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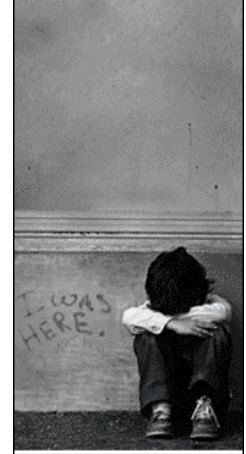

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A sane way to deal with illegal immigration

Posted by [The Oregonian](#) April 14, 2008 16:11PM

Categories: [Community Writers](#), [John Knapp](#)

I was very surprised when I read that a prominent leader of the Mormon faith, Marlin Jensen, has called on Utah's mostly Mormon legislature to "slow down, step back and carefully study and assess the implications and human cost involved" in new anti-illegal immigration legislation they are considering.

Having always viewed Mormon leadership as ultra-conservative, they have occasionally surprised me in the past with what would normally be seen as liberal viewpoints. I was gratified to hear their leadership speak out against the punishing illegal immigration legislation being drafted at the state and national level.

I have a problem with the number of illegal immigrants in this country. I wish this wasn't happening to all of us. If we pass stringent legislation meant to punish those who have migrated for survival's sake, how on earth are we to find out who they are? Do we really believe they will come forward for their public degradation? (As an anti-illegal immigration strategy, this seems to me akin to knocking over your king as the first move in a chess match). If we do find them, how are we going to expel an estimated 10 million people? Who is going to do that? Who gets to pay for it? Answers: We can't, who knows and the U.S. taxpayer.

What is the answer? For me the answer is, "I don't know enough to make an enlightened recommendation to my state and federal representatives." I feel because this is such a major issue right now that we all need to do some homework, and take some personal responsibility for understanding more about this problem. I did find a website that provided me with a thorough enough background on the subject of legal and illegal immigration that I feel compelled to recommend it to you, the readers of The Oregonian. <http://www.immigrationprocon.org/>.

You will find a summary of both sides of the issue on this website, with enough information to begin a reasonable discussion of the history, costs and human impact of this truly world wide phenomenon.

I believe the only sane way to deal with illegal immigration in our country is to grant guest worker status to those here illegally in return for their coming out of hiding. Once identified, we can begin a fair process of dealing with their applications for citizenship. I don't think these people should be fined or punished for trying to survive. Did we make Russians or Cubans coming to us for asylum during the height of the Cold War pay fines? Neither then should we make Mexicans, Africans, Asians or Canadians.

It is a wondrous thing that so many still recognize in this country their greatest hope, and those who do just want the chance to be granted the rights we inherited. So, as we craft legislation aimed at resolving this situation, let's avoid the red herrings, address the real issues, and craft realistic solutions by "measuring twice before we cut."

-- John Knapp

Tags: [illegal immigration](#), [legal immigration](#)

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Posted by **Brittanicus** on [04/14/08 at 4:35PM](#)

ATTRITION or SELF DEPORTATION, IS THE SANE WAY TO DEAL WITH ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION...?

Today! Now! YOU! Must decide the future of America? There will be absolute no chance to stop an Amnesty of immense proportions, once the new President takes office. None of the new presidential candidates can be trusted, thats why we must this new Federal law. NOW! The globalist open-border, free market ideal agenda is the free movement of cheap foreign labor, throughout the North American Continent.

Neither political parties can be trusted when it comes to the illegal immigration occupation of our country. More states are trying to enact strict laws for enforcement against predator employers. However, THE SAVE ACT has the teeth and packs the punch, to halt this pestilence overwhelming our wilting economy. Very few Senators and Representatives have THE PEOPLE' S best interest in mind. The Democratic hierarchy have specifically been pandering to special interest groups, and very few have offered to co-author THE FEDERAL SAVE ACT.

A Mr. Rubenstein, a former director of research at the Hudson Institute, a nonpartisan policy research organization, said U.S. taxpayers paid more than \$9,000 for each immigrant in the country, a third of whom are believed to be in the U.S. illegally.

In addition, more than 37 million immigrants in the United States, both legal and illegal, cost the federal government more than \$346 billion last year, twice as much as the nation's fiscal deficit, according to a report released yesterday. The loss estimates, the report said, included \$100 billion in federal taxes lost "from the reduction of native incomes caused by immigrant workers." He also stated that even programs that are not usually associated with immigration, he said, have actually added financial burdens to the taxpayers.

More than 10 million immigrants have arrived since year 2000; it is estimated that nearly 6 million are illegal. All told, the group of immigrants now account for 38 million at the moment according to the White House's own census bureau.

America cannot afford to enact another AMNESTY? The ramifications are unthinkable on each states economy? Taxpayers will have to support even more illegal immigrants as the word gets out and millions more will pour into our nation. You must read the suppressed evidence of the consequences of the illegal immigrant occupation. Not found in the national press you can find the truth at these sites. NUMBERSUSA! LIBERTY POST! AMERICAN PATROL!

Keep calling your Democratic Congressmen today to co-author THE SAVE ACT! Toll free numbers include 18778516437 and 18662200044, or call toll 12022243121 AND REGISTER YOUR OUTRAGE at ongoing efforts to keep our country from enforcing its immigration laws!

Please copy and paste or otherwise freely distribute this information.

YOU CAN PETITION TO DEMAND COMPLETE THE BORDER FENCE HERE: [grassfire](#)

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Posted by **bajarat** on [04/14/08 at 5:52PM](#)

Good grief, I've never read such crap in my life. Put a muzzle on that Knapp kook for the general protection of the American people, will you?

This is no stinkin' "phenomenon," it's an invasion. The military needs to be deployed to the borders and into the barrios to correct the problem, too. Illegal immigration is a crime, and if existing laws were enforced these parasitic squatters would be leaving in droves. So Bush and minions; Do your jobs and take out the trash rather than acting like the potentates that you are not, will you?

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Posted by **rktrix** on [04/14/08 at 5:53PM](#)

So... I got a short question for ya, Brittanicus. How much are you willing to pay for lettuce? For apples? Do you understand how many illegal immigrants are crucial to our survival?

Are there any farmers out there with an opinion?

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Posted by **jknapp1005** on [04/14/08 at 6:16PM](#)

Hello, one and all. So it begins.

God made man. Man made borders, and walls.

I fear less the human tide coming toward me than the ignorance, hatred and racism I see being whipped up in this country. We are putting a big brown Mexican face on a world wide phenomenon. Have you seen the papers? There are food riots across the globe. Mass migrations are happening everywhere. People running from drought, crime, violence, war, poverty, disease.

Yes, this is a big problem. When it hurts bad enough we'll do something about the root of the problem. In the meantime I'm not going ignore the good people who are suffering the grinding poverty, horrid violence and the terribly demoralizing choices forced on them. I'm against watching as people starve to death, and not saying anything about it. I'm against brutality against human beings who are just trying to survive. I'm against splitting up families to satisfy people whipping up the wedge issues to get the hate boiling.

Yeah, they're coming. It's like a flood. They are like the water. Stand in front of them, they'll flow around you. Try to stop them, you'll drown. They aren't going to stop until we help them.

WE ARE OUR BROTHER'S KEEPER. God made that crystal clear early on. You don't have to answer to me. But you're going to get to answer to him, man.

