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Editor's note: This is one of two pieces in a point/ counterpoint format. Please see Joshua Holland's response [here](#).

Traditional conservative William F. Buckley was once asked how he would describe a "liberal." He thought for moment, his snakelike tongue darting about just behind open lips, then spoke.

"A liberal is someone who overwaters their house plants."

Ouch! That hurt. Because he was right. I knew exactly what he meant. Why would a liberal overwater a house plant? Because they were mean? No. Quite the opposite. They were just trying to help. Because liberals are nice people -- sometimes too nice. Liberals have overdeveloped empathy glands. When they tell you they "feel your pain," they mean it -- even if at that particular moment you're not feeling it.

Now, before you jump all over me, I'm a liberal. (Well, a social liberal anyway, though I tend to be more conservative when it comes to things like balancing the federal checkbook.) But on social issues I'm right there -- choice for women, equality for everyone and more than a little suspicious about what the domestic Axis of Evil -- corporate/political/media nexus -- are up to.

But, just as conservatives always go too far with their proclivities, so too do liberals. And for both, that is always their downfall. We are coming to the end -- whew! -- of a conservative cycle and just beginning the next liberal cycle. Be assured, it too will inevitably end in excess. But maybe we can avoid some obvious mistakes early on.

Which is why I am risking the ire of the liberal/progressive community to speak frankly about immigration reform. I know the war in Iraq is currently consuming almost all the available attention -- and rightfully so. But there are other festering wounds on America's body-politic that require immediate attention, and one of the biggest is immigration.

But before I put the war aside for a moment, we should all remind ourselves that the Democrats were also on the wrong side of that issue -- and for way too long. And, though they seem to have now gotten it right, it's too late. The damage is done, and it's

irreversible. Simply put, Democrats were snookered, bamboozled and herded like sheep to the slaughter by conservatives on the war.

And now they are now being led to the slaughter again, by the same bunch, on immigration reform.

Yes, the Neocons are at it again. On the war they played on Democrat's fear of being seen as sissies. This time Neocons are playing on liberal empathy for the very real plight of illegal immigrants from Mexico. But as laudable as that empathy is, it's a trap and Democrats have taken the bait -- again.

By falling in step with the Bush administration's so-called "[comprehensive immigration reform](#)," Democrats are driving a dagger into the hearts of working class Americans, particularly those struggling to survive at the bottom of the income scale. In other words, they are about to screw the very people they claim should vote Democrat because only Democrats will help them.

Four years ago the Neocons sold the Iraq war with a lie ... that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. Now they are selling their version of "comprehensive immigration reform" with another lie ... that immigrants, legal or otherwise, are simply taking jobs Americans won't do.

Well, then, how do you explain this story:

Wall Street Journal -- Jan. 17, 2007

Immigration Raid Aids Blacks

After a wave of raids by federal immigration agents in Stillmore, Ga., on Labor Day weekend, a local chicken processing company called Crider Inc. lost 75 percent of its mostly Hispanic 900-member work force. The crackdown threatened to cripple the economic anchor of this fading rural town.

But for local African-Americans, the dramatic appearance of federal agents presented an unexpected opportunity. Crider suddenly raised pay at the plant. An advertisement in the weekly Forest-Blade newspaper blared "Increased Wages" at Crider, starting at \$7 to \$9 an hour -- more than a dollar above what the company had paid many immigrant workers. The company began offering free transportation from nearby towns and free rooms in a company-owned dormitory near the plant. For the first time in years, local officials say, Crider aggressively sought workers from the area's state-funded employment office -- a key avenue for low-skilled workers to find jobs. Of 400 candidates sent to Crider -- most of them black -- the plant hired about 200. ([Full Story](#))

So, what happened there? This local Stillmore chicken processing plant had been perking right along for years paying illegals immigrants wages so low it made more sense for American workers right there in town to remain unemployed. But once those those illegals were gone, forcing the company to offer a reasonable wage, local (American) workers stampeded to get a job there. The job hadn't changed. It was the same, dirty, smelly, messy chicken gut-flinging work as before -- the kind of work the company claimed "*Americans won't do.*"

All that changed at the Crider plant were the wages on offer.

And that's what it's all about, boys and girls. The entire GOP "comprehensive immigration reform" scam is about wages -- specifically keeping U.S. wages low and company profit margins high.

