

Doesn't this moral argument essentially boil down to a factual argument? Yes, to a degree. Isn't it just as difficult to determine who is right with this sort of argument? Yes, it is. But it doesn't follow from these points that the moral methodology *reduces* to the factual. For one thing, by invoking the moral argument you still have the high ground, *even if your reader thinks your facts, or your analyses of the facts, are mistaken*. This is why holding the high ground *can* mean genuine domination (as Clausewitz says) — its reality cannot be denied. Your intentions become almost as important as your arguments. No one can impugn your motivations. You are not a racist — you are battling *against* racism. The very fact will, in itself, cause many (who would otherwise be diametrically opposed) to look more favorably upon factual arguments put forth by yourself and others.

### What We Should Do

So here is my suggestion for strategy. The demographers, economists, social scientists and population experts should keep pumping out books filled with factual arguments — we can't afford to let the opposition make inroads in that theater. This is an important function. But we are sorely lacking books and articles along the line of Beck's. We need books that argue from the moral point of view — books that assume the moral high ground or take back the ground assumed by others. These moral arguments are *logically prior* to the factual arguments in that they "prepare the way." By showing first that

the anti-immigrationist position is a moral position in its own right, they open the door for acceptance of the factual material. My suggested strategy thus diverges from Sagoff's. He seems to think factual arguments should be dispensed with altogether. My view, however, is that both are essential to a complete strategy. To paraphrase Immanuel Kant: the moral without the factual is empty, the factual without the moral is blind.

Antoine-Henri Jomini, the great propounder of Napoleonic strategies, claimed that victory in war is achieved by the occupation of enemy territory. This alone, claims Jomini, is what brings a war to successful conclusion. If also true of debates, then we must win the war of immigration reform by concentrating on turning the tables on the opponents and re-occupying the moral high ground which is rightfully ours. TSC

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Mark Sagoff, "Do We Consume Too Much?", *The Atlantic Monthly*, June 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Sagoff, *ibid.*, p.96.

<sup>3</sup> This is no elitist claim. We all do this, from scientists to philosophers. Objectivity is often preached but seldom practiced.

<sup>4</sup> Roy Beck, *The Case Against Immigration: The moral, economic, social and environmental reasons for reducing U.S. immigration back to traditional levels* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1996), p.176ff.

# Weasel Word on Immigration

## *Showing how far the moral intimidation has gone*

by Thomas Sowell

New York's mayor, Rudolph Giuliani, helped launch yet another special-interest organization. This one is called the Immigration Coalition. Like so many such organizations today,

its purpose is described not as trying to persuade others of the merits of its position, but as "educating the public." Apparently only the ignorant can possibly disagree with them.

There are many arguments that can be made for and against immigration in general and our

current immigration laws and policies in particular. However, many of the pro-immigration spokesmen do not depend on arguments at all but on lofty talk about "educating" others, evasive talk about "undocumented" immigrants, nostalgic talk about immigration in a past era

radically different from today and politically correct talk about “diversity” — a word more designed to silence others than to convince them.

For any one who respects logic and honesty, it is virtually impossible to talk about immigration in general because there is no such thing as an immigrant in general. Some immigrants — past and present — have brought priceless gifts to this country, while others have brought crime, disease and degeneracy. Not only do individual immigrants differ, so do whole groups from various parts of the world. Given the enormously different geographic, cultural and historical backgrounds from which they come, it could hardly be otherwise.

Yet any thought that the United States should more readily accept immigrants from nations whose track record is good than from nations whose track record is bad sets off howls of protest and charges of racism. More important, this moral intimidation shuts off discussion.

Mayor Giuliani laments that proposed federal legislation would not allow local governments to “provide zones of protection for undocumented immigrants.” What specifically does this collection of weasel words mean?

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Protection from what?  
Under proposed new federal legislation, local governments could no longer pass laws forcing

**“...local laws deliberately set up to conceal people who are breaking federal laws.”**

local officials to conceal the presence of illegal immigrants from the federal government. The very fact that we can no longer use the plain words “illegal immigrants” shows how far the moral intimidation has gone.

It is bad enough for individual citizens to obstruct the application of immigration law to people who are here illegally. It is staggering that there should be local laws deliberately set up to conceal people who are breaking federal laws.

Giuliani, like many other pro-immigration spokesmen, sidesteps this outrageous legal situation to argue that, on net balance, it is better not to pursue illegal immigrants too zealously, or to restrict their benefits too severely, for fear of social repercussions. Whatever the merits of that policy position, it is a position that should be argued before the federal law-makers.