Thanks, rktrix. You're a cool person.

Peace out,
JK

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Posted by **bajarat** on [04/14/08 at 6:18PM](#)

Illegal aliens are criminals and parasites. Ejecting them and employing Americans to do those jobs wouldn't impact the retail price of produce much at all. Booting the loathsome invaders just might inspire some of these greedy farmer-types to invest in mechanization. The big plus there is that John Deere equipment doesn't spit out anchor larvae and future gangster cocoons every few months :-D

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Posted by **mohl** on [04/14/08 at 6:32PM](#)

It is not sane, and never will be sane, to reward illegals with a path to citizenship. Not only have they broken our immigration laws to get here ahead of those who go through the proper process, the VAST majority of illegal adults have broken many more laws to stay, not the least of which is identity theft. If we are to provide any legal status at all to any of those who have come here illegally, they must first prove they have not broken ANY other laws. That may eliminate most. That is too bad. We often have to live with the consequences of our actions. Attrition through enforcement will always be the best solution even if it isn't the most politically correct. Those who came illegally but otherwise followed our laws can stay as guest workers, but should never be given an opportunity for citizenship or the right to vote.

Yes, it is wondrous that so many see America as their greatest hope, and we should reward those applying through the proper channels with a quicker process. That doesn't mean we can take everyone. That would be crazy. Immigration should first and last benefit Americans, not American business.

Rktrix - Don't you think it's time US farmers joined the rest of the developed world in modernizing our harvesting process? If we eliminate slave labor, they will do that in order to survive. If you believe a permanent underclass of slave laborers is appropriate to keep your lettuce cheap you need to re-examine your priorities.

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Posted by **babenrosie** on [04/14/08 at 6:35PM](#)

bajarat,
reading your comment makes me feel sick to my stomach. I understand the need to find a way to deal with illegal immigration, but my god, these are human beings you are talking about, NOT trash! I go to school with a number of these 'illegals'. They are living here, working like dogs for US, doing the crap work we are all too good to do, living in squalor conditions here, in the US, because they can't even make enough in wages to live like humans. The ones I know are working 2 or 3 jobs, going to classes to learn English, hoping they won't be separated from their loved ones here.

I agree with John K. that we should start by granting them guest worker status while we deal with solutions in a civilized manner. Of course there are 'bad' illegals, just like there are bad US American citizens that I would like another 'special' planet to send to. But to just call the whole lot 'parasitic squatters' makes it hard to even think straight, let alone think about human solutions.

Rose

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Posted by **jknapp1005** on [04/14/08 at 7:09PM](#)

To those who are making degrading statements about others, please stop.

I realized when I wrote the piece there would be those who would, to a greater or lesser degree, disagree with me. MOHL - I appreciate your civility in your answer. My argument was 1) investigate and understand this as part of a world wide phenomenon 2) find a vehicle to use as an intermediate step to facilitate a sane way to deal with the process. My idea was an official guestworker status in exchange for information, "Who are you?"

Hopefully, I haven't given the impression that everyone who disagrees with me is a racist. They aren't. Many just want laws to be followed. But I believe that survival trumps laws. We need to help these people. Yes, we need to address criminality in whatever manner it shows up. But I believe we must also try to be wise, kind and civil.

Thanks, Babenrosie.

John K

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Posted by **bajarat** on [04/14/08 at 7:21PM](#)

Say, jknapp1005, please explain what caused you to describe a deliberate invasion as a "phenomenon." How is deliberately invading a neighboring country a phenomenon? Vicente Fox and Felipe Calderon love to use that term. Why do you use it inappropriately as well?

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Posted by **babenrosie** on [04/14/08 at 7:40PM](#)

No, thank YOU John, for always bringing things back to order !

I get so darned emotional when people are getting tromped on--especially if I know there is more to a story than some people may know or even want to understand. Of course I'm not for standing behind anyone breaking laws. But it really isn't as simple as putting in for a change of address. I live near the strawberry fields and watch the mexicans working in the pouring rain, wearing large garbage bags with holes punched out for their head and arms. And across the street is a meth house, where the cars line up through the night , being served by

our US lawbreakers. Seems nothing can be done about them either, since the calls to authorities don't seem to bring resolution.

So, I feel comfort in knowing that there are people out there like you John, who understand we must address this issue, but your heart is so huge you aren't going to use the bottom of your foot to make that happen.

BTW John, your writing is so uplifting to me. Whether you are discussing the joy of your walks or your very difficult times with family, just your way of dealing with life is an example for me--one day I hope I can write in a calmer way when I feel upset about something! Thanks for setting me straight! ;)

Rose

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Posted by **jknapp1005** on [04/14/08 at 7:41PM](#)

Thanks for asking a civil question, Baja. Actually, I said world wide phenomenon. You are interested in the fact that the majority of our illegal immigration problem is from south of the border. There are one million people from Bhutan in Thailand. Four million Iraqi's have fled their country. Several countries in Europe have immigration issues with people from N. Africa. Different issues drive different problems. What makes it "phenomenal" is its size and scope. I don't really think I used the term inappropriately.

I hope when you have to flee north into Canada because of global warming that our friends up north will treat you as warmly as you have treated people who want to have decent lives.

Thanks, B.Rat,
:) JK

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Posted by **jknapp1005** on [04/14/08 at 7:45PM](#)

BABENROSIE!

I was actually thanking you for being civil! I hope you don't think I was calling YOU out for being emotional. Go ahead. Be emotional all you want in defense of what I think is sanity. But, always remember, you don't HAVE to answer anyone who is being rude.

Plus, you like to read the paper. My kinda gal.

John

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Posted by **bajarat** on [04/14/08 at 7:51PM](#)

jknapp retched: I hope when you have to flee north into Canada because of global warming that our friends up north will treat you as warmly as you have treated people who want to have decent lives.

BajaRat replied: Er, there is no such thing as your so-called 'global warming.' You really are out of touch. And as for the invaders, if they "want better lives" they need to build a better Mexico rather than turning our once great nation into some chicken feces-encrusted barnyard similar to the one they just fled, eh? Use your head.

Gawd, I'm glad I can call myself a former Oregonian judging by your remarks and the remarks of that airheaded bimbo pal of yours. Sheesh!

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Posted by **jknapp1005** on [04/14/08 at 8:12PM](#)

I dream of a world where no one will have to be afraid of anyone or anything, and will feel free to give and take without judgement.

Yeah, I love people like Babenrosie. She loves people. You can tell. I love people like Virginia, Susheela, Niranjana. People named Mendez, Nguyen. And Smith. And Nuxoll. All colors, all creeds. This ain't no

meltin' pot. It's a banquet. I am surrounded by people that love people, and love life. And they are willing to go out on a limb, and say how they feel about things in a civil way.

I do hope they treat you well when you move up north, though. Everyone deserves to be treated with kindness. It's really the only thing that matters.

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Posted by **bajarat** on [04/14/08 at 8:24PM](#)

Say, jknapp1005, what's with this 'move up north' crap? Why would anyone in their right mind want to move north?

You're obsessed!

Go grab another hit of acid, cabron... you 'we are the world' clowns are eally rather creepy.