Nevertheless there they are, our Democrats, parroting GOP demands for "comprehensive immigration reform." Which, if passed, would undercut American workers and gut what little is left of union power to negotiate wage and benefits with companies. ("What ya gonna do? You gonna strike? Go ahead, make our day.")

Oh sharper than serpent's tooth are politicians capable of so casually ditching their tried and true friends of yore. Scroll back up

and read that WSJ excerpt again.

Who got jobs once the illegals were herded out of Crider's factory?

Unemployed local African-Americans, mostly.

And where had all those worker been?

Cooling their heels at the Stillmore unemployment office waiting for a job that paid something approximating a livable wage.

And what happened when such jobs were offered?

They stormed the Crider plant to claim one of those jobs the company had claimed "Americans won't do."

Now, isn't that precisely what Democrats say their party has been fighting for all these decades since the civil rights movement? I thought so. But here we have those same Democrats joining Republicans pushing for this thing they keep calling "comprehensive immigration reform." Which, if enacted as currently envisioned, would not only put those 200 newly employed Stillmore, Ga., workers back on the unemployment line, but guarantee that millions more like them remain unemployed.

I do have to amend an early statement. Attributing the Democrat's support for Bush's immigration policies to just empathy is giving them a bit too much credit. While empathy may be part of their motivation, realpolitik plays a big role as well. Democrat's figure Hispanics, as "people of color," are theirs by right. Never mind that the legislation backed by President Bush would screw millions of American citizens of color. The important thing for Democratic Party strategists is to say and do whatever it takes to make sure Hispanics don't vote Republican.

The trouble is that, once again, Republicans are playing chess and Democrats are playing checkers. While Democrats are simply trying to make their party attractive to Latino voters, Republicans are going for bigger game. Sure the GOP would like to attract Latino voters to their camp and have had some luck doing so, especially in places like Florida and Texas. But they have a second bigger and more significant goal: keeping American working class wages low for companies. And the best way to do that is to guarantee the [surplus of cheap Mexican labor](#) continues unabated.

And that's where American GOP policy dovetails nicely the needs of Mexicans. No, not the poor Mexicans risking their lives sneaking across the border. The GOP's real friends in Mexico are the handful of [oligarch families](#) and monopoly enterprises that have succeeded in rounding up the lion's share of Mexico's wealth for themselves. The porous U.S.-Mexican border serves as a safety valve for those Mexican oligarchs, providing Mexico's poor an alternative to rebellion. Those oligarchs understand all too well that the day that border is sealed is the first day of the revolution that will end their sweet deal.

All the above is why I have come to believe that liberal/progressives need to get their politically correct heads out of their butts on immigration reform -- and fast. Fool them once, shame on the Neocons. Fool them again, shame on the Democrats. What a bunch of suckers! First Democrats let themselves be snookered into voting for the Iraq war, and now they are on the verge of being snookered by the same Neocon con-men into voting for "comprehensive immigration reform." Dems were afraid voting against war would make them look like a bunch of sissies. Now they are afraid that not backing the GOP's "comprehensive immigration reform" would make them look like racists.

(Sometimes I'm forced to admire how Republicans maneuver Democrats into these kind of rhetorical traps. Think about it. Here are a bunch of lily-white Republicans seemingly embracing the [La Raza](#) position on immigration. What are the Democrats to do? If they oppose "comprehensive immigration reform," they look like a bunch of flag waving, ethnocentric rednecks. While Republicans, by backing their version of immigration reform look like -- well, like Democrats. Come on. Admit it. You have to give Neocon strategists a grudging wink for pulling that off.)

While those pushing the current version of "comprehensive immigration reform," would have us believe that this is a terribly complicated matter, it really isn't. Maybe that's all Democrats need, a simple alternative. Here it is:

Could the U.S. government deploy a simple, online, browser-based, database employers could use to verify the Social Security numbers provided by their employees?

Yes.

Could Congress require the INS/ICE to hire enough workplace auditors to assure that any company with more than ten employees is audited at least once each year?

Could Congress pass legislation authorizing guest workers that requires companies to pay the same wages to guest workers as they would have to pay American workers -- you know -- the ones they say "don't want those jobs."

