

# Borderline Insanity:

## How the Right Got Immigration Wrong

(presentation for CPAC, 2008)

### A. Introduction

Richard Nadler has written and directed over 150 TV and radio ads targeting conservative messages to minority audiences. The opinions expressed in this talk are his own, and not necessarily those of the Americas Majority Foundation.

### B. Speech

During my prolonged and misspent youth, I played bass in a jazz band that was, excepting yours truly, Black. In Chicago, we sometimes performed at the Sirah House, owned by Black Muslims. The managers, considering my presence an insult, lobbied my boss to fire me, but apart from that, proved gracious hosts. One evening, a Fruit of Islam stalwart lectured me on the moral inferiority of the White Race.

He explained that sometime in pre-history, a demonic geneticist named Dr. Yakub had created the white man from the original Black stock of humanity as an act of rebellion against Allah. Yakub's object was to create a race without a soul that would rule and torment God's creation.

At the time, I didn't believe a word he said – or rather, I didn't believe that he believed it. I thought he was playing me. But years later, reading Malcolm's autobiography, I understood that the world-view he espoused that evening in Chicago was an intrinsic part of the theology of the Nation of Islam. Dr. Yakub, its Satan figure, designed a single strategy that would mimic the crown of creation, but that would spoil it all.

### C

It is only recently, during the immigration debate, that I began to believe in Dr. Yakub. I derived his existence via Okham's razor – it was the simplest hypothesis that would synthesize all known facts in the area of inquiry – in this case, immigration. But in

my version, Dr. Yakub was neither geneticist, nor fallen angel. Rather, he was a political consultant working for the DNC, or perhaps for some yet-undisclosed arm of the George Soros network.

If a demon or demi-urge set about to design a single policy that would unravel everything conservatives worked to achieve over the past 50 years – our economic message, our cultural message, and our national security message -- he could do no better than the deportationist immigration policy that has been embraced by Tom Tancredo, Pat Buchanan, Laura Ingraham, Ann Coulter, Michelle Malkin, Duncan Hunter, and practically every media luminary of the political Right.

I will treat the economic, cultural and national security aspects of deportation in turn. But first, some definitions are in order.

D

A deportationist policy is one that defines border security to include the removal of all, or nearly all, of some 12 million illegals currently resident in the United States. Some deportationists want law enforcement to round them up. Most want to sanction their employers so severely that illegals will be unable to work, and will therefore leave of their own accord. An amnesty policy is one that tightens border security without removing all, or even most, of the 12 million. All amnesty proposals include some form of work visa to normalize the status of most illegals.

As retail politics, deportation is an exercise in futility. And although it masquerades as national security, law-and-order, economic nationalism, and cultural self-defense, the deportationist orthodoxy is none of the above.

More leaders on the Right than you might guess are quite aware of this. But at the grass roots, most conservatives now believe that illegals who crossed from Mexico are endangering national security and ruining the U.S. economy. They believe this, because they have been told so repeatedly by the sources they trust for reliable information. And because these misimpressions have been so instrumental in the success of popular conservative authors, and in the ratings of popular conservative talk-show hosts, most leaders who know better prefer to duck for cover – or to hop aboard for the ride.

E.

Well, the ride will be short. This talk of deporting or starving 12 million illegals – plus two million children with full U.S. citizenship rights; -- of voiding 6 million labor contracts; of sanctioning hundreds of thousand of employers; of throwing a million “mixed” marriages into crisis -- this deportation talk is pure poison, guaranteed to fracture the Reagan coalition at it seams, guaranteed to transform Conservatism from a governing majority to a cultish minority.

The ride, I say, will be short, and it will end November five, 2008 – the day that conservatives wake up to the shocked realization that their immigration policy has given them neither national security, economic security, nor even border security, but rather a Democratic president and a Democratic Congress that governs most of the Southwest, West and Midwest.

It is an irony of this debate that the same media organs of Right that have served us so brilliantly in the past – that have informed us so ably on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, that have relentlessly unmasked the secularist agenda of the Left, and the pork-barrel proclivities of Democrats and Republicans alike – have totally misled their conservative audience on even the most basic facts of the immigration controversy. The right wing press has regularly associated illegal immigration with high levels of crime and unemployment, and low levels of wages and economic growth. They have implied that the border is up in arms about this issue, and that taxes are skyrocketing because of it. And they have assured their listeners that the general public supports either deporting these 12 million people, or starving them out. All of these assertions are, to be kind, factually incorrect.

