

Against the Invaders

by Paul Gottfried

The Case Against Immigration

by Roy Beck

New York: W.W. Norton;

287 pp., \$24.00



Roy Beck's brief against immigration abounds in useful but also familiar statistics: e.g., since the Immigration Act of 1965, 30 million immigrants, mostly from Third World countries, have entered the United States; at least half of our births in the last 30 years are traceable to these immigrants; without them, the current population of the United States would be about 210 million, and within two generations, if present trends continue, our population density may be that of the Indian subcontinent, with even less cultural cohesion. Beck analyzes the damaging effect Third World immigration has on the wages of American workers, and he shows how the combination of cheap imported foreign labor and growing social service costs for immigrants (over 350,000 of whom arrive illegally each year) have hurt the most vulnerable segment of the American working population.

Although Beck discusses the cultural implications of what Wayne Lutton and John Tanton call the "immigration invasion," he focuses mostly on its material costs. Ecologically and financially, he finds immigration to be a ruinous social experiment, except for the advantages accruing to business interests, public administrators, and social workers. In this sense, it might be compared to late 19th-century imperialism, by which small but powerful advocate groups prevailed against the interests of the majority of Europeans.

Unlike imperialists, however, immigration advocates cannot appeal effectively to cultural and national pride since, if successful, their own project may culminate in the destruction of a fixed Western (not to mention American) identity. Beck insists that invasion from the Third World will bring harm

not only to America's workers, but, above all, to our natural environment. The present urban sprawl and depletion of resources will be nothing, Beck notes, in comparison with the ecological effect of another 200 million people, predominantly of Third World origin.

Beck refutes several platitudes featured in the *Wall Street Journal* and spread by television talking heads and the two national parties. He maintains that immigration since 1965 has not helped our economy to expand more than it might have without this demographic explosion, and he underlines the falsity of the parallel drawn between the high rates of immigration to the United States between 1880 and 1924 and immigration since 1965. The present immigration is numerically far higher than during the Great Wave, and it comes at a time when the country does not need additional labor, particularly of the kind our own unemployed lower class can provide. This new unprecedented immigration, observes Beck, has also contributed to escalating crime rates since the mid-60's. It has brought us foreign and often organized crime at a time of social dislocation, and it has aggravated violent tendencies among American minorities who have lost job opportunities at the bottom of the income ladder to immigrant competitors.

Two observations regarding Beck's argument come readily to mind. The first is that it is not the first presentation of its kind. It draws openly from an expanding body of research that has been available for some time. Beck's associates at the *Social Contract*, contributors to *Chronicles*, and authors like Dan Stein, Samuel Francis, and Peter Brimelow have been publicizing the case against expanded immigration for at least a decade. But until Brimelow's *Alien Nation*, no major house would publish a book stating this case, though the vast majority of Americans favor significant reductions in, or a suspension of, immigration. Brimelow and Beck, who have found prestige publishers, both take special care to neutralize potential critics: Brimelow by speaking kindly of his opponents, and Beck by championing the environment, underclass blacks, and unskilled workers as the prime victims of immigration. The sec-

ond is that Beck may have surrendered too much analytically by pursuing his strategy of critical respectability. Are we to believe that "aggressive civil rights programs to benefit the descendants of slavery have been watered down, co-opted, and undermined because of the unanticipated volume of new immigration"? And are we to accept Beck's judgment that, if not for an equivocating President and a congressional cabal, the majority of Americans would have their way on immigration? One can easily understand why Beck makes such statements, given his interest in creating an inclusive coalition and also his desire to minimize obstacles to the success of his goals. He is trying to anticipate the charge of insensitivity, one that is habitually raised against critics of our immigration policy.

Unfortunately, the advocates of this policy, as Beck occasionally hints, are the political class, public administrators, the two major parties which front for the administrative state, the official right and left, corporate managers represented by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers, the sensitivity police who command the media and national press, and their mentally feeble counterparts in the academy. The same coalition of forces can be seen favoring immigration expansion elsewhere; in Europe, Canada, and Australia, for example, the immigration expansionists support hate-speech laws and the criminalization of comments deemed detrimental to the self-esteem of ethnic minorities. In France, Germany, and Austria, anti-immigration forces have prevailed to the extent that they have compelled the governments of their countries to reduce immigration and to restrict citizenship to the children of those who are already citizens. But nowhere have the opponents of immigration been able to dismantle the sensitizing and social service mechanisms created to minister to the immigration waves unleashed by the political class. These have remained in place, together with a spreading thicket of laws against what the French euphemistically call "crimes of opinion." While Beck has written knowledgeably and eloquently about a major social problem, his work would have gained in depth had he ad-

dressed the problem of nonaccountable government. If he had followed this course, it is doubtful, however, that Norton would have published his book. And there are occasions when publicizing half a case is better than nothing at all.

