

Letters to the Editor

EDITOR:

Thanks for Don Feder's article exposing "Clueless" Jack Kemp (Vol. X, No.4, Summer 2000, p.247). The California Coalition for Immigration Reform (co-sponsor of California's Proposition 187 in 1994 — the measure denying public services to illegal aliens) takes pleasure in dogging Clueless at conferences and exposing him as a fraud.

In 1990, when Clueless was HUD chief, the City of Costa Mesa, California proposed excluding illegal aliens from HUD housing and other public services. After meeting with illegal alien advocacy groups he killed the proposal by threatening to terminate all federal aid to that city, personally nullifying the findings of his own HUD attorneys that such exclusion was legal (See *Los Angeles Times* articles June 12, 13, 18 and 21, 1990).

In 1994 Clueless came to California twice to campaign against Proposition 187. Then he did the waffling-shuffle to run as Vice-President in 1996 with Bob Dole, who supported denying public benefits to illegals. Now he publicly supports the AFL/CIO demand for amnesty for the several million illegals in the United States.

Augmenting his duplicity, Clueless appeared on "Larry King Live" at the Republican Convention on August 2, 2000, lauding Gov. Bush for his *welfare reform and immigration reform positions!*

Evidently Clueless forgot that people dub him *champion* of illegal aliens' right to tax-supported housing, welfare and other benefits. Maybe the Seven Deadly Sins should be increased to *eight* in order to include *hypocrisy*.

EVELYN MILLER
Irvine, California

EDITOR:

Tim Aaronson provided a great response to fourth grade teacher Zulma Hernandez in "On Teachable Moments" (*The Social Contract*, Summer 2000). The immigration billboard sponsored by ProjectUSA refers to the numbers, and not ethnicity, of immigration-driven population growth. For fourth-graders, Ms. Hernandez could have left it at that. But she wanted to involve the children in issues of ethnicity, and she asked some stark questions of ProjectUSA.

ProjectUSA does not deal with issues of ethnicity, but I do.

Ms. Hernandez says "The (billboard) is creating conflict among the children of different backgrounds and hatred against a group of people. These fourth graders stated that people who see the billboard will think that immigrants are bad people and will act violently against them."

Ms. Hernandez, the billboard could not possibly do that among fourth graders unless guided in that interpretation. You are stigmatizing the sponsors of the billboard, and all others who oppose mass immigration, as bad people. A decent respect for intellectual honesty requires that you present their position in a fair manner (if you are going to address the issue at all), or bring in someone who will.

Ms. Hernandez and her fellow grade-school teachers want to know what is meant by "American people?" "According to you, who is a true 'American Person?' Is it Native Americans ... or United States citizens who entered the U.S. before 1970?"

The question implies that the United States is up for grabs, and no identifiable group has an unquestionable claim to it. Let me ask who is Vietnamese? Who is Chinese? The answer is clear: Those who are descended from Vietnamese, are Vietnamese. Those who are descended from Chinese, are Chinese. An Italian family, that moves to China, has children born in China, followed by grandchildren born in China: the grandchildren are not Chinese. In the hospital where the grandchildren are born, the nurses do not gather around and say "What cute Chinese babies!" They say "What cute Italian (or European) babies!"

The core American ethnic group, the European Americans, built this country over the centuries out of a sparsely populated wilderness. America's language, culture, religion, science and art come almost exclusively from this group. This same ethnic group made an enormous contribution to the science and engineering of Western Civilization. For the first six decades of the 1900s, we were 88% of the population. This country is ours, and we would be foolish to relinquish it. There are distinct ethnic groups that have migrated here in large numbers in the past 30 years. But 30 years is too short

a period to be recognized as a historical claim.

Ms. Hernandez wants someone to describe and explain American culture. “Isn't everything in this country adopted from foreign countries?” Our country was originally an extension of England, which is the source of most of our culture. All cultures evolve over time. The Japanese, for example, have adopted the railroad, the skyscraper, and the airplane from the West. But that does not imply that we have a right to Japanese land or a right to migrate there. The basis for all Japanese culture — the Japanese genetic heritage — remains unchanged.

