

The editors solicited critiques of John Tanton's essay, "End of the Migration Epoch?," which appeared in the Spring 1994 issue of THE SOCIAL CONTRACT, (Vol. IV, No. 3). We reprint them here, together with Tanton's answers to these criticisms.

Critiques of 'End of the Migration Epoch?'

Summary of the Tanton Argument

Three main "pillars" account for today's high migration levels and the even higher levels some project for the future. These pillars are: the dramatic increase in human numbers, the growing ease of international transportation, and improvements in communication — all of which stimulate interest in and facilitate migration.

In opposition there is growing resistance to newcomers. Among the 170-plus member states of the United Nations, only a handful are willing to accept any significant number of immigrants or refugees for *permanent* resettlement. There are no virgin continents left awaiting tens of millions of newcomers.

Which of this set of forces will prevail? And to what degree? Tanton believes the forces working to limit and restrict immigration will win out, but recognizes that the forces are massive on both sides and the outcome essentially unpredictable.

Tanton closes by offering a new paradigm for understanding international migration, and a proposed set of ethical principles to guide policy makers.

Do Not Assume the Nation-State is a Permanent Factor in World Affairs

by William H. McNeill

[Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Chicago, William McNeill is a past-president of the American Historical Association, and author of The Rise of the West (1963) and Plagues and Peoples (1976). His book, Polyethnicity and National Unity in World History, was reviewed in Vol. III, No. 4 of THE SOCIAL CONTRACT, Summer 1993, p. 294.]

I disagree with the Tanton essay on several points, of which the one most obvious is his exaggeration of the role of doctors in reducing disease losses. They killed almost as many as they cured before about 1750. Population growth resulted from a far-ranging set of variables — better food supplies, and disease homogenization chief among them. Jenners' vaccine was important; he misdates it, however. [ed. note: it was 1796, not 1776.]

Point 2: the world has never been empty from the time our Paleolithic ancestors spread across the habitable lands. The Indians filled the Americas — given their level of technology — and were killed and displaced by newcomers — mainly by new infectious diseases. Throughout the formerly isolated lands of the earth, the native populations

(often very substantial in number) were decimated by the diseases the newcomers brought. It often took no more than breathing in the presence of the disease inexperienced — small pox, for example, is spread in this way.

Point 3: I see no reason to assume that the modern nation-state is a permanent factor in world affairs. It was invented about 300 years ago; maybe one ought to say in 1776 and 1789: and like all other human artifacts is likely to decay in time. There are clear signs that it has begun to decay already.

Point 4: as long as great differences of life possibilities exist across boundaries that are permeable, people will use their ingenuity to move to more favorable places. That has been going on always as far as I know. I do not suppose therefore that the age of migration has ended. On the contrary, I suspect that it will increase in the foreseeable future — say the next hundred years, legally or illegally. There are, after all, people within the rich countries who employ poor newcomers, and they are likely to collaborate with illegals — and have considerable political clout within the receiving society. And successful transplants tend to bring others after time.

This does not lead me to think that unregulated frontiers are desirable. But how to police them and what measures to take to keep people out is unclear to me. The Tanton recipe would require a Berlin-wall type of guard: and very brutal police intrusion on persons living within the borders of the U.S. and other similar countries. This seems a high price to pay. Letting everybody in would also be extremely costly to existing ways of life and civility. I do not have a clear answer to what a wise policy would be. Close enough to what we have — legal prohibition of all but a few; and illegals not so very numerous as to overwhelm existing patterns of society seem bearable to me. The real test will come if some massive upheaval breaks out, e.g. in Mexico. That could precipitate the flight of millions in a very short time. Blocking their flight would be brutal.

"...sooner or later nature will limit human numbers if human behavior does not do it first."

I quite agree that migration is unlikely to relieve population pressures in most of the earth. Even with free

migration, that could not happen. But sooner or later, nature will limit human numbers if human behavior does not do it first. Changes in human behavior are taking place, and I believe it is true that birth rates are going down a bit in the most overcrowded countries. The swing can be quite sudden if and when a tip point is reached — witness what happened in Quebec after WW II.

But for the coming hundred years or so, the earth is going to be very crowded for sure, and living standards will be under severe stress for very large numbers of people. That is likely to mean violence, perhaps also epidemics of enormous proportions. Perhaps also new food resources — farming the seas or the like — and maybe some chemical manufacture of food from sunlight and appropriate raw materials.

