

by Samuel Francis

Immigration Reform's New "Palatable Face"

Almost immediately after the attacks of September 11, the open-borders lobby knew it was in trouble. The immediate, obvious, and logical implication of 19 aliens legally entering the country and proceeding to carry out the biggest single act of mass murder in human history is that the United States needs to close its borders, at least for a while. The attacks ought also to have suggested that our immigration policies are seriously flawed and in need of radical reform and that allowing literally millions of aliens to pass through our borders virtually at will creates not only security threats but a vast range of other problems.

Most Americans did indeed perceive these implications of the September 11 attacks, but for the last several months, proponents of mass immigration have fought to smother in its political cradle any effort at reform to which these perceptions might have given birth. The lobby has followed essentially three tactics, each of which is an enhancement of tactics it used before September 11: first, concede the need for some reform (especially in such merely procedural matters as visa security, screening of foreign visitors, and expelling expired visa holders) while avoiding and opposing any and all comprehensive immigration-control measures such as a moratorium or drastic and permanent reductions in numbers of immigrants; second, continue to smear those who have actively supported immigration control as "racists," "extremists," etc., to prevent them from gaining legitimacy or influence through their claims that September 11 proved that they had been right all along about the dangers of immigration; and third, posture as the true or "responsible" advocates of real and effective immigration reform whose efforts are in danger of being hijacked and discredited by the aforementioned "extremists." So faithfully have these tactics been followed by a series of apparently unconnected opponents of immigration control that I would be tempted, if I did not know better, to posit an actual conspiracy among them to pursue a common and concerted plan.

The reason for the urgency that the open-borders zealots felt was expressed by Tamar Jacoby, whose article in the *March Reader's Digest*, "Don't Slam the Door," generally follows the tactics described above. "Phones rang off the hook at radio call-in shows," Miss Jacoby panted in her depiction of the national reaction to September 11.

Angry messages flooded Internet chat rooms. Members of Congress soon joined in, demanding that the country freeze all visas for six months, even station troops and tanks on the borders.

Most Americans probably have no recollection of the sort of xenophobic hysteria she portrays, but readers should recall that Miss Jacoby, a denizen of Manhattan, perhaps harbors a somewhat overwrought view of the national heartland and spies beasts lurking there that few others can see. Nevertheless, allowing for some exaggeration, she is certainly correct that most Americans did grasp that the reckless mass-immigration policy of the federal government was at least indirectly responsible for September 11 and were furious in their demands that it be rectified. As she pointed out, a Fox News/Opinion Dynamics poll found that 65 percent of the public favored "temporarily sealing the U.S. borders and stopping all immigration" until the war against terrorism is over.

Miss Jacoby, however, was by no means the first of the pro-immigration warriors to roll into battle against the popular demand for immigration restrictions. That distinction probably belongs to a gentleman named Stephen Steinlight of the American Jewish Committee, who unbosomed his thoughts to a large audience in New York on November 14 in a speech entitled, "The Jewish Stake in America's Changing Demography." Mr. Steinlight's argument was that American Jews, who have traditionally been in the forefront of support for liberal immigration policies, should rethink their position, not just because of September 11, but because



we cannot consider the inevitable consequences of current trends [in immigration]—not least among them *diminished Jewish political power*—with detachment. . . . We have an enormous stake in the outcome of this process, and we should start acting as if we understood that we do.

Steinlight explicitly endorsed what he called "a pro-immigrant policy of lower immigration," mainly out of consideration of the interests of his own religious and ethnic group, but not at the expense of embracing what he called the

white "Christian" supremacists who have historically opposed either all immigration or all non-European immigration (Europeans being defined as Nordic or Anglo-Saxon), a position re-asserted by Peter Brimelow.

Mr. Brimelow, author of *Alien Nation*, which virtually all sides of the immigration controversy acknowledge as the most significant recent book arguing against mass immigration, soon became the demon of choice for the post-September 11 open-borders witch hunters. Indeed, while Mr. Steinlight's insulting and false characterization of him and his book in the published version of his speech was rude enough, the notes of a member of the audience make clear that the speaker did not hesitate to indulge in a little ethnic name-calling as well. Mr. Steinlight described *Alien Nation* as "a book I abominate; it is entirely objectionable and racist" and called Mr. Brimelow "a Brit continuing cultural Buchananism with a British accent." He also cast aspersions on Mr. Brimelow's character—"I'm honest; he's not"—and motives

(Brimelow contributes to a “brutal ethnocentrism”).