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Posted by **rktrix** on [04/14/08 at 8:43PM](#)

Just to join in once more - if every illegal immigrant left this country, how many jobs would be unfilled? How many day care positions would be empty? Restaurant workers? Health care providers? Our "President" Mr. Bush also supports the guest passes as he understands how many industries would be devastated by the loss of the efforts of those who have come to America to work. I don't think anyone would be prepared to suffer the losses of that many skilled laborers.

Yes, there are abuses of the system. Yes there are strains in living together. So - what is new? There are native born Americans who leach off the system as well. Why don't you get the pitchforks out to throw them overboard? They are robbing from "their own" - isn't that pretty odious?

At least our immigrants are here because they want to be... unlike areas of political unrest in Africa where people are uprooted due to genocide.

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Posted by **bajarat** on [04/14/08 at 9:05PM](#)

Say, 'rktrix' --> Er, illegal aliens cannot work in the US legally. Their actiivites are criminal, and they are most likely committing felonies by using stolen SS numbers and other ID info in order to steal said jobs. Citizens are therefore victimized by this border-hoping vermin.

Bush has, just today, been deemed the worst president in US history. He is a POS indeed, and worthy of indictment on loads of charges. Whatever that globalist pig wants is definitely exactly the opposite of what is good for the American people.

As to your loony statement, "At least our immigrants are here because they want to be..." we are not talking about "immigrants" here. These cockroaches are criminals. We have laws in this country. Look them up.

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Posted by **esmith12** on [04/14/08 at 9:40PM](#)

Nice post, John. I'm dumbfounded at the response, but glad to see that some are still thinking clearly (namely, you, Rose and rxtrix).

What's disturbing about all of bajarat's comments is the likening of people to cockroaches, parasites, larvae, loathesome invaders and trash. As an Oregonian, the most prominent examples of racism I can speak to are those involving Latinos. A rational reaction to undocumented immigration should not be outright hatred.

On the pages of human history, not a single positive thing will be written about attitudes like yours, bajarat. Unfortunately, you've left the task of fighting logic like yours to people like John (and me, if I'm speaking candidly). That's a dirty job. However, your hateful language and poorly argued points speak for themselves. That makes the job a

little easier, so thanks.

John, you picked quite a hot topic this week, but I hope you'll feel it was worth the flack. Your position is grounded in compassion, justice and reason. It's one that needs to be out there. Thanks for tackling this tough issue.

Emily

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Posted by **mohl** on [04/14/08 at 10:36PM](#)

John,

I wish we could improve the lot of all the world's poor. But if we have learned anything in our history, we KNOW that legalizing those who came here illegally only encourages more and more illegal immigration. If we do this one more time, we invite total chaos. Why would ANYONE ever again bother to go through the legal immigration process?

I don't condemn you for your values. In fact, I wish we could afford them. But I'm reminded of a old saying (yes I know it has changed over the centuries): "The road to hell is paved with good intentions."

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Posted by **jknapp1005** on [04/15/08 at 5:09AM](#)

Emily and rktrix -

Thanks for your posts. The government has not done itself any favors by cutting the number of guest workers to an incredible new low. I believe Susheela wrote on that issue. It doesn't make any sense to shoot ourselves in the foot by closing the door on those who will use the system legally, both here and in Mexico.

MOHL - Thanks again for a civil posts. I'm not actually suggesting amnesty. I'm suggesting a measure for being able to begin shining a light on the problem. We don't frankly know what we're dealing with, and won't, until we use a vehicle to get everyone honest. I think a lot of people are dishonest in a case like this because they are afraid - of poverty, of jail, or death. They sometimes deal with something akin to enslavement via cayotes on the way up, and a form of economic enslavement once here. There are businessmen and women all too willing to exploit their illegal status. Bringing illegals out in the open, and legitimizing their presence, will take away any benefit to those businesses that would use illegal workers.

I've never been against secure borders. They should have been secure all along. It was to no one's benefit to have a tide of human beings fleeing desperately through our deserts. But when was someone going to stop, acknowledge and address the human suffering?

Yes, I don't think blanket amnesty is a good idea. I believe processing each case individually, and assessing that person or family's issues on a human level, is a better idea. And I think the American People, and their government, need to step up and wake up. We are part of the problem, therefore need to be part of the solution.

Worldwide, I think we passed the gates of hell a long time ago. If we don't like the road we're on we can turn around, or we can quit building roads to nowhere. I would agree that intentions are meaningless. That's why I'm speaking out.

Once again, to those who would use this blog to post racist utterances, you are really only embarassing yourself.

John K

John K

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Posted by **831274** on [04/15/08 at 8:15AM](#)

Use our strength of technology to turn the tide on illegal immigrants and their employers.

We, as patriotic U.S. Citizens, must collaborate and use the strengths of our technological infrastructure. This

is a huge advantage that we are not fully tapping. The internet is an American creation so let's be proud of this

and make full use of this powerful communications tool.

Illegal immigrants are attacking us financially. This has been proven time and again to be true. We must be very

careful where our legally earned money goes. Purchasing goods and services from organizations which support or

utilize illegal immigrants is unpatriotic and funds the very people who are blatantly attacking our proud American

ideals on our own soil.

Google Maps (accessible at maps.google.com) is a powerful tool for locating and providing reviews on businesses

throughout the U.S. This searchable map of any area of the country allows internet users to post information about

their experiences at businesses for all to see. We must utilize this powerful communications system by posting

reviews on businesses utilizing illegal immigrants. The reviews posted on these law breaking businesses must

clearly and politely state the fact that they are hiring illegal immigrants. Additional information such as

evidence and accounts should be in the review. Most importantly, keep the review you write politically correct and

devoid of foul language or racist remarks as these actions will only result in your review being removed.

Once more reviews have been posted, patriotic U.S. Citizens will be able to look up a company which they intend to

do business with on Google Maps to see if it has been reported as hiring illegal immigrants.

I cannot stress how important it is for us to use this system. We need to fight back on the economical war waged

upon us honest, hard-working, tax-paying, legal U.S. Citizens.

Let us all go now to maps.google.com and write reviews on every company we know which hires illegal immigrants.

Use this powerful tool we have to stop the economic support of those who are trying to ruin our beautiful country.

Spread this message to every message board you know of. Email this message to everyone you know. Post this

message on all user comment forms for news stories. The time is upon us for us to take matters into our own hands.

Report businesses using illegal immigrants now at:

<http://maps.google.com>

and

www.wehirealiens.com

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Posted by **LauraP** on [04/15/08 at 8:52AM](#)

I wonder if any of the self-described 'patriotic Americans' posted here have ever lived in, or visited extensively, another country. I doubt it. If they had, they would have been jolted when they returned - shocked by the waste and greed and short-sightedness of our lifestyle. They would also be saddened by the bigotry, as demonstrated in many of these postings.

Our lifestyle is in for a shock. Our national debt is currently a disaster, thanks to the Bush administration and its cronies. ..Let's fast-forward about 10 years. The baby boomers will be retiring in huge numbers, placing a significant drain on the country's already burdened economy. Social Security is nothing but a government-sanctioned pyramid scheme; ditto Medicare. Our population is not expanding at a rate sufficient to fund payouts without either cutting benefits or increasing taxes on the employed - or both. One way to decrease the tax burden would be to increase the number of employed. Guest workers are an excellent vehicle to achieve this. Many illegal aliens pay into the system, but many receive payment under the table. As lawfully admitted guest workers, they would be paying their fair share.

