

## Immigrants Just Come Here to Have Babies

There are a lot of stories that say immigrants just come here to have babies so the babies will be American citizens, but there is very little evidence that this is a big issue. All 100% of the millions of undocumented Mexican immigrants came here to work. Most are young and of course they form families and have children. But almost none of them came here for the purpose of having a baby. Hard, dirty work of the kind most immigrants perform is always done by young people, and young people will invariably have children whether immigrants or U.S. citizens.

## Immigrants Come Here to Receive Welfare

Again this is untrue. Welfare benefits are very limited for undocumented immigrants and most work at one, two or even three low paying jobs. Immigrants, whether documented or not, are eligible for certain social services like anyone else in their income bracket. But there is no evidence that welfare is a motivation for migration.

## Immigrants Don't Pay Taxes

Most immigrants work for businesses that deduct taxes and remit them to the government, although often under a false social security number. Undocumented immigrants using such numbers will never receive social security benefits. But they are paying taxes like everyone else, including sales taxes. Of course some immigrants are working for employers who choose to pay cash and do not deduct for taxes. But this is the choice of the employer not the immigrant. Such tax evasion occurs whether the worker is documented or not, and occurs for many American citizens including professionals who receive cash payments off the books. This is a problem for the tax system and has nothing to do with whether the person not paying taxes is documented or not.

## Immigrants are Invaders Who are Taking Jobs from Americans

The overwhelming majority of studies can find not statistically measurable effect on employment of citizens as a result of immigration. Of course, some individuals may be affected, but the effect overall is too small to measure. Over the past several decades, every industrialized country has established programs to import workers to do menial jobs that citizens don't want. This is true of Japan, Germany, France, and almost every other European country. Xenophobia and traditional prejudice against Latinos has made it difficult to implement such a program in the United States. Yet economists almost universally favor bringing cheap labor into the United States. As a result administrations since the 1980s have tacitly condoned illegal immigration. Employers have almost nothing to fear from the government (there were only 4 prosecutions in the latest year for which statistics are available, 2004). However, there has been a superficial show of enforcement on the border which has effectively slowed the rate of migration and insured that only the most determined and fit would-be immigrants succeed. This has had the de facto result of increasing the quality of the undocumented immigrant labor force.

## Undocumented Immigration Damages the Country

This is a complex question involving economic and social issues. As noted, economists universally favor immigration of low-wage labor. Some social critics of immigration argue that Latino immigrants are adversely affecting the culture of the United States. But this is a value judgment that can border on ethnocentrism or even racism. There are certainly legitimate problems associated with large-scale immigration such as the negative effects on primary and secondary education resulting from schools attempting to assimilate immigrant children with poor English language skills and a poor educational foundation. But similar problems exist for other subcultures of U.S. citizens. The existence of such problems does not justify wholesale condemnation of immigrants.

## Immigrants are Lawbreakers and Should be Treated as Such

Immigrants came here to accept jobs freely offered by American businesses. The government has tolerated these employment contracts between immigrants and employers and has collected taxes from immigrant employees regardless of their legal status. The principal lawbreakers are the employers, not the immigrants. Moreover, after decades of toleration, immigrant families are as much a part of our communities as American citizens. As a hard-working, low-income group with few rights, they deserve sympathy rather than vilification.

## Immigrants May be Terrorists