Yes.

Could Congress craft a program for farmers that creates an orderly agricultural guest worker program?

Yes.

Could Congress put real teeth in laws for employers caught repeatedly hiring illegal workers?

Yes.

Could illegals already living in the U.S. eventually be "normalized?"

Yes -- though a teeth-grinding, grudging yes. But only after all the above is in place and operating smoothly. And once the fate of all future illegals is immediate deportation. Then, and only then, should those living in the United States for at least five years be issued green cards. After that they can get in line behind those who followed the rules in the first place.

See. It's really not complicated. And we don't need no stinkin' fence either. All we need is some common sense thinking and common sense rules supported by common sense enforcement -- primarily workplace enforcement.

But once again we're confronted by an issue with flabbergastingly enormous implications -- and a completely flummoxed liberal/progressive Democratic Party rushing towards the houseplants with pails of water.

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Stephen Pizzo is the author of numerous books, including "[Inside Job: The Looting of America's Savings and Loans](#)," which was nominated for a Pulitzer.

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Oh come on!

Posted by: Temporary on Jan 31, 2007 12:06 AM

[\[Report this comment\]](#)Without illegals where would we get new, cheap slaves, and the perfect excuse for another [Civil war!?](#)[\[<< Reply to this comment\]](#) [\[Post a new comment >\]](#)» [Don't worry, read the article, he is saying "Don't have illegal immigration, except....."](#) Posted by: Prophit» [RE: Don't worry, read the article, he is saying "Don't have illegal immigration, except....."](#) Posted by: BriMan**Free at Last**

Posted by: edith on Jan 31, 2007 12:50 AM

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Finally someone with the guts to expose the "immigration" issue of hiring unskilled Hispanic undocumented labor as what it is: a clever effort by racists to keep Black America, particularly younger black males unemployed. Shame on the unions for not backing tough on the job enforcement of immigration laws and fair wage laws in industries like poultry, meatpacking, construction and landscaping. Shame on the Obamas for backing legalization of illegal workers without first clearing out jobs held by illegals for African Americans and legal Hispanics and white workers willing to work hard at a living wage.

And once the Kennedy-Bush No Child Left Alive law really sinks in and millions of black kids and hispanic kids are tossed out of high schools on plan as standardized assessments control high school graduation, there will be a vicious standoff between illegals brought in to fill low skill jobs and the mainly black youth of America who will be dumped on the street by the education establishment funded by Bush and Kennedy. (And well funded the education bureaucrats are, hot air from Doughboy Teddy to the contrary notwithstanding).

And don't hold your breath for Reid and Pelosi to impose trade sanctions on China to revive US manufacturing and create new US jobs for blacks ready and willing to go through the blue collar cycle like whites did after WWII as an entrance experience to the middle class.

McCain, Kennedy, Obama, Hilary are all exposed by this excellent article as the corporate wage depressors and stooges that they really are.

Joe Kennedy would be proud of you Teddy.

[\[<< Reply to this comment\]](#) [\[Post a new comment >\]](#)» [Right, Hilary used to be on Walmart's Board of Directors](#) Posted by: plantland» [Yeah and chavez would roll over in his grave.](#) Posted by: Prophit» [RE: Yeah and chavez would roll over in his grave.](#) Posted by: oregoncharles» [RE: Yeah and chavez would roll over in his grave.](#) Posted by: BriMan**Has Pizzo actually read his own article?**

Posted by: HeroesAll on Jan 31, 2007 2:43 AM

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But, just as conservatives always go too far with their proclivities, so too do liberals. [...] the next liberal cycle. Be assured, it too will inevitably end in excess.

What? When have 'liberals', as if it's an entire homogeneous group, ever gone too far? And what on earth are the 'proclivities' he's talking about? What 'excess'? Is the man just wanking on for his own health, or does he really believe what he writes?

All the above is why I have come to believe that liberal/progressives need to get their politically correct heads out of their butts on immigration reform

Anyone who uses the term 'politically correct' is intellectually lazy. What exactly does it mean? Does it mean caring about other people? Then why not say that? Anyone using this term is basically saying "Look, I'm a bastard, okay? And then over there are all nicey-nice, oooh, don't you hate them?"

