Immigration : History Of American Policy Essay, Research Paper

Immigration : History of American Policy The first move stopping immigration decided by Congress was a law in 1862 restrictingAmerican vessels to transport Chinese immigrants to the U.S. The Alien Contract Labor Laws of1885, 1887, 1888, and 1891 restricted the immigration to the U.S. of people entering the countryto work under contracts made before their arrival. Alien skilled laborers, under these laws,were allowed to enter the U.S. to work in new industries. By this time anti-immigrant fellingrose with the flood of immigrants and in this period the anti-Catholic, anti-foreign political partythe Know-Nothings, was already born. After World War I a marked increase in racism and the growth of isolationist sentiment in theU.S. led to demands for further tight legislation. In 1921 a congressional act provided for a quotasystem for immigrants, which the number of aliens of any nationality admitted to the U.S. in ayear could not exceed 3 percent of the number of foreign-born residents of that nationality livingin the U.S. in 1910. This law applied to nations of Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Australia,New Zealand, Asian Russia, and certain islands in the Atlantic and Pacific. In the 1980s concernabout the surge of illegal aliens into the U.S. has led Congress to pass legislation aimed atcutting illegal immigration. The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 allows mostillegal aliens who have resided in the U.S. regularly since January 1, 1982, to apply for legalstatus. Also, the law prohibits employers from hiring illegal aliens and mandates penalties forviolations. Debate over immigration and immigration policy is not new to the nation’s history. From time totime, Congress jarred legislation to control the flow of immigration. As immigration rises andhatred grows more laws will be implemented trying to release some of the pressure. Illegalimmigration has some pros and cons. I will discuss the pros first and explain them briefly inorder for you to get a better understanding of the position. It offers cheaper labor to businesses.By not paying minimum wages to the workers who are willing to work for a lower price, thisgives the business an edge over other competitors. Provides culture diversity in the united states.Bringing in immigrants gives more and different cultures to the U.S.. which can expandbusinesses to other fields of the world. Also giving people a more understanding of othercultures. Lowers the cost of products produced in the .U.S. that we buy. If the businesses can produceproducts and services at a low price keeping there overhead low, then we as a consumer willalso pay a lower price. Most illegals are skilled workers and helps run the economy. Other countries economy is also being helped. The workers bring money to their families outside of the U.S. which in most cases the U.S. dollar has a higher value than their own. Experts disagree saying the cons of this issue out way the pros. Next I will discuss some consand explain them briefly. Illegal immigrants pay no tax. If they pay no taxes then how can we as acountry pay for public services we as well as they do. Sending money out of our economy and sending it to their families abroad. If money is taken outof our economy it causes a monetary problem. this can cause an inaccurate account of money incirculation which might cause inflation. Lower wages. If an illegal is willing to work for underthe minimum wage then the employer will not pay more for the job to any other employ. In factmight higher only illegals and take away jobs form legal residents who are willing to work. When illegals come to this country they do not get tested for diseases that might infect thepopulation. Which can cause a heath problem. Such as polio, tuberculosis and other forms ofdiseases. Illegals cost the states money, paying for education, health care, and other social services. In analready under funded programs they give these services a more heavy burden to deal with. Republicans have reached agreement among themselves on legislation designed to combat illegal immigration. But with their package facing delaying tactics fromSenate Democrats and a veto from the president, they finished the week of Sept. 2 uncertain oftheir next move1 “Republicans need to show we can govern,”2 said bill sponsor Lamar Smith,R-Texas. “We need to show we can pass good legislation.”3 Dianne Feinstein (d-Calif.) called for tough and controversial enforcement measures, includingimposing a toll on anyone entering the united states to raise revenues to beef up the Borderpatrol.4 Sen. Alan Simpson (R-Wyo.) one of senate’s leading authorities on immigration issues,also proposed a similar border tax ten years ago, but was defeat in senators fearing it woulddetour tourists.5 Referring to the Democrats “If they want to go home and do nothing about illegal immigration,that’s a gross violation of what we should be doing,”6 said Sen. Alan K. Simpson, R-Wyo.,sponsor of the Senate bill. Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., and other Democrats on theImmigration Subcommittee said Republicans would have to choose between passing animmigration bill, or proving their ideological purity on the public school issue.7 Both democrats and republicans agree that illegal immigration should be dealt with. Theproblem is they cant agree on anyone purposes given to them. The Democrats say it is theRepublicans fault, the Republicans say it is the Democrats fault. With this type of finger pointingneither of them will gain a fast decisive action to resolve the problem. When it comes to illegal immigrants there are a lot of interest groups that have been involved inthis issue. From businesses to governments agencies. First the businesses, especially in agriculture. Agriculture employs more undocumented workersthan any other industry in the country. Half of California’s 700,000 farm workers are estimated tobe undocumented. “Three decades ago, the percentage of foreign-born farm workers inCalifornia was 50 percent,”8 the Chronicle stated. “Now it is 92 percent.”9 Agriculture, however, is not the only industry with an insatiable need for the cheap laborprovided by immigrants. Published by the Chronicle, a list of businesses fined by the INS in SanFrancisco includes a car rental company, construction firms, restaurants, clubs, a trucker, atravel agency and even a Protestant church.10 Everywhere one looks today, one sees immigrantworkers cleaning rooms in hotels, mowing lawns in the suburbs, pumping gas in service stations,doing janitorial chores in countless workplaces, toiling in the garment industry and doing allsorts of temporary jobs. These business groups have a lot of interest in illegal immigration. They provide cheaper laborwhich cuts costs and causes better competition. Richard Rogers, district director of the INS inLos Angeles, was quoted as saying: “If we were to increase fines 75 to 80 percent, we wouldprobably have a lot of people out of business.”11 Government agencies are also involved. The new immigration legislation nearly doubles the sizeof the Border Patrol. In addition, National Guard and active-duty armed forces personnel areused more and more along the border. Local police forces are also being authorized to enforceimmigration law, says Roberto Martinez of the American Friends Service Committee’s

U.S./Mexico border program.12 Possible solutions to the problem. Faster citizens processing, helping illegals country’s economysuch as NAFTA which is already in affect. Some suggest tamper proof residency cards,computerize the I.N.S., increases the number of boarder patrol agents, and build a wall aroundthe U.S. and problem countries. There has been many suggestions made in dealing with this problem. The Gallegly bill is one ofthem. If ever completed by House-Senate conferees, is likely to include several conditionsalready adopted in similar form by both chambers. As passed by the House and Senate, the billwould: Increase the number of border patrol agents by 1,000 each year between 1996 and 2000, roughlydoubling the force to reach 10,000. Make it difficult for people caught trying to enter the UnitedStates illegally, or overstaying a visa, from being granted visas in the future. Establish pilotprograms in which employers could electronically check the immigration status of theiremployees. Restrict public benefits for legal immigrants by increasing the time for which theirsponsors are responsible for them. This section is partially obtained by the welfare law, which denies benefits to many legal immigrants. Allowsthe deportation of legal immigrants who illegally accepted public benefits for 12 months ormore. Besides the Gallegly provision, which is in the House bill only, conferees face two other issueswith major disagreements between the two chambers: The House would require that any family wishing to sponsor a legal immigrant earn at leasttwice the poverty rate. The Senate bill would require the family to earn an income one-fourthhigher than the poverty rate. The House bill would also make it much more difficult to apply forpolitical asylum, both for those who apply upon entry into the United States or for those already on U.S. soil. Immigration experts generally agree that the Clinton Administration has devoted more attentionto immigration than either of its two Republican predecessors and he always has at least tworeactions: his initial public statement (determined largely by public-opinion polls, which showsupport for restrictions), and then the actual policy (as determined by his advisors and thevarious special interests they represent). Clinton proposed legislation that included expedited exclusion for frivolous asylum claimants,an increase in INS asylum personnel, and various anti-smuggling provisions. President Clinton’srecord on legal immigration. In June 