

The November 2018 Election: A Referendum on Immigration Reform

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Since 2016, the United States has been rethinking its entire system of immigration. In keeping with his campaign pledges, the president has used his executive authority to enforce the law far more vigorously than his predecessors, while his congressional allies have introduced legislation that would: (1) reduce legal immigration; (2) rationalize the criteria for selecting immigrants; (3) tighten border security; and (4) impose sanctions on employers of illegal aliens and otherwise strengthen enforcement in the interior.¹ Simultaneously, the opposition to the president's reform has blossomed into a full-fledged Resistance, determined to preserve the *status quo* by any and all means. States and localities have declared themselves "sanctuaries," refusing to cooperate with federal authorities in enforcing the law with many prominent Democrats, including elected officials, calling for abolition of ICE (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement).²

With each side taking a clear position, the stage is set for the voters to make a historic choice. Although no such question is on the ballot anywhere, the overwhelming question that voters will decide in November is "Do you want the reforms of immigration that began with the 2016 election to continue?"

IMMIGRATION AND THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN CIVILIZATION

A reconsideration of the present immigration regime is long overdue. As argued in the next section, by most measures it gives few economic benefits to anyone besides the immigrants themselves and those who use their labor. More fundamentally, unless the present system is changed, mass immigration will lead to

a replacement of the present American population in a comparatively short time. The United Nations projects that the population of the United States will grow from some 320 million in 2017 to 500 million at the end of the century.³ By that time Europe, Asia and Latin America are all expected to have stable or declining populations. Only Africa and a few Middle Eastern countries will still have significant natural population growth (i.e. births exceeding deaths) and most people who want to migrate will come from those regions.⁴ Although this country will have negligible or declining natural population growth, migration will add 170 million people to the population in this century.

Much has been made of the prediction that by the mid-2040s white people will no longer be a majority of the population. Assuming that this projection materializes, shortly thereafter all "historic Americans," i.e., those whose ancestors were in the country before the post-1970 surge of immigration, will be in the minority. This will occur about mid-century, but the replacement of the population will go on. By the end of the century "historic Americans" of all races will only represent less than one-third of the population. Newcomers will come from cultures completely unlike the historic culture of America and will share no collective memory with "historic Americans." Of course all civilizations undergo constant change, but the impending change in this country is distinctive in that it is amazingly rapid, predictable, and directly attributable to present immigration policies.

In earlier periods of high immigration (e.g., 1880-1910) natural population growth and immigration each contributed to rising population. Looking ahead, natural population growth will all but cease, and essentially all future increases in population will come from immigration. The only comparable demographic transformation in our history is the replacement during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries of the indigenous inhabitants of North America by transatlantic migration from Europe and Africa.

The cultural context of the impending demographic replacement is as significant as its quantitative dimension. Following the immigration surge of 1880-1910,

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the American people decided that the flow of new immigrants had to be cut drastically, while those who came were expected to assimilate to American culture. This policy decision was informed by the conviction that the culture to which immigrants were expected to assimilate was their heritage of high intrinsic worth and that it was the duty of living Americans to assure its survival.

The present surge of immigration from nontraditional sources coincides with a reevaluation of the nation's history and culture, beginning with Christopher Columbus and extending to our own days. By applying the most rigorous techniques of deconstruction from our best liberal arts colleges, substantial parts of the country's elite have found America to be defective. The deconstructed view of America is now embedded in school textbooks and pervades the media. Substantial numbers of persons of authority and influence have therefore concluded that American society has no moral claims on its present inhabitants and certainly no basis on which to demand acceptance of its values from those who come here.

Although rejection by immigrants of the values of the receiving country and its civilization has not been an overwhelming problem for the United States until now, it is already a very serious problem in Europe. If it were ever to become a problem here, the assumptions that underlie present policies will make it impossible to deal with such an eventuality.

On the face of it, the impending replacement of the existing American people and their historic civilization would seem momentous enough to deserve serious debate. Realizing that the majority disapproves of the open borders regime, the reaction in elite circles has been to stigmatize the mere asking of such a question as an act of primitive nativism. Fortunately, a substantial number of Americans are bold enough to ask the question anyway.

ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM

The present immigration regime of did not come into being through legislative deliberation or by decisions of the citizenry. The Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965, the legal basis for the system, replaced the existing national origins quotas with annual quotas favoring persons with family ties to American citizens. This adjustment appeared harmless enough at the time. Voters were assured that the change would not lead to a surge in the numbers or of the geographic origins of immigrants.⁵

In fact, the system has evolved in ways that were in direct contradiction to the promises of the framers of the law. In the ensuing half century, annual legal admissions have risen from less than 300,000 to 1.5 million at present (about 70 percent of them through family connec-

tions) while some 12-million persons are in the country illegally. Nevertheless, over the decades an alliance in defense of the system has successfully lobbied, first, to prevent any reconsideration of the present system of high legal immigration; second, to obtain additional low-cost labor legally through a system of special visas to alleviate "labor shortages"; and third, to undermine enforcement of laws against illegal immigration, especially laws against hiring illegal aliens.

By the mid-1980s, it was clear that things were evolving in unforeseen ways. Legal immigration was exceeding predictions by wide margins. At the same time, millions entered illegally and employers disregarded the law by hiring illegal aliens on a large scale. In response, the Congress passed, and President Reagan signed, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, which granted amnesty to all those in the country illegally. President Reagan expressed the hope that Congress would follow up by (1) taking measures to secure the border and prevent future illegal immigration and (2) reviewing the entire system of legal immigration.

The 1990 revisions to the law mandated the creation of a congressional commission to reassess immigration policy in the context of broader national objectives. In 1992 a commission was formed, chaired by Congresswoman Barbara Jordan (D-TX), an African-American civil rights activist, lawyer, liberal and professor. After lengthy deliberations, the Jordan Commission issued a Report calling for, first, securing the border; second, stricter enforcement of laws against illegal immigration for those already in the country, including deportation and sanctions against employers of illegal workers; and third, reduced legal immigration with an end to "chain migration."⁶

Looking back from a vantage point of 26 years, the Jordan Commission Report has withstood the test of time admirably. It candidly addressed a problem everyone agreed needed to be addressed. It made pragmatic recommendations for reform that should have been able to draw support from across the political spectrum. In preparing for his 1996 re-election campaign, President Clinton promised to use Jordan Report's recommendations as the basis for reform. He reversed himself on ending chain migration even before the election, but still pledged to tighten border enforcement.

The failure to act was bipartisan because Republicans, who opposed the present regime more consistently than Democrats, gained control of Congress in 1994. During the ensuing six years, the Republican-led Congress was able to pass welfare reform and NAFTA in collaboration with the president. The Republican-led House was even able to impeach Clinton, but immigration reform ranked lower among their priorities. Whether the Republican-led Congress could have persuaded Clinton

to support immigration reform along the lines suggested in the Jordan Commission Report is uncertain. We shall never know, because it was never tried.

Since the second Clinton administration enforcement has progressively slackened. After 9/11 the Bush administration strengthened border enforcement, but interior enforcement degraded considerably under Bush and Obama.⁷

On three occasions during the Clinton, Bush, and Obama administrations, presidents and senior legislators of both parties tried to persuade the Congress to enact programs misleadingly labeled “Comprehensive Immigration Reform.” Despite the label, rather than addressing large-scale legal immigration and border security, which the citizenry wants, these programs consisted of (1) amnesty and eventual citizenship for illegal aliens and (2) enlarged programs to provide cheap labor to business legally, with nothing more than vague promises to secure the border. It was a straight deal between the Democratic side, with its deepening commitment to open borders, and a minority of Republican legislators, who wanted to reward their donors with cheap labor.



U.S. Rep. Barbara Jordan (D-TX) (1936-1996)

The fact that the alliance has not obtained its grand prize should not be interpreted to mean that the struggle over immigration policy is stalemated. The system has momentum of its own. Each year more than 1 million people enter the country legally, and tens of millions

remain in the country illegally. From the point of view of reformers, a “tie” is a loss.

THE ALLIANCE TO DEFEND THE SYSTEM

The alliance that sustains the present arrangement is between major segments of the business sector, which want low wages, and a diffuse coalition situated on the left/progressive side of the political spectrum, consisting of politicians, immigrant advocacy and “civil rights” groups, as well as sympathizers in the media, all closely identified with the Democratic Party. These two parts of the alliance regularly work in tandem on issues of common interest. Each partner in the alliance has a lobbying arm to influence officials and a public persuasion arm aimed at wider audiences.

