



**Your on the
Street Reporter**



Uyless Black

Balancing the Immigration See-Saw

Preface to the Immigration and Emigration Series

This essay is one of several reports on immigration, emigration, and cultural assimilation issues in the United States. To be clear about my message: Only if immigrants are willing to assimilate into America's culture should they be welcomed. I am not making this claim from national chauvinism. I am making it because I believe linguistic, political, and cultural assimilation are essential to successful nation building.

To those who come to America for a better life: Keep your ties to the "old country" but foster ties with the new motherland. Keep your language, but learn English. Keep your traditions, but learn about those of America.

The American Italians did it. So did the American Chinese. My forbearers, the American Irish and Scots assimilated into our national family. As did many others.

Irish pubs are part of Americana. Little Italy in New York is a welcome respite to Manhattan's sky scrapers. The Chinatowns make our cities more appealing. The Latino citizens of Santa Fe are just as "American" as you or I, and their mariachi music is a joy to hear.

Thus goes our melting pot: a rich and diverse menu of mixed cultures, sensibly seasoned with American customs.

We are tolerant because of our diversity. We are strong because of our diversity. We are more interesting and have more fun because of this diversity.

So come, you are welcome, but with another caveat: You also embrace this idea: "America is now my country."

But I also state this idea. If you do not accept the Constitution and Bill of Rights as part of your life in America, you should not come to these shores. If you believe that religion should be integrated and holds supreme with that of law, I do not welcome you. This statement may come to you as harsh, but the very fiber of the United States is founded on the idea of the separation of church and state.

Balancing the Immigration See-Saw¹

June 15, 2007

Hello from Your on the Street Reporter. The big news these days is the immigration bill now before Congress, and the push by President Bush to persuade legislators to pass the bill. The most strident opposition to the bill comes from people who think granting amnesty to law breakers should be---well, against the law---and the millions of illegal workers should be incarcerated or shipped back to their points of origin.

I am in agreement with these sentiments but I cannot come to grips with how sending these people to jail or deporting them is possible. First, government officials do not have accurate information on their identities or their whereabouts. How can people be evicted if it is not known where they live?

Second, who takes their place? Is Mr. Marriott going to make the beds in his hotels? Is Wendy going to cook her hamburgers? Who picks the cherries for our Cherries Jubilee? How about Jack Nicklaus tending his sand traps at the Memorial golf course, not to mention Jack Daniels cleaning his whiskey stills? It appears our country has gotten itself into a situation for which there is no workable solution.

Excuse these puns, but the dam has been breached, and the wetback water is flowing without control through (across) the Rio Grande. The immigration egg is broken, and all the king's men cannot put it back together again.

It is too late to fix the problem properly. The issue begged for attention years ago, but we Americans were too complacent---too focused on our day-to-day soap operas---to come to grips with illegal immigration.

In this report, I propose an idea to repair the dam and put a few pieces of Humpty's immigration egg back together. Your reporter, after conducting research on this issue, has come up with *The Solution to an Unsolvable Problem*™ etc. What is more, I've come up with multiple solutions, but I'll concentrate on one idea for now. To begin our problem solving, please examine Figure 1.

Notice the legend and the disproportionate number of American consumers in comparison to the number of American workers. From this see-saw, it is obvious our problem is an uneven balance between workers and consumers: We have too many consumers who do not work enough to provide for what they consume. Consequently, we must import more workers to supply the consumers' fodder.

Before offering my seminal solution to the immigration problem, please note the copyright and trademark insignias on "The Solution to an Unsolvable Problem™ etc." and "The Workers and

¹ The signs in the Reporter's thought cloud on the cover were extracted from an article in *The Economist*, "Paleocon Pat," September 9, 2006, p. 36. Please note in the preface of this report about the personal or commercial use of the sources in these essays.

Consumers See-Saw © TM etc." I'm alerting you to my associated royalty fees for borrowing others' ideas, who in the spirit of this report will go undocumented and unidentified.

