

Zero Tolerance For Illegal Immigration: An Urgent Policy Need

An NPG Position Paper

Summary Statement

NPG's primary concern with immigration, both legal and illegal, is that it is the driving force behind America's population growth. Our population grew by some 33 million in the decade of the 90s, and is on track to grow even more in this decade. The Census Bureau's current estimate is that U.S. population, now approaching 300 million, will reach 420 million by the middle of the century and still be growing rapidly. If present trends are allowed to continue, substantially more than two thirds of that environmentally devastating growth will be due to post-2000 immigrants and their descendants.

Our immigration policy should be an integral part of a national population policy aimed at reducing our U.S. population over time to a sustainable level of not more than 150 million and then stabilizing it there. To halt, and eventually reverse, our population growth we need to:

- 1) *Halt illegal immigration, which increases the national population by 400,000 to 500,000 each year.*
- 2) *Reduce to near zero the present population of aliens living here unlawfully, estimated at 10-15 million.*
- 3) *Reduce legal and quasi-legal immigration drastically from the present 1.1 million each year to not more than 200,000 -- a level favored by public opinion. A 2003 poll for NPG found that 58 percent of respondents favored keeping yearly immigration at 300,000 or less with the majority of those favoring a limit of 100,000. (Curbs on legal immigration are examined in a separate NPG Forum Paper.)*

Ending the flow of illegal immigrants and reducing to near zero the pool of 10-15 million now settled here demands far tougher penalties for illegal entry and illegal presence and their consistent and timely application. Higher fines and, for persistent offenders, mandatory jail terms must be applied to illegal entry and presence, but also to a range of abuses and violations that support the process: document fraud; knowingly hiring or harboring illegals; abuse of asylum and open-ended temporary protection; automatic citizenship for U.S.-born children of illegal aliens; and delays and obstructions to deportation.

Sanctions on employers of unlawful aliens must be backed up by a secure computerized process for verifying job applicants' legal status. But verification should not be limited to the hiring process. Detection and deterrence of illegal aliens should be an ongoing process using checks of legal status for common everyday transactions in banking and finance, medical care, school and college enrollment, licensing, housing, and access to vital documents.

The cooperation of state and local governments, particularly the police, in removing illegal aliens should be required by law. Vigorous federal, state and local efforts in carrying out these measures will deter prospective illegals abroad and convince many of those already here to opt for “self-deportation.” Local government “sanctuary policies” to shield violators should be penalized as harboring under federal law. Amnesties in whatever form must be discarded as an option in immigration management.

Bringing illegal entry and presence down to zero will serve other interests: curbing crime and terrorism; raising labor standards and job opportunities for citizens; easing crowding in low income housing and schools; and reducing social service costs. But its overriding importance remains in reducing the population growth that is now degrading America’s environment and progressing toward a smaller and more sustainable population.

SECTION ONE

Most Americans Favor Tougher Action

What measures are needed to halt illegal immigration and compel settled illegal aliens to leave the U.S.? Clearly, our present policy, to the extent it is applied at all, is not working. Formal deportations number only about 160,000 a year, most of whom are criminals or terrorists. An estimated 500,000 aliens who have received deportation orders are running loose in the U.S. Many of those actually deported return to the U.S., a felony which U.S. attorneys lack time or willingness to prosecute. About 1.3 million are caught each year by ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) at or near the border, and until recently either released on their own recognizance if non-Mexican, or given voluntary departure back to Mexico with no penalties.

The sanctions enacted against willful employers of illegal aliens have all but been abandoned by our Federal government. A patchwork of ongoing partial amnesty programs and other loopholes legalizes some 180,000 illegal aliens a year.

A 2005 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report found that ICE man-hours spent on worksite enforcement fell from an already inadequate 240 in 1999 to just 90 in 2003. Other enforcement indicators such as arrests of persistent violators, employer fine notices, and worksite arrests declined even more steeply. While Washington blamed

changed priorities after 9/11, the cutbacks started almost two years before 9/11 when the economic boom of the late 1990s sparked employer complaints of labor shortages.

