Overcrowding America By Immigration Essay, Research Paper

All over America, some places more than others, immigration has become a major debate for everyone. More than one million people are coming into the United States legally and illegally. According to the US Immigration Guide, written by attorney, Ramon Carrion, legal immigration means people coming into the country with their temporary or permanent visas given out by the government?s consent. And illegal immigration means anyone who crosses over the border without proper documentation of the government?s consent, and staying for any period of time (xii). On one hand, the experts are saying those loose borders are very good because it helps out with the nation?s economy and ethnic diversity. But on the other hand, loose border can have a negative effect on the nation by overcrowding, keeping the wages of working down and drug importation.

America is a nation built on immigrants from all over the world. However, numerous actions have been taken to slow down the rate of immigration. For example, in 1924 congress passed the Johnson-Reed Act, which allowed fewer immigrants to come to the United States legally and strengthened the borders. And in 1996, congress passed the Illegal Immigration and Immigrant Responsibility Act to toughen the borders and deportation procedures (Masci 579). Currently the top three countries of origin for immigrants admitted into the United States are Mexico, China, India, in that order, Mexico being the highest with 131,575 people in 1998. China being the second highest with 36,884 and India with 36,482 people, both also in 1998. Plus, the United States admitted over 40,000 people from Africa in 1998 (Masci 576). And these numbers are increasing rapidly. In the 1980?s there were approximately 6.3 million immigrants legally admitted to the United States, compared to the 1990?s when 10 million were let in. And in 1998, approximately 1.51 million immigrants came into the United States illegally and 1.54 came in 1999, according to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) (Masci573). Now the Center for Immigration Studies says 68 million people have been added to the population since 1970, and a lot of that has to do with immigration since the fertility rate of American families has decreased since then. An estimation by the National Research Council says, ?that by 2050, current immigration policies will cause the population of the United States to be fully 80 million larger than without immigration, triple the population growth that would take place naturally without immigration (qtd. in CIS 3).

A major cause of immigration is that people want to reunite with some of their families who may already have citizenship in the United States. In some cases, maybe one of their children came to America for college, and the parent became widowed and would like to have a close family member to live with. Or maybe someone?s spouse came to the states to get a higher paying job, and later on the person decided, after saving money, to move with him or her. The government sees it as that people already living in the United States should have the ability to live with their close family, regardless of whether or not they are legal. And actually two-thirds of legal immigrants who enter the US are sponsored by families (Masci 581). Miguel Escobar, a member of the Mexican Consul in Douglas, reported that, ?the reason that women come to the United States is because they are looking for work and they want to reunite with their families in this country? (qtd. in Zaragoza 1). However, this may lead to problems such as women being sexually assaulted while attempting to cross the Mexican-American border. Xavier Zaragoza of the Daily Dispatch mentioned two women who were recently assaulted sexually by robbers while crossing the border (1).

Other reasons for people wanting to immigrate may include gaining religious freedom; to escape drought, famine or depression; the want or need to bring their business or corporation to America; better colleges for a better chance of succeeding in their career field and one of the biggest causes, wanting a better opportunity for freedom and better standard of living (Carrion 8). Very commonly immigrants can easily come to the United States and get some type of job that will pay better than how they were getting paid in their home country. In the past many immigrants were likely to come here and start a business, but now they are more likely to come to the United States and take the undesirable jobs most Americans do not want. Dan Stein, the executive director of the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) says that most immigrants are not well educated and take low skilled jobs for a low wage (Masci 571). This is directly effecting wages by not only people willing to work for less, but also by increasing the supply of workers, said the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS) (CIS 4). However, this is also helping our economy. Also, there is a great shortage of employees in the information-technology field, so the businesses are hiring from abroad to not cost them as much. Otherwise they would also have to pay to train the American workers and pay them at a higher wage. But opponents feel like for one, in the areas where there is low immigration, the undesirable jobs are being taken care of, so they will get done no matter what. And they feel corporations should train Americans to be employed as opposed to importing people who are unskilled and uneducated just because they work for less. For instance, Microsoft rejects all but two percent of its applications for technology jobs. Mr. Matloff from the University of California says ?how can they do this when they claim they?re so desperate for workers?? (qtd. in Masci 577).

Just as there are many reasons as to why people choose to immigrate, there are many consequences to the action. Immigration, no matter how you see it, has a great affect on all people living in the United States. The most commonly talked about is the fact that there is overcrowding in this country. Many Americans feel as if the government admits more and more people, plus all the people who are coming here illegally, then it will lead to a lower quality of life. Also it leads to loss of natural habitats, farmland and increased traffic. FAIR?s Dan Stein said, ?We?ve already got gridlock from sea to shining sea. So of course people are asking themselves how many new people does this country really need?? (qtd. in Masci 574). But the biggest concern of people dealing with overcrowding is schools. Having more people in the schools (many of which are already facing problems) may lead to a shortage of teachers and equipment.