1995, the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, chairedby the late Barbara Jordan, recommended a modest cut in legal immigration and the eliminationof some extended-family immigration categories. President Clinton immediately endorsed the recommendations as “consistent with my ownviews” and added that they “are pro-family, pro-work, pro-naturalization.”13 Clinton’s record on illegal immigration, since that is a major focus of his re-election campaign,particularly in California, a must-win state. Less than three months after taking office Clintonsent to Congress his Fiscal Year 1994 budget proposal for the Immigration and NaturalizationService, which included cutting 93 Border Patrol positions. President Clinton gave a speech inwhich he proclaimed that “our borders leak like a sieve” and urged that $45.1 million be spent tobeef up the Border Patrol, including six hundred new agents.14 He failed to mention that theHouse had already approved an additional $60 million for the Border Patrol, or that the SenateAppropriations Committee had approved an additional $45 million. One of the California’s response to the problem was proposition 187. This proposition seeks todeny social services to illegals and their children. Pete Wilson, governor of California,announces his intention to file a suit against the federal government for “its failure to control ournation’s borders.”15 He claims that there are a million illegal residents in the city of Los Anglesalone, and that since 1988 the taxpayers of California have spent more than $10 million ineducation, medical, and prison costs for illegal immigrants. My personal opinion is not good for illegal immigrants. I believe that illegals should deal withtheir problems in their countries, instead of coming here and creating more problems. If therecountry has a poor economy then they should fix it. In the long run it would be good for theircountry, but I know this is easier said than done. The illegals that are already here should bedeported. The term “illegal” speaks for itself , that is what they are called illegals. Also theyshould not live and take up social services that legal residents use. Some people say “They havethe right to use these services they, pay sales tax and don’t file income tax which in most casesthe government owes them.” Well I do not see it that way. I found that a majority of illegals thatwork here take the money out of the country and into there families in other countries. Most oftheir net income goes outside of the U.S. economy. My father came to this country over 30 years ago. He applied for a visa, which took him twoyears to get, complied with all regulations dealing with immigration to the U.S.. After arriving tothe U.S. he work hard to became a legal resident and finally a citizen, gaining all privileges ofthat citizenship. Why should others come and take those privileges while they come hereillegally. Out of the solutions given in section three the one I believe to be the best is the Gallegly bill. Ibelieve that a tighter restriction with added border patrol would be the best and reasonableoption. Building a wall with machine gun towers would be a great deterrent as in the oldGermany, but I don’t think that’s America’s style. Endnotes 1. Dan Carney, ” Social Policy ” Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, 9/7/96, Vol. 54 Issue 36, p2531. 2. Dan Carney, ” Social Policy ” Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, 9/7/96, Vol. 54 Issue 36, p2531. 3. Dan Carney, ” Social Policy ” Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, 9/7/96, Vol. 54 Issue 36, p2531. 4. Glenn F. Miller, Los Angles Times, 7/1/93,pA25. 5. Glenn F. Miller, Los Angles Times, 7/1/93,pA26. 6. Dan Carney, ” Social Policy ” Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, 9/7/96, Vol. 54 Issue 36, p2531. 7. Dan Carney, ” Social Policy ” Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, 9/7/96, Vol. 54 Issue 36, p2531. 8. Moises Sandoval ,National Catholic Reporter, 6/28/96, Vol. 32 Issue 33, p20. 9. Moises Sandoval ,National Catholic Reporter, 6/28/96, Vol. 32 Issue 33, p20. 10. Moises Sandoval ,National Catholic Reporter, 6/28/96, Vol. 32 Issue 33, p20. 11. Moises Sandoval ,National Catholic Reporter, 6/28/96, Vol. 32 Issue 33, p20. 12. Moises Sandoval ,National Catholic Reporter, 6/28/96, Vol. 32 Issue 33, p20. Bibliography Taylor, Monica. Workbook For Political science 5, Western Custom Publishing. Conover, Ted. A Journey Through the Secret World of America’s Illegal Aliens. Vintage, 1987. Hutchinson, E. P. Legislative History of American Immigration Policy, 1798-1965.Pennsylvania, 1981. Bontemps, Arna and Conroy, Jack. Anyplace But Here. Hill & Wang, 1966. May, Charles Paul. The Uprooted. Westminster, 1976. Carney,Dan, ” Social Policy ” Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, 9/7/96, Vol. 54 Issue36,p2531. Miller,Glenn F., Los Angles Times, 7/1/93,pA25. Sandoval, Moises, National Catholic Reporter, 6/28/96, Vol. 32 Issue 33, p20.