To those who post civil comments and reasoned arguments, thank you. To those who choose to use this forum for personal attacks, I ask - would you like someone attacking your brother?

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Posted by **mohl** on [04/15/08 at 10:47AM](#)

LauraP,

I think one of the fears held by those opposed to illegal immigration is that, instead of remembering how terrible other countries in the world are and give thanks for our blessings, our own country could well become like those places we've visited but in which we would never choose to live. Yes, we waste and we are greedy. We are also the most giving and welcoming country the world has ever known. It is often good to keep that in perspective during these debates.

Yes, our national debt is mind-boggling and created by an enept administration (btw, I'm Republican). SSA has been in trouble for years, partly because 1) we've been told for 2 generations to have fewer children to avoid overcrowding, and 2) because SSA has become THE retirement for many instead of the supplemental retirement it was designed to be. Adding tens of millions of poor will only help short term. In 40 years those people will retire and then the strain will be even worse. And in the meantime our communities would be bursting, our infrastructures would be crumbling, and we would have too many people to be sustained by our dwindling natural resources.

As cruel as it sounds to you and others, we cannot continue down this destructive course. Rome fell. We can too.

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Posted by **jknapp1005** on [04/15/08 at 11:10AM](#)

Thanks LP and and MOHL for civil and intelligent replies. I do believe the best thing would be for the illegal immigrants to be able to remain in their country. Even then, there would need to be a civil, fair way to help them do that. Also, we need to help our neighbor. Yes, Mexico's problems aren't our responsibility, but their problems have certainly affected us. There is no way they could possibly solve this problem alone as we are part of the problem. That may not be being driven by anything sinister on our end (although there may be some who are taking advantage).

I do think this country has actually had a lot of problems welcoming people consistently from the beginning. Each group of immigrants has taken its lumps. Even legal ones. I work with people who are from other countries and have been here legally for quite sometime. One told me with bitterness that he is told, "If you don't like it, why don't you go back to your own country?" This IS his country now. There are bigots. There is hatred.

There's also love and concern. There's also decency. Wherever there is help needed, we need to step up and help. We cannot continue to do what we've been doing if we expect the problem to get solved. At some point we will have to do something counter-intuitive, that goes against what our instinct is (to punish, to blame), think outside the box, and

extend the hand of fellowship. That doesn't mean automatic citizenship, but it doesn't mean condemnation, racial slurs and exaggerations of economic hardships (my opinion, MOHL. Please don't take offense).

John K

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Posted by **LauraP** on [04/15/08 at 12:15PM](#)

Mohl, your points are taken. I thought that the entire premise of guest worker is that they would reside temporarily in the U.S. Maybe I'm wrong - or naive.

Call me cynical, but I think we've already fallen.

1) We have an abhorrent educational system, which I blame on parents more than the government. Asian immigrants are spurring competition in schools, otherwise we would be doing even worse in standardized tests. Without education, there's little left in the foundation for our growth as a nation. I think this is why Colin Powell is working so hard on the education system.

2) Our health care system is sapping our economy even further. It's almost like a tax that benefits very few. And unhealthy people do not make the most productive workers.

3) We are reviled in much of the world. Yes, we are still seen as the land of opportunity, but probably not for much longer. Foreign investment has been propping up our economy since the real estate market is no longer able to do so. Our creative entrepreneurs are looking to China and other developing economies for opportunities. Currently, the growth industries here are health- and government-related. And corn. I hope that the growth in 'green' businesses continues.

Sorry to be such a pessimist. I know I've had a good life here and I'm grateful, but sometimes I'm very unhappy with our direction as a nation.

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Posted by **jknapp1005** on [04/15/08 at 1:28PM](#)

LP -

I guess I have a somewhat naive hope that there are enough good people out there to turn it around. Please see O. Virginia Phillips' and Sarah Nuxoll's articles this week. There are still PLENTY of people out there fighting the good fight. And the people on both sides of the argument are good folks. Just have some different ideas about what the cause and the cures are.

Thanks for posting,
John K

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Posted by **dmbones** on [04/15/08 at 1:36PM](#)

Greetings friends,

Si se puede!

Of the two angels guarding the Garden of Eden, in a classic some of you may remember, do you think it's fear or desire that is the limiting factor here?

Check out the near future of the North American Union for a different take on immigration....

<http://www.humanevents.com/article.php?id=14965>

dmbones

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Posted by **jknapp1005** on [04/15/08 at 1:46PM](#)

Not sure I buy it. I've heard the theory posited, and have even seen advertisements for such a thing in a theater, with an ad to annex Mexico. While an open border might be an OK idea, I'm sure a lot of

people would be shocked if something like that happened.

Interesting that YOU floated that one out.

:) JK

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Posted by **dmbones** on [04/15/08 at 6:29PM](#)

Hi John,

The NAU is Bushie's deal for now, but it's not going to go away with a change of administration. It's the future, I do believe. Troglodytes will have their worst nightmares realized and may actually have to meet someone who is different than them and their immediate families. Que lastima! LOL!

I see the future as more united on the planet than we are currently. The only truly global system so far is the economic system. Tom Friedman's "flat earth" is the water of wages finding their own level. "Here Comes Everybody," is another recent book on the subject. We are a small neighborhood, getting smaller by the day, and all the candidate's musings will not put high paying wages back together again here.

In such a time, we need cheap labor, as we've always had... and Bush knows Mexico has plenty. People are just resources for corporations. Plenty of them around means that some will work for almost nothing. Does anyone really think that corps care what country they come from or what eye color their workers have? Who can stop them from finding the cheapest sources of labor?

Also, nationalism is a disease. I can hardly wait until this era of nation-states is over. Do you know that the UN can't go into Darfur to save people from being killed because the Sudanese government will not let them? The rights of nations supersede the rights of people not to be killed still. This must change, and I'm sure it will. The flag of humanity will be raised above the nation-states before peace will come to earth, IMHO.

From my perspective, the larger and more shared the interests of America, the better. If Mexico and Canada can share their interests with us, then the fruits of that unity will accrue to us all. This is the rocky road to the future that will eventually undermine corporate interests and the cabal of profiteers now bent on a NAU. But, in the short-run, American workers are faced with major problems as they transition to other work for probably far less income.

We can't blame immigrants for this condition, it's the maturation of the people of earth sloughing toward the future. Conservatives should see who's pushing it, so I used a conservative link.

Thanks for responding to the slow learners, until they make any further response unnecessary.

dmbones

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Posted by **mohl** on [04/16/08 at 8:57PM](#)

dmbones,

Your vision of the future world is frightening, and hopefully wrong. The end of nation-states as we know them would also be the end of "beacons of light," countries that attract people from around the world who want to be a part of something better or that shine as examples of what can be in their own countries. Without those beacons, there would be nothing to strive for except mediocrity or even just survival. A one-world state could have only one master, the corporation. That is not a happy thought. The fact that you envision this as a better alternative makes me wonder at the state in which you currently exist.

A perfect world would be one filled with countries that respect the rights of their people, ones that provide the necessary tools and opportunities to achieve happiness and security, in other words a better life. The U.S. can share markets with Canada and Mexico without becoming the NAU. To go a step further and imagine that all the world's peoples can co-exist peacefully under one rule is naïve at best.