Mr. Steinlight’s speech set the tone of tolerance and enlightenment for the “debate” on immigration that quickly ensued, and the next installment popped up in a conference on “Immigration and National Security,” sponsored by neo-conservative David Horowitz’s Center for the Study of Popular Culture and held in Washington, D.C., on January 29. Unlike Mr. Steinlight, the Horowitz cabal was civil enough and refrained from insults and ethnic slurs against those who disagreed with it, and it even offered some speakers who called for substantial reductions in immigration. Nevertheless, what was most remarkable about the conference was the total absence of the most prominent and active advocates of immigration reform in the country. Not only was Mr. Brimelow not invited, but neither was Roy Beck of Numbers USA, Glenn Spencer of Citizens United, Wayne Lutton of *The Social Contract*, Dan Stein of FAIR, John Vinson of Americans for Immigration Control, or any of a host of others long actively engaged in the immigration debate. As Mr. Horowitz described the purpose of his conference to a mutual friend, the point was “to put a more palatable face on immigration reform,” which is simply neocon-speak for co-opting the mainstream immigration-reform movement and turning it to neoconservative goals and purposes.

Indeed, the Horowitz conference even adopted some of the same codewords that Mr. Steinlight had used in his address in New York a few months before. Mr. Steinlight endorsed what he called the “patriotic assimilation” of immigrants, and the Horowitz conference also used the phrase to describe what seems to be a kind of intensive brainwashing course for immigrants in the do’s and don’t’s of the Credal Nation dogmas so beloved of neoconservatives. Mr. Steinlight also inveighed against bilingual education and insisted that immigrants learn and speak English; this, too, popped up as a permissible reform among several speakers at the Horowitz gathering.

Mostly, however, the speakers at the Horowitz conference were careful to rehearse all the approved mantras of the open-borders lobby itself, regardless of what reductions in numbers or demands for assimilation they supported. Immigration has always been a good thing; we’re a nation of immigrants; America is based on a creed; immigration brings a

valuable mix of different peoples (though there’s really no difference among different peoples); diversity is a good thing (though immigrants need to assimilate); assimilation is happening (though left-wing multiculturalist elites won’t let it happen); most immigrants want to assimilate. Even speakers who clearly supported more drastic reductions in numbers of legal immigrants were careful to wrap their remarks in this kind of rhetoric, which grants the pro-immigration premises that the open-borders lobby wants to govern the entire discussion of the immigration issue.

Similar installments of pseudoreform quickly followed, one of the more notable being a vicious little piece of journalistic sheep-dip penned by Jonah Goldberg of *National Review* in the *Los Angeles Times*, which complained that “ideologues” (i.e., Peter Brimelow, Pat Buchanan, and, I’m proud to say, I) “have hijacked an important debate.” The “debate” we hijacked, of course, is the one in which such luminaries as Mr. Goldberg claim to have been engaged before we proponents of “racial gloom-and-doom ideologies” sneaked into the airplane with our verbal box-cutters at the ready. Buchanan’s arguments against immigration in his recent *Death of the West* have “marginalized the entire debate about immigration at the exact moment that the issue needs all the intelligent discussion it can get,” Mr. Goldberg spouted. This, indeed, is quite rich. When did Mr. Goldberg ever express any interest whatsoever in immigration control before September 11 and the surge of grassroots demands for it? What does he have to contribute to the “debate” now, other than ugly *ad hominem* attacks on those who have sought a real debate for years? Like Mr. Steinlight and the worthies of the Horowitz conference, Mr. Goldberg has only the most tepid recommendations—criminals shouldn’t be allowed to immigrate, nor should illegal immigrants be accepted. “We need to respond,” Mr. Goldberg intrepidly demands, “to the fact that the president of Mexico is developing political constituencies on both sides of the border to influence politics on both sides of the border.” How “we” should “respond” he never says, though I, for one among the gentlemen he attacks, have written numerous columns opposing it for years. When has Mr. Goldberg ever mentioned it before?

The Goldberg onslaught makes clear

what is going on, even if the earlier installments of “palatable” immigration control did not. The September 11 attacks raised public awareness of the insanity of our open-border policies, and it soon became obvious that mass immigration might be in trouble from populist political forces that the American ruling class cannot control and its neoconservative stalwarts cannot co-opt. Therefore, those who have been demanding immigration control for years—Peter Brimelow, Pat Buchanan, *et al.*—must be demonized, lest the nation begin listening to what they have been saying. Moreover, simply crushing all immigration control, as the lobby has successfully done for decades, wouldn’t work anymore, so some fairly innocuous concessions have to be accepted and—at the same time that experienced, knowledgeable, and well-known critics of mass immigration are demonized—a new crowd of pseudocritics has to be deployed to do the demonizing and offer the policy concessions. Those following these tactics were by no means confined to the few mentioned so far. Neoconservative Paul Greenberg first attacked Buchanan (mainly for his 1992 speech at the Republican National Convention, writing that “the hate was thick enough to cut, and the mob—I mean the crowd [actually, he means the Republican delegates]—loved it”) and then got around to immigration. (Like Mr. Goldberg, Mr. Greenberg is not exactly famous for a long record of thought and writing on the immigration issue, but that didn’t stop him from pronouncing on what should and shouldn’t be done: A moratorium, even for six months, is in the category of “bad ideas”; creating “a unified agency to guard the borders” is a good idea, as, to the neoconservative mind, any and all enhancement of government power always is.)