Sorry for the rant, but PC has to be one of the laziest cop-out phrases in the English language. Now back to our regular programme.

I'll admit up-front (well, up-front but post-rant) that I know little of this comprehensive immigration reform of which he speaks. So I can't comment on that. But I can comment on this, which stuck out like dogs balls (sorry, it's Australian vernacular):

Could Congress require the INS/ICE to hire enough workplace auditors to assure that any company with more than ten employees is audited at least once each year?

Yes.

Could Congress put real teeth in laws for employers caught repeatedly hiring illegal workers?

Yes.

Could Congress actually enforce some of the laws they already have on the books, such as unsafe workplaces? Yes. Could Congress put real teeth in laws for employers caught repeatedly endangering workers safety? Bloody hell, yes. But they don't.

Let's get real here: if the government isn't willing to put up the ludicrously small amount of money required to audit meat-packing companies, and apply serious penalties when they're found selling contaminated meat; if the government isn't willing to front the doosh to pay for enforcement of laws supposed to ensure workers lives and health; if the government can't be bothered about that, what makes you think they'll cough up for immigration enforcement?

Oh, right. Mexicans. Of course. It's far more important to keep impoverish forriners out of the country than to safeguard the lives of US citizens.

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» [On PC](#) Posted by: karma_ran_over_dogma

» [RE: Has Pizzo actually read his own article?](#) Posted by: MAD

» [RE: Has Pizzo actually read his own article?](#) Posted by: MatthewSavage

» [RE: Has Pizzo actually read his own article?](#) Posted by: MAD

» [RE: Has Pizzo actually read his own article?](#) Posted by: oregoncharles

» [A few responses](#) Posted by: HeroesAll

» [RE: A few responses](#) Posted by: cacky

Someone had to say it.

Posted by: kepstein7777 on Jan 31, 2007 3:15 AM

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Nice of you to point out that "jobs Americans won't do" is a bunch of crap.

Of course, they'll never go after employers. There's too much at stake.

A conservative never waters his houseplants and then blames the plants for dying.

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» [RE: Someone had to say it.](#) Posted by: YogiBear

Look at the evidence: countries that control immigration have less turmoil, better wages

Posted by: Bobsays on Jan 31, 2007 4:22 AM

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Both Canada and Australia tightly control immigration. They are generous in the numbers of people they take every year - and the variety - but they make sure everyone goes through a legal process. And the result? They both have diverse societies where most people get along just fine. They also have good wages for people who do service sector jobs. They also have no truck for illegals, and have crack squads that quickly round them up and deport straight away. This policy is supported by the majority of people who are also immigrants. Why?

Because legal immigrants, the people who work hard and strive for the opportunity to come to a country, also do not like people who lie and cheat their way in. They also don't want to have the country degenerate into ghettos and slums like they see in the third world, and sadly, see in the US today.

So, the progressive position is for legal migration. It is for migration that does not favour one race or ethnicity over another and the process is transparent and fair. That can only happen with a proper immigration service and border controls. Simple.

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» [Yes, almost nobody is against legal immigration](#) Posted by: karma_ran_over_dogma

» [RE: Look at the evidence: countries that control immigration have less turmoil, better wages](#) Posted by: oregoncharles

» [RE: Look at the evidence: countries that control immigration have less turmoil, better wages](#) Posted by: albrechtkrause

» [RE: Look at the evidence: countries that control immigration have less turmoil, better wages](#) Posted by: jaby

» [I wish you were right about Canadian immigration](#) Posted by: Rod from Canada

Corporatist agenda

Posted by: lclark on Jan 31, 2007 4:43 AM

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Finally, this forum publishes something approaching an honest assessment of the purpose and result of the Federal government intentional lack of border enforcement. It's all about wage suppression, long term 'harmonization' of wages between this country and poorer countries, as well as the deconstruction of this Republic and the formation of larger geopolitical entities such as the North American Union, formed and organized to benefit the privileged class.