We cannot have local governments passing laws exempting people from those federal laws they don’t happen to like or making it a crime for local officials to obey federal law. This is so blatantly obvious that nothing like this is even attempted on other issues.

Underlying such practices

and rhetoric is the notion that it is somehow wrong to stop people from coming to the United States. Those who adopt a “citizen of the world” air and lament the existence of national borders may enjoy a glow of self-righteousness but immigration is a virtually irreversible decision — and it is receiving nothing like the careful scrutiny that our irreversible decisions deserve.

A nation and a people is more than simply the sum total of the individuals who happen to live within its borders. For a multi-ethnic society like the United States, especially. It is a population which shares certain cultural traditions and moral values. Protecting those traditions and values means limiting how many people can enter, under what conditions and with what commitment to becoming American rather than remaining foreign.

The much-denounced restrictions on immigration to the United States in the 1920s at least served the purpose of encouraging the Americanization of the existing immigrants. All over the world, immigrants who are part of a continuing stream of immigrants from their homeland tend to remain foreign longer. Today, there are organized movements and government-subsidized programs to keep people not only foreign but even hostile to the very country to which they have immigrated.

Ironically, those who thus raise the cost of immigration to the American people are loudest in demanding freer immigration. ■

# 'Living in a World of Limits'

## *An interview with noted biologist Garrett Hardin*

by **Craig Straub**

**G**arrett Hardin is Emeritus Professor of Human Ecology at the University of California at Santa Barbara. As an educator, ecologist, and environmentalist, he has devoted much of his work to a reconsideration of the ethical implications of population-related problems. Dr. Hardin is perhaps best-known for his 1968 essay, "The Tragedy of the Commons." The Social Contract Press is reprinting some of his most important books.

Dr. Hardin was interviewed at his home in Santa Barbara on June 21, 1997, for *The Social Contract* by Craig Straub. Mr. Straub is an environmental scientist who is currently completing a Ph.D. in Human Ecology at The Union Institute, Cincinnati, Ohio. His dissertation involves an application of Professor Hardin's methodology outlined in his 1985 book *Filters Against Folly*.

THE SOCIAL CONTRACT: *Did you have any childhood experiences which had a major influence on your life?*

PROFESSOR GARRETT HARDIN: All the years that I was growing up, in the summer time and during vacations as well, we would go to the Hardin family farm, five miles from Butler, Missouri. So this was the one, fixed place. My own home, the home of my parents, kept moving all the time because my father kept moving from one place to another. The one stable place in my life was the farm in Missouri. After about my tenth birthday I spent all my summers there until I was about eighteen or nineteen. My work load was stepped up as I grew older. It had to be kept back somewhat because of my physical disabilities. But still, by the time I was eleven or twelve I was in charge of about 500 chickens, which I had to take care of — feed and water. And I had to kill a chicken every day for lunch.

This, I think, was a very important part of my education — learning to kill an animal. I regard this as an important part of everybody's education. I think the fashionable attitude is one of the many

foolish things in this world. If you want to eat meat, somebody has to kill it. I think everybody ought to have to do it, and not just once but many times. Because one of the things that I was imbued with, by this farm family, was a horror of cruelty — not of killing, but of cruelty. If you are going to kill an animal, you have to kill it instantly and as painlessly as you can. It's a disgrace to do otherwise.

Killing is part of life, you see — one of the things that has to be done. I have always had very strong emotions about this matter, very negative emotions about so many people who claim to love animals. There were people in Kansas who had cats they didn't want. They would drive out from Kansas City and when they got out to the farms, they would let the cats out and drive on, because that way they weren't killing the cat. They weren't being cruel. They thought, "It will find a good home." I'm sure that was their attitude. Well, we were on the farm. Those cats wandered onto our farm, so what do you do? Well, the dogs would kill them. They distinguished between the visitor cats and the home cats. When they saw a visitor cat... particularly when our little fox terrier saw a strange cat, boy, he'd kill it if he possibly could. And he usually could.

I realized from the very beginning that death is a necessary part of life. I learned my first basic lessons about population and carrying capacity on the farm. All my life, I have been haunted by the realization that there simply isn't room for all the life that can be generated, and the people who refuse to cut down on the excess population of anything are not being kind; they are being cruel. They are increasing the suffering in the world. So, I have a very low opinion of most so-called animal lovers who want to save every last animal.

In fact, I've asked in one of my essays, "Does God give a prize for the maximum number of human beings?" And I think this needs to be taken seriously. If we think he does, then, of course, I shouldn't keep that canary you hear singing in the other room,