F.

I became interested in immigration because of economics. As opposition mounted to President Bush’s comprehensive immigration reform, the character of Right Wing talk changed. One could listen to Laura Ingraham or Sean Hannity for hours, and hear little to distinguish their shows from the standard fare on Air America. Every Marxist nutcase theory had spawned its Right wing analog.

For instance: The Left wants a minimum wage. Okay: the deportationist Right demands that businesses hike wages, so that they can hire Americans instead of illegals.

The Left wants comparable worth. Okay, the Right now wants American agribusiness to treat welfare bums as equivalent to Mexican agricultural workers.

The Left wants to eradicate undercapitalized business that can't afford health care. Okay, the talk-show Right wants to eradicate undercapitalized businesses that can't afford American teenagers.

The Left says that greedy capitalists are driving down wages to destroy the middle class. Okay, the talk-show Right says that greedy capitalists are driving down wages to destroy the middle class.

The tenor of this debate presented me with a different kind of border problem. The border between classical economics and socialism – between Hayek and Marx, between von Mises and Lenin – had been breached. Across it raced every discredited socialist enthusiasm of the last century – an inundation of undocumented alien theories.

G

Worse, the coyotes directing it often drew their salaries from institutions of the conservative movement. Now, the Right's economic debate on immigration was more sophisticated than that on the talk shows. Think-tank economists tripped over one another in their eagerness to prove that contemporary immigration created a market anomaly: that while the free movement of labor was generally good, this particular immigration was bad. This immigration had too many uneducated workers. These immigrants had too many babies. These low-pay workers would reduce innovation, or capitalization per worker.

In an America with a sizeable welfare system, this immigration would impose public costs – tax costs – that would outweigh any benefits. Displaced native workers would refuse to reenter the workforce at slave wages, raising unemployment. Above all, this immigration would harm the middle class.

In the age of Reagan, the political Right exposed the fallacy of Ricardo's Iron Law – the notion that capitalism would enrich only business owners, while depressing the living standards of working people. But in 2007, you couldn't turn on your radio without having

class warfare thrown in your face: not by John Edwards, but by Right Wing talk show hosts.

H.

Late last year, I started a project to check the claims of Right Wing talk against reality. Was immigration really damaging economic growth or wage growth? Was it destroying the middle class? Was it increasing the rates of unemployment, poverty and crime?

To measure these claims, I separated out the 19 jurisdictions – 18 states and the District of Columbia – where 84 percent of America’s immigrants live, and compared these against the 32 states where the remaining 16 percent reside. To be sure that I captured the impact of illegals, I also disaggregated a set of the ten states with the most dramatic recent growth in immigrants – growth during this decade -- a growth that, according to most authorities, was at least 50 percent illegal,

I published my findings in “Immigration and the Wealth of States.” You can download this at [amermaj.com](http://amermaj.com). That’s A-M-E-R-M-A-J-dot.com What the study demonstrates is that pretty much everything you’ve heard on right wing talk about the economics of immigration – and I include illegal immigration – is baloney.

I.

Let’s start with the broadest index of economic activity. Gross state product measures the total value of goods and services attributable to the labor and property located in a state. Gross state product is growing 23% faster in the 19 high immigration jurisdictions than in the 32 low immigration states.

What about earnings? Personal income growth in the high immigration states outpaced the others by 25%. Five of the six states with the fastest rate of personal income growth are immigrant-rich Nevada, Arizona, Utah, Florida, and Texas. Per capita personal income – income per person -- is 18% greater in the high immigration states. And in the high influx states – you know, the ones inundated with illegal aliens – per capita personal income is 20% higher than that of the low-immigration states.

Disposable income measures income after taxes. If immigrants are imposing tax costs that offset the growth in personal income, you'd expect the 32 low immigrant states to have superior disposable income growth. But they don't. Disposable income grew 23% faster in the high immigration states. And the same states had five of the six best growth rates: Nevada, Arizona, Utah, Florida, and Texas.

J.

The middle of the middle class is measured by median income. To determine median household income, you sort all households in a specific area by earnings, then you define the income point at which half earn more, and half less. In 2006, the high immigration states had median household income \$8650 higher than the low immigration states. From 1999 to 2006, they had a median income growth rate 33% greater. Eight of the top ten household income states were high immigration states. The top five states in median household income all were high immigration states.

