

The Great All-in-Agreement Debate

by Derek Turner

"Debate is masculine; conversation is feminine."

—A. Bronson Alcott

Do We Need Mass Immigration?

by Anthony Browne

London: Civitas; 153 pp., \$16.00

**Tomorrow is Another Country:
What Is Wrong With the
UK's Asylum Policy?**

by Myles Harris

London: Civitas; 117 pp., \$17.95

**Overcrowded Britain: Our
Immigration Crisis Exposed**

by Ashley Mote

Petersfield: Tanner Publishing;
160 pp., £8.95



Jeff Drew

For decades, a massive problem has been aborning in all Western countries: the increasingly difficult-to-ignore presence of ever-growing and restive ethnic minority groups alienated from the majority communities surrounding them. These disparate groups—emboldened by our enervation and in thrall to ethnocentric demagogues masquerading as “antiracists” and Marxists masquerading as compassionate liberals—are temporarily united against the perceived common Western enemy in a constant search for further privileges, more power, and expanded geographical and cultural territory at the expense of the native population.

Over long, depressing years, mass immigration has made daily life more difficult for everyone. It has undermined assumptions and institutions, endangered liberties, and threatens ultimately to overturn the balance of power—after which

the constituent groups are likely to turn on one another, scrabbling for supremacy among the ruins of the West. Like mass tourism, mass migration often destroys what it comes to find.

The instinct of politicians—even “conservative” leaders who should be concerned above all with conserving their various nations’ ancestral customs—is to refuse to confront this unpleasant situation. In this respect, they are no worse than other men, who are equally averse to confronting unpleasant truths—with the important difference that politicians presume to be problem-solvers and sages, far-seeing pilots guiding the ship of state into safe harbor by the leading lights of rationality and patriotism.

When it comes to immigration, the British center-right is unfortunately very much like the center-right in other Western countries. Across the drowning West, rank-and-file Tories, Republicans, Christian Democrats, Conservatives, and Gaulists can clearly see the problems associ-

ated with large-scale immigration. Yet their respective parties’ leaders do their level best to ignore the question completely—either because they fail to comprehend reality or because they mistake pusillanimity for pragmatism and silence for statesmanship.

“Conservative” leaders know that their supporters feel very strongly about immigration—as do many left-wing voters, whose affiliation to the Labour cause is often mere family tradition or an understandable dislike of the free-market reductionism that came to characterize conservatism in the late 1970’s and 80’s. One might have thought that shrewd politicians would want to capitalize on this sentiment. Yet it never seems to happen, and successive Conservative administrations have effectively gone along with the left-wing consensus on immigration. Now we have a situation in which, under present trends, Britain, already one of the most densely populated countries in the world, is likely to add two million people to her population every ten years, quadrupling existing population growth.

No one really knows how many legal—let alone illegal—immigrants are in Britain. The census categories, a relatively recent introduction, are subject to constant change—and they omit illegal immigrants. Work permits, often to fill projected, rather than actual, vacancies, and student visas for colleges anxious to attract foreign monies are scattered like confetti. (One hundred seventy-five thousand work permits were issued in 2002.) The asylum “system” is clearly fundering—a blank check given by Britain to the whole world. Membership in the European Union means that Britain has to allow freedom of movement for all E.U. citizens. And ten more countries—all

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relatively poor and porous—are poised for membership in 2005. As long ago as 1995, there were one million illegal immigrants in Britain—and that was probably a low estimate. Today, who can guess?

However sincere a politician may be, there is always some reason why this issue should not be tackled—why “the time is not right”—and so the problem worsens exponentially. Many Conservatives, having been ideologically castrated, believe that immigration restriction is the equivalent of genocide. Individual M.P.’s occasionally break silence, but even they almost always backtrack and apologize, leading their followers like a latter-day Duke of York, up to the top of the hill and then back down again.

