

The Way Out

Demagnetize the welfare magnet

By DAVE GORAK

This collection of essays by Heather MacDonald, Victor Davis Hanson, and Steven Malanga, which originally appeared in the quarterly *City Journal* during 2002–2007, belongs on the bookshelves of everyone seriously concerned about this nation’s worsening immigration crisis.

Using plenty of statistics — but not so many as to make one’s eyes glaze over — the authors leave no doubt in the reader’s mind that our present immigration policy has become a nightmare that won’t end until our politicians begin to take seriously the public’s growing disgust with mass immigration. The people we’ve been

sending to Washington to represent our interests are more concerned with kissing up to the Mexican government and not offending Hispanics than they are with fulfilling their responsibilities to their constituents, a majority of whom continue to tell them they have had it with large numbers of foreigners — more than half of them from Mexico — pouring into this country.

These immigrants, while like previous newcomers in certain respects, are in fact dramatically different because they have the luxury of a welfare safety net to prop them up if they fail to achieve their version of a better life. This luxury wasn’t available to many of the 24 million immigrants who

came here during the 1880–1924 “Great Wave” but returned to their own countries during economic downturns. Malanga writes, for example, that almost 60 percent of foreigners in this country during the Great Depression packed up and left.

In short, immigrants in the past arrived willing to risk all for the opportunity to better themselves; today’s arrivals come with a sense of entitlement because of the services now available to them, including “free” education and health care and (in certain states) driver’s licenses and in-state tuition rates. Our government’s willingness to spare no

effort to coddle Hispanics, which includes refusing to enforce its own immigration laws, has done much to shatter the unity and quality of life in many communities, including Selma, Calif., Han-

son’s own hometown. What’s taken place in Selma during the past 50 years led to Hanson’s celebrated work, *Mexifornia*.

Hanson writes that since illegal immigration became a flood in the quiet valley in which he lives, five drivers have driven into his vineyard causing thousands of dollars in damage. “Our farmhouse in the Central Valley has been broken into three times. We used to have an open yard; now it is walled, with steel gates on the driveway.”

Most notably, the authors say, the majority of today’s immigrants are poorly educated and unskilled and contribute nothing to an economy that’s increasingly knowledge driven. As a result, they remain in low-paying service sector jobs that are a dead-end street for them and their descendants. Europeans during the last century, however, brought with them important skills needed in a growing young country that offered the potential for personal advancement.

The Immigration Solution

A Better Plan Than Today’s

By Heather MacDonald,
Victor Davis Hanson, and Steven Malanga
Ivan R. Dee, 2007
197 pp., \$24.95

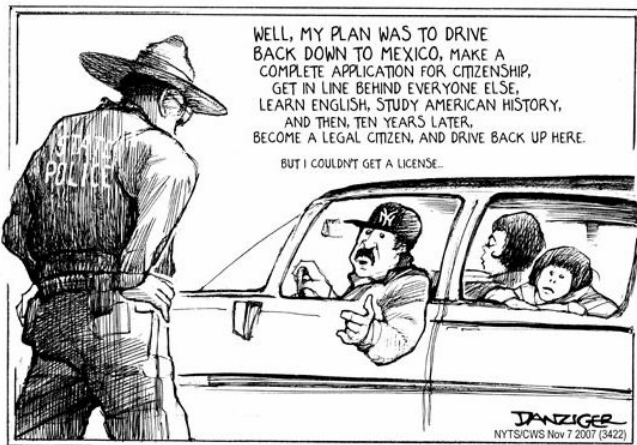


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This lack of upward mobility in the Hispanic community, MacDonald writes, is helping to fuel crime rates and increased membership in gangs that have grown more organized and violent.

All three writers agree that the assimilation process that worked so well in the past is virtually nonexistent among Hispanics, who also bring with them negative attitudes toward education and the English language. Thanks to multiculturalists and our own government, Hispanics are encouraged to retain their own culture at the same time our schools are teaching them that their new country has much to be ashamed of.

What can be done to deal with the problems associated with today's laughable and dangerous immigration policy? Malanga offers this two-part solution:



First, this country has to wise up and follow the examples of countries like Canada, Ireland, and Australia that have de-emphasized the outdated idea of family reunification in favor of admitting those immigrants with skills beneficial to their respective economies. Second, the U.S. must also turn off the welfare magnet.

Malanga argues that we must adopt the recommendations calling for reduced levels of immigration and protection for American workers made by the Jordan Commission during the mid 1990s, recommendations that were ignored “when political opposition arose from an unusual alliance of business interests, open-borders ideologues, ethnic and racial activists, and Mexican politicians.”

It is this last group of those bent on impeding

all efforts to control immigration, says MacDonald, that is particularly worrisome.



Quick to defend its own sovereignty, Mexico on a daily basis is meddling in this country's affairs. From publishing a “survival guide” for those planning to violate our borders to pressuring local communities to accept its matricula consular as a valid form of ID (a de facto amnesty), the Mexican government has

become more determined to control American immigration policy.

“The Mexican government will push to control as much U.S. immigration policy as it can get away with,” MacDonald says, “but the Bush administration simply winks at foreign attacks on immigration laws that it itself refuses to enforce.”

Mexico's increasingly aggressive meddling in this country, seeking to influence school boards and even local elections, is nothing new, according to Hanson, who says this country's desire to “maintain cordial relations” with Mexico overlooks the fact that “no government in the last fifty years has been more hostile. Mexico's policy for a half-century has been the deliberate and illegal export of millions of its poorest citizens to the United States, which is expected to educate, employ, and protect them in ways not possible at home.” ■