The partner in the alliance that is easiest to characterize is the business sector, because its objective is simple (cheap labor) and its means of exercising influence (campaign contributions) are transparent. Major components of the corporate sector and their allied industry associations believe that their interests lie in a rapidly growing population and an elastic labor supply to lower wages. Their goals are (1) targeted programs to make cheap labor available legally and (2) weak enforcement of the laws against illegal immigration.

Employer associations spend billions of dollars each year to influence politicians, couching their arguments in terms of economic efficiency and appeals to the practical needs of business. Attempts to prevent employers from hiring illegals are depicted as bureaucratic overregulation. The cheap labor lobby receives ancillary support from a few business-oriented publications, some “think tanks,” and a smattering of libertarian professors. Its power, though, stems from access to officeholders and is completely out of proportion to its support from the public. This group is most influential among Republican lawmakers, but it has considerable support among Democratic legislators as well. Politicians of both parties nod their heads attentively when corporate lobbyists tell them about “skill mismatches” or “jobs Americans won’t do.”

The truly astounding fact about the cheap labor lobby is that it has arrived at a position of commanding influence even though the problem it purports to address, i.e., a shortage of unskilled low-paid labor, does not exist. Anyone studying the labor market for the past generation would conclude that the country has an excess supply of prime-age workers with low to medium levels of skills and education. Their condition is distinguished by stagnating wages, diminishing prospects for mobility, and falling labor force participation.

Many commentators, mostly on the progressive end of the spectrum, have been lamenting the rising inequality and reduced social mobility that now charac-

terize the American economy. One study by a progressive institution shows that while real wages of high-paid workers were advancing steadily during 1979-2013, the wages of median workers (the 50th percentile) rose only 6 percent over the 34-year period, while those of the bottom 10 percent of workers actually fell 5 percent.⁸ At the exact time in history when other forces (e.g., technology and globalization) are already inflicting substantial pain on lower-skilled American workers, the business sector and its allies in Congress have established programs to lower wages further and drive Americans out of the labor force.⁹

Perhaps the most egregious example of the cheap labor lobby at work is the H-2B visa program, which allows business to import temporary and seasonal workers. It has been instrumental in depressing the wages of unskilled natives and all but annihilating the institution of the student summer job.¹⁰ All of the evidence shows that industries that use the H-2B program have not experienced a wage increase in decades.¹¹ Yet Congressmen predictably try to tack amendments to expand H-2B visas onto unrelated legislation, and every summer the media can be counted on to print stories about the serious consequences if local businesses cannot obtain their precious H-2B workers.¹²

One element of the cheap labor lobby that has been especially adept at straddling the partisan divide is the tech industry, which has managed to obtain programs (notably H-1B visas) to counter an alleged shortage of IT specialists. This program is distinctive because many high-profile tech tycoons are outspoken advocates of progressive social and environmental causes. It is also distinctive in that, in contrast to immigrant labor programs that depress the wages of less-skilled and less-educated Americans, their programs displace Americans with higher levels of education and aspirations to rise into the middle class. If the open borders lobby maintains its hold over policy, it will increasingly target better-educated Americans.¹³

The second senior partner in the alliance (the pro-immigrant coalition) is a diffuse coalition of politicians, immigrant advocacy and community activist groups, religiously affiliated groups, and “civil rights” organizations, all of which are identified with the progressive left and the Democratic Party. While the business lobby devotes nearly all its resources to influencing government officials, the pro-immigration coalition targets a wider audience.

Organizations in the pro-immigrant coalition are generously funded by business interests and tax-exempt foundations. To the envy of their reform-minded adversaries, they have full-time paid staffs, well-maintained websites, elaborate public relations programs, and media connections. They work closely with immigration and

civil rights lawyers who also have ample funding.

Unlike the business sector, which simply wants cheap labor, the pre-immigrant coalition has more complex goals and motivations. To some degree they have sincere compassion for the plight of impoverished illegal aliens living on the margins of society or refugees fleeing hardship in their home countries. However, compassion alone is not a conclusive argument for the policies they support. No side in the debate has a monopoly on compassion, and no group of individuals is entitled to compassion to the exclusion of all others. Low-skilled Americans displaced by illegal workers, victims of non-citizen crime, and taxpayers who subsidize the presence of large numbers of persons who are in the country illegally ought also to have some claim on our compassion.