Perhaps we should charitably ascribe this unmasterly inactivity to lack of information. It is certainly true that figures about immigration are notoriously difficult to obtain—no one has ever thought them worth collecting. And not knowing the magnitude of the problem makes it easier to discount it as being one of imagination or mere prejudice.

Now, in the wake of these three books, two of which have been produced by an arm of the Institute of Economic Affairs, and at least one of which has been widely publicized, ignorance is no longer an excuse. Whatever politicians may say and do hereafter, they cannot claim honestly that they did not know the facts.

The first of these books to appear—*ergo*, that which attracted the greatest attention—is Anthony Browne’s *Do We Need Mass Immigration?* Browne used to work for the *Observer* and the BBC and is now environment editor of the *London Times*. As befits a trained mathematician and a reputable journalist, his analysis is careful, thoughtful, and backed up by statistics. He also has a very useful asset when discussing such matters: He is half Indian. As he says, “my background . . . gives me a certain comfortableness about the concept and the issues.” Naturally, all these advantages were not enough to save him from being accused of “bordering on fascism” by Home Secretary David Blunkett. Such unwarranted excitability bears testament to the emotions raised by race, especially among those who (laughably) consider themselves to be open-minded and liberal.

For a number of reasons, then—including Browne’s genuinely liberal politics and his attractive humor (“[Low fertility] makes for perfect newspaper scare

stories, some of which I have written myself”)—Browne’s book, of these three, may have the greatest impact. The occasional repetitiveness, the minor typos, and a few eyebrow-raising statements—do Canada and Australia *really* “react strongly” against illegal immigrants?—do not detract from its manifold strengths. With its solid economic reasoning, compassionate realism, and pointed yet light style, *Do We Need Mass Immigration?* is rather like a British version of Peter Brimelow’s *Alien Nation*. It consequently deserves the widest possible circulation, and it is, therefore, a pity that the production values are a little pedestrian. As Browne says, immigration “is the biggest debate of our age, and yet a non-debate: officially everyone agrees.” If race relations are ever to improve, what he calls “this startling consensus” needs to be broken wide open to ensure that immigration—and immigrants—are given at least some democratic legitimacy.

Browne pinpoints the strange coalescence of interests between otherwise unlikely bedfellows: big business, which wants to depress wage levels and defer expensive retraining or technological innovation; wealthy individuals, who want cheap household labor; an ever-growing number of universities that want fee-paying students; ethnic lobbyists, who want to expand their respective communities and power bases; far leftists, who fear “racism” and who secretly despise Britain; and, of course, the immigration lawyers, civil servants, counselors, and organized criminals who batten leech-like on the bloated carcass of good intentions.

Browne highlights the contradictory stances taken to justify immigration, many of which, he notes, are *post facto* arguments promulgated the more shrilly as public unease deepens. He points out that immigration has not been numerically significant in British history. He shows that there is no “demographic timebomb” and, therefore, no need continuously to import youthful workers to support future pensioners; indeed, excessive immigration may actually deter indigenous women from having babies themselves, as it increases the cost of living and heightens social uncertainty. And—to make an impeccably liberal point—he reminds us that stealing the brightest and best from other countries amounts to sabotaging the Third World, whose abasement will therefore be both worsened and extended.

Browne denounces the Conservatives

for abolishing passport exit controls and for being “so paranoid about accusations of racism that [the Party] has refused to comment on any issues relating to immigration.” He denounces the Labour Party for abolishing the primary-purpose rule (which made it more difficult to form marriages of immigration convenience) and for signing on to open-ended human-rights legislation, which, he notes, makes it almost impossible to deport illegal immigrants and gives, *inter alia*, all immigrants with serious diseases the right to stay in the United Kingdom and to receive free treatment from the National Health Service for the rest of their lives.