I don't know who you are or your life's circumstances. But to wish for a lesser existence for all because of sub-standard conditions for many (you?) is not only selfish, it's inexplicable.

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Posted by **sjayapal** on [04/16/08 at 9:25PM](#)

John --

Thank you for your plunge into these waters. I'm always taken aback by the venom spewed against illegal immigrants. I find it hard to rationalize. Yes, these are people who have broken laws. But there are many of those sorts of people. Tax evaders cost our economy some \$300 billion dollars a year -- yes, you read that number correctly -- and yet we don't see them referred to as cockroaches or trash. And typically, these tax-evading scofflaws aren't exactly hanging on by their fingernails.

Most illegal immigrants are people just trying to do their best for their families and children. Which of us wouldn't do the same if we felt we had to? And if we wouldn't, is that really something to be proud of? For the most part, these folks take incredible risks, and live lives of grinding work and little dignity, for the sake of their families. They're not exactly running laughing to the bank.

The other argument most often made in favor of harsh policies against illegal immigrants is that they consume public resources. The evidence on this is completely unclear. I don't pretend to have researched the subject exhaustively, but I've seen studies that support each side -- some that say illegal immigration is a drag on the economy, and others that say that it's actually beneficial.

At the end of the day, it seems to me that the most practical and the most humane policy is one that recognizes that people will always want to move to places where there is opportunity. Opportunity exists because there is demand. We're a capitalist society, right? So why should it be a problem to have immigrants fill a demand? And we claim to be a humane society as well -- so why are some of us so vindictive towards people who are simply trying to make a better life for themselves?

Again, thanks for engaging on this issue.

Susheela

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Posted by **jknapp1005** on [04/17/08 at 5:21AM](#)

MOHL -

I think there may or may not be an organized effort to keep illegal immigration the way it is. My point, getting back to that, was to have a more open way of dealing with it. I want to temper the punishing and blaming aspects of laws being drafted, and take the "opportunity" out of the hands of people who would abuse human beings who are in a vulnerable situation. These people, if we're talking about Mexicans, are in a vulnerable position on both sides of the border. If we could convince all of those, or even most of those who are in this country

illegally to come out in the open, we have a place to start. We know what we're dealing with. Most of us really have no idea what we're dealing with otherwise.

Susheela -

Thanks for weighing in. Here we are, having a discussion about a process, but probably about race, too. Killing two birds, eh?

I think there is an opportunity, for the business community and the immigrant population. I believe you have argued in past pieces that the government has shot itself in the foot by lowering the number of LEGAL immigrants that can enter the country, with the exception of highly skilled workers. It certainly doesn't make any sense to me not to have a robust guest worker program in a country of this size that borders a nation with a struggling economy, that also has a large population.

I just think a lot of what is going as our government is trying to pass laws, and build walls, is fear based. We do have something to fear. Fear, and the consequences of making legal moves based on negative emotion. I say we move forward and look at it like a process, break the process into pieces, and work to improve those pieces. First piece "Who is coming into my country? Identity, please."

Say...aren't you an immigrant to this country? Feel free to post your experiences during that process. It seems to me you are a success story, based on what I understand about your life. It would be nice to counter some of the really negative things said in some of these posts with as many calm rational voices as we can get. Your perspective would be invaluable.

SIDE NOTE: I was wishing more people would've posted on your last piece. I notice you got 10 or so posts, but they were repeats for some odd reason. I think it's important to talk about race, too. I felt what I said was somewhat clumsy, but there you go. I'm not used to talking openly about something like that. I hope it's obvious you're highly respected by me, and that I value your opinion.

John K

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Posted by **dmbones** on [04/17/08 at 8:40AM](#)

"A one-world state could have only one master, the corporation."
mohl

At present, the world is only united economically. That's why business interests have rallied behind the sub-mortgage crisis: to save themselves. It benefits us as well. It benefits everyone, finally.

National boundaries are artificial, marks in the dust. They do not really define humanity. Instead, they are the place of cultural experience. It is the people of those cultures that carry the value we must collectively assure as our children's rightful inheritance. The ground upon which we stand is the most humble of elements, and provides us so much of what we all need in order to survive; still, it is the humanity on that ground that brings it to fruition.

Now, for the first time in human history, we are able to communicate with one another in realtime. Earthlings are finding a common voice. Soon, we will be able to "vote" on global issues, bringing the interests of humanity to bear on more limited vested national interests. If we are smart, we will work together to save ourselves sooner than later. If we are not smart, perhaps the oil wars and there effects will force us to deal collectively in order to survive globally.

Ad hominem attacks are noted, but inappropriate. But, for me, it's the same old story: lived life the way I wanted, made mistakes, suffered consequences, learned compassion, acted on empathy, learned to love humanity as our common birthright, deepened affection with continued service, hoping for enough energy to continue to make some small difference for the grandkids...

We have nothing to fear from people from other places. A world united is the promise of human history. Helping others is better than fearing them. It's where we're going, IMHO.

Cheers,

dmbones

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Posted by **mohl** on [04/17/08 at 6:39PM](#)

I too wish for the best for my grandchildren. That hope includes a country that can not only compete "globally" (gosh I get tired of that word), but can continue to offer opportunities that make life happy, secure, and yes, prosperous. What you foresee sounds like a form of socialism for everyone on earth, under one umbrella, and that experiment, in microcosm, has not succeeded.

Business ultimately has but one interest and that is the bottom line, unfortunately supported by our elected government officials. That is why they continue to demand ever more cheap labor, ever more worker visas, and successfully and with impunity ignore our employment laws. Business wants the status quo. If an amnesty ever happens, and I suspect it probably will to our detriment, those granted amnesty will naturally expect the same benefits due other legal workers, and business will not take long to once again look for and hire newly arrived illegals.

National boundaries occur to separate by culture, language, religion, and custom. They occur because we cannot co-exist peacefully. We also have a right to choose to live with those who share basic values and cultures. All people, living happily as one group, may play out well in fictional works. The reality is far different.

Yours are idealistic goals to be sure, but rely on people to put past real or perceived wrongs aside. Judging by recorded history, that is unlikely. And so, if nation-states are the only alternative to a one-world conglomerate, I prefer to bequeath to my grandchildren a country that has room to breathe and opportunity to thrive. And that should allow me and my fellow countrymen to say who can come here and in what numbers.

BTW, based on who you say you are, we are not so very different.

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Posted by **dmbones** on [04/18/08 at 9:23AM](#)

Hey mohl,

"National boundaries occur to separate by culture, language, religion, and custom. They occur because we cannot co-exist peacefully."
(another mohl)

What a considered response. Thank you. We probably are a lot alike; most people are when we get to know one another better. That's, of course, the operational component that overrides fear: as we get to know those who we previously saw as "different," we reveal our prejudices as unnecessary and wrong. We're all just people, struggling with what Maslow saw as universal needs. When those needs are met, we all get pretty cooperative with one another.

But, therein lies the rub: most of the people on the planet don't have the basic needs. Would you walk across Mexico to an uncertain future, away from your family, facing possible death as a result, for no good reason?