Without consistent detection and tough penalties for illegal employment and illegal presence, it will remain next to impossible for the border patrol to halt the influx of millions of illegal aliens. One of the reasons for this futility is obvious. There is now no effective penalty for crossing our borders illegally. In 99 percent of the cases a Mexican illegal alien now apprehended at our border is simply recorded, fingerprinted, checked for criminal history and prior attempted entry, and then transported back across the border to Mexico. Once across, he or she is free to try again. Many do, often the same night.

Eventually, those who persist do succeed. That is why there are two to three million illegal border crossings each year, with over 500,000 new illegal aliens who settle each year. The entire system, if it were not tragic, would be almost comical. It is a very elaborate, expensive game known to the Border Patrol as “catch and release.” Illegal aliens have no trouble calculating that the benefits of succeeding outweigh the risks of capture.

Washington’s leniency and indifference deeply trouble more and more Americans. A national poll commissioned by NPG and carried out in March 2003 by Roper ASW found that more than 60 percent of Americans agree that:

- Congress should set a goal of halting completely the annual settlement of new illegal entrants, currently estimated at 500,000 to 600,000.
- Congress should set a goal of reducing the estimated 10 million to 15 million resident illegal immigrants to near zero.
- Congress should make penalties for illegal presence here so severe that no illegal immigrants would come here or remain here. Our legislators should enact such tough measures as mandatory fines and prison terms for anyone found to be here illegally, or attempting to enter illegally, followed by deportation and a permanent ban on return.

The entire Roper poll can be found at: www.npg.org.

Rising Congressional Support for Reform

Nothing less than the above goals and implementation measures must be at the core of a national policy of zero tolerance for illegal immigration. Moved by public opinion, Congress itself and a rising number of state legislatures have seriously considered a number of bills to deter illegal immigration.

In December 2005, the House of Representatives passed HR 4437, the *Border Protection, Anti-Terrorism and Illegal Immigration Control Act*, which authorizes the toughest countermeasures for illegal immigration in modern memory. Among its key measures, HR 4437, which faces serious opposition in the Senate:

- Makes illegal presence in the U.S. a felony, raising the maximum prison term from six months to one year or more. Ends the practice of “catch and release” with a citation of illegal aliens.
- Mandates 700 additional miles of high-tech border barriers.
- Empowers and further assists and trains state and local police to enforce immigration laws; denies federal assistance funds for handling illegal immigrants to those state and local governments that bar employees from cooperation with USCIS (U.S.

- Customs and Immigration Service).
- Extends the definition of “harboring” illegal aliens to cover some services provided by private charitable and social service agencies.
- Raises civil or criminal penalties on a wide range of immigration fraud and abuse -- such as alien smuggling, document fraud, marriage fraud, establishment of shell companies, failure to depart as ordered and persistent hiring of illegals.
- Ends many of the loopholes, frivolous appeals, extra layers of judicial review and other delays to prompt deportation. Sets minimum sentences for those reentering the U.S. after deportation and for the smugglers who bring them.
- Phases in a mandatory federal computerized system linked to employers by phone, online, or point of sale devices using USCIS and Social Security data to verify work eligibility of prospective new hires. Requires reverification of longstanding employees.
- Terminates 50,000 admissions “Diversity Visa Program,” a fraud plagued program that encourages legal immigration from countries sending relatively few immigrants.
- Does not endorse any temporary guest worker plan or amnesty.

