

MYTHS SPREAD BY IMMIGRANT BASHERS

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Body

Here's what **immigrant bashers** tell us is happening with alarming consequences for our future:

Jobs held by **immigrants** keep Americans unemployed, which is why the United States must stop allowing foreigners to come over here.

And if **immigrants** aren't taking our jobs, they're on welfare. That is why, as one bill in Congress proposes, we must bar **immigrants** from qualifying for any U.S. taxpayer-financed welfare program for at least 10 years after they become American citizens.

Immigrants today, particularly those from Latin America, are different from those who graced America's shores before; these people don't want to assimilate, and they want to push their language and culture down our throats! That is why Congress must make English the official U.S. language.

Here's what the **immigrant-bashers** won't tell us:

Most jobs taken by **immigrants** are jobs Americans don't want, because Americans believe that those jobs are beneath them.

The ski slopes of Colorado offer a reality check. Colorado's ski resorts, hotels and restaurants have to import workers from countries as far away as Mauritania, Russia and Australia to fill openings for janitors, sales clerks and even ski instructors. Included in Colorado's work force, of course, are the much-despised **immigrants** from Latin America.

A recent report in The New York Times explained Colorado's international labor-pool needs this way: "With American college students shunning low-status jobs, and high housing costs scaring away American blue-collar workers, hotels, resorts and restaurants are increasingly trying to ease an acute labor shortage by hiring **immigrants**."

The **immigrants** aren't wealthy enough to afford Colorado's housing, either. But they are willing to share cramped living space with other **immigrants** for the opportunity to work.

The use of welfare programs by **immigrants** is exaggerated. What the **immigrant bashers** don't mention is that much higher welfare costs were incurred throughout the 1800s to care for **immigrants**. Welfare programs during that time were paid for by private charities and city and state governments.

An article last April 26 in The Wall Street Journal debunked the **myth** of the self-reliant, turn-of-the-century **immigrant**. "Contrary to popular **myth**, for example, more than half of public welfare recipients nationwide in 1909 were **immigrant** families, making new arrivals three times more likely than natives to be on the public dole,

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according to research accumulated by a 1911 commission on immigration. In Chicago, two-thirds of those receiving public assistance were foreign born."

Compare that with 1990 census figures: About 9 percent of immigrant households received welfare. And only 6.5 percent of all Medicaid recipients are immigrants. At the turn of the century, a third of the patients in public hospitals were foreign-born, or more than twice the proportion of foreign-born in the country, the Journal reported.

"There is no denying that today's costs are high, but in many cases those of a century ago were, proportionately, even higher, as a review of census documents, government investigations and yellowing academic tomes shows," the Journal concluded.

As far as today's immigrants shunning English, that's just not true. The census shows that about 95 percent of U.S. residents older than age 4 speak English. And more than 85 percent of the children of immigrant families speak English fluently within three years of getting instruction.

There's every reason to want to protect jobs and ensure that the nation is bound together by a common language. The facts simply don't support the immigrant bashers' contentions, though, that most of today's immigrants are bad for the nation.

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