We still have the luxury of debating this "socialism," which fires up so many, now while the turning wheels are still somewhat under our control. But, larger forces are at work here. We are moving inevitably toward recognition of our human interdependence. As we fail to resolve the issues of basic human infrastructure needs, the forces of insurgency surge. No military might can stop individual actions against infrastructure or civilians. We can't kill everybody who we think might do us harm. Instead, our "fight" must be to raise the floor under us all, so that our full potentials may come forward.

This is what all of the world's religions have promised humanity: that as we treat others, we also will be treated. How else are we to learn this lesson, but from our own experience? Immigration is one angle on this mirror that lets us see who we are in this epic struggle for earth.

Idealism is an act of faith in humanity, and the first sign of faith is love. I've feared others, but now I try to love. It's worked out much better than I would've ever expected, and given the grandkids a handle on these very difficult times.

Thanks again for your very considerate reply.

Best to you,

dmbones

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Posted by **mohl** on [04/18/08 at 11:58AM](#)

dmbones,

You are without exception the brightest, most thoughtful, and interesting opponent with whom I've had the pleasure to debate. While we'll never see this issue through the same eyes, it's a delight to discuss our differences with intellect and reason instead of name calling and race-baiting. I'm guessing you'd be a great person to know.

mohl

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Posted by **mksmith07** on [04/18/08 at 12:40PM](#)

I don't understand why I should object if an immigrant pays into social security under my name, thus increasing my benefit levels when I retire. As to who is being cheated, illegal immigrants are. They pay billions of dollars annually into social security, but are not entitled to receive benefits.

I teach immigrants every day, many of them undocumented, and very few of them trust our government enough to "come out of the shadows," whatever reform proposal may be offered.

On the issue of illegality, shouldn't it be part of the discussion that the United States government and major corporations headquartered here have consistently overthrown democratic governments and crushed

popular movements for desperately needed social change throughout the Third World, thus contributing mightily to illegal immigration flows? This behavior is quite illegal, aside from unspeakably immoral.

On the other hand, we cannot absorb the entire Third World within our borders, so those who object to mass illegal immigration cannot be dismissed on the basis that they lack compassion. In short, those who are paying the social costs of current immigration policy have a right to complain.

To call illegal immigration an "invasion" is a bit of a stretch. What we did in Iraq in 2003 was an invasion. And yes, American soldiers in Iraq are illegal immigrants destroying a country. On the other hand, Mexicans and Central Americans who come here in search of any job they can get are fleeing miserable conditions our government has had a large hand in creating in the first place.

It is not simply "up to the Mexicans" or "up to Latin America" to create decent living conditions for their citizens, as though they haven't been trying to do precisely that for a long time now. But every time they enjoy a little success the U.S. government moves in and destroys the project.

If we want less illegal immigration, we should reign in the illegal actions of our government.

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Posted by **mohl** on [04/18/08 at 1:51PM](#)

The problem with identity theft is that the person or persons who use your SSN to work also often uses it for identification when buying a car, applying for a credit card, using it as identification when getting medical assistance, etc. Often the user fails to pay and that is when things get really nightmarish for those whose identities have been stolen. Of course, our government permits this to happen by allowing the use of an SSN by more than one person, but they will not help you clean up the mess when your credit is tarnished or even destroyed.

Yes, our government and corporate policies, along with those of foreign governments, help to cause this crisis. But the problem ultimately falls to the American taxpayer, especially state and locally, to pick up the tab of caring for and educating those who come here as a result of actions for which they have no culpability.

Over the past 20 years (and mostly in the past 10) as many as 20 million or more have entered illegally. There may be many causes for illegal immigration, but it's pretty hard NOT to call this an invasion.

And yes, we can hold other governments responsible for the living conditions and opportunities in their own nations. Who else is ultimately responsible?

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Posted by **mksmith07** on [04/18/08 at 3:03PM](#)

We are. U.S. taxpayers provide the revenue with which the U.S. government maintains harshly punitive economic and social conditions throughout the Third World. Take Latin America. For decades the U.S. has crushed or strangled one popular movement after another attempting to create decent conditions of life for the majority: in Nicaragua, in El Salvador, in Guatemala (the Catholic Church called our policy genocide), in Ecuador, in Brazil, in Cuba, etc. etc. As a general rule the forces allied with us inside those countries have not been "governments" but denationalized looters beholden to a foreign power - Washington. In short, we shouldn't blame this on "other governments," but on our own. Morally, we are obligated to stop our own (more serious) lawbreaking before we complain of the illegal actions of others. And when we do this, immigration flows will likely decline rapidly.

In Mexico, we have always allied ourselves with the looting class. And we were specifically warned that NAFTA would destroy small Mexican farmers, predictably leading to an immigrant "invasion" of the U.S. If we consistently ignore the predictable consequences of our own actions, can we be taken seriously? I think not.

Where is the element of force in the immigrant "invasion?" The typical use of this word implies force is being exercised. I don't see how sneaking across the Mexican border at night constitutes an exercise of force. The brutality of U.S. force, on the other hand, is dramatically

apparent throughout the world.

Let's get a handle on that.

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Posted by **mohl** on [04/18/08 at 4:38PM](#)

Force can be from numbers as well as weapons. I'm a conservative who blames our current and past presidents as much as you for our actions in Iraq and other loathsome international policies. But what you forget regarding illegal immigration is that there are other victims here as well: American taxpayers, workers, and students are the ones who actually must bear the burden.

You can hate our government for its sins, but why blame Americans for its peccadillos? Wouldn't you then have to blame the illegals for the injustices of their own governments?

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Posted by **dmbones** on [04/18/08 at 6:17PM](#)

Greetings friends,

Think globally! Act locally! We agree on principles, we talk the big ideas, we act close to home. So it goes. America, as usual, is in the big talk stage, with no agreement on principle (is it economic or moral/rational or DarwinianRUS?) and never anything much about close to home.

I see no reason to deny that Bushie, Inc., et.al., are sitting on the North American Union as the remedy du jour. It looks like N'Orleans trying to hold back the waters keeping people from moving to opportunity. It also looks like they're willing to co-opt the nation for more low wage workers. Winning by joining, that would be. The fact that none of the candidates or MSM are willing to talk about it also suggests it's possibility. They are all at least keeping options open in this regard.

This movement toward larger levels of unity seems inevitable to me.

On the larger, principle level, I enjoyed seeing Roger Cohen's piece about America's original sin of racism and our need to deal with it collectively, an issue intimately related to immigration. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/17/opinion/17cohen.html?hp> While he speaks of a "memorialization" of race history, coming to grips with this past has the potential to take us to a higher ground. If we can accept our sin of racism, take responsibility for it, and forgive one another, we can empower pretty much the whole planet, IMHO.

It's incredible at best, and a good sign at least, that we have this opportunity at this particular time. Moving to forgiveness on American race history would raise the flag of humanity for every person with eyes to see.

Si se puede, aprende la lingua!

mksmith07, have you read The Almanac of the Dead, about the retaking of earth by the indigenous people? A little glimpse of what could happen if you rip off too many people.

mohl, thank you for your kind words. We need to agree that cost analysis is not the only way to measure right from wrong re immigration? Ya'tink?

dmbones

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Posted by **elena2** on [04/18/08 at 7:30PM](#)

John,

Just checking in with the blog after a few days, and I just want to say that my hat's definitely off to you. You framed a debate in your typical thoughtful, evenhanded way, fueling robust discussion and top-of-the-line debate. It looks like you even attracted an honest-to-goodness troll for awhile there (the anchor larvae guy) Too bad we couldn't keep him for our blog mascot!

