

## *After the Immigration Bill Stalled*

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### **Body**

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To the Editor:

Re "Grass Roots Roared, and an Immigration Plan Fell" (front page, June 10):

While waiting for a new immigration plan, let's enforce the existing laws to prevent anyone from illegally working in the country. If employers had followed and the government enforced the existing laws for hiring only workers legally entitled to work in the United States, we wouldn't be in this situation.

The laws passed decades ago with the last amnesty were intended to prevent the current situation from occurring.

Employers and governments are as responsible for the current situation as those who enter illegally, and they are the only ones who can make the United States a less attractive place to come illegally. Denise Nitterhouse Chicago, June 10, 2007 To the Editor:

Too many Americans need to be reminded that when millions of our ancestors came to this country, they had to deal only with Ellis Island, not a failed immigration policy that by its impotence invites millions, with similar yearnings as our ancestors had, to risk everything to be here, though virtually doomed to live in the shadows thereafter.

We put our wishes on paper that, no matter how desperate you are, "you" can't come here, and created a law that has no more sanctity than Prohibition.

And so I say to the Senate with regard to immigration: Get back to work, fellas, and don't stop working until you fix it! William B. Vorsteg Verona, N.J., June 10, 2007 To the Editor:

What is it about the notion of "amnesty" that riles so many on the issue of immigration reform? Is there not a long and revered tradition that requires forgiveness as an essential ingredient to solving problems?

The simple truth is that those who enter illegally work at jobs that are at the bottom of the wage scale; what is the benefit to them that is so onerous to us? They pay taxes, often overpaying because they are fearful of collecting refunds on bogus Social Security numbers.

They cut our lawns, our meat, they build our houses, clean them, take care of our children, and cook and serve us our fast-food meals.

Those who have sought legal entry into our country should not be disadvantaged by any immigration reform, but keep in mind that they are more likely to be better educated than the illegal immigrants, are more likely to have earned a decent wage in their home countries, and will earn far more than the illegal immigrants when they arrive here.

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Surely there is a way to make a fair accommodation between illegal entries who have demonstrated good will and legal applications. Let us keep in mind the good example of South Africa's truth and reconciliation program and stop using "amnesty" as a bad word. Francis Day Arlington, Va., June 10, 2007 To the Editor:

It is amazing how people who are ready to send an army halfway across the world to fix an undemocratic nation cannot find it within their souls to help 4 percent of the American population.

Like it or not, the 12 million illegal immigrants are our next-door neighbors, and they will not go away with or without amnesty. Michael Ifrim New York, June 9, 2007 To the Editor:

Maybe an immigrant could take my spot. After reading "Grass Roots Roared, and an Immigration Plan Fell," I feel like leaving the country. It's painful to be ashamed of the government, but it's truly terrible to see my fellow Americans so bitter and hateful. Jennie Kaufman Brooklyn, June 10, 2007 To the Editor:

I agree with conservatives on virtually nothing, but the failure of the immigration bill was not a "failure of leadership" (editorial, June 9). Our government has systematically failed to secure our borders over the years, and that is what has created the 12 million illegal immigrant problem.

The first step in addressing this problem shouldn't be some "grand bargain" with incomprehensible point systems, a complicated and expensive "path to legal status" (that most won't do anyway), but should be simply to enforce the law! That will cap the problem at 12 million and certainly make conservatives more open to dealing with the illegal immigrants, whose numbers will decline with the mere passage of time. John Garand Santa Barbara, Calif., June 10, 2007 To the Editor:

As the two sides argue over how many people should be new citizens, what's missing is a scientific assessment to establish a national population limit based on resources, particularly plentiful, clean water.

This assessment will determine what combination of natural increase (births minus deaths), net immigration and consumption can be tolerated to live in harmony with nature at home and globally with a reduction in our greenhouse gas emissions.

We must encourage family planning, small families and efficient consumption, and shrink the large pool of illegals. And we should have a moratorium on immigration until the policy study is completed and its results are carried out. Alan Kuper Cleveland Heights, Ohio June 10, 2007 The writer is president of CUSP (Comprehensive (approach to) U.S. Sustainable Population. To the Editor:

Re "A Failure of Leadership" (editorial, June 9): You say the immigration bill would have helped illegal immigrants get right with the law. On the contrary, the bill would have helped the law get right with the illegal immigrants.

I believe that most opponents of the bill would favor legalizing the immigrants' status if border security were accomplished first. When a boat is leaking, one should fix the leak first before bailing. David Skurnick Menlo Park, Calif., June 9, 2007

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## Graphic

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Drawing (Drawing by Felix Sockwell)

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