

Legalize LA

An American Apparel project.

“Immigration policy should be generous; it should be fair; it should be flexible. With such a policy we can turn to the world, and to our own past, with clean hands and a clear conscience.”

John F. Kennedy
A Nation of Immigrants (1958)

What does Legalize LA mean?

Dov Charney immigrated to the U.S. from Canada in September 1986 with a student visa. He later received a work permit, and was finally granted a greencard in 1993.



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American Apparel

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Legalize LA is about recognizing, celebrating and embracing the diversity of Los Angeles, so essential to the city's success. As one of the most economically and culturally vibrant urban centers in the world, L.A. is not only the capital of the entertainment industry, it is also home to one of the busiest ocean ports in the world, and it remains the manufacturing hub of the United States.

Los Angeles also represents the largest concentration of immigrants in North America. With over 224 languages spoken in the city, over 50% of the population is foreign born. Immigrants include motivated factory workers as well as entrepreneurs and professionals. Add to their presence native-born Americans from all over the country, as well as native Californians, and it's easy to see why Los Angeles is a city where dreams are often realized.

However, despite the fact that so many experts agree that the productivity and hard work of immigrants improves our economy, the issue has been grossly misrepresented by the media and certain politicians. Businesses are generally afraid to speak out because they're frightened of reprisals by government agencies, but at American Apparel we have not been able to sit in the shadows while the facts get distorted.

Our dream for Los Angeles is that the over 1 million undocumented migrant workers who live here, and contribute to the city economically, culturally, and socially will have the opportunity to become legal residents of the city, and the United States.

Dov Charney*
Founder, CEO, Creative Director,
American Apparel

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9 YEARS OLD
AT FATHER'S SAIL CAMP
SUMMER '78

LA Flavor



Los Angeleno life is made up of exciting cultural experiences, many of which you otherwise couldn't come near without a passport and a Let's Go city guide. Here are a few of our favorites.

Ridiculously delicious ramen houses in Little Tokyo. Completely foreign bath houses in Koreatown that make a girl wish she'd grown up scrubbing her mom and grandma's backs too. All the Kosher charm you can buy (except on Saturdays) on Fairfax and Rosewood. The best dark

brown seeded bread ever at the Russian bakeries in West Hollywood. Family-operated Persian restaurants in Little Armenia that make you feel like you're a guest in someone's house... in Armenia. Affordable 90-minute massages without the aromatherapeutic bullshit in

Thaيتown. Friendly multilingual dentistry signs welcoming speakers of Chinese, Spanish, English, and anyone with teeth, really. And all the spicy varieties of Latin American food you can imagine... Salvadoran, regional Mexican, Guatemalan, Peruvian, Brazilian...the list goes on.

One could even speculate that without immigrants' life in L.A. would be very peanut butter and jelly.

How we got here: A Timeline

1789—The Constitution



The Constitution takes effect.

1790—The Naturalization Act



Naturalization Act of 1790 establishes a two-year residency requirement for aliens who are "free white persons" of "good moral character".

1808 Importation of slaves into the United States is officially banned.

1819 Congress passes an act requiring shipmasters to deliver a manifest enumerating all aliens transported for immigration.

1819—Adam-Onis Treaty

Adam-Onis Treaty establishes U.S.-Mexico boundary.⁽¹⁾

1821-1830 143,439 immigrants enter the U.S.



1841-1850 1,713,251 immigrants enter the U.S.

1849 The California gold rush spurs immigration from China and extensive internal migration.

1861—Lincoln



Abraham Lincoln takes the presidential oath of office.

1863—The Emancipation Proclamation

The Emancipation Proclamation and the Arizona Organic Act abolish slavery and permit African-American men to join the Union Army.

1863 The Central Pacific hires Chinese laborers and the Union Pacific hires Irish laborers to construct the first transcontinental railroad.

1863 Congress legalizes the importation of contract laborers.

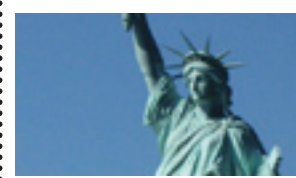
1863—15th Amendment

The 15th Amendment of the Constitution provides African-American males with the right to vote.

1871-1880—2,812,191 immigrants enter the U.S.

1883—Railroad companies search for alternative sources of cheap labor. Mexican workers are increasingly recruited.

1886—Statue of Liberty



The Statue of Liberty is dedicated in New York Harbor.

1886 Unoccupied lands in Oklahoma are made available to white settlers.

1891-1900 3,687,564 immigrants enter the U.S.

1891—The INS

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) is created.

1901-1910 4,107,209 immigrants enter the U.S.

1906 The Naturalization Act standardizes naturalization procedures, makes some knowledge of the English language a requirement for citizenship, and establishes the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization in the Commerce Department.

1910-1920 2 million Italians arrive in the peak of Italian immigration.



1911-1920 5,735,811 immigrants enter the U.S.

1910—Mexican Revolution

The Mexican Revolution begins. Thousands of Mexicans flee across the border for safety.

1917 Congress enacts a literacy requirement for immigrants by overriding President Woodrow Wilson's veto, banning immigration from Asia, except for Japan and the Philippines.

1921-1930 4,107,209 immigrants enter the U.S.

1921 Due to a lack of immigration quotas, more than 89,000 Mexicans come into the United States on permanent visas, making 1924 the peak year for Mexican immigration.



1924 President Calvin Coolidge signs a bill granting Native Americans full citizenship.

1931-1940 532,431 immigrants enter the U.S.

1933 Albert Einstein flees Nazi Germany and immigrates to U.S.

1942 The Bracero program begins, allowing Mexican nationals to temporarily work in the United States.

1942 Supreme Court rules that

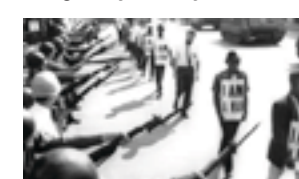
The United States has a long and fairly intense history of collective distrust for people we don't understand or don't want to understand. Indeed since "colonizing" this land in the early 1500s it seems we've had a problem with just about every race/sex/religion/nation possible for one reason or another. Often times this lack of understanding escalates into weird laws, unfair labor practices, cultural polarization and eventually lots of people being shot by lots of other people. Hopefully after 500 years of repeating this cycle we're getting better at understanding each other's needs.

Below is a brief look at the history of progress in U.S. immigration policy, and the setbacks we've encountered along the way.

California's Alien Land Laws prohibiting the ownership of agricultural property violate the 14th Amendment.

1942 Brown v. