

When the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) was established in June 1979, Roger Conner, as first Executive Director, and I, as first chairperson, set ourselves a goal: to make immigration policy a legitimate topic of discussion among thoughtful people.

It clearly was not so at the time. The 1970s had seen a vigorous campaign to establish a population policy for the US. This was kicked off by the 1972 report of the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future, appointed by President Nixon and chaired by John Rockefeller 3rd. But during the 1970s US birth rates fell dramatically even as immigration rates were rising. Many of the people who were concerned about US population growth—when the problem was natural increase—could not bring themselves to deal with immigration as a source of growth. They moved on to other matters.

This experience led Mr. Conner and me to lay out three stages through which we would have to progress on the way to our goal of full and rational discussion of immigration policy:

1. *The Emma Lazarus/Statue of Liberty Phase.* In this phase any questions about immigration could be adequately answered by quoting Lazarus' famous poem, "Give me your tired, your poor..." That ended discussion! Fortunately, many people have passed through this primitive phase.

2. *The Caveat Phase.* In this stage thoughtful people begin to have some questions about immigration as a source of population growth, but feel the topic is not socially acceptable. As a result, the conversation starts with an apology or excuse: "I want you to know that I'm not a racist, but I've been wondering about the wisdom of this aspect of immigration policy..." In this connection, readers may wish to review Dr. Judith Kunofsky's article in the Spring issue of *The Social Contract* entitled "Why Limiting Population Growth Is So Difficult to Talk About in California" (page 140); and in this issue, Dr. Garrett Hardin's observation that "Nobody Ever Dies of Overpopulation," (page 197). We have been in this Caveat Phase for several years, and seem to be arrested there.

3. *The Mature Phase.* In this stage our hangups and guilt feelings have been dealt with and we are able to discuss immigration policy without having our motives or morals questioned. The taboos have been banished. I hope to live to see this stage.

As one effort to help move the discussion of immigration policy from Phase Two to Phase Three, we're pleased to present as our lead article in this issue of *The Social Contract* excerpts from *Ideology and*

Immigration: Australia 1976 to 1987. The book is by Dr. Katharine Betts of the Swinburne Technological Institute located near Melbourne, Australia. What Dr. Betts calls the "ideologically correct" verities on immigration she has found in her country are astonishingly similar to those seen here. Perhaps we can learn about our own situation by studying that of others. Are there lessons from Australian immigration debate and can they be applied here?

Despite laudable efforts over the past decade to defuse the discussion of immigration, many people still feel uncomfortable with the topic. After all, we're here, we're rich, we're free. How can we say "No" to others not so favored? Is it a case of pulling up the gangplank now that we're in?

Fortunately, the choice is not so stark. As we contend in the Statement of Purpose inside the front cover, after all the hand-wringing and avoidance three fundamental questions about immigration policy remain:

- Of the many millions who would like to come, how many shall we admit?
- Who will be chosen to immigrate, and what should the criteria be for choosing?
- How shall we enforce the rules we decide upon?

Our journal is dedicated to helping all of us work our way through the jungle of "Yes, buts" and "What ifs" toward rational and humane answers to these three most fundamental questions of immigration policy.

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