Although Browne does not say that Labour strategists may be privately motivated by a desire to increase their pool of voters, he does know that some immigration apologists are motivated by a desire to diminish Britishness. He recognizes that Britain does not have a moral duty to allow immigration and that it is unfair to blame former imperial powers for problems in countries that have been independent for decades. Such subconsciously patronizing attitudes could actually be interpreted as “racist.”

Browne promotes remedies that borrow from both left and right: more money for the Third World to address the glaring inequalities that make Third Worlders want to become First Worlders; better targeting of aid; ending tariffs against Third World producers; exchanging knowledge and information (although presumably not nuclear technology!); tighter controls on work permits and “family reunions”; tightening up benefits (which will entail an I.D. or “entitlement” card); and effective and rapid deportation of illegals. Browne’s “future perfect” would be a world without borders, but only when global living standards are so much more equal that there is less incentive to move *en masse* from one area of the world to another. This section of the book is somewhat sketchy and ends rather abruptly—although the reader will understand that this is an academic *tour d’horizon*, not a policy document or work of literature.

Browne’s *desiderata* are similar to those espoused by the splendidly named Ashley Mote, whose book is a more conservative and more romantic version of Browne’s. Mote is a well-known figure on the Euroskeptical right whose experience as a scriptwriter and author are evident in this well-written and courageous broadside.

Mote’s much more specific list of proposed reforms adds such traditional-

ist proposals as compulsory teaching of British constitutional history; compelling future immigrants to learn English and swear allegiance to the Crown; closing down the Commission for Racial Equality and repealing all race legislation; encouraging voluntary assisted repatriation; expelling first-generation immigrants convicted of serious crimes; and withdrawing from the European Union. (Arguably, Mote places too much emphasis on the European Union; although E.U. membership certainly has not helped Britain formulate sensible immigration policies, it is a symptom of national angst, rather than the disease itself.) Mote's future perfect would not be a borderless one, yet, in other respects, honest liberal and honest conservative have a great deal in common on this topic.

Ashley Mote addresses several issues that Browne omits or skims over—notably, the European Union, Islam, and the fertility and crime differentials among different ethnic groups—and has many intelligent and interesting things to say on these and other topics. He includes many well-chosen vignettes and snippets of recondite information. I did not know, for instance, that, shortly after Jamaica gained independence, criminal courts in Kingston offered second- and third-time offenders the choice of long-term imprisonment or assisted travel to the United Kingdom to live. As Mote observes dryly, “Not a difficult decision.”

One minor criticism: Mote often uses the term “far right” as though it means something precise, whereas it is actually a moveable feast, covering a multitude of sins against today's orthodoxies, some venal, some venial, some real, some imagined. He does know this, since at one point he refers to “the so-called far right.” Elsewhere, however, he uses the term without the necessary quotation marks.

Mote and Browne likewise have a great deal in common with Myles Harris, who is both a practicing physician and a journalist. His long experience of working in Third World hospitals, combined with his writing skills, make *Tomorrow Is Another Country* a devastating critique of the contemptible cowardice and foolishness of successive governments, which have allowed, and are continuing to allow, the scandalous racket that is the asylum “system” to continue unchecked until, as he says, the Britain of tomorrow may well be another, non-British, country.

In 1989, there were just 4,000 asylum-seekers. By the middle of the 1990's, there were about 30,000 per year. The first big leap came in 1999, when 71,160 people (93,000 if we include dependents) sought asylum in Great Britain. In 2000, there were 76,000 applications—100,000, including dependents. One hundred ten thousand, seven hundred people sought asylum in the United Kingdom during 2002. Of these, 96,000—88 percent—are still in the country. Those awaiting adjudication of their claims exist in a legal limbo. If turned down (only ten percent of claims are deemed genuine), they can make a series of appeals, often at taxpayer expense. Once all legal expedients have been exhausted, immigrants often draw benefits while working cash-in-hand, waiting for the deportation police to knock on the door—a knock that hardly ever comes, at a cost of £38,000 per deportation and a political price that no mainstream politician is presently prepared to pay.