So under the pressure of numbers and ensuing difficulties, human ingenuity may find ways of doing things that will work better than today — and alter our customs and institutions in unforeseen but perhaps quite radical ways.

No act of will can stop that sort of tide: and national decision to police borders with ferocity will not help. It might become retrograde in fact, arousing hostility from the other side that the rich minority could not easily cope with.

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Can It Be Done Humanely?

By Robert Strider

[Robert E. L. Strider is a retired Professor of English and President-Emeritus of Colby College, Waterville, Maine.]

I have read with interest and admiration the essay entitled "*End of the Migration Epoch?*" in **THE SOCIAL CONTRACT**. First of all, it provides an excellent historical survey with illuminating diagrams.

The problems of the 20th and 21st centuries are well stated. I agree that automatic migration, at will, into any country, which has been customary for decades, can no longer be considered acceptable. The demographic data prohibit that possibility.

Further, population control, as you say in the article, is essential. And I agree that each nation should henceforth take the responsibility for the welfare of its own people. It would be not only a commendable practice but a realizable ideal, within realistic limits. It would not be true at this time for Somalia, Rwanda, or probably Bosnia, but it would be an ideal worth working toward.

Questions can be raised, though, in several other areas, as follows:

(a) It would certainly be desirable, and eventually it will be essential, for illegal immigration to be ended. But can it be done without draconian and inhuman mechanisms to bring about this objective? Where is the line to be drawn between a theoretical objective that might involve inhumane procedures to bring about, and the customarily humane attitude toward human problems that an enlightened democracy stands for? I continue to think we would not countenance, as American citizens or as reasonably enlightened citizens of a civilized world, measures such as those that were in our memory taken by Nazi Germany and

the Soviet Union.

(b) Setting limits on legal immigration is essential, but can we do it without invoking such principles as triage? Can immigration be limited fairly rather than arbitrarily? Is there a humane and rational way to determine whom to admit and whom to reject? Can this be done without establishing racial quotas? Perhaps not, but as we work toward articulating a policy, that is one of the big questions.

(c) I am not convinced that every possible haven for immigrants is now "fully occupied." There is hopeless congestion, of course, in Miami, probably in southern California, in New York, and in some of the northern cities like Detroit. But there are vast reaches that are still sparsely populated, some in the U.S. and others in Canada, Scandinavia, the former Soviet Union, and elsewhere. Isn't the challenge to work out a system of organized immigration in selected areas rather than to try to develop a program for the future that involves no immigration at all?

(d) Is this a problem for the United Nations? I don't think the U.S. can solve it unilaterally, as I don't think the U.S. should be expected to solve any of the formidable problems of today's world unilaterally. If the U.S. would pay up its U.N. arrears I would feel a good bit more comfortable about calling upon the international community to address these problems! With the help of the U.S., of course.

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Unpersuasive, Utopian and Cruel

by Bruce Fein

[Mr. Fein is a constitutional and international lawyer and a syndicated newspaper columnist. He was former Associate Deputy Attorney General during the Reagan Administration.]

John H. Tanton's urgent call for an immigration new deal ("*End of the Migration Epoch?*") smacks of the apocalyptic. But it seems unpersuasive, utopian, and cruel.

The centerpiece of his argument is dubious: "North America cannot accommodate huge additional numbers — it is now quite *fully occupied*, with scarcely any virgin land or untapped resources awaiting settlers." Tanton, however, proffers no algorithm for determining when a nation's absorption capacity has been exhausted. Hong Kong is vastly more densely populated than Great Britain but enjoys a higher per capita income. Japan is an economic powerhouse with a population density exceeding that of countless economic midges. The population and prosperity of the United States has climbed enormously since World War II. How does Tanton know that additional numbers through immigration would be counterproductive? By epiphany? Since the majority of immigrants are more entrepreneurial and industrious than any indigenous population, they have historically proven fillips, not drags on national economies. Tanton offers no cogent reason to believe that happy phenomenon has abruptly ended.

All the evils Tanton assigns to population growth through immigration are equally raised by natural increases. Yet he declines to recommend a new ethical code of forced sterilization, abortions, or numerical limits on childbirth (as in the People's Republic of China) to escape the putative impending population calamity. That neglect invites suspicion that his appraisal of immigrants is not evenhanded.

