

Jack Parsons was invited to attend the recent conferences on immigration in our nation's capital. Professor Parsons is retired from his post as Senior Lecturer in sociology at Cardiff University, Wales. His books include *Population versus Liberty*, and *Population Fallacies*. He is at work on a new book on human competitive breeding.

A BRITISH VISITOR WHO SEES MORE OPEN DISCUSSION IN THE U.S.

By Jack Parsons

SOUTH WALES, UNITED KINGDOM

As a foreign visitor, I feel honored by the invitation of *The Social Contract* to give my impressions of some of the issues raised at the two immigration conferences in Washington. I found nearly all the presentations of considerable interest, and it was a great tonic to me as a solitary operative in Britain to share ideas with so many like-minded people. The opening papers by Professor Hoffman-Nowotny and Doctor Heilbrunner were packed with facts and close reasoning. The same applied to Garrett Hardin's and Otis Graham's on the second day, and to Katherine Betts' contributions on both days. I particularly enjoyed Senator McCarthy's disquisition on America as a colony of the whole world and Ed Levy's splendid diatribe against pseudoliberalism.

My starting point has to be an attempt to delineate two seemingly great paradoxes, the first of which concerns the apparent position of members of racial and ethnic minorities.

In his recent, very interesting book, *Peaceful Invasions*, Leon Bouvier pins his hopes on the high ideal that a USA "... comprised of significant proportions ... descending from European, Asian, Latin American, and African sources [could] become the world's first truly universalistic nation ...". He stresses again: "... there is nothing improper about increasing ethnic and racial diversity. The nation can benefit from [it] as the world becomes smaller."

Nevertheless, he caps this with the all-important proviso: "... failing to realize that the massive levels of immigration that cause such diversity seriously tax the society [is] like the proverbial ostrich with its head in the sand."¹ The first part of this argument puzzles me, as it seems to contradict the passage he quotes, apparently with approval, from T.S. Eliot's *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*. "A people should be neither too united nor too divided if its culture is to flourish." Of course, Bouvier is aware of the problems caused by excessive numbers and diversity, but his solution is somehow to contain them through "pluralistic assimilation," which: "... serves to provide *some* heterogeneity within ever-

increasing society homogeneity."²

**"A people should be neither too united nor too divided if its culture is to flourish."
— T. S. Eliot**

The emphasis on "some" above was added, as it seems painfully clear to an outsider that your problem lies not in affording sufficient scope for heterogeneity, but the exact opposite: somehow salvaging or recreating sufficient homogeneity and coherence to enable your society — already very complex on grounds of both population and geo-graphical sizes alone — to continue to exist as a socially and politically manageable entity. In striking contrast to the glib, superficial, self-satisfied utopianism so often manifested by self-styled liberals, this book is the work of a truly liberal mind; the author is genuinely concerned for the good of all. Still, my feeling is that Schlesinger³ and Auster⁴ are more realistic than Bouvier in their recent analysis and policy recommendations. The American ideal is indeed a high one — unprecedented in history — to become "an amalgam of the people of the world" as Thomas Paine put it in *Common Sense* in 1772. Despite this, it seems unlikely that Paine would have insisted on the representation of *all* peoples, without exception, and that the scale of representation must be limitless.

The second paradox relates to the furor about "P.C.," political correctness, and its allegedly quasi-totalitarian censoring influence, (mainly in the universities?) hampering open and unemotional discussion on immigration and racial and ethnic matters in general. Although I did not have the opportunity to visit any of the campuses said to be in the grip of P.C. orthodoxy, I am half-persuaded that an initially praiseworthy movement to counteract prejudice, unthinking ethnocentricity, and stereotyping in particular, has gone much too far, and is leading to Orwellian "thought police"-like activities.

Alongside this, from a British perspective, I find an amazing openness, both in academe and in the

media, to claims and counterclaims on the costs and benefits of immigration and its control. On my first day in Washington, I had the privilege of sitting in on one of FAIR Executive Director Dan Stein's many radio interviews — 6 to 8 each week — on the non-benefits of excessive immigration and the need for much tighter controls in the USA. I was spellbound not only by the well-practiced fluency with which he marshalled his arguments, but also by the obvious freedom of the air for the transmission of tough, if very reasoned, views on migration control. Neither interviewer nor callers (it was a phone-in program) accused him of racism, and he in turn treated all comments and objections with respect, while criticizing them with rigor when it seemed appropriate.

"Sadly, [in Britain], there is little or no chance of frank debate over the air such as you have."

In Britain, this would be almost unthinkable. In the first place, we don't have any respectable pressure groups like FAIR or the CIS, and in the second place, the media will not permit free and frank debate on these issues. Despite its many and obvious shortcomings, I am a great admirer of the BBC. Seen against the world competition, it seems to set high standards but, in this sphere, sadly, there is little or no chance of frank debate over the air, such as you have. Occasional tentative attempts to discuss some of the issues are nervously overseen by a twitchy Auntie BBC who has in any case heavily stacked the cards in favor of expansionist immigration groups to begin with by inviting fiercely anti-British spokespersons and putting a "liberal" producer in charge so that proponents of immigration control are rapidly dismissed as little Englanders or outright racists.