Median per capita income defines the middle of the middle class on an individual basis. It defines the income point at which half of earners make more, and half make less. Of the states with the top median per capita income, nine of the top ten were high immigration states. 18 of the 19 high immigration jurisdictions had median per capita income higher than the average of the low-immigration states.

If immigration drives unemployment, it should be highest in the states where immigration has an immediate impact. It isn't. During the Bush administration, unemployment declined in the high immigration states, while increasing in the low immigration states.

K.

No matter how you slice it or dice it, economic growth is superior in high immigration states. These states outperform others in Gross state product, aggregate income growth, after-tax income growth, growth at the mean, and growth at the median – the middle of the middle class. The accusation that immigration, legal or illegal, is depressing the average worker's earnings fails to meet the threshold question: whether the effect it

accused of causing is happening at all. You're not getting the truth from Sean, Bill, Laura, Michelle, or Pat.

But isn't immigration causing taxes to soar in the states that bear the brunt of it? Again, the answer is no. The national average burden of state and local taxes is 11 percent of personal income. The average in the 19 high immigration states is the same: 11 percent.

Nor is immigration driving poverty. Quite the contrary. From 1999 to 2006, the percentage of individuals in poverty, federally defined, declined in the 10 states with the highest percentage of immigrants; in the other states, it increased. The 10 states with the highest percentage influx of immigrants this decade – you know, the ones overrun by illegals -- had a 10-point-six percent poverty rate, compared to a 13-point-nine percent poverty rate in the low-immigration states.

Immigration, whether legal or illegal, is associated with below-average rates of poverty and unemployment, as well as above-average rates of growth and income. The states with high rates of foreign immigration are hiring more native workers, too. Take Arizona. Between 2000 and 2006, its population rose a staggering 20.2%. But immigrants, both legal and illegal, accounted for only 3.2% of this growth. The impetus driving population was not Mexicans crossing the border, but native Americans moving to Arizona for jobs.

L

The stellar economic performance of high-immigration states is no surprise to those who understand economics. Inflows of population are both a response to, and a predictor of, a market demand for labor. In market economics population is a positive factor, provided that the labor market is free. It is socialist economies that attempt to restrict population as a drag on the economy or a threat to the political order. I find it quaint that so many pro-lifers and Catholic intellectuals are marching arm-and-arm with the population control crowd on the immigration issue.

It is politically important that conservatives face the good news, however painful. The persistently favorable economic outcomes of immigration help to explain the dismal political failures of the deportationist movement today – the very movement to which so

many of our luminaries have hitched their wagons. From California to Texas, nine congressional districts straddle the Mexican Border. They are ethnically diverse. The percentage of the electorate that is Latino ranges from roughly 56% in the Texas 23<sup>rd</sup> to 8% in the Arizona 8<sup>th</sup>. The districts are politically diverse as well: Majorities in 5 of the 9 supported George Bush in 2004, while 4 went for John Kerry.

But in one respect they are identical: Each of the 9 border districts is represented by an advocate of comprehensive immigration reform of the sort advocated by George Bush. Not one of these congressmen, Republican or Democrat, advocates mass deportation, either “hard” or “soft”. And not one, Democrat or Republican, advocates “open borders.”

M

If the popular institutions of the right – our radio shows, cable news commentators, and print mavens – have done a single major disservice to their acolytes, it is in failing to report the actual politics of the border. There, the problems associated with immigration are most felt – the strains on service systems and law enforcement; the problems of drug smuggling, human trafficking, and criminal gangs. All border Congressmen, Democrat and Republican, want stronger border control. There are Democrat and Republican flavors to this shared desire. Republicans like the fence; Democrats prefer boots on the ground, supplemented by electronic sensors. But not a single border Congressman, Democrat or Republican, advocates open borders.

Similarly, not a single border congressman, Democrat or Republican, opposes guest worker programs. Not a single one favors deportation, or “enforcement only.” Just as these districts bear the brunt of the problems associated with unregulated immigration, they also profit from the productive advantages of a vibrant labor market. Bill O’Reilly really ought to mention this.