Tanton's *cri de coeur* for a new immigration decalogue is first cousin to the utopianism of Rousseau. For instance, Principle III enjoins each nation "to provide for the health, education, employment, and security of its citizens." But that injunction is chimerical. It is routinely flouted by countless nations at any time, for instance, at present, Somalia, Rwanda, Bosnia, Haiti, Burma, Cambodia, the PRC, Iraq, Iran, India, Bangladesh, Nicaragua, etc., yet evokes only a yawning spectator response from the United Nations. The Principle evokes recollection of Hotspur's devastating retort in *King Henry IV, Part I*, to Glendower's boastful claim of calling spirits from the vasty deep: "Why, so can I, or so can any man; but will they come when you do call for them?"

Hotspur's rejoinder is equally applicable to the pronouncement in Principle VII that illegal immigration should end, while neglecting to suggest any means to that goal.

"John Tanton's urgent call for an immigration new deal ... seems unpersuasive, utopian, and cruel."

Principle V ascribes an economic omniscience to government that history has thoroughly discredited. It directs each nation to "train its own technical and professional personnel, matching supply to demand." But supply and demand curves for any type of labor are ever-changing and unknowable to bureaucrats or others. As Adam Smith stressed in *The Wealth of Nations*, free market guesses adjusted through operation of trial-and-error by market participants invariably yield the most beneficial results for society. As the ramshackle economies of present and former Communist regimes prove, bureaucrats can no more match supply and demand for professional workers than they can for oil, electricity, food, shoes, shelter, or any other commodity or service.

Principle VI dictates that "[e]ach nation should arrange to do its own drudgery work...." But Tanton offers no clue as to what type of work falls into the latter category. I would find gardening, clerical work, or painting drudgery. Others would similarly hold idiosyncratic views of drudge work. Principle VI thus pivots on an intellectually empty concept.

Even if drudge work could be defined, Tanton offers no reason to confine the labor market to the indigenous population, other than a desire to lose economic efficiencies by artificially inflating wages and working conditions.

He economizes on the truth by likening drudgery to slavery. In any event, a nation is economically handicapped when it channels its indigenous workers into low-skill

employment that can be more efficiently performed by immigrants. Tanton needs reminding of Adam Smith's sardonic scorn in *The Wealth of Nations* of those who would intrude on free markets: "The statesman who should attempt to direct private people in what manner they ought to employ their capitals [or labor] would not only load himself with a most unnecessary attention, but assume an authority which could safely be trusted not only to no single person, but to no council or senate whatever, and which would nowhere be so dangerous as in the hands of a man who had folly and presumption enough to fancy himself fit to exercise it."

Tanton's conclusion betrays a cruel heart. He pontificates that millions of would-be immigrants fleeing from genocide, persecution or hellacious conditions abroad must accept martyrdom and shun asylum: "They will have to work to change conditions they don't like rather than just move away from them."

In other words, the Kurds and Shiites in Iraq, the survivors of the Tienanmen Square massacre in the PRC, Bosnian Moslems confronting ethnic cleansing and worse, the countless victims of sanguinary civil strife in Cambodia, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, and Liberia, and the women consigned to be virtual sex objects in Saudi Arabia should all stay and fight in their homelands in lieu of working for political change from asylum abroad. That flinty attitude was displayed towards Jews fleeing Nazi Germany and earned a stinging reproach from history. Tanton thus seems to need the lecture of George Santayana: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

[For more on Mr. Fein's views see **THE SOCIAL CONTRACT**, Summer 1994, Vol. IV, No. 4, p.297.]

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We've Just Begun to Migrate!

by David Finkel

[An editor of the journal *Against the Current*, David Finkel invites any reader of **THE SOCIAL CONTRACT** who wants to see what the far left thinks to order a free sample copy by writing to him at ATC, 7012 Michigan Avenue, Detroit, MI 48210.]

Let's get it clear at the outset: The basic issues in the debate posed by Dr. John H. Tanton's essay, "End of the Migration Epoch?" aren't fundamentally matters of population pressure or demographics, but rather of *values* — what kind of society we want for ourselves, our children and grandchildren.

It's a debate also about what are the crucial obstacles to achieving such a society, and how to confront them. While these issues are sometimes veiled in Dr. Tanton's argument, in what follows I will try to be as explicit as possible.

