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# FAIR-y Tales In the Immigration Debate

## Anti-immigrant think tanks are aiming their dubious statistics at the 14th Amendment

By **TERRY GREENE STERLING**

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On June 5, hundreds rallied at the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza in Phoenix, Arizona, in support of Senate Bill 1070, the harshest state immigration law in the nation, which had been signed into law in April. The

crowd of mostly middle-aged, working-class Anglos waved handmade signs blaring such things as:

“14 Million Jobless Americans; 13 Million Illegals, DO THE MATH, MR. PRESIDENT.”

And:

“SB 1070 is not racist!”


It was a hot day. People were sunburned. Some wore American-flag shirts, American-flag baseball caps or American-flag necklaces. Some carried American flags. They stood in the sun to hear a lineup of speakers deliver the same victory-themed message: Americans are under siege by hordes of illegal invaders who steal their jobs and suck up public benefits . . . and, in this economy, how much more can Americans be expected to endure?

The call-to-arms message was: Enough is enough, rise up, get active, donate, vote, stop illegal immigration now—before it’s too late.


The orators included black activist Ted Hayes (“Amnesty is racist. This country doesn’t belong to anyone else but us”) and Terry Anderson, the now-deceased California radio talk-show host (“Jackpot babies”)—both of them members of the Huntington Beach-based California Coalition for Immigration Reform. Also speaking were Colonel Al Rodriguez (“Mexicans, you don’t speak for me”); NumbersUSA lobbyist Rosemary Jenks (“Amnesty destroys America”); immigration hard-liner and soon-to-lose Colorado gubernatorial candidate Tom Tancredo (“Barack Obama . . . will open our borders”); and the self-professed author and sponsor of Arizona Senate Bill 1070, state Senator Russell Pearce.

Dressed in a Hawaiian shirt and blue jeans, Pearce beamed as the crowd chanted gratitude for SB 1070. “Thank you, Russell. Thank you, Russell.”


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A display of buttons for sale at the June 5 pro-SB 1070 rally

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In the eye of the hurricane: protestor at an immigration rally

**Terry Greene Sterling**



Russell Pearce meets his fans at a June 5 rally in Phoenix

**Terry Greene Sterling**



A demonstrator at the Phoenix rally speared his sign with a sword

Terry Greene Sterling



Ted Hayes poses with friends at the pro-SB 1070 rally

Terry Greene Sterling



A scene from the June 5 rally in Phoenix

www.johntanton.org



John Tanton's ties to white nationalists have been questioned repeatedly

Details:  
**Editor's note:**

Pearce joked about how maybe President Obama himself didn't have papers.

Then he justified SB 1070 by reciting the "hard costs" of illegal immigration to Arizona taxpayers—\$2.7 billion in a time of "high unemployment and record foreclosures."

Later, J.D. Hayworth, an immigration hard-liner, former talk-show host and U.S. Senate candidate who would soon be clobbered in the Republican primary by John McCain, began his \$25-per-plate fund-raising barbecue in the plaza.

Pearce and Tancredo, who are friends and political allies, were among the featured speakers at the Hayworth fund-raiser. They enthused about what was to be Pearce's next legislative effort in 2011: to challenge the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution by denying legal status to Arizona babies born to undocumented parents.

\* \* \*

Like many successful illegal-immigration populists, Pearce gets his "hard costs of illegal immigration" and his talking points from the [Federation for American Immigration Reform](#) (FAIR), a Washington, D.C.-based "public interest" nonprofit founded in 1979.

For years, FAIR has issued reports detailing how illegal immigrants damage the economy, steal American jobs, sponge public benefits and commit heinous crimes. The nonprofit allies itself with other groups and activists who share FAIR's point of view, and although it takes a backseat at anti-illegal-immigration rallies, its presence is pervasive. At the June 5 rally in Phoenix, for instance, almost every speaker had ties to FAIR.

Thanks to grassroots organizing, Washington politicking and faithful donors, FAIR has changed the immigration debate in the United States. It has successfully blocked progressive immigration reform, including what it calls "amnesty"—legalization of non-criminal illegal immigrants (including magna cum laude college graduates) who have lived in the United States for decades.

After it helped insert SB 1070 into the Arizona Revised Statutes, FAIR turned its attention to its favorite cause: "birthright citizenship" legislation that would challenge the 14th Amendment, which classifies most babies born in the United States as citizens. FAIR wants to change it so that babies born to undocumented immigrant parents will be denied citizenship. Such children are derided as "jackpot babies" or "anchor babies."