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» [North American Union](#) Posted by: veggiegrrrl

Perot Had it Right

Posted by: Democritus on Jan 31, 2007 5:25 AM

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Remember Ross Perot's prediction of a "vast sucking sound" that would occur if NAFTA was passed? Well, he was right. NAFTA destroyed the Mexican farming industry, and poor Mexicans streamed north for jobs--jobs that US corporations offered at less than a living wage. The quickest and simplest way to reverse this trend (other than rescinding NAFTA) is: (1) force employers to provide a living wage for low-end labor, and (2) give US citizens first crack at those jobs. The way accomplish (1) is to have Congress raise the Federal minimum wage. The corporate lament that this would "cost jobs" is nonsense. Empirical studies have shown that there is no causal connection between a rise in state minimum wages (in Washington, Alaska, Oregon, and New Jersey) and job loss. Job loss in those states was due mainly to losses in manufacturing jobs--another effect of the globalization that has enriched corporations and screwed the workers. With CEOs of companies now making 400 times the compensation of the average worker, it's time to reverse that trend--and help put Americans in better jobs as it cures our immigration ills. To ensure that (2) is enforced, make the employers criminally liable for checking on who is a citizen and who isn't.

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ALL JOBS SHOULD HAVE TO BE POSTED AT UNEMPLOYMENT OFFICES

Posted by: plantland on Jan 31, 2007 5:55 AM

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I WORRY ABOUT PEOPLE COMING OUT OF PRISON- SOMETIMES FOR MINOR DRUG OFFENSES- WHO CAN'T FIND WORK.

I would like to see:

1. ALL jobs posted at unemployment offices and on their online sites.
2. Legal job seekers be lent computers and get dialup internet at their residences during the period they are looking for work.
3. The coordination of day worker sites for casual labor with state unemployment agencies, eliminating the county sites often run by pro-immigration groups that foster more and more immigration even though they know that those already pooling at sites are not finding enough work. (Just like Halliburton in Iraq making out on providing meals for soldiers, these groups get contracts for teaching English and providing services- the more, the better for them, and the better for their own name recognition in local politics.)

State agencies could also have access to criminal records, so that potentially violent workers are not sent to private homes to do casual labor. (In Montgomery County , Maryland, several years ago, a mother and daughter were murdered by an illegal painter their contractor picked up.)

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Extends to professionals as well.

Posted by: nhs on Jan 31, 2007 6:17 AM

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I totally agree with the need for immigration reform. But it's not just low income jobs affected. Large corporations often whine that they can't find enough "Professional" employees with the education needed to do jobs. So they search for foreigners to bring into the States to cover this so called need. In truth they can't find Americans willing to work on the cheap. All done to support CEO's multi-million dollar packages and to increase shareholder value.

How many professionals scrap by in "Temp" agencies and as "Contract" employees? Granted there are always a few who have the connections to live well as an independent contractor. But is that true of all of them? The law of "supply and demand" still exists. The more foreign workers Corporations can bring in, the smaller the wages they need to pay.

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» [This is true](#) Posted by: Bobsays

A Most Excellent Article

Posted by: wobblies on Jan 31, 2007 6:50 AM

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Hi~

The mere fact that this article is being posted by AlterNet is cause for optimism, and the content is also very good. This person offers real common sense solutions that would help American working people.

God Speed,
David

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Guest worker program????

Posted by: brad on Jan 31, 2007 7:00 AM

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"Could Congress craft a program for farmers that creates an orderly agricultural guest-worker program? Yes."

So there are jobs 'Americans' [sic] won't do. Farm labor. And your solution is exactly Bush and big Corporations, guest workers. You get the labor, without the rights. You get the to pay cheap wages, without allowing them to unionize. You get to eat cheap, underpriced food, without creating decent working conditions.

Guest worker programs are about coporate power over labor. Imigration control through border enforcement is about corporate power. **The only way for progressives to win this battle is to grant citizenship to those here and to work to unionize them once they become legal residents.**

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» [Winnig the Battle?](#) Posted by: VisionQuest

» [RE: Winnig the Battle?](#) Posted by: brad

» [The division isn't created by corporate propaganda...](#) Posted by: brunowe

» [RE: The division isn't created by corporate propaganda...](#) Posted by: brad

» [The more illegals you have...](#) Posted by: brunowe

» [RE: The more illegals you have...](#) Posted by: brad

» [More workers means it's harder to form unions...](#) Posted by: brunowe

» [RE: Winnig the Battle?](#) Posted by: inclement

LEGAL IMMIGRATION FOR ENGLISH SPEAKERS first.