Sympathy for abject immigrants may be the glue that holds the coalition together, but there are many other impulses at work. Some coalition members have short-sighted and selfish goals, such as the desire to enroll new Democratic voters to expand the welfare state. To a significant degree many in the coalition are moved by the urge to hasten the prospective demographic replacement as a desirable outcome in itself, or as deserved retribution for centuries of white male oppression. To no small degree, it is simply a status game in which those with fashionable political views can parade their virtue and distinguish themselves from “deplorables.” The pro-immigrant coalition is absolutely convinced of its own virtue and uncomfortable with a clash of ideas. Their preferred tactic is to paint their opponents as harboring the darkest of motives while evoking sympathy for their designated deserving victims. One recurrent meme is to frame the issue as a conflict between vindictive white people and their powerless victims.

The pro-business cheap labor lobby and the left of center immigrant advocacy groups may seem like strange bedfellows, but the record shows that they act together in a coordinated way. Their most notable success is in using their influence in the Congress and the executive branch to undermine border security and especially to allow employers to continue to hire illegal aliens.¹⁴

There is a more sinister partner in the alliance whose face is seldom seen, because the alliance would rather not call attention to it. Quite simply, the reason that tens of millions of people remain in the country illegally is that a thriving underground labor market permits some employers to lower wages and impose substandard working conditions. The illicit labor market, with annual earnings in the tens of billions of dollars, could not operate without an infrastructure of human smugglers and suppliers of fraudulent documents operated by criminal gangs. According to United Nations’ estimates, each migrant illegally entering the country from Central America pays \$3-10,000, and the human smuggling

industry earns \$6.6 billion annually.¹⁵ In brief, all the money paid for lobbying and public relations is a pittance compared to the money that employers of illegal aliens gain by violating the labor laws and the criminal gangs earn from human smuggling and document fraud. Objectively, the pro-immigrant coalition is part of the enabling environment for a multi-billion-dollar exploitative labor market.

The symbiosis between the pure of heart and the seamy underside of the labor market occasionally slips into public view. Thus, in the past year the press reported left-wing mayors of progressive towns warning immigrants about imminent ICE raids on sweatshops. One mayor defended her action as part of the Resistance to the Trump administration's crackdown on illegal immigration. Her critics mainly questioned the legality of a local official undermining federal law enforcement, or wondered whether she was placing ICE agents in jeopardy.¹⁶ The mayor herself is hardly likely to see the absurdity of a certified social justice warrior protecting sweatshop operators. The rest of us, however, can take some sardonic amusement in seeing militant social progressives, civil rights lawyers, and socially aware clergymen standing shoulder to shoulder with strikebreakers and human traffickers.

ELITE OPINION AND THE MEDIA

The present immigration regime is supported by the strong preponderance of what may loosely be termed "elite opinion," meaning the accepted wisdom of those in power in the prestige media, the entertainment industry, and educational institutions. Likewise, the tech industry and many senior managers in other parts of the corporate world have assumed an open borders posture as part of their vision of a seamless world, in which business can ignore boundaries in pursuit of profit and advocate progressive causes as part of their corporate branding strategy — all the time quietly gaming the tax code.

The elite media have largely followed the lead of elite opinion. The fact that in 2016 about half of the voters expressed extreme dissatisfaction with present patterns of immigration should have prodded the media to consider the possibility that the voters' concerns may just have some substance, but coverage remains superficial and sentimental. The economic consequences of immigration are never considered worthy of analysis. Border security receives some coverage, but the media never advance beyond showing families being separated, asking whether the Trump administration is being unduly harsh in applying the laws against illegal aliens.

While imbalanced coverage partly reflects media bias, it also reflects an absence of debate. The media operate best when they have a story to tell, preferably a story with two opposing sides. As Democratic politicians

and the pro-immigrant coalition drifted steadily toward open borders stances while branding those who disagreed with them as nativist, few Republicans of stature were willing to answer back.

As the Gang of Eight immigration bill lumbered toward its ultimate rejection, the media never discussed the actual content of the bill. Rather they continued repeating bromides about ingrained Republican obstructionism and casting Republican open borders advocates as "moderates." According to a PBS documentary, even Paul Ryan assured insiders that he had the votes to pass it.¹⁷

The tendency to de-legitimize debate over immigration, already far advanced in the United States, is even more pervasive in Europe. There, the presence of large immigrant populations that openly reject the values of the society to which they immigrate is even more immediately threatening than in this country. Substantial numbers of persons of recent immigrant background have engaged in terrorist acts and/or are in terrorist training camps in the Middle East. Millions of asylees are trying to enter Europe by exploiting relatively lax European asylum laws.