But if you listen to Bill, or Sean, or Laura, or Michelle, you’ll hear that border security is a cosmic struggle between traitors who don’t care about national security, and patriots who demand “deportation.” A typical debate on right-wing talk pits a wounded war vet Minuteman whose daughter was raped by an repeat-offender illegal versus against a blathering ACLU bimbo who wants to pardon Osama since George Bush is the real

terrorist. This is falsification-by-caricature. Democrats want border control, but they want it with a guest worker program, and without mass deportations. And the Republicans on the border want the same things.

N

In 2006, Republicans managed, by a series of flukes, to nominate three candidates in G.O.P.–safe districts in the Southwest who opposed the Bush immigration agenda. In my study *Border Wars*, I describe their fate: stiff losses, highlighted by a 21.5% drop in G.O.P. vote share in the heavily Hispanic precincts of their respective districts.

That’s a 43% shift, sports fans – the votes the G.O.P. lost went to the other major party. Three Southwestern districts, once solidly Republican, are now represented by liberal Democrats.

In the Arizona 8<sup>th</sup>, a narrow Republican plurality nominated deportationist Randy Graff. The 8<sup>th</sup> includes Cochise County, home to the nation’s most violated and problematic border. En route to defeat, Graff, supported by the Minutemen PAC, failed to carry even Cochise. And it was not a racial matter. Cochise is overwhelmingly Anglo.

Bush’s comprehensive immigration reform combined tightened border security with guest worker programs, and a back-of-the-line path to citizenship for many illegals. In 2006, two Republican incumbents in the Southwest reversed their prior support for this approach. Both were defeated.

In 2004, J.D. Hayworth dispatched his Democrat rival 60%-to-38%. In 2006, following his “conversion” to deportationism, he was defeated 50%-to-46%.

O

J.D. likes to tell his admirers that he was defeated because his opponent adopted his tough line on border control. Sure: but not on deportation. The winner, Democrat Harry Mitchell, supported a fence and employment verification. But he did NOT support deportation. He posted the following on his campaign web site, quote: “Catching and deporting 11 million illegal immigrants, as some have suggested, is neither realistic nor wise. I believe we should give families an opportunity to gain legal status if they pay a

penalty for breaking the law, pay their taxes, learn English, and hold a job for a period of years.”

In the Texas 23<sup>rd</sup>, Republican incumbent Henry Bonilla dispatched his 2004 rival 69%-to-29%. In 2006, after supporting Jim Sensenbrenner’s enforcement-only bill, Bonilla lost, 54%-to-46%. Bonilla’s supporters point out that he was redistricted. But in the four heavily Hispanic counties that remained in his district, his support shrank from 59% in 2004 to 30% in 2006. That’s a gross shift of 58 votes per hundred cast, sports fans.

Republicans did not lose Hispanic votes merely for advocating border control. Representatives Jeff Flake, Steve Pearce and Heather Wilson all supported measures to close the open border, and all won re-election.

P

It was deportation that was the deal-breaker. Policies that induce mass fear among illegal immigrants induce mass anger among legal immigrants. There are many reasons for this: common history, common media, sometimes common family. Legal Hispanics outnumber illegals 4-to-1 in this country. They comprise 9% of the American electorate. In my study *Border Wars*, I project that a deportationist policy, if endorsed by the 2008 G.O.P. standard bearer, will cost the party the electoral votes of New Mexico, Nevada, Florida, Colorado, Iowa, and possibly Arizona.

But the political damage doesn’t end with Hispanics. Immigrants, legal and illegal, are not invaders. They are here because someone wants them here. They are meeting a real demand for labor – not in place of American workers, but in addition.

Those who employ “illegals” are precisely those who want them here most. By placing the primary responsibility for “enforcement” on employers, and the primary liability on them as well, conservatives are courting opposition in their traditional base.

During the 2008 election cycle, the *Wall Street Journal* reports that Democratic Party candidates are doubling the business contributions of their Republican rivals. High income families, a traditional base of G.O.P. support, are deserting the Republican banner in droves.

Q

Chambers of commerce and Farm Bureaus regularly sue to block deportationist policies when local governments pass them. This doesn't mean they favor sanctuary-for-Osima, or that they oppose border security. But it does mean that they want their business concerns addressed at the same time that border security is addressed. In a word: they want comprehensive immigration reform.

The business community has already reckoned that there are now two anti-business parties in the United States rather than one. And many in it would prefer to negotiate with a corrupt Charley Rangel than with an incorruptible Duncan Hunter.