You might explain to your fourth graders, Ms. Hernandez, that when foreign ethnic groups move in and displace a native ethnic group, it is always the invaders that claim to be the victims of the native's hatred and violence. Explain to your students that European-Americans, as a fraction of the population, are declining at a rate of 4 percent per decade and what that means for the future of this group.

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EDITOR:

On Saturday, 17 June 2000, a local tv station aired a program about “The Changing Face of Arizona,” referring to the minority becoming the majority, as if it were a welcome fait accompli. A promotional sound bite, running ad nauseam the previous week, featured a minority member saying, “They are nervous about us becoming the majority because they're afraid we'll treat them as badly as they've treated us.” Enraged at this chutzpah, I neither watched nor taped the show for posterity.

Not since the fall of Rome has a country so myopically allowed itself to be engulfed by aliens. And never has a tax-paying citizenry been forced to subsidize their own demise in the form of lost jobs, depressed wages, as well as [the cost of] social services lavished on the invaders.

As for “treatment,” we, the waning majority, have done everything but provide limo service from the border. Diversity cops have manipulated most into believing it is racist to object to this tidal wave of humanity that is rapidly exhausting our resources and demolishing our ecosystem — years of conscientious conservation out the window!

Meanwhile, the fact that Third World overpopulation is the source of all migration is ignored, while symptoms, from traffic congestion to water shortages, are “managed” by building endless roads and drinking sewer water — a short-term solution equivalent to rearranging the deck chairs on the *Titanic*.

As we accommodate those coming here “for a better life,” the only upside is that the deluge will eventually stop when the “new majority” succeeds in making this side of the border as squalid as the other.

Channel 15-TV is not alone in promoting the insanity. Other media, politicians, employers, educators and religious leaders — all who profit from cheap labor or gratuitous guilt — are responsible for the “changing face” which is already destroying life as we knew it: rising crime, gang violence, drug trafficking, graffiti, drunk driving, crowded schools, teen pregnancy, etc. (aka “culture?”).

When the endless road building inevitably results in unbearable heat, and when there is finally not enough toilet water to go around, even then the PC crowd will probably not acknowledge that they should have left well enough alone; nor is it likely that they will apologize to those of us who cared.

SUSU LEVY, President

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EDITOR:

Approval from someone you respect is welcome; approval from Otis Graham is gratifying indeed. And Graham is right, of course, about my article on why liberals are not more actively involved in immigration reform ending “too soon” (*The Social Contract*, Vol.X, No.4, Feature Section, pp.229-243). It did not mention, for example, that just as clear liberal thinking (like mine) can be undermined by left-wing mulishness, well-reasoned and cogent conservative arguments can be smothered by right-wing irrationality. And reading or hearing such irrationality from left- or right-wing selective “histories” will repel clear thinkers, liberal or not, who would want no association with distorted rhetoric.

Specifically, Miles Wolpin's and (especially) John Attarian's articles raise some questions about whether liberals bear *total* responsibility for our current problems with immigration. For example:

1. Since all polls show almost equal support for immigration reduction from liberals and conservatives,

why should we rely on what liberal “leaders” allege any more than we would heed the current “Hispanic” “leaders” who *also* do not represent their constituency? Citizens of *all* kinds want immigration reduced!

2. Why should we heed diatribes that rely on misrepresentations of liberalism? (To act as straw men?) True liberal compassion is expressed not only in the first half of the Talmudic lesson “If I am not for myself, who will be?” but equally in its often-neglected second half, “but if I am for myself *alone*, what am I?” Thus liberalism is based on self-interest, not self-sacrifice, recognizing that cooperation, the “social contract,” is a survival mechanism — but you do not pauperize yourself or those most dependent on you in the process.

3. Is an “ideologue” someone you vigorously disagree with while you, as Bertrand Russell suggested, “have the courage of your convictions.”

4. Is it “government paternalism” to provide unemployment insurance or welfare while it is a “free market” operation rather than paternalism to provide subsidies to tobacco farmers or agribusinesses, or cheaply-bought rights to the use of public lands for timber, mining and grazing interests?