Public opinion polls show that European electorates want immigration reduced and borders controlled while feeling uneasy about threats to their national identity and values. Like their American counterparts, the European opinion elite refuse to recognize the legitimacy of these concerns.¹⁸ The traditional European left and center/right parties will not discuss immigration and border security. As a result, much of the opposition to mass immigration has spilled over into recently formed "populist" parties that have gained strength across the continent and now are in power in Italy and Austria. Meanwhile, the European Commission issues reports telling European populations that mass immigration is an unavoidable fact and that they will have to learn to live with.

The main exceptions to the marginalization of debate on immigration are found in the former communist countries of central Europe (i.e., Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia), where rejection of mass immigration is mainstream. The elected governments of these countries, supported overwhelmingly by the voters, have made it explicit that they wish to defend their national identities and have refused to accept EU-imposed quotas of asylum seekers from Africa and the Middle East.

One possible reason that central European countries are distinctive is that since these countries were forcibly isolated from the West during a half century of Soviet domination, they missed the collective death wish that engulfed Western Europe and America. Having been deprived of participation in Western civilizations for two generations, they understand what it has

to offer and do not wish to surrender it. A substantial part of elite opinion in Western Europe has responded by alleging that the central European countries' commitment to democracy has always been weak. Meanwhile, the European Commission threatens recalcitrant countries with economic sanctions.¹⁹

IMMIGRATION AND THE TWO-PARTY SYSTEM

Inside the Democratic Party, the unmistakable trend has been accelerating radicalization. Traditionally, the Democrats' favorable attitude to immigrants was counterbalanced by the desire to protect unskilled workers. The Jordan Commission Report's recommendations had substantial minority support among Democrats in Congress and in the media, but over the years, their numbers have shrunk.

The drift in accepted opinion among Democrats is reflected in the positions of individual politicians, such as Bill Clinton and Charles Schumer, and in publications such as *The New York Times*. As late as 2013 Bernie Sanders called attention to the potential impact of the Gang of Eight bill on low-paid workers, but in the end he voted for it.²⁰ When he sought the Democratic nomination for president, he stopped talking about the issue entirely.

President Obama increasingly sided with immigrant activist organizations, which pressed him to use his executive authority more aggressively to expand benefits for illegal aliens. Eventually, he did. In 2012, under the doctrine of prosecutorial discretion he suspended attempts to apprehend illegal aliens or enforce immigration laws against those who had not been convicted of serious crimes. Also in 2012 the DACA²¹ program offered work permits and other social benefits to illegal aliens who came to the country as minors. Slightly less than 1 million applications were accepted. In 2014 Obama tried unsuccessfully to extend similar benefits to a much larger number (possibly 5-6 million) of illegal aliens.

The radicalization extended beyond federal levels. Even as the Obama administration softened enforcement, many localities declared themselves "sanctuary cities," in which local authorities refused cooperation with federal immigration enforcement.

By the time that Hillary Clinton was nominated, the only statement on her campaign website about legal immigration was a promise to fix the family visa backlog, meaning that family-based immigration would rise. Her platform did say that she favored securing the border, but "in a humane way." At the same time, she promised to continue and even to expand Obama's executive actions granting legal status to illegal aliens. By the 2016 election, it appears fair to say that the Democratic Party as an institution had adopted the full open borders agenda.²²

The Democratic commitment to open borders has grown during the Trump administration and has now merged into the broader anti-Trump Resistance. In the past year, the administration has made conciliatory gestures to Democrats by offering to consider giving legal status to DACA recipients in exchange for cooperation on related issues. At this stage, the Democrats oppose any compromise, betting their future on a repudiation of Trump.

The fact that the pendulum among Democrats has swung toward extreme open borders positions does not mean that it will always be so. Even now, a tiny counter-movement can be detected among Democratic legislators in Congress, representing states or districts where the voters support Trump's stance. These "moderate Democrats" will not deviate from the prevailing anti-Trump sentiment in their party now, but are positioning themselves to act with greater flexibility if the political winds shift. In August 2018, two Democratic Senators facing re-election in November sponsored legislation to make E-Verify mandatory, with one stressing her commitment to border security.²³ If the voters signal that they want immigration reform to continue, some Democratic office holders and candidates may move closer to the center.