Those who are targeted for removal will almost certainly be able to count on the uncritical support of their fellow countrymen or coreligionists, politicians who want to attract the relevant ethnic vote, charity workers who want to maximize their own importance, far leftists who see each “refugee” as a human battering ram against the West they hate, a sharp lawyer or two, and maybe even tear-jerking petitions organized by kindly old ladies who believe young Rashid's or Ivan's colorful stories implicitly. In April 2001, the government admitted it had “no idea” how many unsuccessful asylum-seekers remained in the U.K.; the estimated figure was 300,000. On average, only 12 percent of asylum-seekers are removed. And those who are expelled can come back and try it all over again.

Harris does not blame Second or Third Worlders for fleeing “the persecution that comes with poverty” or wanting to live in a country where there is the rule of law—albeit by breaking the law the moment they arrive in Britain. He does wax indignant about the Human Rights Act, an especially dim-witted piece of legislation that has thrown “the legal equivalent of a can of petrol onto the flames of mass migration.” He is the only one of these authors well informed or audacious enough to discuss the genetic similarities of European peoples and to remind us that Britain “for nearly 2,000 years remained as racially separate as Polynesia.” He goes on to give us an excellent potted history of

postwar immigration. Harris draws evocative parallels between the fate of Rome and the possible fate of Britain as foreseen by the haunted Enoch Powell. He gives us plenty of really useful figures, such as the Immigration Services Union's 1998 estimate that asylum cost Britain £2.1 billion per annum, the equivalent of one percent on the income tax—after which the number of asylum-seekers has almost doubled.

An interesting postscript to the Harris book is an ingenious essay by British theologian David Conway, who asks whether nationalism and classical liberalism are mutually exclusive. His conclusion is that they are not only compatible, but inseparable—that classical liberalism could never have emerged had it not been for the specific national qualities and experiences of England and America. He goes on to discuss some of Ludwig von Mises' views on immigration, such as how immigration undermines liberalism and why multiculturalism endangers British and American liberties by endangering British and American national existence.

Reading these books is, in some ways, depressing. They are a painful reminder of just how irresponsible “responsible” politicians have been, and for how long. They remind us just how close Britain is to a non-British, non-Western future—and what broken reeds of politicians we must rely on to help us avoid disaster.

Still, there are reasons for hope, and these courageous books are three. Another reason is the existence of the think tank Migration Watch, which has had considerable success at getting some of the facts about immigration into the public domain.

Admittedly, the proximate impetus for change will probably be the recent electoral successes of small populist parties. Where politicians are concerned, the prospect of being politically hanged will concentrate their minds more than any number of analyses. Perhaps the rough auxiliaries of the small parties will force the mainstream parties publicly to reform their immigration policies.

Yet even if they do, the political class is not sincere or determined enough to put any new policies into effect. A genuine change of heart and wider knowledge of the disquieting facts will need to come before any real action is taken, and it is in achieving these goals that these ground-breaking books will come into their own.



Contemporary Assumptions, Moral Judgments

by Christie Davies

Social Life and Moral Judgment

by Antony Flew

New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction;
179 pp., \$34.95



Antony Flew is one of Britain's most lucid analytical philosophers and the most skilled demolisher of the myths of social justice that his country has ever produced. His new book, published in the United States, should prove of great interest to Americans as well as to his compatriots and will be valued by traditional conservatives and enthusiasts for the free market alike.

As in his earlier work on crime and disease, Flew confronts those social determinists who, using the language of science, seek to excuse deviant behavior. He shows with great clarity that these people confuse physical causes with moral ones that work through individual choice; we can never say of a person's actions that it was physically impossible for him to act other than as he did. Flew further develops this argument to demolish the central theses of the overrated American social-ist John Rawls.