Local governments won't do "enforcement only" in the absence of comprehensive federal reform. This brings me to another bone of contention with my homeboys on the Right. To listen to Fox News, one might think sanctuary cities are the one-or-two places where the mayor cross-dresses, schools teach drug abuse, and mobs burn Christmas trees. Can't we all agree to cut funding to these nut-case cities? Do conservatives really need votes from such places?

Perhaps not. But you might want a few votes from some other sanctuary cities, for instance: San Diego, Denver, Miami, New York, Chicago, Portland – that's both Oregon and Maine -- Cambridge, Baltimore, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Trenton, Jersey City, Charlotte, Raleigh, Winston Salem, Austin, Dallas, Brownsville, Laredo, Fort Worth, Houston, and Salt Lake City -- to name a few. The elected governments of these cities don't want to mass-deport hard-working immigrants. They understand the yeoman role these groups play in reviving urban cores. And to the police in these cities, the prospect of mass deportation is a royal pain in the butt, a nutty diversion from the serious business of locating and arresting real criminals, immigrant or otherwise.

R

So to summarize: Conservatives must wish they were in Dixie, because that's what their electoral map is shaping up to look like. The deportationist movement costs conservatives support not only among legal immigrants, but among businessmen, farmers and chambers of commerce and city councils all over the country.

At some point, conservatives are going to have to start counting the costs we're willing to sustain for the dubious pleasure of deporting the kitchen help – how many fetuses killed, how many wars lost, how many budgets busted, and how many taxes raised. I am willing to forecast that point: November 5, 2008 – the day after the national election.

I said earlier that deportationist immigration policy was damaging the social message of the Right. At 13.5%, Latinos are the fastest-growing component of the American population. Compared to an estimated 8 million illegals, 32 million Hispanics are here legally, and 27 million are voter qualified -- roughly 9% of the American electorate.

S.

Hispanics now comprise one-third of American Catholics. Given Latino fertility rates, half of American Catholics will be Hispanic in another generation.

Latinos are also the fastest-growing component of the evangelical movement. 15% of American Hispanics are now born-again or evangelical protestants. Most of these are 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> generation converts from Catholicism.

Latinos are the only major ethnic group a majority of who are pro-life. 77% of Hispanic evangelicals and 57% of Hispanics overall would outlaw all or most abortions. Over 80% of Latinos support school choice; two thirds support tax cuts.

Some conservatives, such as Heather MacDonald, argue that Hispanics vote liberal, regardless of their opinions on social issues. This may be true of those governed by the Democrat machines of Cook County and Los Angeles. But it is not true everywhere, and it needn't be true anywhere.

Hispanics are disproportionately low-income – but they vote disproportionately Republican, compared to other low income groups. George Bush carried 40% of the Latino vote in 2004. Border-state Republicans like Representative Steve Pearce and Jim Kolbe regularly broke 40% in their Hispanic precincts. Some conservatives do quite a bit better. Sen. John McCain won 70% support among Latinos in his 2004 Senate race. Jeff Flake polled 75% among Hispanics in his 2006 bid for Congress.

T.

One factor promoting conservative success among Hispanics has been the growth of the evangelical movement. 46% of these Latinos self identify as “conservative,” compared to 17% who self-identify as liberals. The Pew Hispanic Center records that these voters prefer the Republican Party to the Democrats, 37%-to-32%.

Yet the progress of conservatives in the Latino community was abruptly reversed in 2006, when conservative media mavens renounced comprehensive immigration reform in favor of deportation. Illegals, the targets of deportation, don’t vote. But legal Hispanics do, and there are four times as many of them. The policies that frightened illegals drove legal Hispanics from the conservative banner in droves.

Congressman J.D. Hayworth, a long-time supporter of guest worker programs, reversed course, becoming the House’s most eloquent advocate of deportation. “The Wall Street Journal,” thundered Hayworth, “once scolded that lawmakers need ‘to distinguish between immigrants who bus tables and those who hijack airplanes.’ ... Here’s the distinction I make: if the busboy is illegal, he should be deported. The hijacker should be executed.”

Hispanics made a distinction of their own. In the most heavily Hispanic precincts of his district, Hayworth’s support dropped from 48% in 2004 to 36% in 2006.

U.