5. If liberals and Communists are the plotters who want (like the cartoon mouse, The Brain) to “take over the world,” are the directors of Coke, Pepsi, McDonald’s and the other 400-or-so megacorporations who now control so much of the world’s wealth, along with all the supporters of the WTO and NAFTA, all participants in this internationalist Red plot?

6. Are the American employers who covet cheap, docile, immigrants in such enterprises as computers, meat-packing, hotels, restaurants, real estate, construction, building maintenance — are they all liberals?

7. If, as a Euro-American you want to take credit for what some other members of your ethnic group, but not yourself, have accomplished, can you refuse to accept blame for how native populations were treated by your co-ethnics in all the Americas, Asia, Africa and Australia and for the Catholic-Protestant wars, the Inquisition and for both Hitler and Stalin? If assuming someone’s else’s guilt is sick, then isn’t it only the psychologically or intellectually challenged who take credit to themselves for other people’s deeds?

It seems clear that conservatives can also be prisoners of the past, that stupidity and greed are equal

opportunity characteristics, and that there is more than enough blame, guilt and fault for everyone who wants a share to have one. It seems clear that it is far less important now to find fault than to find solutions. If liberals can support conservative representatives like Tancredo and Stump because of their enlightened views on immigration, then conservatives should be able to accept part of the blame for the fact that immigration reform is not doing better. After all, the Bushes, daddy and son, among other Republicans, are still on the other side.

Liberals want to save America because it is democracy’s “last best hope” and because America’s downfall threatens the entire world. Thus, we can want immigration stopped and all the ills that go with it: the ethnic rivalries that erode our society. Placing blame may ease one’s psychological needs; and if the goal is to repel liberals, then being repulsive is clearly the appropriate tactic. My observation is that immigration reform still needs all the help it can get. Arguments that carefully select only those facts that fit a previously-arrived-at opinion do more harm than good. Fixing blame keeps us arguing with each other. Let’s focus on working together to get it done.

EDWARD LEVY
New York, NY

EDITOR:

Naturally I am very pleased that *The Social Contract* thinks highly enough of Malthus and of my new monograph about him to grant the latter an extended “review-essay” treatment, and that the reviewer, John Attarian, felt moved to speak very well of it in at least some important respects. (He grants — among other things — that it is “a sturdy and valuable effort at rehabilitating Malthus”). However, since I have been doing my level best for some 35 years to get to grips with Malthus in order to try to kickstart a reappraisal of both the man and his core teachings, I do feel rather bemused by Dr. Attarian’s parallel insinuation that I got Malthus’s central message completely wrong:

His statement in the first column, “it is regarding the theory itself and its continued relevance that Parsons is most valuable,” is flatly contradicted in the second column: “When Parsons addresses the theory itself ... trouble erupts.” The way the reviewer presents my treatment of this fundamental issue is quite misleading. He quotes a lengthy passage of plain text, puts it into

italics, underlines a single word, and then states “[Parson’s emphasis]” whereas the original text gives emphasis to only a single word, “tendency.” His portrayal reverses my emphasis and presents a seriously distorted interpretation which he then uses as an Aunt Sally. “This is uncomfortably near the common misrepresentation of Malthus which one encounters even among those who should know better” (p.276) ... “Actually, Malthus explicitly stated that ‘population must always be kept down to the level of the means of subsistence’”(p.277).

He reinforces this blindingly obvious latter statement by describing the Malthusian “checks to population growth” as though these will be news not only to all the ignorant readers of *The Social Contract* but to the author of the monograph, also, thereby completely ignoring my two-and-a-half page exposition of Malthus’s theory of the positive and preventive checks. He adds insult to injury by using the quotation above (“Malthus explicitly stated...”) to demonstrate how badly I have failed to grasp the theory, apparently oblivious to the fact that my section just referred to commences with the identical passage.

He then takes me to task once again (“Parsons errs again...”) for saying that Malthus was a “structuralist.” It is quite true that I do say this but what he completely fails to appreciate is that this was done with heavy irony. The overall tenor of my treatment surely ought to have given the game away, since — when taken with purblind literalness — this tongue-in-cheek statement flatly negates the whole *raison d’être* of the monograph. My points — which are really important — are that Malthus was neither a determinist nor a reductionist. He emphatically did *not* preach what he is so often accused of, that hunger and poverty are inevitable, or that — when these do occur — they are caused solely by the “principle of population.”

