

Election Point and Counterpoint Number Two

An Anti-immigration Reckoning?

by **Paul A. Gigot**

Two years ago a few of us right-wing free-market eccentrics argued that shouting about immigrants might give Republicans a short-term edge but would backfire in the long run. It looks like the long run is shorter than even we thought.

At least the Pat Buchanan-National Review-California Governor Pete Wilson wing of

the GOP has some explaining to do amid the political wreckage of 1996. Hispanic voters moved sharply toward the Democrats this year, and a backlash against the GOP's immigrant-bashing seems the likeliest reason.

The yawning Hispanic gap is the most alarming news for Republicans this year. Ronald Reagan used to get one of every three Hispanic votes, but Bob Dole won only one out of four.

President Clinton increased his margin this year among Hispanic voters by 15 percentage points over 1992, to a 51-point chasm. Only Asian Americans swung harder (by 19 percentage points to a mere five-point Clinton deficit), according to exit polls.

If Republicans want a reason to worry, they can anticipate the fast-growing Hispanic population voting Democratic

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Right-Wing Immigrationists

by **Scott McConnell**

What's the point now, anyway? Their illegal immigration bill is already on the books, as if it will do any good."

So wrote *Wall Street Journal*

Paul Gigot is a columnist with The Wall Street Journal. This column appeared in their November 22, 1996 edition and is reprinted by permission. © 1996 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All rights reserved.

Scott McConnell is a columnist with the New York Post. This article is reprinted by permission from their December 4, 1996 edition.

columnist Paul Gigot, warning congressional Republicans against revisiting last year's aborted effort to reform legal immigration. Some days earlier former Reagan aide Linda Chavez had delivered the identical message on the *New York Times* op ed page.

For those who didn't save the clips, I'll summarize. The election returns have spoken; Hispanics voted heavily Democratic in Texas, Florida and California, defeating even Bob Dornan in Orange County. Because Hispanics are going to be entering the United States in huge numbers for the foreseeable future, it would be

political suicide for Republicans to do anything that might displease them. Legislation that would limit future Hispanic immigration would be particularly stupid; but so would attempts to mandate the use of English in government business, or excessively literal efforts to enforce the nation's existing immigration statutes.

And though Chavez and Gigot don't say so, if Hispanic activists are to be believed, attempts to roll back racial preference schemes are also a bad idea.

To support his point, Gigot notes that the sunny-disposi-

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the way blacks do now, by more than 80 percent. If that happens, Republicans could win 60 percent of the white vote and still lose elections. White men can't jump into power by themselves.

Anyone who doubts this math should consult Bob Dornan. He lost his Orange County, California, House seat to Loretta Sanchez, a former Republican, on a surge of Latino voters. A wacky "B-1 Bob" exception? Sorry, the GOP also lost two nearby state assembly districts (and their assembly majority) where Hispanics made a difference. Who would have thought Pat Buchanan would help end Bob Dornan's career?

Immigration explains the Hispanic shift in 1996 better than anything else. A lousy Dole campaign didn't help, but GOP House candidates nationwide also saw a drop in the Hispanic vote (to 27 percent from 39 percent). Some blame the California Civil Rights Initiative, except that one of three Hispanics voted for CCRI. It's highly unlikely that Hispanic- and Asian-Americans suddenly became born-again liberals. Both groups are culturally conservative enough to make them natural Republicans.

The sharp Hispanic turn in just two years suggests a backlash against both the 1994 fight over California's Proposition 187 and Congress' crusade to limit all immigration. While Gov.

Wilson has always been careful to distinguish between legal and illegal immigrants, many in Congress no longer are. Who can blame Hispanics for picking up bad political vibes? "Even when Latinos agree with us philosophically, they think we don't want them," says Allan Hoffenblum, a GOP consultant in California.

A similar view comes from across the country in Florida, where Republicans lost support even among usually loyal Cuban-Americans. Dario Moreno, a professor at Florida International University who follows Cuban voting in Dade County, says the GOP presidential vote fell to just 60% this year, from 72% in 1992 and 85% in 1988.