Posted by: veggiegrrrl on Jan 31, 2007 7:12 AM

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LEGAL IMMIGRATION FOR ENGLISH SPEAKERS first !

If persons are not literate enough to fill out the immigration forms IN ENGLISH by themselves and have their residency interviews IN ENGLISH we will be allowing millions of more non-English speakers in the country. These folks drive down wages, school performance, etc. Those who don't speak English will always be an underclass requiring government assistance. MAKE PROFICIENT ENGLISH be a key to residency.

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» [RE: LEGAL IMMIGRATION FOR ENGLISH SPEAKERS first.](#) Posted by: brad

» [RE: LEGAL IMMIGRATION FOR ENGLISH SPEAKERS first.](#) Posted by: veggiegrrrl

» [RE: LEGAL IMMIGRATION FOR ENGLISH SPEAKERS first.](#) Posted by: bichomau

» [RE: LEGAL IMMIGRATION FOR ENGLISH SPEAKERS first.](#) Posted by: brad

» [RE: LEGAL IMMIGRATION FOR ENGLISH SPEAKERS first.](#) Posted by: veggiegrrrl

Normpink

Posted by: normpink on Jan 31, 2007 7:19 AM

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YES TO LEGAL IMMIGRATION. What is there about the word ILLEGAL the Democrats don't understand?????

Amnesty is horribly unfair to the millions of people who can not illegally get into the country and want to.

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» [RE: Normpink](#) Posted by: brad

» [Many of them are criminals](#) Posted by: brunowe

» [RE: Many of them are criminals](#) Posted by: brad

» [I am being realistic](#) Posted by: brunowe

» [RE: I am being realistic](#) Posted by: brad

» [Granting citizenship to illegals...](#) Posted by: brunowe

» [RE: Granting citizenship to illegals...](#) Posted by: MAD

» [why so many Dems hem and haw about illegal aliens](#) Posted by: zoeyhall

» [RE: Normpink](#) Posted by: corky

The Second Shoe Drops

Posted by: rwa on Jan 31, 2007 7:20 AM

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Anyone who thinks that the Democrats are looking out for working Americans and not the employers needs to screw their heads back on. Of course they back the guest worker program, it's what their sponsors require them to do.

And no, they weren't fooled by the neocons into backing the illegal wars, ditto, they know who they work for and what they have to do.

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» [RE: The Second Shoe Drops](#) Posted by: oregoncharles

Import Skilled Workers Not Slave Labour

Posted by: albrechtkrausse on Jan 31, 2007 7:24 AM

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The main argument of both the corporate Republicans and Democrats is that we need this labour to "save" social security as the population ages and jobs "Americans won't do".

1) how are people working at slave labour conditions and often "off the books" going to "save" social security? If they argument has any validity we need educated, highly skilled labour who will therefore pay into the system at a high rate to save the program. We need to import more talent from Europe (where people are saddled with high taxes and unlimited immigration lowering their standard of living and safety) and Asia (where people are hard working, becoming highly educated, and wish more freedom.) If we import from these areas we also bring in people less effected by strange religions, blood/ethnic fueds, backwards views towards women, and people more willing to assimilate into modern society.

2) I thought America is supposed to be improving its economy, society, and lifestyle. Not only are we going backwards by promoting industries that have "jobs Americans won't do" but this also hurts developing countries in the 3rd world where those "jobs" are the 1st step to develop a modern economy. One these countries are hurt then their people demand to move to America or Europe because they have no other choices.

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» [RE: Import Skilled Workers Not Slave Labour](#) Posted by: brad

» [RE: Import Skilled Workers Not Slave Labour](#) Posted by: albrechtkrausse

Stop with the 'everything must be equal' crap

Posted by: garym on Jan 31, 2007 8:14 AM

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when you say "Simply put, Democrats were snookered, bamboozled and herded like sheep to the slaughter by conservatives on the war." shouldn't you actually speak the truth and say "Simply put, Democrats were lied to by their President" - ?