I had not realized before Flew drew my attention to it that Rawls believed that no human qualities or virtues whatsoever deserve reward but are entirely arbitrary from "a moral point of view." For Rawls, even the "willingness to make an effort" is "dependent upon happy family and social circumstances." In Rawls' view, the possession of virtue is merely one more undeserved inequality needing redress. Rawls might well wish virtue to be rewarded for expedient reasons, but how is it possible to do so if no one believes that such a reward is deserved and not merely an arbitrary imposition? In Rawls' world, all are justified sinners. Rawls claims that his view of humanity allows equally for a private-property, free-market, or socialist economy. Yet, as Flew shows, it is difficult to see how his views are compatible with anything short of complete socialism, since nothing less could give reality to his speculative fantasies. Unless all property and incomes belong to the

state, what is the point of considering how they might be reapportioned? Flew demonstrates that to put the word *social* in front of any term is to deprive it of its true meaning (e.g., a "social worker" is not a worker, "social democracy" is not democracy, a "social market economy" is not a market economy, "social justice" is not justice, etc.).

Flew's arguments concerning social causation are essentially conservative ones (or have conservative implications), and he bolsters them with American as well as British examples. Flew is particularly strong on aggregate "inequalities" in health and longevity, which, he shows, are more the result of the choices individuals make than of differences in wealth and income. Interestingly, he chooses to illustrate this point by reference to the far higher death rates in godless Nevada than in pious Utah: The wages of sin—in a very literal sense—is death. No doubt some would object that it is the communal nature of the churches and their moderation, by tithing and charity, of inequalities among individuals that make Utah healthier than Nevada. If so, Flew—who regards such associations as churches and families as voluntary associations for human betterment (the antithesis of a compulsory state-welfare system)—would probably agree with them. Indeed, he repeatedly stresses that the single greatest social factor that positively correlates with a person's chances in life is to have had parents who remained married throughout his childhood. Here, in a sense, is the central paradox of the welfare state: Attempts to compensate those who have lacked this particular advantage tend, indirectly but massively, to increase the numbers of those who are thus disadvantaged. To put it bluntly: The more welfare, the more bastards. Perhaps even more significantly, Flew shows that it also works the other way round, the taxation system having induced not only a declining incidence of marriage but a falling birthrate within marriage.

Flew uses his analytical skills to demolish what has become dogma in both Britain and America—namely, the idea that it is not possible to make distinctions of quality among cultures. The complexity of cultures and the arbitrariness of value judgments give this notion a certain plausibility. However, Flew presses the point that some cultures are demonstrably far superior to others when viewed *instrumentally*. Regardless of whether we can judge them for what they are *intrinsically*,

we can rank them in terms of what they make possible. While Flew wins the argument, however, he has almost certainly lost the debate in respect of a question on which Britain has become even more close-minded than America (as a careful reading of Flew's endnotes makes clear). The persecution of Ray Honeyford—who was forced out of his job as headmaster of a school in an area of Yorkshire with a large Muslim population on account of a culturally frank article he had written—and the subsequent suppression of his book attacking the Commission for Racial Equality demonstrate the fact clearly.

Still, Professor Flew deserves congratulations for having added yet another book to his shelf of clearly written, hard-hitting works that demolish the compulsory assumptions of our times.

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Mildred Indemnity Always Twice Pierces the Double Postman

by J.O. Tate

The Postman Always Rings Twice, Double Indemnity, Mildred Pierce, and Selected Stories

by James M. Cain

New York: Everyman's Library;
594 pp., \$23.00



The sheer inanity of so much fiction today sends us necessarily to the past, and not always to Balzac and Trollope. If we are looking for something readable and American and modern, then this gathering is just the thing. Indeed, for sheer readability (if not for the finest quality), James M. Cain is hard to beat when he is on a roll, as he unquestionably was in his three most famous novels.

Eyeballing them today requires a bit of cultural context, and, by that, I mean more than understanding that, when Cain was writing, moral fables were not