The *Border Protection Act* however, rejected or deferred action on several other important deterrent measures pushed by immigration reform leaders in the House. Among promising measures that appeared in other rejected bills, principally the *True Enforcement and Border Security Act* -- HR 4313), but not enacted were:

- Denial of automatic citizenship to children born in the U.S. to illegal alien parents.
- Specific criminal sanctions on employers repeatedly hiring illegals.
- Increase in resources, application to all countries, and faster implementation of “US Visit” program, which will document and help track visiting aliens in the U.S. from

- entry to departure. (The program now excludes Mexican and Canadian entrants.)
- Complete fencing of the Mexican border from the Pacific to the Gulf of Mexico; 6,000 additional border patrol agents, and 11,000 more worksite and fraud investigators.
 - Annual registration of all resident aliens and quarterly registration of temporary foreign visitors.
 - Denial of in-state college tuition and other state and local benefits to unlawful aliens.
 - Restrictions on acceptance of foreign-issued identification and IRS taxpayer ID numbers.
 - Expansion of the existing option of “expedited deportation” (now limited to apprehensions of recently-entered illegals in the border area) to cover illegal aliens apprehended anywhere within-five years of arrival.
 - Building or leasing of detention space for 200,000 apprehended aliens.

Getting to Zero Illegal Entries: Raising the Penalties

NPG finds all these measures a hopeful sign of a changing outlook in Washington, though some don't go far enough and other needed measures are absent. Mindful of the growing evidence of strong citizen and legislative support, this position paper outlines some specific recommendations to advance the goals of zero tolerance for illegal immigration. These goals are realistic and attainable, but strict and sustained enforcement over time is vital. Even without new legislation, the regular and consistent application of existing penalties and sanctions could make a major difference. The intent of tough penalties is not to harass or persecute illegal aliens, but to deter them.

Federal law (8USC1325) already makes “entry without inspection” a misdemeanor allowing for up to six months imprisonment and a fine, and an optional administratively imposed fine of \$250. Few federal laws have been less frequently enforced. Between 2000 and 2003 only about 13 thousand persons were convicted each year for illegal entry, out of more than a million apprehended each year. Current federal law makes it a felony for an illegal alien to return after

deportation, punishable by up to two years imprisonment and a fine. But overloaded U.S. Attorneys have produced only about 4,500 convictions a year in the same period.¹

First Time Offenders

For all persons who are here illegally and are apprehended for the first time (regardless of whether they are visa overstayers or illegal border crossers, and regardless of the length of time they have been here illegally), there should be a stiff fine and deportation.

While many illegal border crossers may carry few funds, those who have been settled here often have substantial assets. Fines should be levied in any event on those claiming indigence, since the unpaid obligation can become the basis for additional charges, property liens, or garnishment in case of a subsequent apprehension. First time violators should lose the privilege of ever returning here, and be warned that a second illegal entry will subject them to a mandatory one year prison term and larger fines. Visa overstayers should be deemed to be here illegally if they are apprehended over 30 days after their visa has expired.

SECTION TWO

Requiring Verification of Legal Status for Other Transactions

We need a comprehensive Federal program that would make it virtually impossible for an illegal immigrant to remain here undetected. The heart of the program would be to require government authorities or private sector officials to confirm legal status whenever anyone:

- Attempts to open a bank account, purchase bank instruments or securities, or transfer money abroad.
- Applies for a driver's or pilot's license, or any other commercial or occupational license.
- Seeks to enroll in school or college for oneself or one's children.
- Seeks medical care at a hospital. (Emergency care would be provided)

- Applies for a marriage license, birth certificate or other vital document.
- Applies for a social security number. (now required)
- Applies for a job. (already required, though verification is inadequate)
- Attempts to buy, sell or rent real estate.
- Applies for a credit card or any other form of credit.
- Seeks to purchase, rent or register a vehicle, aircraft, firearm, explosives, or controlled hazardous materials.

There are precedents for such screening, and databases exist to make it work. A prototype is USCIS's Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) in use since 1987 to verify the legal status of persons seeking certain federally controlled state and local benefits. A variety of state and local agencies that need to confirm legal status have voluntarily signed on to SAVE, such as the California DMV, City of New York Human Resources Administration, the Palm Beach County Property Appraiser, and the Michigan Tribal Gaming Commission.²

Verification of legal status would, for the time being, continue to be by a telephone or online check to a central database maintained by the U.S. government. Until biometric ID documents are adopted, screening should not depend exclusively on any document presented by the applicant. (U.S. passports and some biometric state drivers licenses, for example, would be an exception.) Local law enforcement authorities should be alerted immediately if an illegal alien applicant is detected.

