

Letter from the editor

Song of the Sirens

Like so many sea goddesses luring sailors to their destruction on the rocks, the political strategists and cheap labor advocates are trying to persuade the policy-makers to keep the country on a course toward catastrophe.

In the light of the recent congressional elections, some Republican pundits are urging their colleagues to drop immigration as an issue and start courting immigrants instead — in hopes of getting a third of their votes! Our feature section covers the debate on this issue. Frequent contributor David Simcox leads off with an overall analysis of the various campaigns; opposition stalwarts Paul Gigot and Linda Chavez make their case, with replies by Samuel Francis, Scott McConnell, Lawrence Auster and others. And not all the voting was by Marquis of Queensberry rules— (former) Congressman Robert Dornan and researcher Karen Saranita write on vote fraud. The PRI is moving north!

The message we took from the election is that demography is destiny — that Americans had better realize this soon and, in the words of one planning document, “bring the age of immigration to a close” before they find themselves on the outside looking in.¹

Elsewhere in this issue you will find essays on Australia and Canada, on the role of fiction in social change, and our continuing review of the history of immigration reform: we do not want to fulfill Santayana’s dictum and either learn the lessons — or repeat the mistakes — of others.

I write these comments the day after my own Senator, Spencer Abraham (R-Michigan), assumed the chairmanship of the immigration subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee, which is chaired by another pro-immigration Senator, Hatch of Utah. To make his announcement Abraham traveled, not to his home state of Michigan, but to California. There he appeared with a number of computer company executives to deliver the message that Americans weren’t good enough for the jobs they had to offer; they had to have folks from overseas.

Oh yes, incidentally, by keeping the market flooded, the labor costs can be driven down toward world standards (not for the executives though).

One wonders how much soft political money the good Senator stashed away in exchange for selling out the American worker.

Fortunately, on the House side Lamar Smith still chairs the immigration subcommittee, but with the ample Abraham more than filling the chairman’s chair in the Other Body, progress will be difficult — at least until his term is up in the year 2000. Other means of moving the immigration issue will have to be found.

Which calls to mind a quote from David Hume: “Small reforms are the enemy of big reforms.” I think that many of us, at least initially, held to this maxim, but now reality has crept in. A decade ago, then-Senator Simpson tried to push through a comprehensive bill addressing both legal and illegal immigration, but had to drop the former component to get anything passed on the latter. Representative Smith had the same experience in the last session of the 104th Congress. With comprehensive bills there is something for every one to oppose.

On the other hand, a number of advances have come in small packages through other than the immigration committees, the new strictures on welfare for legal immigrants being a good example. Perhaps, at least for our issue, Hume’s adage should be recast: “Small reforms are *one way to* big reforms.” Unfortunately, this concept is a difficult one to sell to many funders and to the activists in the trenches who are living day to day with the consequences of our chaotic immigration policies.

Last October, The Social Contract Press, parent of this quarterly journal, brought out its first catalog of print and video materials. In the last quarter of 1996, we sold over 1000 titles, so apparently a need is being fulfilled. For information or a free copy of this catalog or other materials, call 1-800-352-4843.

We wish you an enjoyable and informative time with this issue.

JOHN H. TANTON,
Editor and Publisher

¹ See “End of the Migration Epoch,” by this editor in *The Social Contract*, Vol. IV, No. 3, Spring 1994, p. 162-175 and Vol. V, No. 1, Fall 1994, p. 28-47. Call 1-800-352-4843.