Mr. Moreno credits Mr. Clinton's skill in signing GOP anti-Fidel Castro legislation. But he adds that, "Republicans were viewed as being anti-immigrant and eroded Dole's support." It's no accident that two of the few Republicans who opposed their party's immigration bill last year were both Cuban-American House members from South Florida.

"Republican candidates who are right on immigration, like Jeb Bush, can still count on the Cuban vote," says Mr. Moreno, a Cuban-American and a Republican himself. That's also true in Texas, where GOP Gov. George W. Bush has opposed the GOP's harsher anti-immigrant stands and does better among Hispanics.

So maybe it's time for Republicans to re-think their lurch back toward 1920s

nativism. What's the point now anyway? Their illegal immigration bill is already on the books, as if it will do any good. But to do more on that front requires harassing U.S. employers to become immigration police — Ted Kennedy's agenda.

As for reducing legal immigration, the politics go from dumb to dumber. "It's very important for the Republican party to continue to stand up for legal immigrants, or there could be fallout in other ethnic communities, such as East Europeans, in the Midwest and Northeast," says GOP Senator Spence Abraham of Michigan. Mr. Abraham led the successful fight last year to split off legal immigration limits from anti-illegal enforcement, a move that played well in his multi-ethnic state.

The GOP conservative also points out that younger immigrants help compensate for an otherwise aging U.S. population. And as historian David Kennedy reports in *The Atlantic Monthly*, immigration has costs, yet the current level is proportionally only half what America absorbed so well in the early part of this century.

Of course, the Republicans of that era also chose to become the anti-immigrant party, and those Italian, Irish and other new citizens understandably enlisted in FDR's 50-year Democratic majority. Maybe that's a lesson for Republicans bent on driving today's fastest-growing voter group into the arms of the their enemies. **TSC**

McConnell continued

tioned Ronald Reagan (who never gave a serious thought to immigration issues) used to win a robust one-third of the Latino vote, while the dour Bob Dole won barely a quarter of it. If this electoral calculus is meant to persuade Republicans that the entry of tens of millions of additional impoverished Hispanics into this country in the coming decades is meant to improve their electoral prospects, it fails to convince me.

Gigot assures us that this "fast-growing" Latino population is "culturally conservative." This phrase (and its companion, "socially conservative") is deployed frequently by immigrationist Republicans when referring to Latinos or Chicanos. But it always leaves me mystified. Conservative compared to whom? Does it mean that Latino gang members harass homosexuals? That Hispanic culture frowns on the education of women? That (we are probably closer to the mark here) illegal alien workers are docile and uncomplaining?

If it means (as some sociologists assert) that Hispanic immigrants bear the cultural imprint of societies marked by intense class stratification and limited social mobility; that they are accustomed to governments and legal systems plagued by systematic corruption; and that a cultural pattern of "familialism" tends to encourage intense distrust of those outside the family group,

then it's hardly obvious that this is "cultural conservatism" the United States needs more of.

To approach the issue on a more mundane level, it is not true, for instance, that Hispanics are less likely to have children out of wedlock than the average native-born Americans. Nor does it seem to be the case that Hispanics are more likely to prefer being judged on individual merit than to seek advancement through discriminatory quotas.

Surveys of Hispanic opinion leaders during the 1980s demonstrated almost unanimous support for racial preferences. Hispanic voters in California voted against the California Civil Rights Initiative by margins better than 2 to 1. (Ask a conservative immigrationist about the implications of this figure for the future, and he will mutter something about intermarriage and then point hopefully to the Asian vote: After all, "only" 55 percent of California's Asian voters chose to maintain the state's anti-white, anti-Anglo preferences.)

In the face of such electoral results, the burden falls on the *Wall Street Journal's* open-borders conservatives to explain why it is in the GOP's interest — or the nation's — to expand America's Hispanic population dramatically through mass immigration.

I don't doubt for a moment that if immigration were effectively slowed for a while, and if the barrios of Texas and Los Angeles were not

continuously replenished by the arrival of hundreds of thousands of new, desperately poor, Hispanic immigrants every year, an Americanization process would take over, and that this generally hard-working population would advance rapidly in our society. (In no small part because unskilled workers would face a more favorable labor market.)

After a generation or so, Hispanic voting patterns *would* become more Republican (as those of Italians did in the 1950s and 1960s).