Briefly, the society I want to be part of would have the maximum imaginable multicultural, multi-racial diversity and cohabitation, as well as a high consciousness and commitment to environmental preservation both within and beyond the boundaries of the "nation-state."

Obviously, this predisposes me to welcome and advocate immigration. It's also my undisguised belief that a high degree of democratic economic planning is essential.

But wait: Aren't these ideals in conflict? Doesn't the pressure of immigration promote economic chaos, political turmoil and environmental degradation? It's necessary therefore to review this and a couple of other commonplace myths about the immigration menace.

Myth #1: Immigration pressure degrades our environment.

In fact, if we look at Tanton's and my state of Michigan — where immigration is not a large-scale issue — an official government study recently told us what is obvious to the unaided eye: the chief environmental problem in the state is suburban sprawl with the attendant consequences of automobile air pollution and destruction of wetlands and farmland. We may add the results of the Greenpeace study, showing a massive threat to the Great Lakes caused by dumping of industrial organochlorines.

Or look at two states which *do* have large-scale immigration: Florida and California. Florida's wetlands are catastrophically drying up — not, however, because of immigration but because of insane overdevelopment. Similarly, the destruction of California's desert results not from Latino or Asian immigration but from construction of suburban yuppievilles, while southern California's notorious water scarcity is caused by the huge subsidy of agribusiness.

Myth #2: Immigration takes away jobs.

Actually, in most circumstances immigration is both an effect and a cause of economic health (in fact one way to eliminate immigration would be to have a really massive economic depression, though I haven't seen this advocated in **THE SOCIAL CONTRACT**). As Tanton seems to recognize (he'd like to change it) in his Principle VI, immigrants do a lot of the work (e.g. in agricultural and domestic labor) that native workers won't take. They also buy things and pay taxes from what they earn.

Myth #3: Immigration puts pressure on strained social services, notably education.

This one is at least partly true, particularly in states like Texas and California. This, however, points to a much broader issue of state and local governments going bankrupt, quite independent of immigration, due to the massive "offloading" of responsibilities by the Reagan-Bush federal government during the 1980s. Halt immigration tomorrow and the crises of public health, functional illiteracy, violence in the schools and physical infrastructure collapse will still be acute, and still require a fundamental shift in government priorities in order to have any chance of solution.

In short, the fact that our society is undergoing an absolutely fundamental and profound crisis has nothing to do with immigration. The underlying crisis, however, is no doubt the reason why immigration can be painted as a menace by intellectual authors such as Dr. Tanton, and by actual racist *movements* like the Ku Klux Klan.¹

Immigration could actively help solve some of our

problems. I find it tragic that highly educated Russian scientists, who'd like to come to America, are stuck sweeping streets in Israel because political manipulations made it impossible to emigrate anywhere else. (Few of these were motivated by ideological Zionism, and by no means are they all Jewish; some are practicing Orthodox Christians who claimed to be Jewish to get their exit visas!) Imagine the difference thousands of people like this could make, with a year's acclimatization and training, as science and math teachers in our public high schools!

More broadly, from my own perspective, *immigrants in many cases bring with them precisely the values our society has been losing.*

I'm referring here to a certain culture of social and, yes, class solidarity that are desperately needed here. I don't mean to romanticize immigrants or anyone else, individually or collectively, but here are a few recent examples.

As this is written, Chinese immigrant workers in New York — many of whom are smuggled in by unscrupulous agents under the most horrible conditions and then subjected to a form of indentured servitude — have confronted and defeated an anti-union lockout by one of Chinatown's biggest restaurants, the Silver Palace. Salvadoran janitors in Los Angeles two years ago, bringing with them the experiences of union organizing under death-squad conditions in their homeland, spearheaded a "Justice for Janitors" campaign that won union rights in several major hotels. In several midwestern states, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee has built a successful union among largely Latino migrant workers in an industry the traditional official U.S. labor movement could never touch.

"Dr. Tanton's essay ... leaves aside what I suggest is a crucial point: ...the development of the uniquely innovative economic system of capitalism."