Among FAIR's allies are sister nonprofits [NumbersUSA](#), which also lobbied successfully to squash immigration reform in 2007, and the [Center for Immigration Studies](#) (CIS), which refers to itself as a non-partisan pro-immigrant think tank. The three groups cite one another's reports and studies and post one another's findings on their respective websites.

Reporters often quote experts from the three groups as credible mainstream voices of dissent to progressive immigration reform, even though several human-rights organizations have flagged FAIR, NumbersUSA and CIS as white-nationalist hate groups.

Former *Phoenix New Times* staff writer Terry Greene Sterling is the author of the new book [Illegal: Life and Death In Arizona's Immigration War Zone](#) and is writer-in-residence at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University. Jennifer Gaie Hellum assisted with research on white-nationalist groups. Sterling's personal website is [www.terrygreenesterling.com](http://www.terrygreenesterling.com).

Though these three groups maintain the hate designations are arbitrary and untrue, the vitriolic rhetoric at the root of these organizations' sensibilities scalds the ear. "As whites see their power and control over their lives declining, will they simply go quietly into the night? Or will there be an explosion?" asked retired ophthalmologist Dr. John Tanton, founder of these oft-cited organizations.

\* \* \*

Arizona has long been an experimental legal laboratory for FAIR, a place to test increasingly harsh laws: 2004's Proposition 200, the human-smuggling law, the employer-sanctions law, SB 1070 and the promised birthright-citizenship law. The state has replaced Orange County as Ground Zero for the nation's anti-immigrant movement; from the 1990s until the past decade, the county voted on propositions 187 (a precursor to SB 1070 by 16 years) and 227 (which ended bilingual education), and Costa Mesa and Anaheim pioneered the use of local police officers to enforce federal immigration law.

As each law hits the news, FAIR or its sister organizations issue neutrally worded reports portraying the undocumented as social and economic burdens. The studies point to the urgent need for passage of the immigration law in question.

In the wake of the passage of SB 1070, for instance, FAIR advanced a copy of its new report on the alarming cost of illegal immigration in Arizona to FOX. May 17, FOX reported that "Arizona's illegal-immigrant population costs the state's taxpayers even more than once thought—a whopping \$1.5 billion a year, according to researchers at the public-interest group that helped draft the state's new immigration law."



**Editor's note:** Latinos lived in America long before the territories became states. Indeed, much of the territory that was their country. Today, they are part of the fabric of this nation. Yet there is now fervor to drive immigrants out — almost at all costs. Keep them from coming in — almost at all costs.

Arizona, the focal point of the so-called immigration problem in America, has passed a law requiring police to ask anyone they think might be here illegally to produce proof of legal status. This puts a heavy burden of suspicion upon all with brown skin, including Americans. Other states are considering similar legislation.

Village Voice Media, in a national series, is telling the stories of Hispanics amongst us, the struggles they face, the groundswell of anti-immigrant sentiment, and the problems that drive immigrants from south of the border.

The project examines the consequences when federal authorities lack a coherent immigration policy.

See also:  
[Fantasy Voter Fraud Whose Dole is It, Anyway?](#)  
[Mexican Macroeconomics Bookworms](#)

The report helped galvanize support for SB 1070 and for its boosters, such as Pearce and Arizona Governor Jan Brewer, who told the *Arizona Republic* that she signed SB 1070 in part because she was "cognizant of what the impact of illegal immigration was doing to the state of Arizona in relation to cost."

But the FAIR report that Brewer, Pearce and practically every other Arizona politician and illegal-immigration politico relied on to get elected flies in the face of reality.

To start with, FAIR's estimate of the unauthorized population in Arizona is overly robust.

The Department of Homeland Security estimates [460,000 undocumented people](#) live in Arizona.

Recently, the Pew Hispanic Center lowered its estimate to approximately 375,000.

FAIR reports that 500,000 costly illegal aliens live in Arizona.

And FAIR has added a new demographic to the expense column: children born in the United States to undocumented immigrants.

Despite their constitutionally guaranteed citizenship, these children represent a major “cost of illegal immigration,” according to FAIR.

Nearly half of FAIR’s estimated cost of illegal immigration in Arizona involves expenses of U.S. children born to undocumented immigrants, without factoring in the obvious economic counterbalance—lifetimes of paying taxes, working and consuming. Adding these children to the expense column boosts Arizona’s “cost of illegal immigration” to \$2.7 billion, up from \$1.3 billion in FAIR’s 2004 report.