You didn't pick an easy subject either, but a complex multi-faceted issue. For my two cents, I thought the immigration bill that failed awhile back would have probably been the best, though not perfect, solution.

Elena

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Posted by **jknapp1005** on [04/18/08 at 8:47PM](#)

Elena, MOHL and MK thanks for weighing in. I really can't think of anything more to say that I haven't said, and several other people have said, also. It's been a great and civil debate thanks to the the caliber of people who have spoken up. It's been nice to hear from so many people. It's been very nice to hear from people from both sides of the argument who prove that a respectful discussion can happen.

Thanks for reading and posting your thoughts,
John K

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Posted by **mksmith07** on [04/19/08 at 4:32PM](#)

To call our mass murder operations in Latin America and elsewhere in the Third World "pecadillos" is an exercise in apologetics. I mentioned that in Guatemala alone it reached the scale of genocide in the 1980s. And I explained why the American people are responsible: we fund our government, and I should add that we elect it. That makes us responsible for what the government does.

To blame Mexicans for the Mexican government or Guatemalans for the Guatemalan government might make sense if the U.S. role in Latin America were different from what it has been. But historically the governments that succeed in Latin America are highly repressive thug states maintained by U.S. arms, aid, diplomatic support, and counterinsurgency training (i.e., state terrorism), "governments" whose mandate from Washington is precisely to thwart the popular will. When we get our boot off their necks and let them elect whom they want to elect, then I'll hold them responsible for their governments. But not before. And let us here note that in Venezuela, Hugo Chavez, victor of more democratic elections than any figure in Latin American history, is bitterly OPPOSED by the U.S. for precisely that reason.

The immigration issue is directly tied to the legacy of colonialism and imperialism, because the regions exploited by Euroamerican power for centuries are precisely where so much undocumented immigration is coming from. The World Court ordered us to pay \$17 billion in reparations to Nicaragua alone for the destruction we wreaked there in the 1980s, but naturally, we never paid it. So who has contempt for the law?

I acknowledged that those paying disproportionate social costs of mass undocumented immigration can't simply be dismissed for lack of compassion in opposing the loss of community control that occurs when a wave of cheap workers swamps a particular area.

But where I live Spanish speakers have been here longer than English speakers, so who invaded whom first? As a matter of historical fact, the U.S. invaded Mexico and took about one-third of the country by force. As Mexicans often point out, correctly, "we didn't cross the border, the border crossed us."

The illegal immigrants we need to resist most are the U.S. troops destroying Iraq. How many of them brought passports and visas to Baghdad?

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Posted by **mohl** on [04/19/08 at 6:31PM](#)

And before the Spanish speakers were here, the Navajo and Hopi and Apache were here. How far back do you want to go and to whom should we return the southwest? Borders change. They've changed dramatically and often in Africa, in Asia, in Europe, and in the western hemisphere. That is something with which you and Mexico must deal.

We should get out of Iraq as soon as possible. Then we should put our soldiers on our southern border. We should learn from our historic

blunders, not continue to make them.

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Posted by **mksmith07** on [04/19/08 at 9:37PM](#)

But how many Navaho and Hopi and Apaches are here now? Do they have anything like the current demographic and cultural significance of Spanish speakers in the Southwest and California?

Actually, Indian peoples as a whole are still legally sovereign over roughly one-third of the continental U.S. I'm all in favor of honoring that, and doubt very much whether they would consent to putting thousands of troops on the Mexican-U.S. border. (Mexicans are mostly Indian, too, Some 30,000 Spaniards mixed with millions of Aztecs, so genetically they have to be far more indigenous than European.)

In any case, it is not a matter of going back, it is a matter of dealing honestly with injustice, especially desisting from one's own criminal behavior before pointing the finger of blame at others. The Southwest is certainly home to Mexicans, who do not feel they are entering alien territory when they cross the border. I expect it will remain U.S. territory for some time, but that does not mean Mexicans should be treated as criminals for crossing into U.S. territory. If we stopped imposing "free trade" agreements and allowed Latin America to define its own brand of economics for itself, we wouldn't be inundated in immigrants to begin with.

"Borders change" contains no news. On that basis Hitler's redrawing of the map of Europe was legitimate.

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Posted by **mohl** on [04/20/08 at 12:14AM](#)

Demographic and cultural significance? I think the Native Americans would disagree with you as to their significance.

How the American southwest became a part of the U.S. does not nullify the fact that it now is and we won't be giving it back. We have a border and it is sovereign. In the distant past, half the known world was Rome. That is no longer so, and California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas have been part of the U.S. for 160 years. That's the fact and the reality. As you said in an earlier post, let's get a handle on that.

I agree with you regarding Iraq, but that is a separate issue. As is free trade at least to an extent, which has hurt American workers too.

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Posted by **mksmith07** on [04/20/08 at 1:58PM](#)

Well, in one sense all cultures are of equal significance, no matter their size, but as you yourself indicated, numbers in themselves can be an expression of force, or at least impact. In that sense, Spanish-speaking cultures are way more significant than indigenous cultures in the Southwest and California.

We wouldn't be having this discussion if the Mexican border were sovereign. Arbitrarily establishing a border in the middle of Mexico guaranteed that it would not be. Absent a change in our foreign and economic policies, there is nothing that can prevent the Spanish-speaking population in the U.S. from growing to 100 million in the next forty years. Borders change, yes, but so do demographics.

The article that started this thread spoke of undocumented immigration as an international phenomenon, which makes Iraq not at all a separate issue. In fact, it is the clearest possible instance of an illegal immigrant invasion destroying a country.

Free trade is not a separate issue, either, at least if we really want to reduce undocumented immigration. The Zapatista rebellion in Mexico emerged right after NAFTA was passed, warning that "free trade" would destroy communal agriculture, dispossessing millions of Mexican farmers. They were right, and recent waves of undocumented immigrants are among the obvious consequences.

Putting the troops in Iraq on the U.S.-Mexican border is a policy that (1) has no chance of being adopted, and (2) has no chance of solving an

immigration problem rooted in economic exploitation if it were adopted.

When I said "let's get a handle on that," I was referring to stopping the U.S. government's illegal and immoral policies, not insisting on continuing them while complaining about their predictable effects.

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Posted by **mohl** on [04/20/08 at 3:29PM](#)

At least we've come to a round-about agreement that the massive numbers of illegals crossing our border constitutes an invasion.

Our southern border is sovereign but not protected. There's a difference. And yes, I do fear between "invasion" and birth rates, Spanish speakers in the U.S. may number 100 million and in a lot less than forty years. Not a happy thought given the overcrowding and dwindling natural resources that is our likely future if that ghastly growth occurs.

I'll give you that NAFTA was ill-conceived. It enriched the corporations without consideration to the harm that would be done to BOTH Mexican farmers and American workers alike, and our government, Mexico, and Canada knew (or should have known) this going in. So you want Americans to pay for this forever? All three governments were equally complicit. Why then do you believe only the American people should bear the burden?

