

When the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) was established in June 1979, Roger Conner, as first Executive Director, and I, as first chairperson, set ourselves a goal: to make immigration policy a legitimate topic of discussion among thoughtful people.

It clearly was not so at the time. The 1970s had seen a vigorous campaign to establish a population policy for the US. This was kicked off by the 1972 report of the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future, appointed by President Nixon and chaired by John Rockefeller 3rd. But during the 1970s US birth rates fell dramatically even as immigration rates were rising. Many of the people who were concerned about US population growth—when the problem was natural increase—could not bring themselves to deal with immigration as a source of growth. They moved on to other matters.

This experience led Mr. Conner and me to lay out three stages through which we would have to progress on the way to our goal of full and rational discussion of immigration policy:

1. *The Emma Lazarus/Statue of Liberty Phase.* In this phase any questions about immigration could be adequately answered by quoting Lazarus' famous poem, "Give me your tired, your poor..." That ended discussion! Fortunately, many people have passed through this primitive phase.

2. *The Caveat Phase.* In this stage thoughtful people begin to have some questions about immigration as a source of population growth, but feel the topic is not socially acceptable. As a result, the conversation starts with an apology or excuse: "I want you to know that I'm not a racist, but I've been wondering about the wisdom of this aspect of immigration policy..." In this connection, readers may wish to review Dr. Judith Kunofsky's article in the Spring issue of *The Social Contract* entitled "Why Limiting Population Growth Is So Difficult to Talk About in California" (page 140); and in this issue, Dr. Garrett Hardin's observation that "Nobody Ever Dies of Overpopulation," (page 197). We have been in this Caveat Phase for several years, and seem to be arrested there.

3. *The Mature Phase.* In this stage our hangups

and guilt feelings have been dealt with and we are able to discuss immigration policy without having our motives or morals questioned. The taboos have been banished. I hope to live to see this stage.

As one effort to help move the discussion of immigration policy from Phase Two to Phase Three, we're pleased to present as our lead article in this issue of *The Social Contract* excerpts from *Ideology and Immigration: Australia 1976 to 1987*. The book is by Dr. Katharine Betts of the Swinburne Technological Institute located near Melbourne, Australia. What Dr. Betts calls the "ideologically correct" verities on immigration she has found in her country are astonishingly similar to those seen here. Perhaps we can learn about our own situation by studying that of others. Are there lessons from Australian immigration debate and can they be applied here?

Despite laudable efforts over the past decade to defuse the discussion of immigration, many people still feel uncomfortable with the topic. After all, we're here, we're rich, we're free. How can we say "No" to others not so favored? Is it a case of pulling up the gangplank now that we're in?

Fortunately, the choice is not so stark. As we contend in the Statement of Purpose inside the front cover, after all the hand-wringing and avoidance three fundamental questions about immigration policy remain:

- Of the many millions who would like to come, how many shall we admit?
- Who will be chosen to immigrate, and what should the criteria be for choosing?
- How shall we enforce the rules we decide upon?

Our journal is dedicated to helping all of us work our way through the jungle of "Yes, buts" and "What ifs" toward rational and humane answers to these three most fundamental questions of immigration policy.

John H. Tanton  
Editor and Publisher

## Letters to the Editor

Editor:

The current issue of *The Social Contract* just arrived (May 22) and I started to read it. I couldn't put it down until I finished every article! You have selected excellent spokesmen, kept your selections timely, and covered many important aspects of the overall population problem without appearing to be rabid about anything.

There is far too much going on out there, far too few people to do all that should be done, and horrible public ignorance on most population subjects, especially on immigration, a subject about which few people are strong enough to speak up and say what they really think. The article by Judy Kunofsky was especially revealing in this regard. The Sierra Club has not had the guts to speak up forcefully on any aspect of population.

I note that Mayor Gourley of Culver City has raised his voice about the devastating effects of tax dollars laid out to support illegal aliens in Los Angeles County, dollars that should be used to support the present citizenry instead of encouraging others to arrive and feed at the public trough in the Land of Honey. Long may he wave, and may he encourage others to go forth and do likewise.

Keep up the good work!  
Allen Jamieson  
Sacramento CA

Editor:

Not marching in step with *Borders and Quaker Values*, which appears in your Spring 1991 issue, would be like turning your back on motherhood, duty to father and love of one's children. But like the above homilies, the article, while articulating intelligent principles, is much too abstract. Reality is something else when it comes to borders, often the embodiment of much nonsense that passes for patriotism in most countries, the United States included.

The 'principles,' if that is what they are, would be much stronger if they dealt with the specifics of American border 'questions.' I refer, for example, to those between Mexico, a poor and blighted Third World country, and rich, imperialistic United States. That border is not merely two thousand miles long,

but the biggest border between extremes of dire poverty and gross affluence. The flood of Mexicans who daily cross into California testifies to the disparity between these two nations. That disparity, furthermore, is not merely a border problem, for it stems partly, if not to a great extent, from the unjust and unequal economic relationship which American capitalists and their government in Washington have imposed on Mexico. Granted that the well-off in Mexico acquiesce (sic), even applaud that relationship, to the detriment of their own poor, that, however, does not justify it.

Nor do the Quaker 'principles' talk about race, the color of one's skin. Mexico, like much of the Third World (the southern hemisphere) is not 'white,' a phenomenon that since colonial days has terrified white Northamericans. It is no accident that border problems for the United States usually deal with people who are not 'white.' The issue, therefore, is racism, not just the border. American racism, as the world knows, has old roots, dating from the pilgrims on hills, slavery at Jamestown, Manifest Destiny and the killing of Indians and Mexicans and justifications for all of that from the likes of Jefferson, Calhoun, Fiske, TR, the Social Darwinists and the present occupant of the White House who decries what he calls 'quotas' and scares his compatriots with Willie Horton.

The border impasse with Cuba, moreover, will not end until the Cubans renounce socialism, as Washington demands, and harkens (sic) to embrace 'free market' economics, which have kept all of Latin American (sic) in a stage of underdevelopment for nearly two centuries. The world without borders, as most Northamericans envisage it, is capitalist and intolerant of those who would deign to seek other formulas.

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