Another argument people who do not support mass immigration have is that is costs the natives more money in taxes and insurance. As for insurance, drivers with insurance have to pay extra to make sure they can cover if other drivers do not have insurance. And, a very common question asked is, how can illegal immigrants have insurance without a drivers license, because if you are illegally here, then you can not really have a drivers license for the US. As for taxes, 5.5 billion dollars a year is spent on services for illegal immigrants, according to the CIS (1). They receive this money through education, criminal justice, emergency medical care and welfare, though not many illegal immigrants are on welfare. And on top of all that, since many of these illegal immigrants have low wage jobs, they are paying less tax.

Another major problem which comes along with immigration is dug trafficking. According to Rob Daniels, who is a spokesman for the Tucson (Arizona) Sector of the Border Patrol, ?so far this financial year, 125,257 pounds of marijuana have been confiscated,? and that last financial year at this same time 126,739 pounds had been confiscated (qtd. in Hess 1).

The fact that immigrants help to fill jobs is also an incredibly controversial issue in the area of consequences to immigration. Those people who are against mass immigration say that because of immigration, wages are staying down. Dan Stein says that these newcomer immigrants are ?poorly educated people who take low skilled jobs for little money? (qtd. in Masci 571). In Stein?s view and others who oppose high immigration levels, immigration increases a large supply of workers, which decreases the demand and wages. This may also make getting one of these jobs more complicated, and may push out natives who already have the job because the immigrants would work for less money. This competition between the natives and the immigrants is especially prominent at the bottom of the labor market, according to the CIS (4). By hiring immigrants who work for cheaper, labor costs are lowered, so other corporations are forced to lower their labor costs. So then, those corporations who had to lower their costs either lost money or have to also hire immigrants, causing the Americans to lose out. Stein says ?All we?re doing is importing a huge pool of cheap labor, which helps employers but keeps wages lower for Americans? (qtd. in Masci 573). People who are against high immigration levels also feel as thought these companies who are hiring from outside the country should fire from the American applicants more than they are. As Norman Matloff, a professor of computer science (a popular area which companies are higher from outside the United States) at the University of California at Davis says, ?There are plenty of people right here for these jobs? (qtd. in Masci 573). But many of these businesses just find it cheaper to hire from outside of the nation so they do not have to pay for training and the wages Americans require. People like Stein feel as though the future of the United States lies in ?improving productivity by producing our own people without training or education, not importing low-wage labor? (qtd. in Masci 574). Another reason for not hiring outside the nation is if employers lost the opportunity to hire from abroad, they would look to areas of a high unemployment rate. More people such as those on public assistance, handicapped and ex-convicts would, in-turn, have a good chance to get back on their feet, said Mark Krikorian, executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies (Masci 574).

On the other hand, immigration is very good for the economy and businesses. Alan Greenspan, the Federal Reserve Chairman, said that the large amount of workers created by high immigration have helped tremendously to the nation?s prosperity (Masci 571). The immigrants who come in with low levels of education are taking the jobs American do not want such as washing dishes in a restaurant or driving a taxi, and they work for less money, so the business can make more. Celia Munoz, vice president for policy at the National Council of La Raza, the nation?s largest Latino advocacy group said, ? I don?t think people realize how many important jobs are done by immigrants and what would happen if they all went away? (qtd. in Masci 573). Immigration also helps businesses by constantly having people available for hiring. This includes the high technology companies. According to Ramon Carrion, the first preference of people to admit into the United States is educated people with skills (42). People who support high levels of immigration understand that there are a lot of jobs to be filled, but not enough people here with the skills to fill them. As David Masci puts it, it is a ?necessary step in their (the businesses) efforts to stay competitive in a fast-changing cutthroat industry? (572). And by the companies just having access to people who already have skills, this keeps them from having to spend money for Americans to get trained.

Another very important consequence of immigration is that immigrants come into this country and never really become Americans. John O?Sullivan, a noted expert on immigration, and editor-at-large of the conservative magazine, National Review said, ?If every ethic group retains its own cultural sympathies, it will be hard for us to work together as one people? (qtd. in Masci 574). On one hand, not assimilating can be considered a good thing though, because that brings lots of cultural diversity into the nation. Whether the diversity comes through in pride for a certain nationality in a neighborhood full of immigrants or through foreign owned businesses. On the other hand, not assimilating can be a problem because some immigrants have trouble understanding all American rules and laws. Or they still have too much national pride for their country of origin and none for American. Discrimination is a major problem in non-assimilation that immigrants have to face commonly. For example, Rich Davis reported in the Courier and Press that a Hispanic family needed home to rent so a woman by the name of Irene Schaefer called about a place for them. The owner said it was available, but when she mentions it is not for her, but for a Hispanic family, there is suddenly a waiting list (Davis 1). There was also an incident there immigrants in New York showed their feelings against discrimination at a public welfare office. The recipients of public assistance protested because they felt unwelcome in the job center because they were not getting assistance with English translation (Allen 1). Which brings up another problem with non-assimilation ? the language barrier, even though there is no official language in the United States. To help get past this barrier, cops in Tucson, Arizona are taking a Spanish classes on a voluntary basis (that will probably become mandatory before the end of the year) because it is such a common language there, and there is almost constantly calls for officers to come help with translation (Teibel 1).

