

NYC's Isolated Open-Borders Tycoon

Michael Bloomberg's 'open-minded' hypocrisy on immigration

By JOE GUZZARDI

When former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg spoke at the Harvard University commencement ceremony in May, he inadvertently gave his many critics a good, old-fashioned belly laugh. In his address, Bloomberg railed against liberals, especially Ivy League college students, for stifling free speech and repressing conservative ideals. Said Bloomberg, "Great universities must not become predictably partisan. And a liberal arts education must not be an education in the art of liberalism." Bloomberg emphasized that a university's obligation is not to teach students what to think but how to think.

Most would agree with Bloomberg's learning philosophy: Keep an open mind and hear out opinions that may conflict with your own. But Bloomberg would be unlikely to apply his seemingly generous reasoning to immigration. In fact, in his 2008 State of the City address, Bloomberg took a direct shot at politicians that have "embraced xenophobia." Bloomberg, then considered a potential Republican presidential candidate, used his pro-immigration platform to identify himself as favoring of "freedom, compassion, democracy, and opportunity."

Since 2008, Bloomberg has become richer, more influential, and one of the most unbending and outspoken amnesty advocates. Bloomberg's \$33 billion net worth places him as the world's sixteenth richest man. After graduating in 1964 from Johns Hopkins University with a Bachelor of Science degree and then earning a Master of Business Education diploma from the Harvard Business School in 1966, Bloomberg launched his Wall Street career at the powerful Salomon Brothers, which along with Goldman Sachs was one of the bulge bracket investment banks that wielded vast global influence. Bloomberg quickly became a general partner. Then, abruptly

in 1981, Phibro, formerly known as Philipp Brothers, bought Salomon. Bloomberg got a \$10 million severance check and was cut loose. Within a few weeks, Bloomberg formed Innovative Market Systems, which later changed its name to Bloomberg L.P.

Wall Street was then and is now one of the leading advocates for more immigration. Cheap labor for the Street's well-heeled corporate clients is a guiding business principle and one that Bloomberg quickly embraced. After more than 10 years of successfully building Bloomberg, L.P. into a major corporate force, Bloomberg, encouraged by his Wall Street allies, left the Democratic Party, became a Republican, and in 2001, ran for New York mayor. His predecessor, Rudy Guiliani, was also a staunch amnesty advocate.

Although Bloomberg was elected just two months after the 9/11 World Trade Tower attacks that killed nearly 3,000 Americans, many of them New York residents, the mass murders didn't open Bloomberg's eyes to the ongoing folly of U.S. immigration policy. Bloomberg was re-elected in 2005 and, after successfully lobbying to change the term limits law, elected a third time in 2009.

During the twelve years he served as mayor, Bloomberg's pro-immigration, pro-importing more overseas workers, and anti-enforcement positions hardened. Bloomberg made a series of public statements that showed little of the tolerance he urged at Harvard. In 2006, Bloomberg told CNN that the idea of deporting millions of illegal immigrants is a "fiction," and that they do "a lot of jobs other people don't seem to want to do." Again in 2006, citing deportation as an impossibility and claiming Americans won't do certain jobs, Bloomberg relied on worn-out deceptions to make his argument. At various times during his tenure, especially post-9/11 when Manhattan was on its heels, Bloomberg insisted that illegal immigrants didn't present a drain on New York's economy, a statement that on its face is false since at a minimum, aliens' children enroll in public schools.

During his years of immigration advocacy, Bloomberg has consistently ignored the hard truths about New

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York's economic realities. In 2012, during a globalist-attended New York STEM conference, Bloomberg said "our economy needs immigrants," and put his money where his mouth is. Bloomberg made a multibillion-dollar investment to prepare the city for STEM jobs, created dozens of new technical education high schools, supported a City University of New York expansion for STEM programs, and lured Cornell University to build a \$2 billion so-called genius school graduate program to produce tech entrepreneurs.

But nowhere did Bloomberg's new schools or programs encourage American high school kids to study science, technology, engineering, and math. In fact, based on those in attendance, who included Google Chairman Eric Schmidt, IBM Vice President Stanley Litow, CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein, Daily News publisher Mortimer Zuckerman, and city schools Chancellor Dennis Walcott, the conference's purpose was to promote more immigration. As Bloomberg put it, using language he'd used many times before, "Our immigration policy is national suicide."

Bloomberg has offered some off-the-wall immigration solutions, including his most ludicrous idea that the federal government should assign aliens to bankrupt cities like Detroit. If they last seven years, Bloomberg

suggested they should be rewarded with full citizenship for them and their families. In 2012, when Bloomberg advanced his preposterous idea, Detroit's unemployment rate was 10.2 percent.