Gigot finishes by warning that if the Republicans succeed in reducing immigration, they will meet the fate of the 1920s-era GOP restrictionists — squashed by FDR's immigration-based New Deal coalition. "Maybe," he cautions, "that's a lesson for Republicans bent on driving today's fastest-growing voter group into the arms of their enemies."

Putting aside the fact that immigration restriction in the 1920s was possible only because of forceful Democratic and labor-union support (Sam Gompers was an avid restrictionist), this sort of thing really makes me feel that my Republicanism is lukewarm compared to Gigot's. Try as I might, I can't think of Franklin Roosevelt, or Harry Truman, or John F. Kennedy as an "enemy." Indeed, I would prefer to be governed by any one of them than by any Latino head of state, even a "culturally conservative" one.

Who, after all, are some exemplars of the Latin

American right-wing tradition — the type of political leadership in store for our grandchildren if we follow Gigot's advice. Might they resemble Anastasio Somoza, late of Nicaragua, before he was overthrown by the Sandinistas? Or Fulgencio Batista, the former Cuban dictator, thrown

out by the far more noxious Fidel Castro? Or Roberto D'Aubuisson, the Salvadoran strongman and reputed death squad organizer (very tough on labor unions, I am assured)? Perhaps there is an attractive "culturally conservative" Mexican dictator (sorry, I mean Mexican

"president") whom I am forgetting.

No, it doesn't work. Though I scour my library for examples of "culturally conservative" Latino politicians to admire, I can't find one whom I prefer to Harry Truman. Maybe that's a definition of nativism for the '90s.

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Election Point and Counterpoint Number Three

Dornan Gets Religion via Voter Fraud

by Robert Dornan

[In a letter to the editors of The Wall Street Journal printed in their December 13, 1996 issue, Representative Robert Dornan (R-CA) said in part:]

I find phony the chorus of voices claiming that I am not a cheerful loser. Every fair person understands my justifiable concern about voter fraud. I ran 5,000 votes ahead of Bob Dole and may have had

as many as 5,000 illegal registrants voting by "absentee walk-in" ballot on Election Day. I already have sworn affidavits covering six different types of voter cheating. And I've learned in only the past week of three more ways to destroy the integrity of the electoral process. The Office of Voter Fraud in the California secretary of state's office, in addition to the district attorney's office in Orange

County, is investigating and taking depositions.

[Editor's note: On January 14, Judge James Brooks of Central Orange County Municipal Court executed a search warrant for the offices of Hermandad Mexicana Nacional in Santa Ana.]

It's very sad that you would join the gaggle of media geese so giddy at reporting on the defeat-of-Dornan-at-any-cost. The cost, of course, is damage
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Immigration Wake-up Call

by Samuel Francis

If it's the future of the Republican party you're thinking about, consider the sad case of Rep. Bob Dornan, also known as "B-1 Bob," "Mad Dog Dornan," and even less complimentary epithets. After you've considered his case, you can start worrying, which is what Mr. Dornan has been doing ever

Robert Dornan is the former Republican Representative of California's 46th District.

Samuel Francis is a nationally syndicated columnist. This article is reprinted by permission of Tribune Media Services. © 1996.

since election day and for some months prior to it.

Mr. Dornan is famous for his my-fist-meets-your-lip brand of conservatism. An outspoken foe of abortion and a friend of just about anything that flies and drops bombs, Mr. Dornan, like so many Republicans these days, is also a big booster of immigration. Nevertheless, immigration is exactly the reason he and other Republicans need to worry.

When the votes came in on election day, lo, Mr. Dornan's name barely led that of his opponent in the race for California's 46th District, which B-1 Bob has piloted ever since 1977,

with the exception of a one-term gap from 1982-1984. A very large part of his problem derives from the fact that about 50 percent of the voters in the 46th District, in the state's legendarily conservative Orange County, are Hispanic. This week his opponent was claiming the final victory, though Mr. Dornan, still in orbit, refused to concede.

His opponent was the 36-year-old Loretta Sanchez, who had previously run under her married name of Brixey. This year she discovered that dwelling on her Mexican background (she's the daughter of immigrants) by using
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