The Role of State and Local Governments

It would be impossible to effectively enforce tougher penalties and more frequent screening without committed cooperation from local and state law enforcement. While there are only approximately 2,000 Interior Enforcement immigration agents to police the entire country, there are approximately 600,000 local and state law enforcement agents. Federal law now provides for training and assistance to state and local law enforcement agencies that vol-

unteer. State and local agencies need full authority to enforce immigration law and their participation should be mandatory.

Public opinion would be behind it. The increasingly apparent link between illegal immigration, crime and drugs has made state and local governments more receptive to a role in immigration. NPG's Roper ASW poll found that 88% of respondents favored Congress requiring state and local governments to apprehend and turn over to ICE illegal immigrants they encounter. A number of states have accepted the option provided in 1996 legislation for federal training and assistance to state and local police on immigration enforcement. HR 4733, passed in December 2005, fully empowers state and local police to enforce immigration laws.

With such laws and procedures consistently and strictly applied, the country would no longer need to debate whether, for example, illegal aliens should be issued a driver's license, or receive favorable tuition rates at colleges. The obvious answer to both questions is that illegal aliens should not remain here at all.

Would the Numbers be Too Great to Control?

Proponents of mass immigration and even some high government officials argue that we must simply accept the fact that nothing can be done to eliminate, or even seriously reduce the number of resident illegal aliens. They claim it to be impossible for the government to round up and deport 10 to 15 million people. Often they put this in terms of the most unappealing and impractical option, a "mass roundup." Another common objection to proposed prison terms, fines and forfeitures is the argument that it would swamp our Federal courts and prisons.

This need not be so. If the penalties and detection processes are sustained and evenly applied, there would be major changes in the illegal aliens' perceptions, leading to their extensive self-deportation over time. The near certainty of detection, apprehension, jail terms and fines would attach a prohibitively high price to violations. Federal court overload in the interim could be avoided by much broader use of "expedited deportation" (i.e., without hearings), and by continuing to treat first-time illegal entry as a misdemeanor with a penalty of a fine and not more than one-

year jail time. Misdemeanors can usually be disposed of in one day by federal courts.³

There are precedents for believing that large-scale self-deportation is feasible and realistic.

The best example of tough enforcement-changing behavior, of course, is the mass removals of 1954. Then, the apprehensions by INS of some one million illegal aliens over a few months in a determined sweep produced tens of thousands of self-deportations and suppressed illegal immigration for a decade thereafter.

In the summer of 1988, there was a great deal of unrest in Central America, and over 1,000 illegal aliens crossed the Texas border near Brownsville and Harlingen daily. At the outset, for foreign policy reasons, they were released on their own recognizance to apply for asylum. But in a policy switch, then Attorney General Meese ordered that the intercepted aliens denied immediate asylum be held in detention or otherwise prevented from leaving south Texas.⁴ Soon the stream of illegals dropped from over 1,000 a day to almost none.

More recently, in December 2005 the flow of Brazilian and some other non-Mexican illegal aliens through Mexico dropped sharply once ICE began detaining and removing them under its “expedited deportation” authority. Full success of this policy will require adequate detention space for sizeable numbers of illegal aliens.⁵

In a November 2003 paper the Center for Immigration Studies, a Washington research organization, took note of the government’s 9/11 “Special Registration” program for visitors from Islamic countries. The Muslim nation with the most illegal aliens present was Pakistan with an estimated 26,000. Once it became clear that Homeland Security was serious about enforcing the law on Middle Easterners, Pakistani illegal aliens “self-deported” in droves to Pakistan, Canada, and Europe. The Pakistani embassy estimated that more than 15,000 of its nationals had left the country.

The mass exodus by Pakistani illegals occurred because of the likelihood of detection and without an explicit threat of jail time. With credible high prospects of detection followed by heavy fine and/or

prison for illegal presence, we are convinced that a substantial portion of the millions of illegal aliens now living here would, within months, leave the country on their own.