People like this, contrary to the mythologies of arrogant nativist professors like Samuel Huntington who think they need to be "assimilated" to our "political democracy," already understand the value of democratic rights better than most — having been deprived of them and having had to fight for them, both in their homelands and here. In many cases they also understand the value of community — much better than many affluent white Americans in privately guarded suburban subdivisions — without which the prospects for reviving our society are bleak indeed. It would not be the first time in United States history that immigrants reinvigorated a democratic political culture.²

Let's pass briefly to the theoretical content of Dr. Tanton's essay. His synopsis of the breathtaking

technological transformations, especially since 1600, that have constructed our present society is instructive. He leaves aside what I suggest is a crucial point: The technological-scientific transformations of industry, transportation, medicine, communications, agriculture etc. are not autonomous but are closely bound up with, and incalculably accelerated by, the development of the uniquely innovative economic system of *capitalism*.

Once this connection is made, we confront a set of multiple contradictions that simply cannot be reduced, much as Dr. Tanton might wish, to a simplistic "migration epoch," which is but one of an entire complex of effects of the present world system.

Capitalism has, at one and the same time, created the possibility — and for at least a significant fortunate minority of us, including Tanton, myself and the readers of this journal — the reality of unprecedented human freedom and comfort, along with the most ghastly forms of human exploitation, mass murder and ecological destruction. Examples of the latter run from the African slave trade and extermination of whole peoples in the New World, to the factory conditions of the Industrial Revolution in Europe and today's maquiladoras, to the Nazi holocaust.

There is no point wringing our hands over any of this; rather we must grasp the reality we face and move forward (in my opinion, to a democratic socialist society, but we can debate the details of that another time). Mass migration of the recent past and present is an inescapable part of the dual reality of world capitalism: the technological means of travel, and the necessity imposed on peoples fleeing from shattered societies. Like it or not, this process *cannot* be stopped by barbed wire and legal codes, which is why I'm not spending much time here on Dr. Tanton's "New Decalogue" of immigration-control principles.

Instead I'd like to focus on a concluding point that flows from the theoretical analysis. Dr. Tanton is obviously correct — even if migration were perfectly unregulated — that "the proper focus is on the 99.9 percent of people who remain at home." Inasmuch as the bulk of immigration (especially that with which Dr. Tanton and **THE SOCIAL CONTRACT** seem most concerned)³ comes from the capitalist periphery or "Third World," it becomes urgently necessary to say what conditions will make it possible for that 99.9 percent to develop and survive.

The *first and essential* condition is, in fact, crystal clear. Dozens of countries, from Mexico on our border to sub-Saharan Africa, are crippled by foreign debts (in almost every case incurred by highly anti-democratic, militaristic and usually Western-backed regimes) which can never be repaid. The very possibility of economic development in the interests of their populations is blocked by interest payments and by International Monetary Fund "structural adjustment programs," which promote prosperity for the already rich and austerity bordering on starvation for the poor. *To allow the 99.9 percent to remain at home, the foreign debts must be canceled and the IMF abolished.*

Finally, there are specific issues of immigration that

reduce to the most basic morality. If the United States in the past decade has been "flooded" with refugee immigrants from the countries of Mexico, Central America and Haiti, they have every right to be here — because their lives have been destroyed by the actions of successive governments of this country.

El Salvador and Guatemala in the 1980s were ruled by military death-squad regimes, governing with the connivance of several U.S. administrations, which systematically exterminated tens of thousands of civilians and forced hundreds of thousands to flee for their lives.

In the Mexican case, the new North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) greatly accelerates the destruction of the protections that Mexico traditionally accorded to its agriculture and public industries.⁴ Increasing migration pressure is the utterly predictable result.

Yet all recent atrocities seem almost trivial in comparison with the Bush-Clinton blockade of refugees from Haiti, under which thousands have literally been physically handed over to the executioners running that country today. Few Americans, apart from those who follow specialized bulletins and information networks on Haiti, realize the degree to which the Bush administration attempted to prevent the democratic election of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, sought to subvert him afterward and almost certainly had a hand in the coup that overthrew him.

One of Aristide's worst crimes, in the eyes of the United States Agency for International Development, was attempting to raise the minimum wage from 33 to 50 cents, an intolerable affront to U.S. corporate investors there. (Many Haitian workers make much less — including those who make baseballs for export to the U.S., receiving about 14 cents an hour.)

For this reason alone, every Haitian who wishes to come here should be automatically admitted. (I can assure Dr. Tanton that 99.9 percent of them, and of those Haitians living here now, wish to return to rebuild their country when it becomes possible to do so.) To compensate for any excess population pressure created thereby, and to improve the general social climate, I for one would not object if Bill Clinton, along with ex-Presidents Bush and Reagan, their retinues, Oliver North and several thousand CIA operatives were shipped off to Haiti to live under the kind of conditions that they themselves have done so much to create.