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» [RE: Stop with the 'everything must be equal' crap](#) Posted by: oregoncharles

» [RE: Stop with the 'everything must be equal' crap](#) Posted by: corky

What Pizzo left out

Posted by: haytanbello on Jan 31, 2007 8:19 AM

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What Pizzo didn't quote in his piece were the last few paragraphs of the WSJ article:

"Since the raids, African-Americans have made up about 65 percent of Crider's work force, while whites are 30 percent and Hispanics 5 percent, according to the company. Turnover has been high. The population of workers hired since last September's immigration raids has turned over three times, according to Crider.

"Still struggling to fill its ranks, Crider began busing in felons on probation from a state prison and residents of a homeless mission from nearby Macon. . . .

. . . Crider is still about 300 people short of its work force before the immigration raids. It is now bringing Laotian Hmong immigrant workers and their families from Minnesota and Wisconsin, with hopes that they'll stay on the job and build new roots in Stillmore."

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» [Anti-Americanism?](#) Posted by: rwa

» [RE: What Pizzo left out](#) Posted by: oregoncharles

» [RE: What Pizzo left out](#) Posted by: joshua_holland@altnet.org

» [RE: What Pizzo left out](#) Posted by: freeda'all

Simple Symmetry

Posted by: lonpine on Jan 31, 2007 8:21 AM

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In this age of globalization, what's **not** crossing borders? Not capital, nor energy, raw materials, finished goods, not consumer tastes nor even *diseases* stay within national borders. So why keep labor from doing the same? I say, if it's so easy to tear out your sewing machines from a clothing factory in the American South and stick 'em in Vietnam, then Vietnamese seamstresses should be able to come to Tennessee and work for subpar wages if they want.

Capital seeks the lowest factor costs; labor seeks the highest wages. Globalization openly promotes the former; anti-immigration types oppose the latter. Let's be a little more honest and realize that, if it's a "right" for someone to be able to sell something in the market, then that should include not only a finished good, but his or her labor as well.

If you don't like that, then let's **completely** rethink "free" trade.

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» [RE: Simple Symmetry](#) Posted by: oregoncharles

More that Pizzo doesn't tell you

Posted by: haytanbello on Jan 31, 2007 8:40 AM

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To the question, "Could the US government deploy a simple, online, browser-based, database employers could use to verify the Social Security numbers provided by their employees?," Pizzo answers "Yes."

And yet, the Social Security Administration estimates that 17.8 million of its records contain discrepancies related to name, date of birth, or citizenship status. (Source: "Congressional Response Report: Accuracy of the Social Security Administration's Numident File," Office of the Inspector General, Social Security Administration, Dec. 2006, available online if you google the title.)

Pizzo may have been nominated for a Pulitzer, but when preparing this piece he failed to do some basic research. Either that or he figures that AlterNet readers are easily hoodwinked.

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» [RE: More that Pizzo doesn't tell you](#) Posted by: herbal

Overpopulation is why mass immigration sucks.

Posted by: Pat Kittle on Jan 31, 2007 9:24 AM

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Billions of people *right now* would like to move here.

That oughta settle it right there.

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» [RE: Overpopulation is why mass immigration sucks.](#) Posted by: freeda'all

» [Mass immigration is also bad for the environment](#) Posted by: Bobsays

» [Reducing our ecological extravagance does NOT mean multiplying our already-too-big population.](#) Posted by: Pat Kittle

» [RE: Mass immigration is also bad for the environment](#) Posted by: lonpine

» [You're the racist - you injected race, not me.](#) Posted by: Pat Kittle

» [You're the one calling people racists, not me...](#) Posted by: lonpine

shout it now and loud!

Posted by: zooeyhall on Jan 31, 2007 10:50 AM

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Thank you , thank you, thank you Alternet!!! This is a great article that addresses an issue so close and personal to many in America.

Illegal aliens have one purpose for being allowed into this country---to suppress wages. PERIOD!

Employers do have trouble finding workers. They just can't find workers at the non-living wage they want to pay. Plenty of American citizens would do these jobs if the pay were commesurate with the work. PERIOD!

If you oppose illegal immigration, and support the enforcement of the law of the land with regards to illegal aliens, you are NOT a racist. PERIOD!

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RE: Immigration scam

Posted by: Sam Thornton on Jan 31, 2007 11:12 AM

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Stephen, glad to see someone think their way through the rhetoric, come up with workable solutions, and express it so well.