SECTION THREE

Improving Existing Deterrents and Disincentives

Employer Sanctions

The 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) enacted civil sanctions against employers who knowingly hired illegal aliens. The legislation was, however, fatally flawed. Contrary to common sense, it made employers responsible for verifying the authenticity of the applicants’ documentary proof of legal residence. Employers were given an impossible task: to judge the validity of any one of a possible 19 different documents. At the same time IRCA perversely threatened the law-abiding and conscientious employer with sanctions for examining applicants too zealously.

The result was to be expected. Sanctions have not worked, and are now rarely imposed. Many employers preferred hiring low wage illegal aliens and simply accepted whatever documents were offered. Others shifted the responsibility for hiring to scofflaw labor contractors. Still others feared being sued if they turned down an applicant. One study showed that as many as one third of applicants hired in California in recent years were illegal aliens. In part as a result of the failure of sanctions, there are now more than seven million illegal aliens in the U.S. work force.

If properly organized and administered, employer sanctions can prevent illegal aliens from working at all in the formal economy. Government leaders, law enforcement and technical experts have long known that two essential features for effective verification have been missing.

The first is that determination of document validity can not be left to employers. Before hiring, employers should be required to verify applicants’ status by a call-in or electronic check against a federally managed database. If the applicant is found to be here illegally, the federal verification site should be

required to notify the local ICE or local law enforcement to examine and, if necessary, apprehend him.

The second essential feature would be a system of heavy fines for any employer who failed to carry out a telephone verification check with the national database before hiring a job applicant, or who hired an ineligible applicant. Fines are now authorized but rarely imposed and even more rarely collected. Criminal penalties would be mandatory for those employers who repeatedly failed to comply.

Some states are considering legislation to further penalize errant employers through such laws as 1) denying the deductibility of wages paid to illegals as a business cost for tax purposes; and 2) making offending employers ineligible for government contracts, tax breaks and other state benefits. Similar measures deserve consideration by Washington.

According to NPG's 2003 Roper poll, cracking down on employers would have the support of a solid majority of Americans. That poll found that 79 percent or more of respondents favored these measures: requiring employers to check all job applicants' status with a central federal database; full enforcement of existing fines for knowingly hiring illegal aliens; and criminal sanctions against persistent violators. A January 2006 poll by Polling Point about penalties for hiring illegal aliens found that 55.8 percent of respondents favored both large fines and jail sentences. Another 25.7 percent favored large fines only.⁶

Some opponents of employer sanctions have argued instead for stricter federal and state enforcement of workplace, wage and hour, social security, and safety laws. This supposedly will deprive employers of the inherent advantage of hiring illegals. Sadly, labor laws suffer from the same chronic under-enforcement and interest group manipulation, as do immigration laws. In addition, Labor Department investigators fear reduced workplace cooperation if they report illegal workers. NPG welcomes an increase in the resources and intensity of worksite labor enforcement, though this alone cannot rid us of illegal immigration.

One of the serious threats to eliminating illegal aliens from jobs is the massive spread of the informal

economy in major immigrant gateway cities, particularly New York, Los Angeles and Miami. A recent study of the Los Angeles County workforce found over 650,000 people, two thirds of them illegal, working in the informal economy, and costing all levels of government \$2 billion in lost taxes.

Uprooting underground jobs will require a sustained, coordinated crackdown by Federal, state and local labor, safety, tax, health and immigration authorities. The system of additional non-worksitie immigration status checks discussed earlier in Section Two could be a winning weapon against the underground economy. Another asset is the willingness of millions of American workers and their unions to report illegal immigrants and their workplaces to the authorities. ICE and its predecessor have tended to brush off or shelve such tips. Any reformed system must allow for tips from the public, which resents violations that undermine their wages and labor standards.

An End to Amnesties

Limited and general amnesties going back to 1962 have rewarded millions of illegal aliens for breaking our laws, and have encouraged millions more to come here illegally in the hope of a future amnesty. They have generally been corrupted by massive fraud.

