

Opinion

More temporary working visas would ease immigration woes

Now that the July Fourth Liberty Celebration is finished, Americans can get back to their day-to-day lives and resume worrying about unemployment, inflation and the nasty deficits and trade deficits. But one national problem that stayed with us during this past weekend was the issue of illegal immigrants.



Mark Ude

One can say that our festivities were a contradiction of present beliefs. We honor the Statue of Liberty while refusing to upgrade the allowable quotas on immigrants. But Emerson's poem — "Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free" — which is inscribed on the statue's base was put there much later as an afterthought, not as a reason for the gift's existence.

Many people resent the influx of illegal aliens because of the potential threat they pose to the employment chances of American citizens. They see immigrants as stealing away jobs that should be filled by Americans. These jobs include construction and other manual tasks where illegals are willing to work for much lower wages than what the aver-

age American expects to be paid. This marketable trait undermines the government-set minimum wage for labor and the virtual monopoly held by union workers.

Illegal aliens on the whole work better at jobs than their American counterparts, primarily because they desperately want to keep their job, no matter how much or how little they are paid. This strong desire for a job usually keeps illegals from asking for as much as they can get from an employer. Another fundamental reason for their low wages is that illegals know the employer can call up the border patrol and turn them in, resulting in their deportation.

Both of these factors — cheap labor and no problems with strikes or complaints — encourages employers to hire illegals. This is a businessman's dream come true. Little or no prosecution attempts with minimum fines also gives employers what they consider a green light on the matter of hiring illegal aliens.

When one examines an illegal immigrant, one sees a person who works under the threat of deportation daily. Language is not a vital necessity, especially in Florida, Texas and California, where bilingual education is being lobbied for heavily. The low wages which are being paid are usually much greater than the illegal could ever hope to obtain south of the border. Many of the jobs that ille-

gals work are menial and usually unattractive to American workers, and therefore are open to the illegal immigrant.

Yet the problem still remains. What should be done about the flow of illegal aliens into this country from the southern border. One attempt is to ignore the problem as we are doing right now, with amnesty and reconaissance of established illegal immigrants. But if this country really had a mind to carry out a task, we could establish a tortilla wall, preventing illegal immigration while creating a new industry of border guards, barbed wire and land mines. But this wouldn't really solve the problem, instead, it would make it worse.

The best solution to what has been termed an invasion is to allow an increase in the number of temporary working visas. This would permit foreign citizens to have jobs in this country legally, while limiting the number of actual immigrants seeking citizenship. As a large number of illegals would apply, this would increase employment and increase spending and buying of American products.

And since a majority of foreign workers are from The Republic of Mexico and have families to support there, it could indirectly affect and stabilize the Mexican economy.

Mark Ude is a senior geography major and a columnist for The Battalion.

Mail Call

Liberal two-facedness?

EDITOR:

I think *The Battalion* Editorial Board should be extremely careful if it wishes to accuse anyone or anything of hypocrisy. This is simply a case of the darkest pot calling the kettle black. It is amazing what a "bill of goods" the BEB tries to shove down the throats of the sometimes naive readership here at Texas A&M.

Case in point: for months now *The Battalion's* group of experts on foreign and domestic affairs have *Clammed*, demanded and showed their outrage about the situation in South Africa. Shouting rhetoric like, "inhuman," "oppressive," "censorship," they have demanded not only that we divest our financial interests in South Africa, but also that the United States take affirmative action to oppose the oppressive government of South Africa. Then these same blind-in-one-eye journalists completely ignore the oppression going on in Nicaragua and declare it a "sovereign state" that we should absolutely keep our hands off of.

Nevermind the hundreds of evangelical Christians that have been tortured and oppressed. Regardless of all that have fled the nation to take arms against Daniel Ortega and his communist regime. These, in the eyes of our celebrated journalists don't matter. You see, it is scandalous when there is no freedom of the press in South Africa, but when there aren't even basic human rights much less freedom of the press in Nicaragua, where are the cameras?

It seems you have to be black in order for the media to raise its banner and rally around your cause, but if you are a Christian, or have any other religious convictions, or if you wish to fight in order for your country to be free, and you are being slaughtered for it, don't worry, *The Battalion* Editorial Board will either close its eyes or viciously try to strangle you with their slanted flag of secular liberalism.

Could it be that the BEB is oblivious to its own hypocrisy? And shall we, a student body at Texas A&M be fooled by their liberal two-facedness? Yes, M&M should not allow itself to be so easily deceived.

Michael V. Forarde

In bed with Big Brother

EDITOR:

It's two years late, but it has finally arrived. Even though it's only a pale reflection of the horrors postulated, it is a trend that can no longer be ignored. Big Brother is here.

I hope that we all realize what the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling on the Georgia sodomy case means to American society. A definition of terms may be necessary. "Sodomy" is not a synonym for "homosexuality" or even a "homosexual act." "Sodomy" refers to the act of stimulating one person's sexual organ with another's oral cavity. Notice, there are no specifications as to the gender to those involved.

A definition of the Supreme Court's action: the ruling does not make homosexual acts illegal. It does not even make sodomy illegal. The Supreme Court Justices have upheld any state's right to make sodomy illegal for that state's citizens inside that state's boundaries. Now any state may pass legislation that prohibits oral sex between two people (including between a male and a female), anywhere (including your own bedroom).