That’s a more-than-100 percent increase in supposed illegal-immigration costs in the face of a dramatic decline in the state’s population of illegal immigrants.

Longtime FAIR staffer Jack Martin—who is not an economist but rather, according to the FAIR website, “a retired U.S. diplomat with consular experience”—put the Arizona report together.

In July, Martin said he included in his report U.S. children born to undocumented immigrants as a cost of illegal immigration because they “wouldn’t be here” if their parents hadn’t been in the country illegally.

And if Mom and Dad returned to Mexico, they’d take their American children with them, Martin declared.

Asked why these same American kids mysteriously disappear from his report once they become adults and offset the cost of their educations by paying taxes, consuming and working, Martin offered no rational answer. He posited that once these children reach adulthood, they no longer represent a “cost of illegal immigration” because if their parents were to be deported, the adult children probably would stay in the United States.

Martin could not explain away the accounting trick at the heart of the “report” that helped justify SB 1070.

\* \* \*

In July, as politicians around the United States eyeballed SB 1070’s popularity and drafted similar election-year legislation in their states, FAIR issued yet another report: [“The Fiscal Burden of Illegal Immigration on United States Taxpayers.”](#) This detailed report says illegal aliens cost American taxpayers \$113 billion annually. It says each American household pays \$1,117 yearly for illegal immigration. It says most illegal aliens don’t pay taxes.

Such numbers can only outrage millions of penny-pinched Americans already anxious about their own futures in uncertain economic times. But once again, the numbers defy logic. That’s because the misleading techniques in the Arizona report were duplicated in the national report.

Start with the population estimate.

The Department of Homeland Security estimates that 10.8 million illegal immigrants lived in the United States in 2009, but the FAIR report estimates a much larger population of 13 million.

And, again, as in the Arizona report, the largest single “fiscal burden” of illegal immigration is tied to American children. FAIR says it costs taxpayers \$52 billion to educate the children of illegal immigrants, and that includes more than 3 million American citizens born to one or more undocumented parents.

As with the Arizona report, the positive economic counterbalance to education costs (the adult lifetime of productivity, consumption and taxpaying) is excluded from FAIR's calculations.

But contrary to FAIR's assertion, the consensus among many economists is that the U.S. government nets a profit from educating its children because educated adults pay more taxes and contribute to the nation's productivity. "Many government expenses related to immigrants are associated with their children," Michael Greenstone and Adam Looney write in "Ten Economic Facts About Immigration," recently published on behalf of the Brookings Institution. "Both the immigrant children and children of U.S.-born citizens are expensive when they are young because of the costs of investing in children's education and health. Those expenses, however, are paid back through taxes received over a lifetime of work."

Giovanni Peri, an economist at UC Davis and an expert on the contributions of immigrants to economies, says, "Education spending is always considered an investment, not a cost, because it adds to the productivity of the country."

And Daniel Griswold of the libertarian Cato Institute writes in a 2007 report titled "[The Fiscal Impact of Immigration Reform: The Real Story](#)" that it would be misleading to "count the costs of educating the children of an immigrant without considering the future taxes paid by the educated children once they have grown and entered the workforce."

\* \* \*

Educated voices of reason are drowned out by FAIR's populist appeal. If you want to measure the nonprofit's effectiveness at convincing Americans that illegal immigrants are an undue burden on taxpayers, consider this: U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, a staunch supporter a few months ago of legalizing the undocumented already in the United States, now seeks hearings on whether their kids should be citizens.

"People come here to have babies," he told FOX News in July. "They come here to drop a child."

His assertion that parents illegally enter the United States just to pop out "anchor babies" to obtain parental green cards makes no sense. Under current immigration law, undocumented parents would have to wait for their "anchor babies" to reach adulthood before they could legally apply for parental green cards. And if the parents live illegally in the United States, immigration authorities generally require they return to Mexico and stay there for 10 years before the U.S. government will consider giving them green cards.

But this doesn't stop Graham's bluster. He has even hinted he might introduce legislation to change the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. Such an effort has long been championed by the OC-based California Coalition for Immigration Reform, the author of 1994's notorious Proposition 187.

If a birthright-citizenship law were passed, it would create a burgeoning, illegal, illiterate and expensive underclass. What's more, if children of the undocumented were deprived of schooling, government revenues would plummet. A 2007 Columbia University study titled "[The Costs and Benefits of an Excellent Education for America's Children](#)" found that even kids who needed expensive interventions (such as English classes) in order to get their high-school diplomas netted the public purse an average of \$127,000 per student over a lifetime.