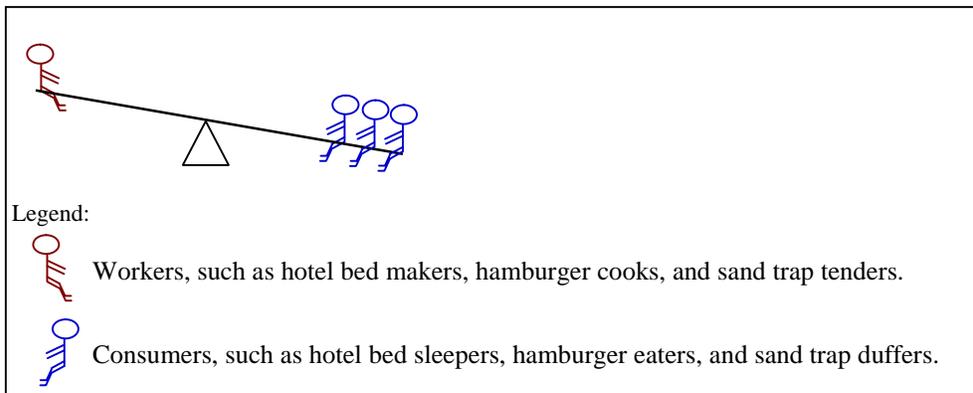


Figure 1. The Workers and Consumers See-Saw © TM etc.

Last week, I was listening to a radio interview with one of the Marriott men about the labor shortage at the Marriott hotel chain. Mr. Marriott said if a solution did not come about, not only would America's hotel industry go into a funk, but so would America:

- Interviewer, "So you have a labor problem. Have you been talking to the labor unions?"
- Mr. Marriott, "It's not a labor problem. It's a problem of keeping businesses open."

Sounds like a labor problem to me. Anyway, this week, I read and watched reports on America's business people who made the same claim. As examples, Wendy's would have to close some of her fast food franchises. Americans could no longer buy cheap cherries, because cherry pickers--being cherry pickers---would cherry-pick their jobs and go to another farm to pick something else for which there was a shortage of labor. *And for which they would be paid more money.*

Why should Mr. Marriott and others assume they have access to unlimited cheap labor? Is it the job of our government to insure there are enough people in this country to staff all the Marriotts, Wendy's, cherry orchards, and golf courses in this land?

The Dole-Out Dollars for Babies © TM etc. **Initiative**

If so, let's have Uncle Sam dole-out dollars to couples for having more children. (With the exception of Catholics and Mormons who have developed their own incentive plans.) Using this strategy, in a few years, the country will have ample hired-help to service all our consumer whims. Granted, there will be a lag effect of a few years until the tots become big enough to tuck in a sheet, pat-down a hamburger patty, pick a cherry, or rake a sand trap. But in the long run, these folks will likely (a) speak English and (b) pledge allegiance to the Stars and Stripes.

There you are. We've just solved the looming problem of balkanization.

Why is America Obsessed with Possessing the Dispossessed?

Let's examine the reasons America has so many illegal immigrants:

- In comparison to non-union workers (who are often illegal immigrants), union members demand more money for their labors. (For a case study, see the balance sheets of GM and Chrysler, and their upcoming bankruptcies.)
- Businesses do not want to raise their overhead to accommodate higher wages. After all, China and India are world-leaders in the low-wage department, and our trade balance with these countries is already lopsided.
- Cheap labor keeps the cost of renting Marriott hotel rooms down; Wendy's burgers so affordable that Joe and Josephine Citizen can eat out almost every night of the week, cherries cheap as potato chips, and the golf fees to play 18 holes within reach of Joe and Josephine's pocketbooks.
- Plus, let's face it: Many Americans will not work for minimum wage anyway.

The illegal immigrant problem is not only the fault of incompetent politicians and immigration authorities. It is also the fault of business people who demand cheap hamburger flippers, and the fault of consumers who demand cheap hamburgers.

So, here's a solution, prefaced with a few questions:

Why do we have more people who sleep in hotel beds than we have people who make up hotel beds? Why do we have more hamburger eaters than we have hamburger helpers? Why more cherry eaters than cherry pickers? Why more sand trap players than sand trap tenders?

Something is wrong. The see-saw is not balanced. Something is amiss, so let's fix it. See Figure 2. I've balanced the see-saw by moving some of the consumers over to the other side, so they are workers.

