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Monday, June 15, 2009

Re: Spreading the Wealth Around [[Jerry Taylor](#)]

Mark, not to get too deep into the politics of immigration, but I think it's fair to say that the harsh anti-immigration message from many Republicans helped to scare away Hispanic votes in the past two election cycles. The GOP's anti-immigration gambit also seems to have turned off a lot of women and moderate voters, who are bothered by the anti-Hispanic undertones of some of the arguments against immigration reform. Scaremongering about immigration wins the Republican party very few voters who weren't already leaning toward the party, but it seems to lose key constituencies that might otherwise have been up for grabs.

Moreover, I am suspicious of confident statements about how this or that policy position promises to do this or that politically. Ronald Reagan's pro-immigrant policies, for instance, did not doom the GOP. Pete Wilson's anti-immigrant policies, on the other hand, did not save the California GOP.

Regardless, the case for or against "amnesty, loose enforcement, and increased legal immigration" (as you put it) should be made on the basis of whether those policies are good for America, not whether they are good for the GOP. You and I clearly disagree about that matter, but that's where the debate should stay. I think you do your argument no favors when you offer long-term political considerations to back your policy preferences. War against Hispanic immigrants would seem to be a losing proposition given simple electoral demographics.

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