Your state legislators have the right to decide what you may legally do in your bedroom, whether you're heterosexual, homosexual or neutered. They have been given the power by our country's highest court — in a country where personal freedom, the freedom to do what one pleases in one's own home, is valued above all else and guaranteed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights — to make a criminal offense of an act that hurts no one, nor violates anyone's rights.

Think on that for awhile tonight in your bed — while you're still allowed.

Michael Gardner '86

Parental rights, not censorship

EDITOR:

I quite often find myself in agreement with Karl Pallmeyer, especially when he makes fun of the stranglehold "tradition" has on Texas A&M behavior. However, I must take issue with his Thursday column concerning censorship and records.

The point that the plaintiffs in this suit seem to be making is that pornographic materials were sold to a minor. This is obviously the case; your description of the poster as "vile and disgusting" leaves no doubt that it must be considered pornographic. The only possible justification for the defendant, then, is that a "warning" is sufficient to make the sale of pornographic materials to minors legal. Only a very small segment of the population would accept such a defense. This is why "adult" magazines, movies, etc., are not sold or shown to children.

I understand your concern over censorship as applied to popular music. However, this case is not about music; it is about a poster whose content, however socially significant, is not what the vast majority of American parents wish to have shown to their children. Their right to keep such material from their children is an accepted principle of law, not a new assault on the First Amendment.

I believe in free speech. I believe in the right of consenting adults to see, read, listen to or sing about and do just about whatever they want as long as they don't interfere with the rights of others. These other rights, however, include the right of parents to keep pictures of "copulating penises" out of their children's reach.

Stephen Williams
Agricultural Economics

Not logical

EDITOR:

Karl Pallmeyer, in his Thursday column, appears to reason that the successful prosecution of a rock group that puts obscene materials in albums sold to children will threaten the freedom of speech for everyone.

I don't think such reasoning is very logical.

Paul R. Koch

Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and must include the address and telephone number of the writer.

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MARGULIES
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IRAs: tax shelters made easy

Last year, a two-career couple I know made well over \$100,000. At the end of the year, they would have owed a certain amount in taxes but paid only some of it. They didn't have to pay the rest. They made a deductible contribution to their Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) instead. To paraphrase the Paine Webber commercial, the couple would like to say, "Thank you, Uncle Sam."



Richard Cohen

Because the couple was in the 50 percent tax bracket, their taxes were reduced by 50 cents for every dollar contributed to their own retirement — their IRAs. It might seem nice of the government to help the couple out in their old age, but the truth is that they already have pension plans. Their companies provide them and, of course, they have Social Security as well. Our couple, besides being affluent, is also candid. To them, IRAs are primarily a tax dodge and only secondarily a savings program.

Mad? Angry? Just wait. Do you know how the couple bought its IRAs? They emptied their savings account and then borrowed the rest. They went to the bank, got a loan, went to a different bank and made a deposit into their IRA account. Of course, they have to pay back the loan. The couple deducts the cost of the interest from their taxes. This, too, represents revenues lost to

the government, which is to say the people, which is to say you.

By now a certain sickening realization ought to be dawning on you: You don't have to be a dues-paying member of the military-industrial complex to have government subsidy by way of a tax shelter. All you need is an IRA, and the higher your tax bracket, the more you benefit. Despite that, both the Senate (by resolution) and the House (by enactment) have voted to retain IRAs in their present form in the current tax-reform bill. There is a good chance that when the Senate and House butt heads in conference to reconcile the differences between their two bills, the IRA program will in some form be incorporated into the final legislation — maybe as it now exists.

But why? The answer is that the well-off and the politically influential want it while the poor and the politically apathetic, with a shrug and the standard crack about how politics doesn't matter, will not be paying attention. It's hard to come up with another reason to justify what would amount to a \$22 billion loss to the Treasury in 1987. After all, the beneficiaries of such government largess are not the poor or the otherwise deserving and as a national savings program, IRAs seem to be something of a dud.

Let us return to our \$100,000 couple. The idea behind IRAs was to encourage savings. Money saved is money that can be invested. But, alas, our \$100,000 couple is fairly typical. Notice that they did not save any money; they moved some

around and borrowed the rest. They not only did not add to the total savings pool, they created debt. In fact, since the inception of the IRA program, the country's savings rate has declined — although whether the decline would have been steeper without IRAs no one knows.

At the moment, the thinking in Washington is that the IRA will survive in some form. As usual, compromise looms — maybe one where the tax deduction for the purchase of an IRA will be pegged at the minimum tax rate. That means that all taxpayers would benefit equally. The affluent would still get some benefit, but the question of fairness would largely evaporate.

It would be hard to work up a real snit over a reasonable compromise — one that might enable us to see if the IRA program really does encourage savings. But the big money and the big lobbyists want to retain the program as it now exists. The Senate, by a nonbinding 96 to 4 vote, says that's what it wants, too, and the House has passed a bill that does just that.

IRAs now amount to a gift from the poor to the rich. Unless President Reagan, who only last year wanted to expand the IRA program, comes out in opposition, there is a good chance that once again money and influence will carry the day. The \$100,000-a-year couple, being well-educated, was only being polite when it paraphrased the Paine Webber commercial. What they really meant to say was "Thank you, sucker." If the present IRA program is retained, they will be talking about some of you.

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