As you and many here have pointed out, our "illegal alien" problem is not due to any evil intent of those who cross the border, but to economic conditions brought on by failed policies and political corruption on both sides of the border. Not the least of these failed policies is NAFTA and similar arrangements, or at least the manner in which they've been carried out.

Demonizing and further penalizing those who brave hardship and risk all for a better life seems to me to be completely counterproductive. These folks should be our allies in a coalition to fix the problems on both sides of the border.

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non-racist immigration control

Posted by: herbal on Jan 31, 2007 11:49 AM

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Approximately one million legal immigrants enter the US annually.

There is, of course, no accurate way of recording 'undocumented' immigration.

Many unheralded illegal immigrants are Europeans and Asians through the northern Canadian border and Puget Sound. These escape controversy.

The old rule of thumb for economists in keeping wages stagnant is a 7% unemployment rate.

Corporate America and its apologist Republican party certainly do have many ways to curb illegal entry. They lack the will.

The right wing and southern racist agenda attacks brown skin people and the liberals over react to the inherent undercurrent of racism. Liberals, in their embarrassment, over look the legitimate issues surrounding immigration. It is no longer huddled masses time in the US. We have a 300 million population and the country is fully developed and has an environmentally destructive consumer based economy.

Most likely an immigrant will be easier on the earth if they stay in their native country, wages can better support equitable distribution of wealth in this country.

'What' you say? 'Different measures of wealth for different countries?' Oops, to counter this argument is to accept the argument of globalism. Why not separate free standing internal economy for Switzerland?

Why not use the immigration issue to open the real issue of desirability of localized economies (local food, etc.)? Progressives have an opportunity to introduce to the media the idea of Steady State Economics and the challenge to the old saw necessity of

perpetual growth as an essential component to economies.

What is perpetual immigration if not an adjunct to perpetual growth economy. Lets recognize that there are limits to growth of both population and economic growth. Growth economy, as a measure of economic health, sorely needs to be publicly challenged and discussed. Immigration is the perfect forum, with its ready audience of conservatives, to hit them up with the absurdity of perpetual economic growth as a requirement for social welfare.

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North American Union-NAFTA Highway

Posted by: mite on Jan 31, 2007 12:49 PM

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The goal of terrorism is to create terror and fear. Terrorism is not an expression of rage. Terrorism is a political weapon, used against the masses to cause unrest. With unrest comes martial law, and dictatorship with a police state, freedom and liberties given away freely to keep the people safe. So the masses are deceived by the rulers.

If there is a WAR on terror, why are our borders wide open. I'll tell you why, for the 'North American Union' the union of Mexico-Canada-United States as one entity-state like the 'European Union'. On March, 2005, President Bush, Fox, and Canadian Prime Minister Martin signed an agreement to create this union of these three country's.

To enforce this act there is the plan www.spp.gov to build highways from present Interstates-Tollways and construction of new ones for the free movement of commerce, immirgrants, and terrorists. You see to explain the conspiracy you must watch the following DVD's for the truth-freedomtofascism, theft-by-deception, and terrorstorm. All three can be viewed for free on Google video, but please support the film makers.

This U.S. Government is bankrupt and dissolved as of March 9, 1933 and controlled by bankers-foreign and domestic. Did you know illegal immirgrants can collect billions of dollars from Social Security, and banks are loaning home loans without any identification or SS #'s. These actions allowed is are acts of treason by Congress-President and officials. see:Washington/PRNewswire-USNewswire-U.S.-Mexico Social Security Agreement Released After 3 year FOIA Battle; Mexican Illegals Could Get Billions of Social Security Dollars:

It is serious when Americans need a 'Real ID Act' as of May, 2008 and illegal's need no ID. This Media-Press, Government, lie to us about 9-11, Iraq, and the destruction of this Constitution-Bill of Rights before our eyes, and we keep living in denial with the same excuses: "Oh I never heard about that on TV or in the Paper".

Well I hope the people of this once great nation enjoy the 800 concentration camps in the U.S.

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» [RE: North American Union-NAFTA Highway](#) Posted by: inclement

» [say it loud and say it proud](#) Posted by: veggiegrrrl

The debate continues ...

Posted by: joshua_holland@altnet.org on Jan 31, 2007 2:53 PM

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Pizzo and I have another exchange over in [Peek](#).

-Joshua H

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