

Mass Immigration: The Economy & Jobs

When American workers think of mass immigration, they envision illegal aliens toiling on farms to provide them with cheap produce or working to maintain their landscaping. They give tacit approval to illegal immigration because the allure of cheap labor is irresistible. Unfortunately for these middle-income professionals, what goes around comes around. Employers also want cheap labor and are using foreign professionals to get it, costing many middle-income workers their jobs.

Guest-workers, on non-immigrant visas (NIVs), come primarily from Asia and Eastern Europe on H-1B or L-1 visas. Employers justify hiring foreign professionals by claiming that dire shortages of workers with the right skills threaten our economy. The shortages don't exist, but the propaganda effectively perpetuates this importation of foreign labor.

Competing in the job market against NIVs isn't an option for American citizens because the deck is stacked against them. NIVs are virtually indentured, depending on the employer to maintain the visa. In other words, they must meet their bosses' demands or face deportation. Americans are justifiably opposed to competing for jobs against indentured labor, but unfortunately that shuts them out of the job market. Many NIVs pay no income or Social Security taxes, further cutting employers' costs.

Millions of temporary and permanent employment-based visas have been issued to

allow foreigners to work in the U.S. They don't just take low-paying jobs either. Many of these visas allow immigrants to be employed in such professional jobs as high-tech, science, education, medical, business, and management. Others take highly skilled blue collar jobs in crafts, manufacturing, and mechanics.

Because a strong middle class insures stability, saving American jobs for American citizens is as vital to our national security as the war against terrorism. We cannot afford to allow employers to continue their practice of replacing American workers with cheap foreign workers.

Temporary guest-worker programs must be abolished. Turning the visa faucet off will not only make companies less inclined to replace American workers at home, they will find it very difficult to "offshore" jobs overseas. Allowing white-collar guest-workers into this country exacerbates the offshoring of jobs since companies must import foreign workers to learn our technology and skills. Once the knowledge transfer takes place, the offshoring begins. We must stop the influx of nonimmigrant labor before the destruction of the American middle-class is irreversible.

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[For an annotated version of this essay, see
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