On the Republican side, rank-and-file general voters and lower-level office holders have long opposed open borders by wide margins, but corporate donors have exerted decisive influence upon higher Republican office holders. A significant number of GOP senators are closely allied with corporate open borders lobbyists.

Following the collapse of the 2013 Gang of Eight deal, Jeb Bush co-authored a book encapsulating the establishment Republican wish list on immigration, including (1) an effective program to secure the border, (2) a conditional amnesty with some attempts to exclude those with serious misdeeds and a fairly long waiting period for naturalization (3) an expansion of programs to enable business to obtain foreign workers, and (4) a shift to some kind of merit-based system of legal immigration.²⁴ If implemented the plan would have ended illegal immigration while assuring business legal access to all the workers it needed. Legal immigration would remain high but focused on the needs of business. By early 2016, Jeb Bush had amassed a huge war chest, while several other well-funded establishment Republican candidates stood ready to take his place just in case he faltered.

The ascension of Donald Trump, first inside the Republican Party and then in the nation, put open borders Republicanism on an amazingly swift path to extinction. In effect, Trump said that the Jordan Report had been right all along and that it would be the basis for his immigration policy. Voters in Republican primaries agreed.

To the degree possible, the Trump administration has used its executive power to effect changes such as ending “catch and release policies” at the border, reasserting the right of the federal authorities to penalize employers hiring illegal aliens in the interior, and tightening standards for asylum seekers. He has catalyzed congressional efforts to reform the legal framework for immigration. Senators and representatives have introduced bills that would reduce legal immigration and introduce merit-based immigration. Other proposed laws would impose penalties on employees who hire illegal aliens and require employers to use E-verify. This legislation has not advanced beyond the earliest stages. Even though the Republicans have slight majorities in both houses, pro-reform votes fall short of what is needed to pass legislation of this kind.

Trump has already scored substantial achievements in changing the party’s direction on immigration. Congressional Republicans have defended the president against efforts to remove him from office. When seeking office, Congressmen and congressional candidates are taking bold positions on immigration and seeking to associate their positions with Trump’s. Candidates aligned with the president on immigration are contesting primaries and usually winning. Several open borders Republicans are retiring, reflecting in part the conviction that that position does not sit well with the voters. Even former open borders Republicans who do not retire or are not removed in primaries are likely to move toward the party consensus in the long run.

Most importantly, despite his possible shortcomings as a communicator he has given us a pretty clear idea of what he and his allies would like to do on immigration if the voters give them a chance.

THREE POSSIBLE OUTCOMES FOR THE NOVEMBER ELECTION

If the Democrats capture at least one house of the Congress, the Democratic-controlled house(s) would hold a series of hearings on all conceivable topics, with the immediate aim of making it impossible for the administration to take any further action on enforcement. At the same time they would use their power over confirmations of appointees and spending to hobble enforcement even further. Legislation to close or defund ICE will be introduced. The ultimate goal would be to impeach Trump, but even if they fail to achieve that aim, they will have obstructed him at every turn in the hope of regaining power in 2020. Action in the Congress will be supported by actions of state and local government such as expanding the number of sanctuary cities. Clashes inside the government will lead to accelerated media attacks on Trump, as well as encourage demonstrations on streets and university campuses.

As of now, the Democrats have staked their collective future on the proposition that voters will find Trump and his policies so intolerable that they want to devote all of the energies of the federal government in 2019-2020 to wreaking vengeance on Trump, while conveying the message that it is hopeless to try to change the system of immigration.

At the other extreme, a “red wave” would swell Republican majorities in both houses. The Congress would interpret this as a mandate to enact legislation to reduce legal immigration, end chain migration, improve border security, and penalize businesses that hire illegal workers, which would encourage them, in Mitt Romney’s terms, to “self-deport.” Other legislation would enhance the capability of the executive to enforce the law through expedited deportation hearings and removals. With a pro-reform majority, wavering Republicans would realize that they have no alternative to cooperation, hoping to throw some favors to their donors along the way. This outcome would also force moderate Democrats to rethink their present position of aligning with the Resistance.