This onslaught against the new grassroots movement for effective immigration control will probably succeed. Not only does it offer the mirage of success and acceptability to a movement desperate for any victory, it has the support of the American ruling class, which demands mass immigration as a new proletarian power base. September 11 was, in a grim and unwelcome way, an opportunity to achieve the radical reforms needed to control and reduce mass immigration, but thanks to the tactics of smear and co-option deployed by the neoconservatives, it’s likely to be an opportunity missed.

by Scott P. Richert

De Profundis

In recent months, as horrifying allegations of homosexual and pedophilic activities among Catholic priests in the United States have multiplied, the response of the American Church has been, to say the least, disheartening. Remarks by Bernard Cardinal Law of Boston, Roger Cardinal Mahoney of Los Angeles, and Francis Cardinal George of Chicago have clouded the issue. Amid the turmoil, the words of Bishop Thomas Doran of Rockford, the second-largest diocese in Illinois, have seemed a “voice crying in the wilderness.” Writing in the February 22 issue of the *Observer*, the newspaper of the Rockford diocese, Bishop Doran condemned clerical sexual abuse in no uncertain terms:

The words of Christ regarding those who harm the innocence of children are to be before our minds as we think about these things. “It would be better for him to have a great millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea” . . . I say without fear of contradiction that every priest who so violates the confidence placed into his hands at ordination by molesting children or adolescents sexually or in any other way or for any purpose should suffer that fate.

Since no allegations of sexual abuse have emerged in the Rockford diocese, it is tempting to say that, finally, Rockford has found an area in which it is not simply average, but to do so would be to join the media frenzy. While Bishop Doran is one of shining lights in the American Church and his statement is far and away the best, most hard-hitting commentary on the scandal released by any American prelate, the truth is that Rockford is typical of American dioceses. Now that the allegations of abuse have largely played themselves out, two conditions have emerged: First, the number of priests accused of abuse amounts to about one quarter of one percent of all active Roman Catholic priests in the United States (and, since many of the accused priests are retired, that percentage is on the high

side); second, plotting the alleged cases of abuse on a map reveals a United States that is far more divided than the red/blue America of the 2000 presidential election. Allegations of abuse have been confined largely to the East and West Coasts; most of the cases in between are found in large urban dioceses. (In this, the Archdiocese of Chicago seems the exception. Joseph Cardinal Bernadin moved aggressively, during the last round of scandal a decade ago, to institute strict guidelines for dealing with such allegations; this time around, the media has had to dig up old cases to bring Chicago into the story.)

Unlike some American prelates, who have used the scandal as an excuse for attacking the Church itself, Bishop Doran, a superb canon lawyer and former advisor to Pope John Paul II, points out in a later column in the *Observer* that “the rules of conduct and the moral standards which bind bishops forbid” the reassignment of priests known to have abused children and warns that “these events, which are in themselves disgusting and horrible beyond words, will now be politicized by people in the church with different points of view”:

Those on one side will use it to condemn the Church’s discipline of celibacy saying that a celibate priesthood is responsible for this. . . . [I]n fact, the best science today tells us the crime of pedophilia is quite unrelated to anyone’s station in life.

More disturbing, perhaps, are conservative or traditionalist attacks on the Church:

there are those who will say these crimes are proof of the laxity with which men are admitted to the seminary and priesthood—in spite of the fact that seminaries and dioceses and religious congregations have been very careful to assess the proclivities of those who apply for admission to our ranks.

Attacks from the right are often bound up with a smug moralism, which manifests itself in a desire to make the scandal seem



even more widespread than it is. *Chronicles* contributing editor Philip Jenkins, whose 1996 book *Pedophiles and Priests: Anatomy of a Contemporary Crisis* has been cited in Vatican documents, has been accused of downplaying the seriousness of the scandal because he insists on placing the allegations in context. (You can read his response to those accusations at www.ChroniclesMagazine.org.)

In the end, however, the turmoil in the Church comes down to one thing: the persistence of evil. As Bishop Doran writes:

Sometimes people’s intentions are good. They look the other way, or they misjudge the nature of the problem. That was, it must be said, once the case with respect to pedophiles. Not so many decades ago the best science said their obsession could be cured, or at least treated and brought under control, in the same way that people can be freed from the snares of alcoholism and drug addiction. . . .

Now we know better. . . . [W]e all must join together in beseeching God to make us duly conscious of the monstrosity of this evil.

Unfortunately, some American prelates still show no sign that they understand that sin is a condition that can only be treated by true repentance, not psychology, and that some temptations are so powerful that the only reliable way to keep from giving in to them is to avoid the occasion of sin. Let us pray that Bishop Doran, who clearly understands that the wisdom of Christianity has not been trumped by modern psychology and liberalism, may be a beacon for his fellow bishops.