But let's not forget that long before NAFTA, the Mexican, Guatemalan, Colombian, and Salvadoran peasantry were little more than fodder for their ruling classes and crossed our borders illegally or over-stayed their visas in smaller but still significant numbers. Another ill-conceived U.S. government policy, the 1986 amnesty, shouted to the world that all you had to do was get here and we would relent and let you stay. Do you concede that was also a blunder by our government?

I agree putting our soldiers on our border won't happen. Too politically incorrect. I don't agree that it wouldn't stem much of the flow. Of course I don't advocate shooting people who are attempting to cross illegally, but I do believe if you make it too costly and too difficult, they will stop trying. Maybe then the people who look to the U.S. for economic survival will turn their attentions to demanding more opportunities in their own countries.

It's time to stop blaming the U.S. (and its people) for everything and start thinking about saving it. It's far from perfect, I'll grant you, but it's better than the alternatives. You can detest the U.S. government all you want, but don't overlook the fact that its people are the first to give and help when disaster occurs.

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Posted by [mksmith07](#) on [04/21/08 at 1:13PM](#)

Massive undocumented immigration may fit the secondary definition of the word invasion, though I think applying the word in this case is more rhetorical than accurate. But I can't say it's completely wrong.

The Mexican-U.S. border is one of the most militarized borders in the world. Militarizing it more will not solve the problem, which is social and economic, not military. There is no military/police solution.

I have not said only the American people should bear the burden of NAFTA, which is a nonsensical statement and therefore one I would not make. I have said, and continue to say, that Americans are responsible for their own government, not the Canadian or Mexican governments. And I've pointed out that the U.S. does not allow the Mexican people or any people in Latin America to have a government that runs contrary to major corporate interests in the U.S. In short, the governments that typically hold power in Latin America are extensions of U.S. power, so how can the people suffering under them be blamed? And the denationalized looters that hold power by being servile to the U.S. are doing what they are paid to do.

With the advent of NAFTA, even Canadian sovereignty has been at least partially eclipsed. Canadian social welfare protections - more generous than ours - are challenged under free trade doctrine for restraining trade. The U.S. government was far and away the most powerful actor in ramming through NAFTA.

Making immigration more costly and difficult will increase the death rate among migrants, but will not staunch the mass immigration flow. To stop that, we'd have to support Chavez, Castro, Evo Morales, Rafael Correa, and other socialists in Latin America, whose democratic populist agenda explicitly rejects free trade, while favoring the closing down of U.S. military bases in Latin America. These governments are trying to make Latin America a decent place, so people don't have to migrate thousands of miles to find a job. The U.S., of course, opposes them.

As I already mentioned, Latin Americans have been demanding more opportunities in their own countries for a long time. (That's how Chavez, Correa, Morales et al came to power in the first place.)The U.S. has drowned their demands in blood time and again. The alleged generosity of the American people has done little about it. Then again, the American people know virtually nothing about Latin America, and therefore CAN'T do anything about it.

It is frankly conceited to rate one's own society better than all others, especially when it is committing crimes against humanity on a regular basis. Do we really need Osama bin Laden to wake us up?

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Posted by [mohl](#) on [04/21/08 at 5:12PM](#)

Sometimes reason can fly out the window when you hate something so much, as you seem to hate this country. Chavez is making moves to become a dictator and it may not be long before we see Venezuelans attempting to escape to freedom in the same way Cubans (under the thumb of another of your heroes) have done since 1959.

Your preference for socialism is puzzling given the historically oppressive nature and ultimate failure of this type of government. It seems the victims of corrupt regimes, once down-graded to socialism, would go from the frying pan into the fire.

Illegal immigration to the U.S. is beneficial only to Corporate America's bottom line, but a terrible economic and resource drain on state and local taxpayers. You can't make that fact go away regardless of where you wish to lay blame for this chaos.

I said the U.S. was far from perfect. But if it were not a better place to live than most, why would so many want to come here, and not just for survival? Should not a people be proud of their country, their culture, and their way of life, and want to protect it?

We are clearly and permanently at cross-purposes here. I want to bequeath to my grandchildren an America with room to breathe and opportunity to thrive and prosper. I'm not sure what you envision for our future (or what future you believe we deserve).

Yes, our government has made many international blunders (I venture to guess it's a rare country that hasn't). Yes, the American people could be better educated as to the actions of our government. But since I

have voted for non-winning presidential candidates for the last 28 years and losing Senators for even longer, I'm just not sure what you would have me do. What do you do to see that the wrongs are righted?

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Posted by **mksmith07** on [04/22/08 at 11:30AM](#)

I have expressed no hatred for my country in any of my posts, nor do I harbor any. I have spoken of injustice and the need to overcome it. That is not hatred.

Chavez respected the will of the people in rejecting his reform package, one feature of which would have allowed him to seek a third term as president. How many dictators agree to limit their time in office in accordance with a popular referendum?

Just like capitalism, socialism has many forms. It is too sweeping to speak of "this type of government" when referring to socialism. Each case is unique and has to be judged accordingly. To pronounce all socialist efforts as "failures" betrays a deep prejudice, as well as unawareness of what is going on in Latin America, where it is very much alive, and not just in Cuba. Note that in Venezuela, Chavez, the "dictator," has rejected calls by Marxist-Leninists to nationalize the whole Venezuelan economy.

I don't know if people "should be" proud of their country, but they naturally are, and this is fine within limits. But when pride becomes chauvinism and blinds the patriot to the crimes of state he/she needs to take responsibility for, the limits have been surpassed. And calling a long series of deliberate criminal behavior "blunders" is pretty far-fetched. Was it a fit of absent-mindedness that had the U.S. kill millions of people in the forging of its empire?

It is impossible to know whether the U.S. is a country "better than most" - better in what sense? The culture and people of the U.S. have much to recommend them, but the national security state and the transnational corporations headquartered here are rapidly bringing the human race to the brink of extinction. They are a major factor in sustaining the miserable conditions people are fleeing when they come here. Therefore, it is disingenuous for us to conclude that simply by coming here immigrants are stating that the U.S. is better than other countries.

I don't think "an America with room to breathe" will result from supermilitarization of the Mexican-U.S. border, or any similar effort to turn the country into a prosperous cage.

I share your hopes for your grandchildren to thrive - for everybody's grandchildren to thrive - but have serious doubts about their "prospering," which usually connotes financial success. When we've reached the point where trillions of dollars in assets disappear overnight, it is not clear that anyone can count on prospering anymore.

Profit as the superordinate goal of society was probably never a good idea, and is now clearly obsolete. The ecological crisis will never be solved by tinkering with market incentives. It requires extensive social planning. Wall Street is not likely to look kindly on this fact - or even recognize it.

Our material standard of expenditure is going down, and will continue to. That in itself is not a bad thing. A life glutted with gadgetry and haste is not the best of all possible worlds. We need to find a higher quality of life at a lower standard of expenditure. I doubt very much that can be done within the constraints of a profit-driven system.

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Posted by **mohl** on [04/22/08 at 11:29PM](#)

You're probably expecting a lengthy response but I'm worn out trying to win any concessions from you. I plan to go on believing this country can and will continue to thrive and prosper, along with my grandchildren, and hope that wisdom guides us to be a sovereign but more honorable neighbor. Hope you have a great week.

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