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The Eye of the Beholder

by Philip Jenkins

**A Force Upon the Plain:
The American Militia Movement
and the Politics of Hate**

by Kenneth S. Stern
New York: Simon and Schuster,
303 pp., \$24.00



A *Force Upon the Plain* is the most comprehensive of the outpouring of books inspired by the Oklahoma City bombing, based as it is upon an elaborately researched examination of the radical paramilitary right. However, Kenneth Stern is by no means a newcomer cashing in on post-Oklahoma jitters. As a long-established researcher for the American Jewish Committee, he can legitimately claim to have issued a public forewarning that something very bad was likely to happen on April 19, 1995, the second anniversary of Waco. As will be known to anyone who has ever delved into the more bizarre reaches of the political fringe, the best resources are generally to be found in the archives of Jewish groups like the AJC and the Anti-Defamation League, and it is not surprising that Stern's book is so amply documented. It is at its best when describing the neo-Nazi loons inspired by William Pierce's book *The Turner Diaries* (though even Stern seems not to know the almost equally influential text *Hunter*, also by Pierce, which portrays terrorist activism by lone "berserkers"). As such, Stern's book is likely to become a standard reference work, and to this extent it can be recommended.

Even so, there is much that is trou-

bling about Stern's approach, and the underlying ideological assumptions of the enterprise. For example, the biographical note asserts that the author is "an expert on hate and hate groups." Expert, certainly, but what exactly is "hate," beyond a generic psychological phenomenon? Presumably a communist practices hate when he excoriates class injustice, just as a radical environmentalist mobilizes hate against the corporations and agencies which despoil the environment. The Nation of Islam both practices and preaches hate of the worst kind when its whole political theology is based on hastening the day when white devils will no longer pollute the earth they have corrupted and enslaved. In some sense, hate is integral to the rhetoric of any militant or extremist movement, yet today the term is only applied selectively to the politics of the radical right.

Stern evinces little concern for definition, hate being an easily recognizable thing. In the context of this book, the term applies to a remarkably wide range of groups, mostly united by their extreme suspicion of the purported benevolence of government; in addition to overt Nazis, it includes "White Supremacists," though most of these are interested less in dominating rival races than in achieving the largest degree of geographical separation. "White Nationalist," while more accurate, is presumably unacceptable for not being sufficiently pejorative: it is too objective by half. The "hate" category also comprehends Identity Christians, marked by a theory of racial separation and bizarre biological views; in fact, they are near clones of the Nation of Islam, though the latter are conspicuous here by their virtual absence.

A great many people qualify for inclusion in this book for expressing skepticism of the federal battle honors of Waco and Ruby Ridge; for their concern regarding the surrender of American sovereignty to supranational entities like the United Nations; for their unhappiness with federal land management policies; or for holding views about taxation and representation similar to those expressed forcefully at Lexington on April 19, 1775. And "hate" emphatically includes the ideas of any group militantly opposed to any further extension of gun control. After all, "some minimal regulation of guns makes sense to the majority of Americans," and the quite sweeping

laws already in place fall far short of the "quite minimal" standards desired by Stern. If you have doubts about the logic or constitutionality of this position, then you are already well on the road to "hate." For Stern, no acceptable legal or moral justification permits an individual or group to conclude that in American law and tradition, the right of self-government is based upon the personal liberties of an armed people.

White supremacists, gun-control opponents, survivalists, theorists of religious or racial apocalypse, conspiracy advocates, radical-right critics of government, even some UFO believers: for Stern, all these groups are thrown together with Nazi extremists like those of the Order, and of isolated militants like those who carried out the attack in Oklahoma City. All are "Patriots," racists, and anti-Semites, and thereby part of the "politics of hate." If "hate" is so abominable, and so richly deserving of exclusion from public debate, then we are left with a remarkably narrow spectrum of appropriate political expression. In fact, it runs the whole gamut of ideology, from A to about H.

Even if we accept Stern's expansive definition of "hate," there is little justification for thinking it unprecedented in its contemporary manifestation, and still less for concluding that we are witnessing an "epidemic of hate." Militia and vigilante activity in modern America is sparse compared to that in the 19th century, which embroiled many cities and states in something like civil war (in fairness, Stern takes some account of this bloody heritage). In the present century, paramilitary upsurges have tended to occur in the two or three nervous years following the displacement of a conservative Republican administration by a liberal Democratic President, as witness the shirt groups and Bund activity of the mid-1930's, the Birchers and Minutemen of the 1960's, and, today, fatigued men in the woods of Michigan and Oregon.

In stark contrast, contemporary race relations are radically different from what they have been in the past, and active racial hatred today is at an absolute historical low. This might seem a curious statement given the "surging epidemic" of hate crime evidenced by official statistics over the last decade. But these figures indicate only altered sensibilities, while the mere fact of collection demonstrates a state of mind quite un-