As part of IRCA in 1986 some three million illegal aliens were amnestied. The proponents of that amnesty argued that it would curb the flow of influx of illegal aliens. That did not happen. Instead Congress in 1994 enacted the 245 (i) program that grants legal residence to illegals petitioned for by family or employers in the U.S. on payment of \$1000. Nearly 1.2 million more illegals have been amnestied under 245 (i).⁷ In spite of the relabeling of immigrants through amnesties, the number of illegal aliens has tripled since 1990. Any amnesty only invites fraud and creates the expectation of future amnesties.

Worst of all, any given amnesty is just the first step that results in a great increase in the size of our resident U.S. population, and for that reason alone should never even be considered. Once an amnestied immigrant achieves permanent resident status, or subsequently becomes an American citizen, he or she is

able to bring here legally a seemingly endless chain of relatives and relatives of relatives. This endless process, family "chain migration" has enormous population implications and must be phased out.

A 2002 NPG study showed that, incredibly, 30 to 50 million more foreigners could become candidates for immigration (in the next 15 years alone!) through family ties (i.e. chain migration) if five to six million aliens are amnestied. The complete study, *Amnesty: Overpopulation by Fiat*, is at www.npg.org. We will address the problem of chain migration in a forthcoming NPG Position Paper on Legal and Quasi-Legal Immigration.

Document Fraud's Many Victims

Massive and chronic document fraud enables many violations of immigration and nationality law, as well as identity theft and a wide range of other serious offenses. While Congress has increased the penalties for document fraud to cope with rising foreign crime and terrorism, prosecutions in the immigration field still lag. Annual convictions for immigration-related fraud, forgery and misuse of ID documents have fallen by two-thirds since 1997. There must be more prosecutions and tougher penalties. Admissions of immigrants and provision of benefits should be revoked if a court finds that they were parties to fraud in obtaining them.

A fraud-resistant secure national identification system is essential if we are to minimize fraud while successfully regulating immigration and combating terrorism. See the NPG Forum paper on *Secure Identification: The Weak Link in Immigration Control* at www.npg.org.

Automatic Citizenship

Because of a questionable interpretation of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, the U.S. currently grants automatic citizenship to children born on its territory, even if the mother is a temporary visitor, or an illegal alien. According to the Center for Immigration Studies, 383,000 children were born in the U.S. in 2002 to illegal alien mothers, an astonishing 10% of all births in the U.S. in that year. The parents of such children are rarely deported.

We believe that the law should be applied so that

any child born here, to qualify for U.S. citizenship, must have at least one parent who is a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident. A number of legal scholars believe that automatic citizenship could be restricted by clarifying legislation. We share that view and support legislation introduced so far to that effect. But if the courts find a constitutional amendment is essential, we would support such an amendment.

Our goal should be to reduce births in this country to illegal alien mothers to near zero, by discouraging their presence here. Illegal aliens who give birth here should be subject to the same penalties as all other illegal aliens – a heavy fine for first time offenders followed by deportation and forfeiture of the right to ever return here, and, for repeat offenders, a mandatory one year term in a federal prison or detention center. Maternal responsibilities to minor children should not be a bar to prison sentences any more than it is in the case of citizens and legal residents who are sentenced to prison.

Given the urgency of ending the population growth that is endangering our environment and resources, we simply cannot continue to allow our population to be increased by some half a million a year, due to births to illegal aliens or "demographic tourists." Because of these births, the actual number added to our population each year may even be considerably more since the U.S. citizen child shields the illegal parents from deportation and enables their ultimate legal settlement here, eventually forming a new starting link in a family immigration chain.

Sanctuary Cities: A Shelter for Criminals and Terrorists

Creating a sanctuary for illegal aliens, as many cities have done, is incompatible with the intent of federal immigration law. In her excellent book, *Invasion*, Michelle Malkin writes, "...sanctuary cities across the country continue to declare themselves safe refuges where local government officials must strive to protect the anonymity of illegal aliens, thwarting ICE and local police measures against foreign threats and crime."