NOTES

¹ That intellectuals can be just as racist as the Klan is well exemplified in Samuel Huntington's "America Undone" in the same issue of **THE SOCIAL CONTRACT** (Spring 1994). Space won't permit any critical dissection here of his "twin bedrocks of European culture and political democracy." I'll simply mention one of the titular pillars of both in this century: the saintly Winston Churchill who, early in his political career, shortly after World War I, approved the aerial poison-gas bombing of civilian populations in Afghanistan, a technical innovation for which Saddam Hussein has lately been given unjust credit.

² To be sure there are also conflicts within, and among, immigrant groups as well as between immigrant and native working class populations. Working these through is centrally what democracy should be about. The scene in Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing* where Italians, blacks, Koreans and whites spew hate epithets at each other is disturbing, but it also illustrates the importance of people being able to yell and scream at, without killing, each other. That's the real difference between Brooklyn and Bosnia (where the actual differences among the Serb, Croat and Muslim Slavic populations are much smaller!).

³ Reading through several issues of this journal I have not seen serious concern expressed over the very significant illegal immigration from Israel and the Irish Republic, both countries which I suppose are considered "white," or European, or whatever.

⁴ The destruction of peasant's rights to their historic collective plots is partly what the Zapatista uprising is about. This is closely related to U.S.-Mexico "free trade" under which U.S. agricultural products will flood Mexico. One Mexican economist has told me that between four and five million displaced peasant families — upwards of 20 million people all told — may be streaming northward by the end of the decade (personal communication with Manuel Aguilar Mora).

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Australia's New Age of Migration

by John Nieuwenhuysen

[Dr. Nieuwenhuysen is Director of the Australian Federal Government's Bureau of Immigration and Population Research. Some of the material in this article also appeared in Melbourne's Sunday Age.]

"We are fast approaching the end of the Migration Epoch," says John Tanton in his concluding section headed *End of the Migration Epoch?* Dr. Tanton should recall, however, the traditional salute on a king's death: "The king is dead! Long live the king!"

True, large scale mass permanent migration and settlement has waned as a potential solution to poverty, overpopulation, and dismemberment following wars. Nonetheless, several traditional immigrant-receiving countries, such as Canada, the United States, New Zealand, and Australia, seem likely to continue with planned intakes. (Though in Australia, the current level of this intake is at its lowest ebb for many decades, the program, serving humanitarian — refugee, family reunion, and skilled labor objectives, continues basically to be a politically bipartisan program that will persist in years to come, perhaps at levels higher than the present.)

But more important than this continued planned permanent migration is the growth of **other** types of migration. It is a fundamental omission that Dr. Tanton's article *End of the Migration Epoch?* does not foresee or recognize the replacing significance of these other forms of movement. The point may be illustrated by reference to Australia, but for these purposes Australia is not unique, and the same forces are at work elsewhere.

Two forms of migration now overshadow Australia's traditional permanent flow of settlers, both through the scale of numbers concerned, and the potential impact on the economy and society.

The first is temporary migration. In 1993, compared with the net 33,500 people who migrated permanently to Australia, there were about 94,000 temporary residents here; 75,000 overseas students; and nearly 2.7 million short-term international visitor arrivals.

These numbers are expected to grow considerably — for example, it is forecast that short-term visitors (mainly tourists) will increase to 7 million a year by 2000. In tertiary education institutions which are becoming more entrepreneurial and successful in attracting overseas students, the implications of continued or expanded international involvement are also formidable. I doubt that many can fully envisage today the enormous consequences of this growth on the future shape of Australia's society, economy, and structure.

The first category — the 94,000 temporary residents — is of special relevance to labor market issues. It includes managers, executives, specialists, technical workers, and (the main group) working holiday makers.

As freer trade grows, and inter-country investment expands, so demands for temporary resident movement will rise.

This expansion countervails the decline in permanent migration. It aids labor market flexibility and provides a means for coping with temporary skill demands. It also carries tensions, however. The availability of temporary skill supplies is sometimes said to undermine incentives for local training, and threaten conditions of work.

But there is no doubt that greater population movement to and from Australia will accompany regional economic integration. Aspirations other than permanent settlement will emerge.