In Britain, almost all public debate on the key issue in this context — the size and rate of immigration flows — is stifled by a ploy called the "Numbers Game." In just about every discussion, few though these are, between expansionist and restrictionist spokespersons, the former will refuse to discuss the size of immigrant flows in some variant of the phrase, "I'm not going to play the Numbers Game." For instance, the deservedly highly respected Bishop Trevor Huddleston — for many years one of the doughtiest campaigners against apartheid and author of the cited famous book⁵ — said in a BBC TV series (commissioned and published jointly with the Commission For Racial Equality): "I ... view ... race relations in our country as transcending every other issue at this time ... Unless the false perspective created by the Numbers Game and the kind of arguments used in playing it can be changed, then ... the future is very bleak, indeed."⁶

"...the overwhelming will of the people as expressed in poll after poll, that immigration — especially the illegal variety — should be greatly reduced, has been ignored by your legislators."

There seem to be no limits to the expansionist's hospitality and generosity of spirit. Paddy Ashdown, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, has passionately demanded that, when the territory reverts to China in 1997, the whole population of Hong Kong — some five millions — should be invited to settle in Britain. This magnanimity applies even to other countries. Some British acquaintances — professional people with university degrees — are deeply convinced that everyone, from any part of the world and for whatever reason, has an absolute right to go and settle in the USA. Academics openly espouse this sort of argument, arguing, deadpan, that numbers have nothing whatever to do with host-immigrant relations. Five thousand, fifty thousand, fifty millions — it is all the same to them.

The assiduous propagation of this fatuous slogan "playing the Numbers Game" has effectively prevented nearly all open discussion in Britain of the key question, "How many?" In the USA, you are much more rational, or at least much luckier, in having no such barriers to exchanges of views on this important topic. However vigorously they may be attacked, opinions about numbers and other variables can at least be freely expressed and argued over. A further handicap to rational discussion of these matters in the U.K. is that many immigrants, vocally supported by native apologists, demand not only that they be accepted in increasing numbers and granted at least equal citizenship (some want positive discrimination, as in the USA), but that they must be made to feel positively *wanted*.

By far the most important aspect of all this, ethically, socially and politically speaking — not to mention its scientific aspects — lies in the extraordinary fact that, operationally speaking, the USA appears to have organized an immigration policy to satisfy the aspirations of very large numbers of aliens at the expense of the clearly expressed wishes of the native majority. Of course, there are powerful internal lobbies supporting this stance, employers wanting cheap labor, ethnic minority propagandists such as United Farm Worker president Cesar Chavez (who tried to have the I.N.S. abolished), the mindless extreme Left wing chorus, the immigration lawyers, and — last but not least — unregenerate economists who want more of everything. In the face of all this sound and fury, the overwhelming will of the people

as expressed in poll after poll, that immigration — especially the illegal variety — should be greatly reduced, has been ignored by your legislators. As early as June, 1977, a Roper poll showed that 80 percent wanted legal immigration to be reduced, and their 1988 poll showed a massive 91 percent wanting "an all-out effort ... to stop illegal immigration."⁸ A 1990 poll by the same organization showed that 87 percent believe that the USA has overall population problems, nearly two-thirds of these defining them as "major" problems.

The most basic requirement of your Constitution — as expressed by Lincoln's seminal phrase that calls for "government of the people, by the people, and for the people" — is flagrantly negated. The damage this does to the democratic fabric of your society seems likely to be high: not least in the rise to national prominence of unsavory characters such as former Nazi supporter and Ku Klux Klan leader, David Duke of Louisiana, now girding his political loins to run for the Presidency. If the deep and clearly expressed needs of the mass of the people are systematically thwarted, then the temptation to turn for salvation to extremists like Duke is reinforced. A further turn to this screw is applied by the fact that as extremists increasingly come to the fore then moderates increasingly tend to shrink back to avoid contamination by contact with them, leaving the field still wider open for the extremists. If the will of the people had been respected as and when it manifested itself, and appropriate policies put into effect, then it seems likely that opportunists of the Duke variety would have had to content themselves with fulminating on the sidelines. As it is, these people and the extremists from the other side — the Left liberals — tend to dominate the debate. There is no telling which side will win, but the evidence from Europe and many other parts of the world is disquieting in the extreme. Separatist movements, virulent anti-immigration and extreme right-wing parties are springing up like weeds in spring.

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The scientific aspect needs to be set forth against the vast panorama of human history in which just about all groups, all the time, have pursued what they perceived to be their self-interest with any means at hand. Out of this Darwinian melee has appeared the unique evolutionary fact, as noted above, that very powerful and highly organized groups, whole nations, are now voluntarily giving appreciably higher priority

to the interests of substantial out-groups than to those of their own majorities. In this debased form of "altruism," as practiced by a detached power elite, there may be a queer sort of analogy with the biological principle of "competitive exclusion," and the likely outcome is that the out-groups will progressively take over. The out-groups strenuously pursue their self-interest while the in-group rejects its own. More and more articles are being written in the USA giving the coming takeover a rapturous welcome, or at least fatalisti-cally accepting its inevitability and meekly exploring the consequences for the present native majority and the nation as a whole.