Sanctuary cities such as Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco arguably violate federal laws against harboring illegal aliens. Those city councils

and/or mayors responsible for maintaining sanctuaries should be held responsible. Tougher and more explicit anti-harboring laws are essential along with greater access in the courts for law suits against sanctuary cities by crime victims.

Asylum: A Magnet for Opportunists

In recent years, U.S. courts and Congress have greatly expanded aliens' rights to political asylum because of alleged persecution abroad. The hope of winning asylum or its legal equivalent, cancellation of removal, is a magnet to prospective illegal immigrants, who see it as a win-win situation. Their claim to asylum might be approved. About one in five are. Of if not, they can abscond. The system of frequent checks of immigration status for day to day transactions outlined in Section Two would ferret out failed asylum seekers. But access to the asylum system for frivolous claimants should also be more tightly restricted to end its magnet effect. (See *Humanitarian Immigration: Third World "Persecution" Swamps the West at www.npg.org.*)

SECTION FOUR

Why Halting Illegal Immigration is Crucial

Our primary concern with immigration, both legal and illegal, is that it adds weightily to population growth in our crowded country. Our present population of 298 million is already far beyond the long term carrying capacity of our resources and environment. We need to halt, and eventually reverse our population growth so that, after an interim period of population decline, we can stabilize our population at a lower, sustainable level.

Besides its impact on our population size, there are a number of other compelling reasons for halting illegal immigration. First, the violation of our laws by millions of illegal aliens breeds contempt for all laws and nourishes a culture of fraud and deceit. Illegal aliens depress wages of American citizens and legal immigrants, and add to their unemployment. Their access to social services combined with their low tax payments burden our taxpayers. The claim is often made that they do jobs that Americans will not do, but there are no jobs that Americans will not do with prop-

er work conditions and wages. Their presence here invites abuse by unscrupulous employers, and results in the creation of thousands of sweatshops and a pernicious underground economy.

Homeland Security

The annual flow of illegal aliens across our borders and the presence of many millions who live here clandestinely is an open invitation to terrorists to establish themselves in our country and attack us. If there were no other reasons to end illegal immigration, homeland security alone would be sufficient. It is outrageous that over four years after 9/11, our Federal government has done so little to halt illegal immigration and secure our borders.

The “Push Factors,” A Nearly Irresistible Force

Principally because of the disparity between our standard of living and that of most third world countries, hundreds of millions of people are determined to come here, whether legally or illegally. Most third world people live in abject poverty, and we sympathize with their plight. World population is growing by some 77 million a year, and almost all of that growth occurs in the developing countries, the countries that send us almost all illegal immigrants. We cannot possibly allow more than a tiny fraction of those millions to come here each year without degrading our quality of life and environment.

Clearly, to believe that the problems of underdeveloped countries can be solved by emigration is delusional. Nothing can permanently and significantly improve living conditions in those countries unless they halt and eventually reverse their population growth, the root cause of their economic and environmental poverty. We should do everything in our power to help those impoverished nations that are determined to halt, and eventually to reverse, their population growth.

If that is ever to happen, it will take decades and perhaps centuries. Because of the tremendous momentum of past population growth in the third world, and the resulting disproportionate numbers of young people, just slowing growth is a gargantuan task. Despite official optimism, an eventual halt to population growth in third world countries may well occur because of increased mortality rather than

reduced fertility.

In the meantime, we need not feel apologetic for giving top priority to our own national interest, by halting illegal immigration completely and drastically reducing legal immigration. The U.S. has a long history of generous immigration policies. Our first and primary responsibility now must be to provide for the welfare of present and future generations of Americans, many of them descendants of earlier immigrants, and alleviate environmental pressures in the U.S., such as global warming, that are threatening the whole world.

As world population continues to grow and, and as that growth continues to degrade economic and environmental conditions in many third world countries, the push factors abroad will inevitably increase in force and intensity.