On the other hand, the same study reports, high-school dropouts tend to commit more crimes, be less healthy, rely more on public benefits and pay fewer taxes.

CIS has long pointed to a 30-plus percent dropout rate among Latino immigrants. The implication is that Mexicans drain the economy with social costs, and if they don't leave, it will only get worse. As if to

underscore the Mexican menace, the Citizenship and Immigration Services website displays hidden-camera-on-the-border videos of brown people purportedly sneaking into the country.

Scaremongering about Latino dropout rates is based on National Center for Education Statistics data on the “16- to 24-year-old status dropout rate.”

Richard Fry, of the Pew Hispanic Center, determined that 38 percent of Hispanic immigrants, ages 16 to 24, were high-school dropouts.

But here’s the catch, according to Fry: The 38 percent dropout rate includes thousands of young immigrant laborers with minimal educations who never attended American schools. They’re still counted by the National Center for Education Statistics as high-school dropouts because they haven’t finished 12 years of schooling.

The sadder part of this story is that U.S.-born Hispanics actually do have a relatively high dropout rate—11 percent. That’s not a good statistic, and it does have social costs. But it’s impossible to tie this rate to illegal immigration, as Fry says there’s no way to determine how many of these U.S.-born dropouts are children of the undocumented.

\* \* \*

Seeing their peers waste educational opportunities mightily frustrates many of about 825,000 undocumented immigrant children known as “DREAMers.”

Brought to the United States as children by undocumented relatives, about 65,000 of them graduate from American high schools every year. Many have made it through college on private scholarships and graduate with honors.

But they can’t legally work in the United States, even though they self-identify as Americans.

By now, most of us have heard of the feel-good federal legislation called the DREAM (Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors) Act, which would allow undocumented high-school grads without criminal records temporary legal residency so they could attend college or trade school or join the military. They’d get green cards only if they lived up to their end of the bargain. Then, eventually, they’d qualify for citizenship. They would work, pay taxes, shore up the middle class and strengthen the military if they only had a chance, their advocates say.

The law has been introduced every year since 2001, and it’s getting a last-chance airing as 2010 draws to a close.

FAIR has successfully blocked DREAM Act legislation, decrying it as closeted amnesty for illegal aliens and condemning it as an incentive for further illegal immigration into the United States.

In Orange County, DREAMers face fierce opposition. After Garden Grove native Tam Tran died in an auto accident in Maine this summer, officials at her alma mater, Santa Ana College, announced they would name a scholarship in her honor that would go to a fellow DREAM Act student such as herself. The news was barely a day old before Huntington Beach Congressman Dana Rohrabacher—who frequently gets scores of 100 percent on FAIR’s immigration report cards and cites the nonprofit’s reports in press releases—threatened to try to pull federal funding from the community college for daring to champion undocumented students. His threats haven’t deterred Santa Ana College officials, who plan to hand out the first Tam Tran Memorial Scholarship this spring.

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Brewer has spoken of drug-related beheadings in the desert, and she famously announced that most Mexican immigrants were drug mules.

The beheadings-in-the-desert/all-illegals-are-drug-mules stories were patently false.

Contrary to Brewer's assertions, border counties and cities have experienced declining crime rates, and border cities were among the safest in the nation, according to the FBI. The Associated Press crunched FBI numbers in June and found that violent crime was down 15 percent in Arizona.

Crime studies show again and again that immigrants do not commit as many violent crimes as their native-born counterparts. And areas with larger populations of unauthorized migrants actually experience reduced crime rates, according to the progressive Immigration Policy Center.

Despite all this, when Arizonans were polled after the passage of SB 1070, they voiced mounting fear over border security—meaning, crimes committed by Mexicans on Americans. This fear is fueled on FAIR's website, which posts articles detailing horrendous crimes committed in the United States by “illegal-alien criminals.”

This same fear is fanned in FAIR's alarmist “report” on the fiscal burden of illegal immigration to taxpayers. The think tank claims American taxpayers pay about \$7.83 billion for “law-enforcement costs of illegal immigration.” About half is tied to federal detention, removal and prosecution of immigrants for entering the country illegally—for which FAIR has long advocated. Another \$1.4 billion is tied to National Guard and Coast Guard costs.

