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## GUEST OPINION

*The fact is, without foreign immigrants, there would be substantially fewer high-skilled workers in the United States. The number of visas given to highly trained professionals each year should be increased.*

# Support for legal immigration

*Editor's note: This is the first of two parts.*

**D**uring recent years, immigration to the United States has been among the most contentious issues. However, as a result of changing economic and other circumstances, immigration to the United States is no longer the issue it once was. There will continue to be considerable immigration to the United States in the ensuing decades, as there has been since the 1950s.

Recent research by the Cato Institute and the Manhattan Institute in the current editions of their leading journals sponsored by the Arthur N. Rupe Foundation provides the most cutting-edge research on immigration available. This research indicates it may be possible to come to a consensus on immigration.

This consensus would be that the legal immigration of students, entrepreneurs and others to the United States is valuable and desirable. The other aspect of an emerging consensus on immigration would be that illegal immigration is undesirable and should be discouraged.

The recent research in the Cato Institute's Cato Journal demonstrates forcefully just how valuable legal immigration to the United States is. Legal immigration is an important source — in many fields, the most important source — of high-skilled workers in the United States. According to the National Science Foundation, the share of Ph.D.s awarded since 1960 to foreign stu-

dents has risen in American institutions from one-fifth to three-quarters in math, computer science, and engineering, from one-fifth to three-fifths in the physical sciences; and from one-fifth to one-half in the life sciences. Moreover, U.S.-educated foreign workers receive patents at a higher rate than U.S.-born workers.

As the Cato Institute summarizes these data: "High-skilled immigration promotes innovation."

Moreover, the numbers involved are large. About a quarter of all individuals with a Ph.D. in the United States are now foreign-born, as are about 15 percent of those with a master's or advanced professional degree. More than a tenth of all individuals in the United States who are college graduates are foreign-born.

The fact is that without foreign immigrants, there would be substantially fewer high-skilled workers in the United States. The number of visas given to highly trained professionals each year should be increased.

At the same time as making it easier for educated workers to enter and remain in the United States, it is appropriate to continue to make it more difficult for undocumented immigrants to enter and stay here. There is nothing inconsistent with supporting legal immigration to the United States and opposing illegal immigration. These two positions are, indeed, complementary.

*Lanny Ebenstein is president of the California Center for Public Policy.*

## HAVE YOUR SAY

Your opinions are valuable contributions to these pages.

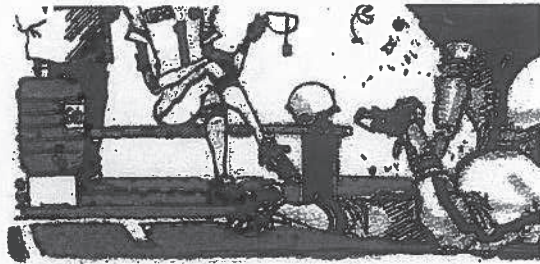
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## LETTERS TO THE NEWS

### Santa Barbara losing its charm?

Every city has its shabbier parts, but generally these gloomier blocks of streets are not on the city's central, most prominent thoroughfare. This is not the case, however, for Santa Barbara. State Street has never looked so tragic. Vacant windows of some stores that have gone out of business have had graffiti etched into them. There are too many homeless people to count.

And whose idea was it to put a generic department store in a prime location for a store with actual charm?

Even when the city geared up for the holidays and everything was supposed to look cheerier, it was looking less and less so.

There seems to be more trash on the ground and gum stuck to the pavement. While we're no inner-city L.A., things are slipping for Santa Barbara standards. Santa Barbara is a beautiful place. Let's keep it that way.

Tenley Force  
Santa Barbara



### CHOICE WORDS

*While we're no inner-city Los Angeles, things are slipping for Santa Barbara standards.*

Tenley Force



Union speech: "Give me a jobs bill to sign." But they won't.

A recent letter writer bases his complaints on one of the strangest statistics I've seen, GDP per person, adjusted for inflation, from 1962.

I'd say this is speculation based on an anti-Obama leaning, evidenced by the last paragraph of the letter — Mitt Romney, for example, said: "Things always get better after a recession."

Unless, of course, you have a total 1929 economic collapse, which we narrowly escaped thanks to the bold, brilliant actions taken by Mr. Obama.

On what grounds does anyone have to make an assumption, such as some 17 million jobs would be created if we used Mr. Reagan's economics? I well recall his frickle-down economics, as well as him signing the sub-prime bill into law for the first time in 1984 — the cause of most of today's foreclosure woes.

Since then, millions of Americans' jobs have been shipped overseas by our pampered corporations.

Virginia Mariposa Dale  
Santa Barbara

### A president by any other name

**B**ush vs. Obama? Who cares? In my opinion, President Barack Obama is the current in-

### Acknowledge job gains with Obama

Let's get a few things straight. George W. Bush was president in 2007 when the recession started, although a significant percentage of Americans have been living in homeless shelters since his father, George H.W. Bush, was president, which borders on a depression.

Employment statistics under Bush junior were bolstered by the unfunded wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, which employed up to 140,000 men and women.

To compare the present economy to President Ronald Reagan's, whose experience was in acting, is grasping at straws simply to discredit tangible gains (8.3 percent today from 9.9 percent in December 2009) made by the Obama administration, which would be even better if the Republicans in Congress would, as President Barack Obama said in his State of the

## Facts, not rhetoric, will show Afg

**U**.S.-led international forces should not remain in Afghanistan a day longer than necessary to ensure that country's stability after more than three decades of war. The entire reason for America's military presence is to eliminate the conditions that allowed al-Qaida's leadership to base there and plan the 9/11 attacks.

Despite progress, does enough evidence exist to suggest that Afghanistan can fend off an Islamist radical resurgence without a strong U.S. combat presence? Americans haven't seen it. The Obama administration nevertheless says it will end the combat mission in Afghanistan by mid-2013 in preparation for a withdrawal the following year.

President Barack Obama is no doubt keenly aware of this country's war fatigue. The timing of this announcement also suggests a keener awareness of the upcoming elections. Being presidential often means making difficult, unpopular decisions that don't always win votes. Mr. Obama must put America's interests first.

Mr. Obama may be hard pressed to make a case for Afghanistan. Last year, the Afghan president's

brother, along with 18 other, were assassinated by U.S. and other foreign

troops are to be expected. In 2007, 4 with 7 within al-Qaida's leadership to base there and plan the 9/11 attacks. Acc-tured 1 ly state gaining the upper hand belligerent Pakistan i and control over then said violent incidents 40 percent over 2010 i growing.

Those are just a few. There certainly are s least of which is the fi moving toward the ne hasn't marshaled eno his case for an end to

If there's a case to l make it in such a way dent that this isn't, jus

### ANOTHER VIEW

Dallas Morning News