Lots of actions have been and are being taken in order to solve or at least cut back on immigration in America. A few ideas of how the United States is keeping the number low, of people let in the country legally is by choosing the preferences of what kind of people they want to accept. For example, 40,000 visas are given out annually to the first preference (scientists, researchers, Nobel Prize winners, international executive, etc.) compared to the 10,000 given out annually to the fourth preference (religious ministers, former employees of the United States government abroad and certain juveniles) (Carrion 42). Also, besides being choosey, the INS has grounds for inadmissibility such as a legal immigrant committing a crime of bad moral character or if they have a communicable disease.

One action taken against illegal immigrants that the residents of Arizona have taken on themselves is having trespassers arrested when they are on their property. ?Over the last two years, Arizona ranchers Roger and Donald Barnett have captured about 3,000 illegal aliens and turned them over the Border Patrol,? said Masci (583). Another is for America to get a better relationship with Mexico. One step has been taken in that direction, as Jesse Helms and Joseph Biden, two United States Senators, went to Mexico to work out a new plan to stop drug trafficking (because Mexico despised the old plan) and to talk about ways the two countries can begin to trust each other. Another way to cut back on illegal immigration is to actually punish the people who try and come to the United States illegally. Not only will they become an example, but if they got punished, they may think twice before trying again. Not to mention a point David Masci brought up, ?The INS estimates around 300,000 people per year move to the US without proper documentation. Few are ever detected and fewer still deported (582).

One of the most obvious ways to solve the problems of illegal immigration is through tightening borders. Right now, the Border Patrol is understaffed, however lots of people (including 89 percent of Arizona residents) find it appropriate to beef up the border with military. And the other most obvious way to solve illegal immigration is by the IMS doing its job inside the borders. ?The INS is making no effort whatsoever to fight the ever-increasing presence of illegal immigrants in this country,? says Peter Brimelow (qtd. in Masci 575). In 1986 an immigration law was established which punished employers who knowing hired illegal immigrants, but this is rarey enforced, according to Masci (572). If the employers is concerned about getting fined or serving jail time (after repeat offenses) then they will be less apt to hire someone withouth proper documentation. However, it is unfair for the employers to have to be immigration police. Plus, the illegal immigrants sometimes forge their papers to be able to get a job. So this stress may lead to discrimination against anyone of ethnic decent because the employer may be afraid of getting fined. Also, the INS has the ability to arrest any undocumented worker.

In conclusion, America, the melting pot nation, may be boiling over. The rate of legal and illegal immigration is increasing very rapidly due to many reasons such as family, better opportunities for college and career, or just a better standard of living, to name a few. However, every cause has an effect, and immigration is definitely having its effects on the United States. From such things as overcrowding, to low wages, to a good economy to having a language barrier and a very diverse culture. All of these are ways we can see immigration shining through. Immigration can be taken very seriously one way or the other, for it is a very debatable issue and very prominent issue everywhere you look in America.

Works CitedAllen, Michael. ?Welfare Recipients Demand Translators.? 18 April 2001. New and Views/City Beat. VCT American Patrol. 20 April 2001. Carrion, Ramon. USA Immigration Guide. Naperville, IL: Sphinx. 1998.

Center For Immigration Studies. 9 April 2001. Center For Immigration Studies. 10 April 2001. Center For Immigration Studies. 9 April 2001. Center For Immigration Studies. 10 April 2001. Center For Immigration Studies. 9 April 2001. Center For Immigration Studies. 10 April 2001. Davis, Rich. ?Room For One More.? 6 April 2001. Sierra Vista Herald. VCT American Patrol. 6 April 2001.

Dwyer, Mark Andrew. ?Idiots Guide To Illegal Immigration.? 21 August 2000. VCT American Patrol. 19 April 2001. Hess, Bill. ?Room For One More.? 6 April 2001. Courier Press and Staff. VCT American Patrol. 10 April 2001. Jacobs, Janet. ?Author Calls On US To Open Border To Mexican Immigrants, Legalize Drugs.? 29 March 2001. American Statesman. VCT American Patrol. 29 March 2001.Masci, David. ?Debate Over Immigration.? CQ Researcher. 14 July 2000: 569-592.

Schneider, Susan. ?Senators See Mexico Drug Appraisal Ending Soon.? 18 April 2001.

ABC News.com. VCT American Patrol. 20 April 2001. Simcox, David, John Martin, and Rosemary Jenkins. The Costs of Immigration: Assessing a Conflicted Issue. 9 April 2001. Center For Immigration Studies. 10 April 2001. Teibel, David L. ?Se Habla Espanol.? 10 April 2001. Tucson Citizen. VCT American Patrol. 10 April 2001. Zaragoza, Xavier. ?Women Border Crossers Pose Whole New Problems For Authorities.? 29 March 2001. The Daily Dispatch. VCT American Patrol. 29 March 2001.

34e