U.S.-bound migration verges on becoming a tidal wave of irresistible force. An irresistible force can only be stopped by an immovable object – and that can only be our own nation's unshakable resolve to stop illegal immigration and reduce to near zero the illegal population now here.

1. U.S. Customs and Immigration Service. Immigration Statistics. Convictions for Immigration Violations, 1993-2004, table 50
2. Save Program at <http://uscis.gov/graphic/services/SAVE.htm>
3. Border Security Bill Could Overwhelm Valley Courts. Brownsville, TX, *Herald*. January 15, 2006.
4. Vernon Briggs, Immigration and the National Interest (3rd edition). M.E. Sharpe: Armonk, NY, 2003. p. 160
5. U.S. Jail Program Slows Illegal Immigration. Reuters, January 14, 2006
6. See www.pollingpoint.com/results_121405.html
7. Briggs: Mass Immigration and the National Interest (3rd edition). p. 265

Statement of Purpose

Human population growth in the past century was three times the total growth from the origin of the species until 1900.

Coupled with sharply rising levels of resource consumption and economic activity in the more prosperous nations, that growth has imposed unprecedented strains on the ecological systems that support us and other living things. It has led in many parts of the world to rising unemployment, intensifying water shortages, increasing competition for resources, and the specter of hunger. It is affecting the world's climate, and the consequences -- rising sea levels, more powerful hurricanes, heat waves, and more intense floods and droughts -- are becoming apparent. Population growth has depended on fossil fuels, which are running down. Future generations must depend increasingly on renewable energy, which is unlikely to be recoverable in amounts sufficient to support more than a fraction of current world populations.

U.S. population has also quadrupled since 1900. The U.S. and the world are in a condition of overshoot.

NPG (Negative Population Growth) is the ideal of a turnaround in U.S. and world population growth until we approach less destructive and more tolerable levels, perhaps at numbers that were passed two or more generations ago.

Our objectives are to

- document the harm humans are inflicting on ourselves and our support systems and arrive at some rough idea of "optimum population" -- the human numbers that can live at a decent standard of living within the constraints of environmental sustainability,
- suggest the policies on migration and human fertility that would make it possible to come down to such numbers,
- persuade our government at all levels, and other governments afflicted by population growth, to pursue such policies, and
- dissuade them from the pursuit of policies and behavior that, intentionally or not, lead to population growth.

To those ends, we promote concepts such as "the two-child family", lowered rates of migration to the United States, and the development of conceptual systems such as the steady state economy. And we comment on the demographic implications of present and proposed policies and legislation.

NPG, Inc. is unique among national organizations in calling for a turnaround in population growth and describing the means to achieve it.

About NPG

Negative Population Growth (NPG) is a national nonprofit membership organization with over 30,000 members nationwide. It was founded in 1972 to educate the American public and our political leaders about the devastating effects of overpopulation on our environment, resources, and standard of living. We believe that our nation is already vastly overpopulated in terms of the long-range carrying capacity of its resources and environment.

NPG advocates gradually halting and then reversing our U.S. population growth so that, after an interim period of population reduction, our population can be stabilized at a level that would be sustainable indefinitely, and afford an adequate standard of living for all, in a healthy environment. We believe that in order to be sustainable indefinitely our population should not exceed 150 million, its size two generations ago. We are convinced that goal could be reached within several generations by non-coercive tax incentives to encourage parents to have not more than two children, coupled with a substantial reduction in immigration.

Permission to reprint is granted in advance. Please acknowledge source, and notify NPG.

This paper, as well as other NPG publications can be found on our internet website at www.npg.org.

NPG is a national membership organization founded in 1972. Annual dues are \$30 and are tax-deductible to the extent the law allows. Please write or call for a list of available publications.

Negative Population Growth, Inc.
2861 Duke Street, Suite 36
Alexandria, VA 22314
voice: 703-370-9510
fax: 703-370-9514
internet: www.npg.org
e-mail:npg@npg.org