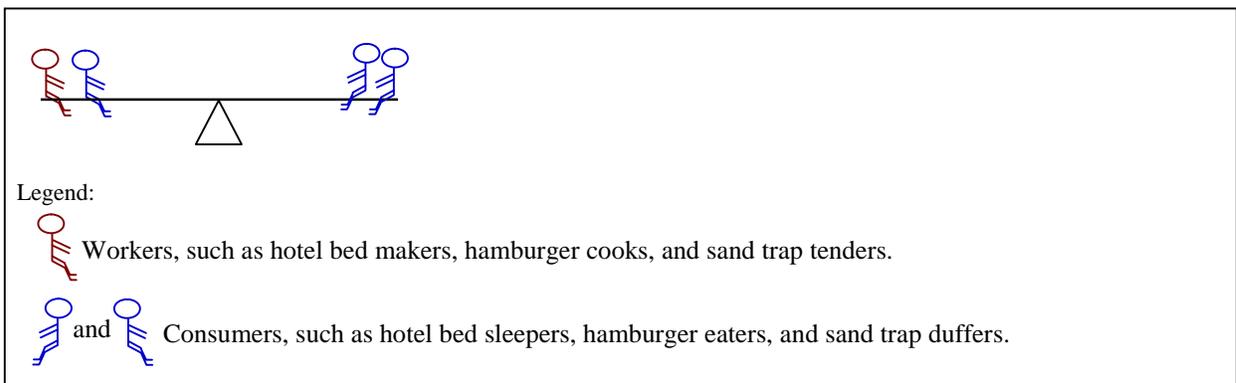


Figure 2. The Workers and Consumers See-Saw II © TM etc.

The idea behind this solution is that we Americans recapture some of our can-do spirit about doing things for ourselves. For example, consider a check-in memo from the Las Vegas Marriott to a guest:

Welcome to the Las Vegas Marriott

Dear Sleeper,

We value your sleepiness, as it keeps us in business. In supporting America's ongoing battle against illegal immigration, and in its quest to keep the USA free, white, Evangelical, and speaking English, we request:

1. Please make-up your bed each morning. On your last day, a fresh change of sheets will be placed at your door. Please deposit the used bed clothing in the hall, and our non-immigrant staff will take care of them.
2. Each evening, please turn-down your bed and put your own piece of chocolate next to your pillow. If you can, use Hershey's, as it is made in America.
3. A vacuum cleaner is located in the closet. Please run it on the carpet before you check-out. Notice we use Hoovers, an All-American brand.
4. During your stay, we ask you to be cognizant of accidental emissions of any bodily fluids that might blemish the furnishings. For such an emergency, a bottle of Hot Spot stain remover has been placed in the night stand next to your bed, alongside your Gideon Bible.
5. A daily cleaning of your bathroom is recommended. Windex, Sani-flush, and other handy tools can be found under the bathroom counter, just to the left of the refrigerator mini bar---which is stocked only with American beer, California wine, and Jack Daniels.
6. On your way out, kindly turn out the lights. The city's depletion of nearby Lake Mead's water has created a problem with the Hoover Dam generators that run our Hoover vacuum cleaners.

As the revised see-saw shows, *consumers do more work to be workers, and they consume less as consumers*. The result? Fewer illegal immigrants coming across the Rio Grande to service the now reduced needs of consumers.

Which results in our economy grinding to a halt.

The truth is, we must keep-on consuming. It is the vital grease for the cogs of growth, of expansion, of more people, of immigration, if need be, of illegal immigration.

Does Capitalism have a Rainbow's End?

But when (or if) does it end? In order to feed the productivity machine, how many times in X years must Las Vegas' population double? For how long will Lake Mead withstand the depletion of its water level? Is there a point where Joe Citizen says, "That's it. I've accumulated enough wealth. I can't eat any more Swiss chocolates. Gucci shoes overrun my closet. I'm sick of fast food, my garage is full of cars, and I have no idea how to program the ten DVDs for the twenty rooms in my two-person home."

In these modern times of *Consumptive Capitalism*, perhaps we should consider that our quality of life is affected by our ability to control our appetite for the very quality of life to which we aspire.

Sure, but we want to be comfortable. We want convenience and comfort. With the flick of our credit card wrist, we have our lawn mowed, our hair trimmed, our toilets cleaned---all by immigrants.

The services of immigrants have become so engrained in our country they are now part of our life, ingredients into the daily menu of our suburban consumptions. We accept them as if they are givens. They have become part of America's landscape.

Regarding this landscape: If you don't want your bed made at the Marriott, or your hamburger cooked at Wendy's; if you don't want your cherries picked, or your sand trap raked, then email the President your opinion with this directive: "Keep building that wall!"²

Otherwise, be content with cheap comfortable hotel rooms, cheap juicy hamburgers, cheap succulent cherries, and cheap pristine sand traps.

Accept the associated, inevitable fading away of America's European-Anglo identity. And stop complaining.

² A note written in 2016: I have not altered this article from its 2009 creation date. Thus, note that a wall between the United States and Mexico was not the idea of Donald Trump. Besides Mr. Trump needs cheap labor for his hotel rooms, just as the Marriott brothers do.