

**SOME LARGER  
INSIGHTS AND LESSONS  
From  
“ORDEAL IN WAUSAU”**

**Unanticipated & Unintended Consequences of Purposive Social Action**

- Compounding effects – 1<sup>st</sup> stream (initial immigration; 2<sup>nd</sup> stream (secondary migration); 3<sup>rd</sup> stream (high birth rates & large extended families)
- Multiplying, confounding events (e.g., Hmong reproduction vs “white” reproduction rates--2→4→16→64 vs 2→2→4→8 great grandchildren)
- Relative increases, absolute & relative (1980-200 Hmong; 1990-4,200 Hmong=11% of total population, 25% of school population)
- Differential distributions (35% Hmong HS pregnancy rate; children under age 6=30% Hmong vs 7.7% “white”)
- Cultural lag & cross-cultural disparities (e.g., menarche, marriage & family patterns, values, parental control, differential assimilation across generations)
- Differences in Asian groups in language skills, education levels, “urbanity”
- Disconnect between decision-makers (e.g., federal government) and program implementation (local agencies & communities)
- Changing demands on social priorities and allocation of resources (e.g., from better to just more)
- Importance & Salience of public schools – the institution that represents and is an arena of immediate social change; a vehicle of democratic “social engineering;” a gateway and/or gatekeeper especially in regard to social mobility and the access to desired futures
  - \* involve people’s children – their projected future
  - \* neighborhood level – area of perceived control
  - \* neighborhood schools = proximity of various social “boundaries”
  - \* immediate costs – time, money, taxes
  - \* everyday, ubiquitous presence
  - \* salience of language, the medium of instruction and social intercourse

## THE RANGE OF RESPONSES TO IMMIGRATION

- A. "No Way, No More!" Really close the borders, especially with Mexico, but ultimately to almost everyone from everywhere.
- B. Breathing Room. Impose a short-term moratorium on immigration.
- C. Encourage LEGAL immigration while discouraging ILLEGAL immigration.
- D. Encourage more-selective immigration, so we get the people with the skills this country needs.
- E. Open the Borders to everyone, and especially recognize that functionally we are becoming one economy with both Mexico and Canada.

WHERE DO YOU COME DOWN IN RE: THESE ALTERNATIVES?

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MAYBE BEFORE ANSWERING THE BIG QUESTION,  
THERE MAY BE SOMEOTHER QUESTIONS TO REFLECT ON --

- Are we simply getting too many immigrants?  
How many is too many?
- Are we getting the "wrong" immigrants?  
Who are the "right" immigrants?
- Are we getting too many *illegal* immigrants?
- Since immigrants end up in states and local communities, who should be making these decisions?  
Can there be workable/enforceable policies below the level of the federal government (which, after all, monitors the national borders)?
- Should the impact of immigration and immigration policy on racial tensions be taken into consideration?
- Do we have too *few* immigrants?  
If so, how many is "enough?"

WHAT OTHER QUESTIONS OR CONSIDERATIONS  
WOULD YOU ADD TO THIS LIST?