



B · O · O · K · N · E · W · S

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Maya Rutherford  
212-790-4388

**The Case Against Immigration**  
The Moral, Economic, Social, and Environmental  
Reasons for Reducing U. S. Immigration  
Back to Traditional Levels

by Roy Beck

"The 1996 presidential election is teaching us all that immigration has become primarily an economic issue. Some Americans make money when legal immigration is high and illegal immigration is loosely policed. Other Americans lose money. The line between the two groups is, roughly, the line between management and labor. Gently and in a distinctly democratic and liberal tone of voice, Roy Beck makes the case for returning immigration to traditional levels."

-- Jack Miles, author of God: A Biography and Director,  
the Claremont Graduate School Humanities Center

"This readable book on the most volatile issue in American public policy will make you rethink many of your most basic assumptions about American immigration."

-- Richard D. Lamm, former governor of Colorado

In the midst of a national debate about immigration that threatens to break down in polarization, THE CASE AGAINST IMMIGRATION arrives just in time to offer Americans a uniquely mainstream way of understanding the issues and of choosing solutions that will benefit the country as a whole, including recent immigrants. It decisively answers such key questions as:

\* Are today's levels of legal immigration dangerous to the well-being of American society?

\* During a time of stagnant and declining wages, of worker insecurity and a squeeze on the middle class, of growing income disparity, and of worsening problems in our cities, is it harmful or helpful to Americans for their federal government to import hundreds of thousands of foreign workers and their families each year?

W · W · NORTON & COMPANY · INC. · 500 FIFTH AVENUE · NEW YORK, N.Y. · 10110

TEL. (212) 354-5500 · FAX (212) 869-0856

\* Would lowering immigration levels betray the nation's history of opportunity and multicultural diversity?

\* Is opposition to immigration that is high above traditional levels necessarily an indication of racism or isolationism?

In *THE CASE AGAINST IMMIGRATION*, journalist Roy Beck brings a wealth of new research and enlightened humanitarian argument to the hotly debated, little understood immigration crisis. In so doing, he shows that current policies are damaging all segments of U.S. society (including recent immigrants), except the elite that benefits from an abundance of underpaid labor.

"Since 1970, more than 30 million foreign citizens and their descendants have been added to the local communities and labor pools of the United States," Beck writes. "It is the numerical equivalent of having relocated within our borders the entire present population of all Central American countries."

The results have been devastating:

\* Plentiful, cheap immigrant labor has distorted business decisions in a way that has slowed productivity growth, depressed wages, reduced worker benefits, and dramatically shifted hiring from native-born Americans to foreign workers in a number of both lower-paid and higher-paid occupations;

\* Black Americans have suffered disproportionately in the current wave of mass immigration, which has knocked large numbers down the economic ladder as employers have chosen immigrants over black American workers;

\* The middle class has been eroded and middle-class opportunity has declined significantly;

\* Crime and ethnic tensions have risen in areas of high immigration;

\* Potentially irreversible damage has been done to the environment; and

\* U. S. population growth has exploded at Third World rates.

Beck's analysis is the first major work to explain why the reductions in legal immigration currently being contemplated by Congress are not nearly enough to eliminate the destructive consequences of mass immigration and why restoring traditional levels of immigration is imperative from moral, social, economic, and environmental points of view. He brings together important recent

studies, interviews middle-class white and black workers affected by high immigration, and describes exactly how America's communities have been victimized.

In addition, THE CASE AGAINST IMMIGRATION shatters many popular, romantic myths that have confused recent debates. Beck offers a revealing new insight into American history, showing that Americans never have approved of immigration -- or benefited from it -- except when the numbers were a fraction of the present level. And although the Great Wave of immigration in the late 19th and early 20th centuries is often cited as a positive example of why the country should be able to handle the current, even greater wave, Beck details the depressed wages, social unrest, and disintegrating cities that were the actual results of that mass immigration. Assimilation has been slow. It is taking nearly a century for the descendants of the Great Wave immigrants to catch up with the descendants of the native-born white Americans of that time. The rise of both groups into the middle class -- and the entry of black Americans into the economic mainstream -- could not begin until immigration rates were lowered in 1925. As Roy Beck writes,

"The federal government's current immigration program primarily benefits a small minority of wealthy and powerful Americans at the expense of significant segments of the middle class and the poor. Attempts to protect the current level of immigration by wrapping it in the language of tradition or humanitarianism generally distort both history and the practical realities of our own era."

What precipitated the current crisis? Immigration rates skyrocketed far above traditional levels from the unintended consequences of reform legislation passed in 1965, and from relaxed rules for refugees from Communist countries during the Cold War. In addition, our immigration policy has abused the concept of "temporary refuge."

According to THE CASE AGAINST IMMIGRATION, arguments for sustaining today's historically high levels of immigration come mainly from a powerful group of conservative business interests and leaders of civil libertarian and religious groups. But their premises are wrong:

- \* Technically trained workers are not in short supply in the U.S.;
- \* High U.S. immigration fails to bring humanitarian relief to -- and often harms -- the sending countries of the Third World;
- \* The U.S. refugee system is so rife with deception and corruption that the annual numbers could be cut by 75 percent and still meet the U.S. share of international obligations;

\* Immigrants do not fill jobs Americans won't do, but instead flood occupations, drive down working conditions and wages, and create workplace cultures that often bar native-born Americans from access to jobs; and

\* The economy benefits in the long run from labor shortages that encourage increased productivity and technological innovation, not from legions of ill-paid workers.

Unlike many calls for change, **THE CASE AGAINST IMMIGRATION** provides guidelines that would effectively reduce legal immigration to healthy levels while also promoting social justice, economic growth, low crime rates, and a protected natural environment -- if only the U.S. Congress would pass sensible, historically informed legislation. Beck's proposals are without rancor toward the foreign-born among us: their numbers, not their individual qualities of character and national origin, are primarily responsible for immigration-related problems. Beck makes a powerful argument that drastically reducing further immigration would be the most helpful action that could be taken for the foreign-born residents of this country.

Dedicated "to an era of respect for the American worker," **THE CASE AGAINST IMMIGRATION** is a populist manifesto that affirms the traditional values that have fostered prosperity, opportunity, and fairness in America. At a time of grassroots political agitation for corporate responsibility and public policy based on the belief that American workers deserve a raise, Roy Beck shows how changes in immigration policy can help to reverse three decades of deterioration in our national quality of life.

About the author: Roy Beck is the Washington, D. C. editor of The Social Contract magazine, and a frequent speaker on environmental, population, and immigration issues. He is former Washington, D. C. bureau chief of Booth Newspapers. His April 1994 article in the Atlantic Monthly, "The Ordeal of Immigration in Wausau," sparked national media attention and commentary.

Title: **THE CASE AGAINST IMMIGRATION: THE MORAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL REASONS FOR REDUCING U.S. IMMIGRATION BACK TO TRADITIONAL LEVELS**

Author: Roy Beck

Price: \$24. U.S.A./\$31. CAN

Pages: 287

ISBN: 0-393-03915-3