Australians are already succeeding in gaining short- (and long-) term employment footholds in neighboring countries. And Australia's entry arrangements are likewise being adapted to cater for professional and technical transients, investors, and students.

Cutting across national boundaries, there is a growing pool and network of interchangeable skilled people, making the international labor market increasingly mobile.

The second type of movement which dwarfs the scale of net permanent arrivals is internal migration. Between 1986-91, 33.5 percent of the population changed their place of residence. In 1993, Victoria suffered a net interstate migration loss of 31,500 people, and New South Wales 16,100. Queensland gained a net 53,000 people.

There are also widely different population growth rates between the States. In the years 1987-93, Victoria's population growth rate declined from 1.18 to 0.2 percent, and that of New South Wales fell from 1.54 to 0.84 percent. At the same time, Queensland's population growth rate rose from 1.92 percent in 1987 to 2.71 percent in 1993. This was almost three times the national average.

***"Cutting across national boundaries,
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This population movement within Australia carries profound implications for service provision and planning in both the private and public sectors. It is also visibly changing the face of urban settlement, as the ribbon of development stretching down the Queensland south coast testifies. The environmental, budgetary, economic, and social results of population growth and decline for regions are also of great significance.

In the light of this vigorous, expanded movement of people, Dr. Tanton's claim cannot be sustained that the end of the "migration epoch" is nigh. Indeed, there is a New Age of Migration — that of temporary and internal movement (coupled with reduced but continuing permanent settlement programs to some countries).

It would be foolish to neglect this New Age or to fail to monitor its path. It is likely to be just as or even more influential in the long run than the 'Bold Experiment' of post-war immigration to Australia and other countries like it.

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Migration — The Challenge of the 21st Century

by Sudha Ratan

[Sudha Ratan is an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science at Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, Georgia. He is currently working on several projects dealing with issues of international migration and ethnic conflict.]

In "End of the Migration Epoch?," John H. Tanton argues that given the lack of virgin land and untapped resources in North America and the growing animosity towards migrants in the developed countries, international migration in the late 20th and into the 21st century is "no longer a practical option for almost all of the world's people."¹ In this response I will briefly outline why migration is still very much a "practical option" for the world's people regardless of how unwelcome they are. Also, I will identify the forces that are at work in keeping the exodus steady.

The obvious starting point is an examination of patterns of migration flow to determine why and how people are moving *en masse* from one region to another. Tanton (quoting Kingsley Davis) notes that the flow today runs from the developing to the developed world.² In fact, as a recent U.N. Population Fund report points out, nearly 63% of the world's total migrant population of 125 million represents migration between developing countries. The report identifies 35 million migrants in sub-Saharan Africa and a further 15 million in Asia and the Middle East as compared with about 13 million in Western Europe and North

America.³ Of these, 19 million are classified as refugees with Iran, the former Yugoslavia, Pakistan, Malawi, Jordan and other developing countries playing host to over 78.9% of these refugees.⁴ Estimates are that population growth is going to lead to increased international migration of about 98 million people per year, mostly in the developing world. The effect of these statistics on the already poor and burdened states in Asia, Africa and Latin America is enormous and is going to increase if the projections made by international organizations are even partially accurate.

Ironically, the greatest hand-wringing about the negative effects of immigration is taking place today in the industrialized West where concern is focused on the inability of these countries to increase population given current consumption levels of about 75% of the world's resources. The recurring theme advanced by these countries is that they cannot be asked to bear the burden of unchecked population growth in the developing world at the expense of their own taxpayers, economies and environments. However, population growth in the developing world is **not** the most important factor per se contributing to outward migration. Given the subsistence living standards of most of the inhabitants of the developing world, large numbers of people have been and continue to be accommodated in these countries despite a limited resource base. Migration takes place when political and economic upheaval makes it impractical and dangerous for peoples and communities to continue to live in their traditional homelands.

