

## **U.S. should put three-year hold on immigration**

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**Byline:** YEH LING-LING

### **Body**

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President Bush has repeatedly vowed to do whatever is necessary to protect our homeland security. But can this nation achieve this goal if we maintain current levels of immigration?

Trying to prevent future terrorists from entering the United States and tracking down and deporting criminal immigrants are very costly measures. The Immigration and Naturalization Service is already overwhelmed. How can the understaffed INS be effective in eradicating terrorism at home if it is burdened with more than 800,000 applications for permanent residency annually, in addition to hundreds of thousands of applications for "temporary" worker and student visas and millions of tourist visas?

For the Journal-Constitution

Since Sept. 11, the United States has spent well over \$60 billion to combat terrorism and to rebuild from the attacks. It would be fiscally wise and responsible to adopt a three-year moratorium on most categories of visas from all countries. That would free INS resources for the fight against illegal immigration.

This step is particularly necessary because of the following disturbing developments:

Prize-winning Mexican novelist Elena Poniatowska, who has taught at Ivy League universities, said: "Mexico is recovering the territories yielded to the United States by means of migratory tactics." She also said Hispanics are "imposing their culture" on the United States.

Furthermore, the well-respected French news magazine Le Nouvel Observateur carried a news article last August titled: "Californie: La reconquista des Latinos," which means "Reconquering of California by Latinos." In December, The Associated Press reported that up to 500,000 Mexicans are expected to migrate to the United States each year over the next 30 years. The potential impact is clear, because seven states in this country have populations of fewer than one million.

If the United States continues to grow as it did in the 1990s, people of Mexican origin will be the majority within the lifetimes of today's children. In 1997, then-Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo affirmed in Chicago that "the Mexican nation extends beyond its territory enclosed by its borders and that Mexican migrants are an important, very important part of it." Do Mexican and other Americans wish the United States to become another Mexico or part of the Mexican nation?

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In 1998, President Clinton warned: "Unless we handle this well, immigration of this sweep and scope could threaten the bonds of our union." A timeout from mass immigration is in the interest of all law-abiding legal residents.

Yeh Ling-Ling is executive director of Diversity Alliance for a Sustainable America, a national nonprofit organization based in Oakland, Calif.

## Graphic

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Photo:  
Yeh Ling-Ling

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