



‘Free Market’ Immigration Destroys Freedom

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What should not be contentious . . . is the commitment for increasing legal immigration by anyone supporting free market principles. — Alex Nowrasteh, Cato Institute.

Fact Check: The Cato Institute is a libertarian organization which basically believes in open borders. The reason is that the nations and national cultures that borders delineate appear to have little significance to the Cato variety of libertarians. Their perspective is purely economic: human beings are first and foremost economic creatures, so there must be few if any restraints on whatever economic activity they wish to pursue.

Obviously, in this view, national borders shouldn’t restrain these money-minded creatures who envision a world where all people become virtually identical and interchangeable cogs of an international business machine, the global free market. This outcome, the libertarians assure us, will bring us a utopia of universal prosperity.

The problem with this notion of “economic man” is that it simply ignores the totality of human nature. Certainly people seek money and material well-being. But these aren’t the only things they seek. People, in fact, quite often through history have disregarded material gain and indeed have given their lives to defend and uphold non-economic values and causes. Examples are religious faith, culture, nationhood, and community. Certainly the record shows that people rebel at the idea of becoming identical and interchangeable.

Economic freedom indeed has a record of bringing prosperity, but it becomes dehumanizing and even tyrannical when it obliterates the freedom of peoples to maintain the national distinctions that inspire their deepest loyalties. The two freedoms must be kept in balance. The love of money alone is indeed the root of all evil.

Our immigration policy, today based significantly on the “free market” principle of businesses obtaining the cheapest possible labor, is a policy which truly cheapens our country. It impoverishes our working classes, inhibits upward mobility, and discourages technological innovation to meet our economic needs. Also, ironically, it undermines free enterprise as well.

Mass immigration of the type we have now increases the constituency for our substantial welfare state. As that state grows, the free enterprise sector must shrink. Hispanics, who make up the largest share of immigrants, strongly favor government programs. Seventy-five percent favor bigger government, compared with only 41 percent of the general U.S. population, according to the PewResearchCenter. As libertarian-leaning economist

Milton Friedman observed, "It's just obvious that you can't have free immigration and a welfare state." Unfortunately, the Cato libertarians can't see the obvious.