A third possibility is the “no change” scenario in which Republicans make modest gains in the Senate while maintaining a majority in the House. This outcome could still result in a substantial gain for reform. As noted earlier, open borders Republicans are diminishing in numbers. Therefore, even with no change in the party alignment, the position of reformers will be stronger. Such an outcome would also signify that the Resistance has failed in its overarching goal of removing Trump by non-electoral means. In that case, his opponents will have to revert to traditional tactics of opposition, such as criticisms of specific aspects of policy and selective compromise.

Under these conditions, it might still be possible to make meaningful gains in immigration reform, but it would require concessions to moderate Democrats and pro-business Republicans. Pro-business Republicans can be relied upon to use their position to protect employment-based immigration programs. Moderate Democrats would have the possibility to use their influence to obtain better protection of American workers, as well as to obtain favorable treatment for DACA recipients and other illegal aliens.

In November the voters will decide whether they want immigration reform to proceed. It thus may be the most decisive election of our times. ■

Endnotes

1. In this article “reform” means actions that reduce legal immigration, shift to merit-based selection of immigrants, enforce the laws related to illegal immigration more strictly, and tighten criteria for accepting refugees and asylum seekers.

2. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) enforces federal laws governing border control, customs, trade and immigration to promote homeland security and public safety. ICE was created in 2003 through a merger of the investigative and interior enforcement elements of the former U.S. Customs Service and the Immigration and Naturalization Service. <https://www.ice.gov/about>
3. The data on projected trends in immigration and population are discussed in the context of the labor market in Thompson (2018). The data on these topics are found in NAS (2017) and United Nations (2017).
4. According to Phillip Connor of the Pew Research Center (2018), one million sub-Saharan Africans have moved to Europe since 2010 and more than half of all Africans would like to emigrate. By the end of this century the population of Africa will increase fourfold.
5. This is the view both of those who disapprove of the ways in which the system has evolved (Auster 2015) and those who approve (Gjelten 2015).
6. For discussions of the Jordan Commission, see Briggs (2009) and Kammer (2016).
7. For a concise chronological description, see Kammer (2018.)
8. Economic Policy Institute, “Wage Stagnation in Nine Charts,” January 6, 2015.
9. I discuss the way in which immigration is immiserating American workers in Thompson (2018).
10. For the Impact of H-1B visa on student jobs, see Camarota and Ziegler (2018), Thompson (2017), Menege 2017.
11. Business apologists would have us believe that the H-2B program targets sectors with “labor shortages.” In fact, there is also no measurable shortage of labor in the industries that use the program most (Camarota 2016). Recent studies show that most of the industries that most heavily use the program have not provided a real wage increase in decades (Economic Policy Institute 2014). The program is also rife with abuse; see GAO (2010) and also see Bensinger, Garrison, and Singer-Vine (2016). Even the editorial board of *The New York Times*, usually among the most reliable advocates of open borders, has published editorials about how this program is used to exploit vulnerable foreigners. See *The New York Times*, July 1, 2016.
12. For typical articles describing the shortage of seasonal workers as explained by those seeking low-paid workers, see Driscoll (2017) and Fernandes (2017).
13. Nelson (2012) estimates the quantitative losses inflicted on American tech specialists through the employers’ ability to use immigrant workers through special programs. Another viewpoint is found in In an article in *Slate*, Oremus (2013), where the author observes American tech workers who are resentful about H1B workers depressing their wages; his attitude is that U.S. workers should not get uppity, but realize the moral imperative of tech workers taking their jobs.
14. For a historical overview of how the two parts of the “left-right coalition” have collaborated to undermine workplace enforcement, see Kammer (2017). For more concise summary, see Kammer (2018).
15. *Daily Mail* (2014).
16. Flynn, *The Washington Post*, March 2, 2018.
17. Immigration Battle (2015).
18. For an excellent view of the situation in Europe, see Murray (2017)
19. Hanley and Dawson (2016). A shorter version of this article was published in the *Chicago Tribune* with the title “Poland isn’t a democracy and it never was.”
20. Dawson (2013).
21. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) order of June 15, 2012, granted qualifying illegal aliens postponement from possible immigration action and 2-year renewable work permits.
22. <https://www.hillaryclinton.com/issues/immigration-reform/>
23. <https://www.mccaskill.senate.gov/media-center/news-releases/mccaskill-introduces-bill-to-make-voluntary-e-verify-system-mandatory>
24. Bush and Bolick (2013). Also see review by Hurlbert (2015).