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The conference opened with Professor Hoffman-Nowotny's scholarly introduction, but I wish there had been sufficient cover of the deeper historical perspective. The flavor of the debate was that immigration problems had only recently burgeoned and gate-crashed the American scene. No doubt numbers and problems have exploded in recent years and bid fair to be even further amplified, but they have troubled humankind from time immemorial. Herodotus (460?-377 B.C.) noted that whenever and wherever a large number of immigrants appears "... a terrible perturbation always followed."

About three generations ago, at the 1927 World Conference on Population in Geneva, a group of distinguished scholars discussed with great openness the modern problems of migration. They laid down the foundations of a clear analytical framework, a sound ethical basis, and the beginnings of social and political structures which would help to regulate and optimize the mighty migratory currents which could already be espied on the horizon — although world population was then estimated at only 1.8 billion, one-third of what it is today. A few brief extracts will give the flavor of this substantial section. In his introductory paper, M. Albert Thomas, then director of the International Labor Organization at Geneva, pointed out that recent "... evolution from practically complete liberty to increasingly strict regulation by collective and national action has had a very considerable effect on migration" and that this was already causing international friction. "... the policy of exclusion pursued in regard to Asiatics in the U.S. in particular, and also in certain countries, such as Australia, has given serious offense to Japan and inflamed opinion in that country to an alarming extent." This latter is ironical, is it not, in light of Japan's subsequent exclusion of nearly all immigrants until very recently, including even the Vietnamese Boat People on her own doorstep.

In his proposals for a supranational body to regulate migration "... probably ... premature or utopian ...", Thomas distilled four general principles, including:

- (a) *Individuals should be entitled to ... settle abroad only under certain conditions, the idea of absolute freedom ... being no longer valid and quite impractical.*
- (b) *...an international authority ... agreed [upon] by ... free will ... should ... lay down the conditions under which territory ... obviously unoccupied ... might be thrown open to certain classes of immigrants.*
- (c) *... [every country] would be entitled to ... a right of selection as [its] ... vital principles should certainly not be threatened by invading swarms of migrants.*
- (d) *International rules ... might form protection against excessive growth of certain sections of the world population where [it] ... may represent a danger for neighboring countries.*

He contrasts the "the sacred principle of the liberty of movement" with the putative "right of overpopulated nations to occupy other lands" and then asks "... is it possible to impose on a people ... national minorities, with all the inconveniences that [they] imply?"⁹

A Soviet scholar, Doctor A. Koulisher, argued that "[migration] laws exist and ... operate with tremendous force ... [the] process goes on through the ages like the ebb and flow of the ocean ... it is no use shutting our eyes to the gravity of the situation. Cheap optimism will not help ... it would be a childish illusion to think that the richer countries can be forced to admit the populations of the poorer countries; they will not do it ... to force a country to admit immigrants is to promote the making of war. The richer countries should help potential immigrants to get a living at home."¹⁰

The remarks of a US contributor, Doctor C. B. Davenport, seemed to bear this out. He stated of the then recent tightening up in the 1920 and 1925 legislation, "Chiefly two aims have been set, and ... gained, to give an opportunity for assimilation, and secondly, the preservation of a reasonable degree of homogeneity in ... the United States."¹¹

How these two sets of remarks resonate over the succeeding two or three generations! It seems to me that in many important respects both scholarship and practical politics have markedly regressed over this period. In my view, students of these problems — plus those concerned with practical affairs — can often gain both insight and encouragement from these older writings, and it might help if FAIR or the CIS reprinted the appropriate chapters in pamphlet form.

It may already be too late for the moderate majority opinion to assert itself and take its rightful place in the control of the political process, but beliefs can turn into self-fulfilling prophecies. It follows that the best option is to work on the assumption that it is *not* too

late, that democracy can and must be made to work, and that every effort should now be put into the development of calmer, saner, and more sustain-able policies.

NOTES

- ¹ Leon Bouvier, *Peaceful Invasions*. Washington, D.C. (1991) Center for Immigration Studies, pp. 158,159.
- ² Ibid., p. 190.
- ³ Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., *The Disuniting of America*, Knoxville (1991) Whittle Books.
- ⁴ Larry Auster, *The Path to National Suicide*, Monterey, Calif, (1990) The Immigration Control Foundation.
- ⁵ Trevor Huddleston, *Naught For Your Comfort*, London (1953) Nelson.
- ⁶ "Five Views of Multi-Racial Britain," London (1978) The Commission for Racial Equality.
- ⁷ e.g. A. Bhat, et. al., *Britain's Black Population*, Aldershot UK, Brookfield, USA, (1988) Gower.
- ⁸ Anon., *The Other Side*, No. 22, Spring 1981, The Environmental Fund.
- ⁹ M. Sanger (ed.) *Proceedings of the World Population Conference*, London (1927) Edward Arnold. pp. 259, 260, 263, 268, 269.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., p. 290.
- ¹¹ Ibid., p. 27.