Among the political causes of migration are the prolonged wars and civil strife fueled in the 1970s and 1980s by U.S.-Soviet animosity. More recently the trend towards democratization has fueled a spate of ethnic hostilities in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet republics. Depending on the politics of the situation these migrants are variously classified as refugees (Afghanistan), asylum-seekers (Ethiopia, Nicaragua), or illegal immigrants (Guatemala).⁵

Economically, war and civil strife have placed tremendous burdens on state governments in the developing world. In the 1990s the industrialized countries were transferring \$20 billion worth of military supplies to less developed countries, many of which are coping with the legacy of the Cold War — money that could be better spent on the people of these countries. The forces of industrial capitalism have also created massive dislocations in the developing world leading to an annual migration rate of about 30 million people from rural to urban areas within these countries. As "needs-based" agriculture is displaced by export-driven and profit-oriented strategies in these countries, more and more people are being forced into the mega-cities of the developing world in search of work. This migration is further fueled by the ongoing environmental degradation in many of these countries brought on by ill-conceived economic policies aimed at rapid industrialization and export-led growth. Urbanization further exacerbates the

environmental problems because city dwellers consume more — more goods and more energy. While 45% of the world's population or 2.4 billion people live in cities today, the estimates are that about 65% or 5.5 billion people will live in urban areas by 2025. The ability of state governments to limit extractive and exploitative economic policies is severely hampered by an inter-national economic system which has trapped these states in a cycle of debt-in-the-name-of-development. As these states struggle to cope with larger numbers of people entering the labor markets and runaway urbanization, the industrialized world will face increasing pressure from migrants who would prefer to take their chances in a more livable environment.

Today, the developed countries take in a small percentage of the world's migrants — less than 12% of the total number. Most of these migrants are from neighboring countries — Mexico and the Central American states in the case of the United States, Romania and Bulgaria for Germany. Political and economic conditions in these countries act as **push** factors that make migration an eminently practical option for large numbers of people. For example, democratization in Eastern Europe and elsewhere may in fact increase the pressure of migration because, in the absence of economic improvement, people now have the option to leave and try their luck elsewhere. The presence of family members and friends in the developed countries also serves to encourage new migration and helps to soften the blow of anti-migrant sentiment or resentment in the host country. The home state has little incentive or power to stem the tide given the logic of the international economy. An outflow of migrants helps to generate much needed foreign-exchange revenues (as in the case of Pakistan, India and China among others) while easing public frustration with limited resources and low wages.

At the same time, there are **pull** factors which bring about migration. The globalization of trade and markets has encouraged migration among different groups of people to the developed countries. The restructuring of developed country economics has expanded the supply of low wage jobs (primarily in service sectors like the hotel industry) especially in major cities — jobs that indigenous workers do not want and are not likely to want in the future, given the low rate of population growth and the aging of the population. These jobs tend to be filled by recent migrants with minimal language and technical skills. However, globalization has also allowed transnational corporations to recruit and relocate scientists, engineers and other highly skilled professionals to the developed world where their skills can be put to use at less cost given that the initial training costs were paid for by the home state. As one Indian education consultant pointed out recently, "Considering that it costs taxpayers (in India) \$4500 to educate one engineer from the Indian Institute of Technology and twice that amount for a medical student, India has repaid through export of human capital more than the total aid it received from abroad."⁶ The host state has little economic incentive or power to discourage this kind of migration.

Given the factors at work in international migration,

attempts to limit it by fiat are hardly likely to work. In the UK, Germany and the U.S. laws have been passed to gradually limited immigration. However, enforcement has been difficult in the best of cases and impossible at worst. In Nogales, Arizona, which borders the Mexican city of Nogales, Sonora, attempts to limit migrants by erecting a cyclone fence have not worked and the Border Patrol is talking about constructing a four-mile steel fence, though there is consensus that this is not likely to work if economic conditions in Mexico do not improve. As long as conditions on this side of the fence appear to be more conducive for living, working, and raising children in a politically stable and economically viable fashion, there is going to be a powerful incentive to migrate for those who are presented the opportunity to take advantage of the advances in communications and transportation identified by Tanton in his article.

NOTES

- ¹ John H. Tanton, "End of the Migration Epoch?" *The Social Contract*, Vol. IV, No. 3 (Spring 1994), p. 175.
- ² Ibid., p. 168.
- ³ Sue Baker, "'Human Crisis' If Migration Unchecked, U.N. Says," Reuters, London, July 6, 1993.
- ⁴ The State of the World's Refugees, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Penguin Books, 1993.
- ⁵ Doris M. Meissner, Robert D. Hormats, Antonio Garrigues Walker, Shijuro Ogata, *International Migration Challenges in a New Era: A Report to the Trilateral Commission*, New York: The Trilateral Commission, 1993, p. 6.
- ⁶ "An Unwelcome Export Success," *Nature*, 366, December 16, 1993, p. 618.