be particularly insensitive to the mounting restrictionist sentiment that is clearly evident in the polls. Official migration policy has never been related to population policy, because the United States has unfortunately not developed a population policy or population goals. Immigration policy and population policy cannot continue to be regarded as separate problems.

Legal immigrants need to be given every opportunity for first class citizenship, and other Mexican migrants in the United States should not be permitted to continue in the never-never land of illegal status. It is incomprehensible that at least five million people live here in that category, and that new illegals increase at an unknown rate, perhaps as many as one million a year now⁹. There are, in fact, en-

⁹ In 1978, 350000 Mexicans were apprehended in San Diego alone. Many more migrants are successful in crossing the border than are caught.

tire industries like the garment and shoe industries in Los Angeles that are almost entirely staffed with undocumented aliens [6]. These employers apply pressure not to do anything about the problem, and unions fight to restrict entry. The government responds by doing nothing.

Each country has every right to decide on its rate of population growth through immigration and what category of newcomers they are willing to admit. The United States should expect and be prepared for the press at our southern borders to become more urgent. Both Mexico, and Central and South America are experiencing exponential population increases and their problems in supporting this growth will rival that of India and the Far East. Mexico City, as recently as twenty years ago, was very attractive to tourists, a beautiful city with clean air and fine boulevards, the Paris of the Western Hemisphere. It is now polluted and overcrowded and in twenty more years its present population of eleven million will triple in size to 32 million, making it the world's largest city. The second largest city in the world will be Sao Paulo, Brazil which will grow from eight million to twenty-six million¹⁰. Neither of these countries have the remotest prospect of being able to provide for this level of population.

What constitutes excess population is much more complicated than the ratio of people to land. It is true that certain parts of the United States, like Alaska, might not be harmed by some additional growth, but Hispanic migrants do not go there, or to the Australian outback. They go to Los Angeles, Chicago and Houston.

For every single person that is added to the population, we consume .987 acres of land for urban development, highways, airports, reservoirs, etc. Such urbanization has been using up one million acres of prime farmland a year, when it is estimated that the U.S. has just two-hundred thirty million acres of such land left.

So, surprisingly there is no conflict of interest between what is good for our Hispanic neighbors to the south, and

¹⁰ Report: International Labor Office, Geneva, July 1979.

what is good for us. Restriction of migration at this time in history is not derived from «lifeboat ethics»; it has a strong moral base and is essential for the preservation of our resources and the ability to help provide for world food needs [12]. All the food exporting countries have special obligations, and the U.S. public, if not it's elected officials, seem to be in favor of a healthy and long delayed concern for our viability. Misguided altruism and pressure from both employers of illegals, and self-serving ethnic blocks threaten the continuing role of the United States as a major food exporter.

The world is getting older, and growth and expansion either as a continuing policy or a policy by default will have to end. The future of all countries lies in limiting population and restricting immigration. For this to take place, all jobs, including the least skilled and most arduous, will have to be undertaken by established populations, and accorded dignity, and adequate financial reward. If the population of poor countries have nowhere to go, perhaps they may begin, belatedly, to deal with their excess fertility.

It may be best for all nations in the long run, for the industrialized west to give up the unrealistic, impossible task of trying to solve their problems, and change the conditions of life for people who live in other places, and whose history, religion, and culture are different from our own. No matter how appealing, there is a certain arrogance and grandiosity in the continuing position of helper and rescuer.

It is hoped that the movement in psychology that emphasizes the taking of responsibility for the conditions of one's life, will move into the political area, a view that is consistent with less intervention in the affairs of other countries.

In matters of immigration policy, it is appropriate to distinguish between acute situations like the first Cuban and Vietnam refugee crisis, where a humanitarian response is mandatory, and long-term chronic problems like the overpopulation-poverty scenario of Mexico and much of Cen-

tral and South America. Real solutions for them require less concentration of wealth, land reform, more appropriate industrial development, and population control. The U.S., by refusing to control migration, and thus providing a safety valve (that also benefits the U.S. temporarily) helps delay the needed solutions, and our lack of policy ultimately has a negative outcome for both ourselves and our Hispanic neighbors to the south.

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