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On 'Illegal Immigration'

Thank you for Theodore Pappas's article (Cultural Revolutions) on illegal immigration in the January 1991 issue. So little is written about the topic that we are grateful when anyone recognizes the problems.

A little clarification. There are two kinds of deportation. Most frequent is what agents refer to as "VRs." This translates into "voluntary returns," meaning those who are picked up almost as soon as they cross the border and who return south without going through the lengthy and expensive process of formal deportation. In the San Diego sector alone, there were 473,373 arrested, most being VRs, in fiscal 1990. Were all those people to be put through the entire process, roughly 1,300 illegal aliens would be jailed every day.

Then there are the illegals arrested who have committed crimes other than breaking the federal law to enter. Drug dealers, burglars, rapists, killers—the whole gamut of penal code violations. These are the ones who should be held in custody, but the regulations for handling them are so complex—they have been deemed eligible for all the protections that citizens have—that they are usually released pending trial. Needless to say, most of them disappear.

As an organization, we are having a feud with Jack Kemp and his policy of allowing illegal aliens any benefits that citizens are eligible for. We wrote and asked him why he was allowing illegals to benefit from subsidized housing and other entitlements, and received a canned, non-pertinent answer, so wrote again. This time we received the following from his office:

"Secretary Kemp has expressed particular concern about the injustices that would inevitably result from governmental action designed to withhold funds from illegal aliens facing a critical need for community development block grant (CDBG) assistance. In this regard, it is his view that basic considerations of justice and decency, and special sensitivity to the need to protect the least among us from misfortune not of

their choosing, justifies the Department's position."

You have a good grasp of what our smaller communities are going through with not only illegal aliens, but the amnestied. We find that a huge percentage of the amnestied probably used fraud to get their papers, and they too live in the open and hang around street corners looking for work, driving everyone bananas.

—Barbara McCarthy
Stamp Out Crime Council
San Diego, CA

That was some ball of yarn on West Coast immigration woes in your January issue. Let me pull at a few threads.

First you castigate the liberalization Congress enacted last fall, although it was basically designed to let in more people of a kindred cultural cast. Does its other provisions cloud the issue for you, or do you object broadly to the foreign-born? You worry about the medical costs of unbridled immigration in a social-welfare state. Rightly so. But why don't you address the welfare state itself instead of chasing off those who, like many of us, would exploit it? And, if it's sponging off America that so characterizes the immigrants, why is it, in Costa Mesa, California, and other cities you cite, that the most visible and targeted manifestations of the influx are the day laborers who congregate on residential sidewalks waiting for pickup?

Then, you raise the specter of latter-day Okies fleeing to the great Anglo northland. It is true that California in recent years has shown a net exodus to both Oregon and Nevada, where Latinos are fewer and living costs less. It is not true for Washington State or Idaho or Montana or even Utah, however, so your reference to the Pacific Northwest is overdrawn.

Aside from these details, something larger needs to be said about the schism between libertarians and traditionalists on this issue. Mass immigration brings considerable difficulties, and objection to it is not *ipso facto* nativism or racism, and it cheapens the debate to suggest

AS THE SHOCK OF American cluster bombs and the distinctive rumble of Abrams tanks fade from the Arabian nights, we world-citizens must begin to sort through the events of the last eight months. Many lessons could be drawn. Allow me to suggest two.

First, it seemed clear by the sixth week of open combat that American conservatives had succeeded in one task beyond their wildest dreams: in matters of foreign policy and war, the American press had been cowed. Recurring complaints notwithstanding, twenty years of relentless attacks on liberal bias in the media, by figures ranging from Spiro Agnew to Reed Irvine, have had their effect. With the exception of several writers for the *New York Times* and the consistent voice of Dan Rather, reporters in the Gulf have commonly behaved as dutiful patriots. In contrast to the Vietnam years, where correspondents questioned every official announcement, the Allied Command's principal problem was to restrain press enthusiasm for the campaign. Tight military censorship provoked surprisingly little concrete protest. Back home, regional newspapers and local broadcast outlets helped to marshal the war euphoria. Not since the mid-1940's had the "adversary press" been so pliant a tool of the foreign policy establishment, in service to the executive branch of government.

Second, George Bush deserves our awe for pulling off a constitutional coup, almost without remark. In the heated debate of November-January, some constitutional scholars insisted that Mr. Bush needed a congressional declaration of war before he could commit troops to battle in the Fertile Crescent. Other scholars, along with administration figures, argued that his powers as Commander in Chief gave him all the authority he needed, noting that of the 250 distinct American military actions of the past, only five had involved a declaration. All students of the Constitution, though, agreed that Congress exercised an important check

on presidential war-making through its power of the purse: Chief Executives must still come to the Hill in order to pay for their wars.

Congress avoided an open display of its impotence by narrowly authorizing the Gulf campaign. Forgotten in the histrionics of the congressional debate, though, was Mr. Bush's true innovation: a way to pay for a foreign war without resort to Congress. Call it "contributions" or "burden sharing," the payment of tens of billions by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Japan, and others into the federal treasury gave Msrs. Baker and Bush an unprecedented free hand.

Some critics of the war have blasted these payments as mercenary fees. The pundits miss the real splendor of the deed. A better way to view the money is as a tribute, in the medieval sense of a payment by vassals to their overlord and protector. Another way to see the donated cash is as a clever recycling of those ubiquitous petrodollars by the waxing branch of world government, "the international banking community."

Either way, Mr. Bush found a way to break free of the last enfeebled constitutional shackle on the President's war-making ability, and has enjoyed a power only dreamed of by Wilson and the Roosevelts. Like the Roman Senate in the old Empire, our Congress is still allowed to pretend it has a role, and it has obediently blessed the nation's first "off budget" war. This is, after all, simply good politics in the kinder, gentler Empire we inhabit.

—Allan Carlson

THE NEW WORLD ORDER promised by George Bush is turning out to be something like a unisex barbershop that can buzz off a woman's locks while giving male customers a wave and a perm. Over and over we have heard the phrase "our men and women stationed in the Gulf." As the war went on, we even learned that women were piloting

combat helicopters (as they did, apparently, in Panama); in fact one woman pilot was killed. We were also informed that a woman had been taken as a prisoner of war. Eventually, reporters began to speak of "men and women in combat." The use of women in combat is, as we all know, forbidden by law, but this law is quickly assuming the status of Boston's statute against frequent bathing—more honored in the breach than in the observance.

Women in combat ought to be a source of unease among old-fashioned Americans who until recently believed it was a man's duty to protect the women of his family and nation. One prominent conservative recently told me that he was glad that he opposed the war, because he could not live with the thought that he supported a campaign in which women were risking their lives to protect millions of able-bodied men back at home. No one, in or out of the Armed Forces, ought to have any illusions over why so many women have been sent to the Gulf. They have been sent there to get us used to the idea that women can die for their country as well as men, and if that is the sort of country we are fighting for—a country willing to sacrifice its sisters and daughters for the New World Order—then there is no place in it for what used to be called a gentleman or for anyone raised in the Christian faith.

—Thomas Fleming

AFTER WE'VE attrited all the enemy, we're going to have the New World Order. In the New World Order there will be no more disorder, that much we know. All those people who litter, laze, sprawl, and don't do a lick of work in all those countries that don't function too efficiently because everybody takes siestas all the time, all those slow-on-the-uptake countries with all their low-producing unwork-ethical people, will become efficient, clean, and productive when the New World Order comes. No more piddling