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America's new pastime: immigrant-bashing

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We have always been told that baseball is America's pastime. In fact (after hypocrisy)immigrant-bashing is our new national sport. The draconian anti-immigrant bill recently passed by Arizona's legislature proves just how true this is.

Advocates of this law claim it is necessary to fight crime brought into Arizona by the "flood" of illegal aliens. In addition, the usual claims of higher unemployment, lower wages and increased welfare spending are cited as reasons for this law.

These claims are largely bogus. A study by Walter Ewing of the Immigration Policy Center shows that if illegals were to suddenly disappear, crime in America would actually increase. Syndicated columnist, Stephen Chapman, notes that El Paso, the ultimate border city, is one of the safest in America.

Immigrant labor fills the demand for low-skilled jobs, as native-born Americans have become more skilled and educated(In the early 60s, almost half of native workers were high school dropouts-compared to only 7% today). The National Bureau of Economic Research found that illegals have only a "modest" effect on the wages of low-skilled natives and that they actually increase the real wages of everybody else. The Cato Institute reports that studies conducted by states like Texas and North Carolina, have found only a slight effect on state and local budgets-which are more than offset by the taxes that illegals pay.

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The net benefits of Latino immigration are plain to see. The real issue is one of human rights. Americans always have had the right to travel and live wherever they chose without restrictions.

Libertarians believe that all people throughout the world should have that right. We work for and dream of that day.

Commentary by Tom Harmon, Carthage

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