In 2004, Republican Jim Kolbe polled 43% in the Hispanic wards of the AZ 8<sup>th</sup>. Two years later, Randy Graff, the deportationist, polled 18%. Henry Bonilla was the poster boy for Republican Hispanic success. He polled 59% in the heavily Latino counties of the TX 23<sup>rd</sup> in 2004. In 2006, he voted for Jim Sensenbrenner’s “enforcement only” bill. Running for reelection later that year, his support in those same counties plummeted to 30%.

Liberals now govern these conservative strongholds.

Let me put this in a historical context. For over 50 years now – a half century and more -- African American conservatives have been voting as a block for liberal candidates. Pro-life Blacks vote for pro-abortion candidates; pro-school-choice blacks vote for teacher-

union hacks; African American vets vote for cut-and-run Lefties. That's what you can expect when you stop talking to your potential adherents in a sizable community.

If conservatives write off the Hispanic vote in the same thoughtless, ignorant, cowardly way we've written off Blacks, we can expect pretty much the same result. African Americans and Latinos combined comprise 26% of the U.S. population. Without our share of these votes – without the votes of the millions of Blacks and Hispanics who agree with our conservative positions – we can kiss off any aspirations we have for a pro-life majority, a school choice majority, a war-on-terror majority or, in fact, a governing majority of any kind.

V

It is social conservatives who will eventually kill the deportation movement in the United States, just as they once killed segregation. Eventually religious conservatives will conclude that mass deportation is incompatible with their mission to spread the gospel. Let me hazard a guess as to the date when this thought will gain currency: November 5, 2008.

I am ever amazed at the imaginative paucity of the Right. We all witnessed how the Elian Gonzalez crisis affected the Cuban vote in Florida. That one image, of a SWAT team invading a working-family's home, terrifying the child and his protector, electrified a community. That one faux faux by the Clintonistas arguably cost Al Gore the presidency. Yet the politics of deportation hands the DNC, George Soros, and Dr. Yakub a limitless supply of Elian Gonzalez's – of homes invaded, families sundered, dependents endangered, livelihoods destroyed, viewed nightly on Univision and Telemundo.

Conservatives have agonized over the prospective Balkanization of the American nation along ethnic or cultural lines. Dr. Yakub could hardly devise a better way to balkanize 32 million American Hispanics than the daily spectacle of mass deportation and its consequences.

W

Right wing talk whips up deportationist frenzy by highlighting Latino gang bangers, hit-and-run drivers, repeat offenders, and so on. By I must warn you: FOX News will run out of MS-13 members before Univision runs out of working mamasitas clutching their

rosaries. In the immigration debate, the conservative movement has been slouching toward its Birmingham Bash. State rights groups used to play this game with Black crime in the days of Brown versus the Board of Education. We would do well to avoid our own Bull Connor moment.

Which brings me to the subject of crime. It is almost an article of faith on the Right that immigration, especially illegal immigration, drives crime rates higher. There's a minor problem with this: it's not true. In the F.B.I.'s latest Unified Crime report, the states with 84 percent of immigrants, weighted for population, have a crime rate of 3807 per 100000 residents, compared to 3809 among the 32 other states. When we look at the 10 states with the most rapid percentage influx of immigrants this decade – you know, the states overrun by illegals -- the difference is accentuated. These states have a total crime rate of 3673 per 100,000 residents, compared to the national 3809.

I know this isn't what you guys are seeing on TV – at least if you watch the same programs I do. But what you're seeing on TV isn't the full truth.

X

Crime is not amenable to market analysis – but not because criminals don't respond to incentives. Most crimes describe *involuntary* exchange – the opposite of what markets do. But crime rates are notoriously influenced by law enforcement policy. Modern criminologists measure disincentives in layers. Downward pressures on crime rates in a given category include: the percentage of criminals apprehended; the percentage of those apprehended who are charged; the percentage of those charged who are successfully prosecuted; and the severity of the punishment meted out to convicted offenders.

More recently, criminologists have added conceal-carry gun laws to the corpus of measurable disincentives to crime.

It was conservative criminologists who developed this methodology. They did so in reaction to liberals who used to claim: Crime is an inevitable reaction to poverty. Liberals used to insist on fighting crime with social programs, not with cops and courts and punishments. And we conservatives used to answer: that's a lame excuse.

It burns me to hear contemporary conservatives play the same stupid game with immigration that liberals used to play with poverty – especially when the facts don't lend their thesis surface credence.