While promoting more immigration, Bloomberg disregards New York's acute shortage of well-paying jobs. During most of Bloomberg's last mayoral term, Citibank, one of the New York's major employers, laid off tens of thousands, as did other large corporations like Time, Inc.

On another front, New York's income inequality, suddenly a significant political talking point, is among the nation's most severe. According to a City University of New York analysis of the latest Census Bureau data, the median income of the richest 1 percent of New Yorkers increased to more than \$716,000 per year in 2010 from \$452,000 in 1990. At the same time, New York school bus workers have been told that a \$30,000 annual income is excessive.

Then, there's New York's poverty rate. Even though more New York adults are working than at any time since the recession, 45.6 percent of city residents live near the poverty line. Their already low incomes have been further exacerbated by a sharp rise in rental fees, a 75 percent increase between 2000 and 2012.

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The immigration debate in Congress should be an opportunity not only to fix the problems of the past, but also to look forward and create an immigration system that brings the best, brightest, and hardest workers to our shores.

MICHAEL BLOOMBERG

Interestingly, the Center for Economic Opportunity report found that the most adversely effected were Hispanic and Asian immigrants.

The number of New Yorkers classified as poor in 2010, the most recent year for which data are available, increased by nearly 100,000 from 2009 and raised the poverty rate by 1.3 percent to 21 percent — the highest level and the largest year-to-year increase since 2005, when New York adopted a more detailed system of measuring impoverishment. Using federal standards as the metric, 7.7 percent of New Yorkers live in poverty, meaning below 50 percent of the poverty line; 5.5 percent were in extreme poverty. The federal poverty line is \$15,730 for a family of two; \$23,850 for a four-person household. One thing is for sure: If Bloomberg gets his wish and more immigrants move to New York, income inequality and poverty will increase.

In his first official act after leaving office, Bloomberg traveled to Washington, D.C. to promote amnesty as a civilian, albeit an extremely rich one. Appealing to House Republicans, Bloomberg, with his Chamber of Commerce friends, said that without more immigration, America doesn't have a future. Bloomberg blamed a small group of dedicated Americans who "raise money" and send letters. This is particularly laughable since Bloomberg, Mark Zuckerberg, and Shelton Adelson's billions dwarf the sums available to enforcement groups. Bloomberg's Partnership for a New American Economy, allegedly a bipartisan organization but really a front group for more immigration, publishes bias studies and organizes intentionally misleading polls with the hope that the results will favorably influence the amnesty outcome.

Although Bloomberg has developed a valid reputation for his generous philanthropy, many wonder why he doesn't raise his voice on behalf of the millions of

unemployed or otherwise struggling Americans. Maybe Bloomberg really meant it when he said that the fairways at his strictly limited-membership Deepdale Golf Club would fall into disrepair if illegal aliens didn't maintain them.

Nevertheless, the question of why Bloomberg puts so much effort into an open borders agenda is hard to answer. He doesn't need the money cheap labor creates for most businesses. And as a died-in-the-wool capitalist, Bloomberg should oppose the wealth redistribution from the rich like him to millions from the immigrant underclass. Since many immigrants have few skills and speak limited English, their dependency on social services begins shortly after they arrive.

Like his fellow elitists at Johns Hopkins, the Harvard Business School, Wall Street private dining rooms, and the Long Island country club with its well manicured lawns, Bloomberg has spent his entire life isolated from the realities of too much uncontrolled immigration. Pontificating from the mayor's dais or on a Sunday morning news show makes for good sound bites. Bloomberg's perception, however, would be different if he lived, for example, in California, Arizona, or a New York borough other than Manhattan, where neighborhoods are losing the fight to keep up with the population increases open borders have created. Bloomberg owns 13 homes, among them three in exclusive Southampton, including his \$20 million, 35-acre Ballyshear estate.

A more thoughtful, more compassionate Bloomberg would know that in an economy that barely creates enough jobs to keep pace with population growth and that may never again achieve full employment, more uncontrolled immigration is the last thing America needs. Future immigration, if any, should be carefully managed to coincide with Americans' needs and not the special interests that Bloomberg symbolizes. ■

MICHAEL BLOOMBERG ON AMNESTY

“It's what I would call national suicide—and that's not hyperbole.”

[Bloomberg's assessment of what will happen if we don't grant amnesty and citizenship to 11 million illegal aliens and substantially increase the number of foreign workers admitted under the H-1B visa program.]

—Politico, Jennifer Epstein, 8/2/11

“Our current immigration laws are national suicide.... If you are against the fastest-growing voting bloc in the country, you and your party don't have a future.”

—<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/jan/27/michael-bloomberg-pass-amnesty-stop-national-suici/#ixzz36zyUTYK5> ■