The numbers are ambiguous, at best. The feds who warehouse criminal aliens don't tally who is legal (green card, visa) and who isn't, so it's not possible to get true “law-enforcement costs of illegal immigration.”

In April, Arizona state Representative John Kavanagh said that, in his state, “illegals make up 15 percent of our prison population. . . . It is a fact.”

But it's not a fact.

The Arizona Department of Corrections, like the federal Bureau of Prisons, doesn't break down inmate data by who is and isn't in the country legally. It does tally “foreign national” inmates, but that category includes legal and illegal immigrants.

Two Arizona officials actually did distinguish between legal and illegal immigrants: Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio and former Maricopa County Attorney Andrew Thomas pointed to a disproportionate number of illegal-alien felons incarcerated in the state. Thomas kept the criminal data, but looking at it, many of these “felons” were immigrants with no prior criminal records who'd been nabbed for such felonies as working at car washes with fake IDs or paying a smuggler to guide them through the desert.

\* \* \*

Dr. John Tanton is articulate and friendly. The 76-year-old paints a picture of himself living a seemingly idyllic life of retirement on the shores of Lake Michigan. He is happily married to a smart woman, Mary Lou, and the two are active in the community, their Methodist church and in environmental affairs.

Tanton likes to hike, despite early-stage Parkinson's disease, and on a recent morning, he and Mary Lou walked for 4 miles through a vast nature preserve they'd helped create near their beloved home of

Petoskey, Michigan.

After a post-hike lunch of meatloaf and mashed potatoes with gravy, he returned to his office and his life's work: restricting immigration into the United States in any way possible.

He dismisses a growing number of critics who tag him as a closeted white nationalist and charge that the true aim of a web of nonprofits he has started and/or is associated with has one secret, chilling goal: restricting immigration to preserve the nation for a white, European majority.

Tanton says he's not a white nationalist and neither are his organizations. He says it's irresponsible to even make the claim.

In the 1970s, Tanton was a leader of the group Zero Population Growth, which promoted two-children families as a way to stabilize the nation's population. (Kids replace Mom and Dad; net population growth equals zero.)

He has long worried the U.S. population will overrun natural resources and destroy the country. Tanton sees the human population exploding along Malthusian lines—although the work of monk Thomas Malthus has been discredited, and the United Nations reports the world population may stabilize by 2300 because fertility rates are trending downward.

Tanton's Zero Population Growth movement helped influence a reduction in the size of American families. Even so, the U.S. population soared from about 225 million in 1982 to more than 307 million in 2009, in part because immigrant babies have bolstered the birthrate Tanton has labored so hard to reduce.

Many population experts say this is a good thing, that immigrant babies will become the workers who pay taxes to provide social services for the aging American population.

Tanton has a "fundamental disagreement" with that theory.

He says he's open to new ideas. But his views haven't changed much since he started FAIR in 1979. The nonprofit remains near and dear to his heart; he still sits on FAIR's board.

His self-described population concerns caused him to start a funding nonprofit, US Inc.; the Social Contract Press (a publishing house) NumbersUSA; and CIS. Taken together, these nonprofits make up the so-called Tanton Network.

The network enjoys a solid, loyal list of donors, including the "green" Weeden Foundation and the Mellon family.

Richard Mellon Scaife's foundations funneled more than \$2.1 million to FAIR, NumbersUSA and CIS from 2004 to 2009, according to foundation reports. Another Mellon scion, Tim Mellon, donated \$1.5 million to Brewer's defense fund for SB 1070.

A private foundation, Fernwood Advisors, is overseen by the heirs of Sidney Swensrud, who ran Gulf Oil for the Mellon family. Two Swensrud descendants sit on FAIR's board.

In 2007, the individual nonprofits in the Tanton Network were labeled as hate groups by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). This outraged FAIR, CIS and NumbersUSA. CIS has attempted to deflect the negative image by deriding SPLC head researcher Heidi Beirich as a priss not unlike Dana Carvey's Church Lady character on *Saturday Night Live*. It calls Beirich's work a "distorted and dishonest narrative" that exaggerated the relationship between CIS, FAIR and NumbersUSA. CIS even held a



seminar to discredit the SPLC, which it portrays as a bloated, self-serving nonprofit that funnels funds to overpaid directors while ignoring poor people.

Jerry Kammer, a former Pulitzer Prize winner for the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, is now a “senior research fellow” for CIS. At the panel convened this fall to discredit the SPLC, Kammer bashed the organization but also sought to distance himself from Tanton, whom, he says, “has a tin ear for the sensitivities of immigration.”