Y

Crime is sensitive to nuances of criminal justice policy. Because of this, it is hard to separate out the global effects of immigration. California and New York rank first and second in number of immigrants. Both have violent gangs, both native and immigrant. But California's violent crime rate is above the national average, and New York's is below. New Jersey and Georgia rank first and second in recent immigrant influx as a percent of population – but Georgia's total crime rate exceeds the national average, while New Jersey's is well below. Immigrant rich Nevada has a severe and growing crime problem; crime rates have plummeted in immigrant-rich Virginia.

Because crime rates respond differently to different law enforcement regimes, we cannot honestly claim that the recent overall advantage of high immigration states is a *result* of immigration. But we can decisively refute the lie that crime is rising because of immigration, legal or illegal. Quite simply, it is not.

Z

I asserted earlier that deportationist immigration policy damaged national security. Let me clarify that.

Illegal immigration *is* a national security concern. So is legal immigration. So are residency visas granted to refugees, tourists, businessmen, students and workers. So are the hundreds of thousands of trucks, trains, and planes that transport goods across our borders. So are the millions of cargo containers that enter our international ports. So are the resident populations that visit terrorist web sites on the internet.

A lot of you have read Michelle Malkin's book "Invasion,"—as staunch a deportationist tome as any. Michelle has provided an appendix that chronicles the immigration status of 48 known terrorists. The bulk of them entered on a tourist visa or a student visa. Some married and applied for permanent status. A few were naturalized

citizens. Some overstayed other types of visa – agricultural or business. One popped up in cargo, another claimed refugee status. Some simply bought forged passports.

Care to guess how many entered via Mexico? How many tromped across New Mexico, Arizona and Texas to their targets? Let me tell you. NONE, ZERO, NOT ONE.

AA

No terrorist will walk a nuclear component across the desert, playing hide-n-seek with border patrol, when he can ship it with a 97% chance that it won't be inspected. No profession is going to hand a couple thousand bucks to a coyote for the privilege of tromping across dozens of inhospitable miles – assuming the coyote doesn't take his money and abandon him, as often happens. What terrorist is going to adopt the risks of a hunted peasant when he can simply buy a tour of the Grand Canyon at a travel agency abroad, then miss his train out? Or get a student visa to enroll in a nuclear engineering program, for that matter?

Let's take another look at the border. Roughly a million illegals cross it each year. Pretty scary, huh? Do you have any idea how many people cross the Mexican border legally? – you know, the tourists going both ways, the kids enrolled in colleges and junior colleges cross-border, the workers with visas, the trucks transporting the goods of international trade....

BB

The Mexican embassy estimates the legal crossing as a million – the same as the illegal crossings, right?

No, wrong! That's a million legal crossings per day! If you want to add the legal traffic crossing our Canadian border, and entering our international airports and ports-of-call, you can add another million to that. Illegal immigration amounts to barely more than one tenth of one percent of the cross border commerce of our free society. And, as Michelle Malkin has convincingly, if accidentally proved, illegal immigration is the *least* dangerous part of that commerce, at least as far as terrorism goes.

So sure, the open border exposes us to terrorists – as does virtually everything else a free society does. But as a priority, stopping illegal immigrants in Cochise County is maybe the 101<sup>st</sup> most serious threat on our list of 100.

In elevating Mexican migrants to a top line threat – which is the practical effect of a deportationist policy -- Malkin leads her conservative acolytes straight to Chucky-Schumer land: the place where we defeat international terrorism with defensive expedients. Instead of attacking Islamo-fascism at its source, America must hire a zillion low-skill employees to inspect cargo containers in ports and lady's handbags in airports. Is it any wonder that illegals turn up as security employees so often?

CC

There are plenty of good reasons to close the open border. In the post-9/11 era, governments need to know who enters the country, and why. Moreover, the open border creates horrendous problems for law enforcement agencies. But if you want the border secured, mass deportation won't get you there. This is a democracy. You don't build a consensus for border control by alienating 32 million legal Hispanics, by voiding six million labor agreements, by threatening hundreds of thousands of employers; you don't build a consensus by antagonizing Farm Bureaus and Chambers of Commerce, by threatening half the nation's major metropolitan governments, or by deporting 6 million Catholics over the screaming protests of their Church.

If you think I'm talking trash, Michelle, I challenge you to sum the delegate count for Tom Tancredo and Duncan Hunter, then divide it by 1191 – that's the delegates the winner will need at the Republican convention -- then multiply that by the fraction of the electorate that votes Republican. That's how much political support deportation really has. That's how close you are to your insane goal.