Malthus was a “structuralist” only insofar as he was broad minded and allowed causes of poverty and deprivation other than excessive population pressure. I quote several striking passages to show that — in addition to emphasising the suffering which undoubtedly is caused by overpopulation — he fully appreciated and made quite explicit the malign influences of dysfunctional social norms and institutions in general and bad government in particular.

With regard to the reviewer’s almost passionate rejection of my discussion of the idea of a “tendency” of

population to increase beyond the means of subsistence and thus widen the “gap” between numbers and resources, I am at a loss. If there is no such tendency then where do the many and manifest problems come from? Why have poverty and hunger always been widespread? As the Hutterites have clearly demonstrated in our own time, in the absence of all “positive” and “preventive” checks the human female will on average produce upwards of 10 offspring. Some have argued that “natural fertility” is as high as 15 children per woman. Is there any conceivable social or ecological system which could combine such birthrates with a reasonably high life-expectancy for longer than the merest eye blink of historical time? I cannot very well accept or correct Dr. Attarian’s allegations that I wrongly attribute quotations from Malthus as he gives no details.

However, in closing I thank him for granting that there are some good things in my monograph, but at the same time I cannot help expressing the wish that he had paid somewhat less attention to the letter and rather more to the spirit of the enterprise, a much-needed attempt to further the restoration of trust and respect for Malthus the man, the scholar, and the reformer, and a just appreciation of his massive contribution to human knowledge and welfare.

JACK PARSONS

Treferig, Wales, UK

(Continued)

JOHN ATTARIAN responds:

Jack Parson’s letter on my review of his Malthus monograph demonstrates that he can neither dish it out nor take it.

He accuses me of presenting a “misleading,” “seriously distorted” version of his treatment of Malthus thus: “He quotes a lengthy passage of plain text, puts it into italics, underlines a single word, and then states ‘[Parson’s emphasis]’ whereas the original text gives emphasis to only a single word, ‘tendency’” On reading this I guffawed. Naughty me with my distorting use of italics! What an imbecilic complaint! It is a typesetting convention at *The Social Contract* to put block quotes in italics — which Mr. Parsons, who is familiar with *The Social Contract*, cannot fail to know. Who’s got the problem with reality here?

Likewise, Parsons snarls that I list Malthus’s system of checks “as though these will be news,” “thereby completely ignoring my two-and-a-half page exposition”

of the checks. *Ignoring* his exposition? I was *praising* it: “he accurately presents Malthus’s system of checks on population growth” (which I then enumerated). How did he miss that?

He complains that I didn’t appreciate that his claim that Malthus was a structuralist “was done with heavy irony” and “tongue in cheek” and accuses me of “purblind literalness.” Mr. Parsons, when I read a scholarly monograph, I want trustworthy information, not entertainment or authorial self-indulgence in “heavy irony” and such. A reader who assumes that Parsons is playing it straight rather than playing with words risks getting a — ahem — misleading and seriously distorted view of Malthus here.

As for misattribution, Parsons claims (his p.37) that the paragraphs in Malthus beginning “Although the laws that determine the rate at which population would increase...” and “There are few large countries...” are from the *First Edition*. In fact, they are from the *Summary View*.

In closing, Parsons whimpers that he wished I’d paid “somewhat less attention to the letter and rather more to the spirit of the enterprise” — i.e. blinked his monograph’s shortcomings because his intentions (rehabilitating Malthus) are good. Translation: “He should have gone easy on the faults — I meant well!” Well, “paying attention to the letter of the enterprise” is what a book reviewer *does*. That’s what careful criticism *means*. If the spirit of a text is supposed to override the letter, then scholarly and critical standards collapse, and the door opens to sloppiness of all kinds. Precisely that kind of indulgence goes far to explain the collapse of the modern mind. It was my *bounden duty* to do exactly what I did.

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From the May 2000 newsletter, the Midwest Coalition to Reform Immigration (MCRI)