Tanton is a “distraction” in the immigration movement, Kammer says, because he “sometimes speaks with a freewheeling bluntness that even those who admire him find upsetting.”

What Kammer did not note is that the SPLC is not the first organization to call the motives of FAIR’s founder into question. In the 1990s, several magazines and newspapers profiled Tanton and pointed out his controversial views.

“Do conservatives who embrace FAIR know all they should about the object of their affections?” conservative pundit Tucker Carlson wondered in a 1997 piece in *The Wall Street Journal*.

Carlson was appalled that Tanton told the *Detroit Free Press* he wanted borders sealed to avoid overrunning the country with people “defecating and creating garbage and looking for jobs.”

Three years later, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) took on FAIR. “Unfortunately, FAIR and other anti-immigrant groups have used reckless, distorted language and tactics that cloud and inhibit responsible debate,” the ADL concluded in a report.

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Even today, Tanton sees nothing wrong with associating with white nationalists. He says he doesn’t necessarily agree with them, but reaching out to them is part of his “coalition building.”

And he’s not ashamed of soliciting \$1.5 million in unrestricted donations during FAIR’s early days from the Pioneer Fund, an American foundation that has long financed research into “race science.” FAIR doesn’t take Pioneer money anymore, though the creepy foundation is still going strong.

The Pioneer Fund’s current president, J. Philippe Rushton, is a Canadian college psychology professor who still studies race-intelligence connections.

In a July article for the online journal [VDARE.com](http://VDARE.com)—named after Virginia Dare, the first white baby born in the New World—Rushton wrote that his recent research proved that black 17-year-olds consistently scored at the level of white 14-year-olds on math and reading tests.

Other [VDARE](http://VDARE.com) contributors include white nationalists whose correspondence with Tanton is archived at the University of Michigan.

Sam Francis and Jared Taylor are associated with the white-separatist Council of Conservative Citizens (CCC), birthed from the White Citizens Councils of the 1950s and ’60s in the South. The CCC website disparages blacks, Jews and Latinos. One of the group’s goals is to “oppose the massive immigration of non-European and non-Western peoples into the United States that threatens to transform our nation into a non-European majority in our lifetime.”

Taylor also edits *American Renaissance*, a white-nationalist website.

Another [VDARE](http://VDARE.com) contributor, Kevin MacDonald, is a Cal State Long Beach professor and co-director of

the American Third Position Party, a white-nationalist political party that seeks to deport all immigrants from the United States. MacDonald edits *Occidental Quarterly*, a white-nationalist publication.

MacDonald's good friend, retired Vanderbilt professor Virginia Deane Abernethy, a self-described "European American separatist," has also written for [VDARE](#). Abernethy believes sending food and aid to Third World countries will "exacerbate overpopulation." She recently wrote a blurb calling the violent new American white-nationalist novel *White Apocalypse* "an emotionally compelling account of whites as historical victims of non-whites—just the sort of thing we need to motivate a renaissance among our people."

Tancredo has written for [VDARE](#), and so has his friend Pat Buchanan.

And Tanton's funding nonprofit funneled \$15,000 to [VDARE](#) in 2007 and 2008, according to the most recent federal tax reports for US Inc.

Tanton is also a writer. (He once won an essay contest sponsored by *The Scientific American*.) He contributes to and publishes *The Social Contract Press*, edited by Wayne Lutton, his co-author of a book titled *The Immigration Invasion*.

Lutton, whom Tanton calls a "very nice guy," has addressed the CCC, and he has lent his editorial expertise to American Renaissance's website.

The most recent issue of *The Social Contract Press* cheers Arizona's SB 1070 victory and includes an article by Pearce.

Sometimes, when Tanton looks at how FAIR, NumbersUSA, CIS and other groups he has touched have succeeded in turning the immigration debate his way, the old man feels a certain satisfaction about his life's work.

"It is amazing," he says, "how well we've done."

**Editor's note:** *Former Phoenix New Times staff writer Terry Greene Sterling is the author of the new book *Illegal: Life and Death In Arizona's Immigration War Zone* and is writer-in-residence at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University. Jennifer Gaie Hellum assisted with research on white-nationalist groups.*

*This article appeared in print as "FAIR-y Tales: Illegal-immigration populists rely on a right-wing think tank's misleading reports to scapegoat immigrants and their children."*

*A longer version of this story can be found [here](#).*