Here's what the attempt to deport 12 million illegals does for border security: it delays it. It turns tens of millions of Hispanics, businessmen, farmers, and friends of illegals into de facto opponents of an international war on terror that badly needs their support.

DD

To summarize my argument to this point:

Economically, deportationist immigration policy threatens to increase levels of poverty, crime and unemployment in the United States, while lowering the growth rates of national product, personal income, disposable income, and median income.

Culturally, deportation threatens the future of the pro-life and evangelical movements, while Balkanizing segments of the population that have been hitherto apolitical.

Internationally, deportationists weaken our effort to fight terror by diverting the battle from primary targets that can be defeated in the Middle East and Asia to tertiary targets whose threat levels vary from peripheral to fictitious.

EE

But about one argument, I've said nothing thus far: law and order. It is widely argued on the Right that if amnesty is granted to the millions who broke our laws by entering this country illegally, then the rule of law will be irremediably broken.

There, I've said it: amnesty. I'll define it as the deportationists do: granting a privilege to which a law-breaker would not otherwise be entitled. Thus, Mitt Romney says, truthfully, that John McCain will grant illegals amnesty, because he proposes a renewable work visa. We don't give that to lawbreakers. Of course, Mitt Romney's plan is also amnesty: it grants illegals a multi-year non-renewable work permit. What other class of law-breakers gets that? And, Mike Huckabee's touchback plan is also amnesty. It allows people who broke America's laws to get in line for citizenship.

At the bottom of this ambiguity is the fact that hardly anyone who deals with working-class illegals considers them criminals – at least in the flesh. I attend conservative gatherings all the time. Most of my fellow attendees are ardent deportationists. These conventions are held in lovely five-star hotels. Half the staff can't speak a coherent English sentence. Does anyone call ICE? Does anyone make inquiries? Hell no. Who'd want to deport the polite man who brought up room service? Who wants to deport the sweet-smiling lass who turned out the bed?

FF

But let's assume that these people are indeed criminals – desperate criminals. Right wing talk has worked out an entire rap to whip conservatives of tender conscience into a law-and-order frenzy. First, the alien violated our border. Then he got a legal I.D. illegally – maybe a drivers license from Utah -- so he could work and pay his taxes. Alternately, he got an legal I.D. from the treasonous I.R.S. so that he could steal a job from a real American. Alternately, he got an illegal I.D. out of a drug store in Tiahuana, Alternately, he worked on the black market without an I.D., and failed to pay his taxes. Illegal, illegal, illegal – one law down after another. He got an ID – that's illegal. He didn't get an ID – that's illegal. He paid his taxes – that's illegal. He didn't pay his taxes – that's illegal. He crossed Wilshire Boulevard to buy a cupcake at 7-11. Look, there's an illegal crossing Wilshire Boulevard! What right does he have?

So if we give that serial law-breaker amnesty, hasn't the rule of law broken down? How can we try murderers when such atrocities go unpunished?

GG

Actually, we've given amnesty for quite a bit worse. A century and a half ago, several hundred thousand men under arms crossed the Potomac, crossed the Mississippi, crossed the Tennessee, not to pick lettuce or to turn beds or to work in Silicon Valley, but to kill anyone they saw wearing the colors of the United States of America.

Now, our Constitution doesn't define many crimes. But raising arms against the nation is one of them. It's called treason.

HH

When that rebellion was finally crushed, the general most responsible for its defeat, with the consent his President, did something unexpected. He granted amnesty. He paroled those beaten soldiers with their pride intact and with their firearms at their side, on a simple pledge not to raise them against their country ever again.

He said, substantively: Go and sin no more.

Not everyone was pleased with what General Grant had done. Some in Congress said it would be impossible to re-establish the rule of law if bloody treason were rewarded with amnesty.

## II

But the general and his president knew what they were about. They knew that the law of the land – a serious law – had been violated by so many, and for so long, and with so many accomplices, that the rule of law simply was not going to be re-established unless justice were tempered with mercy.

That's what amnesty is, and that's what amnesty is for. It's not some curse to be cast at one's political rival.

I don't know how the immigration debate will play out. But amnesty will be part of it. I advise all conservatives concerned with the security of their country, and the moral health of their movement, to embrace it.

Thank you for your attention.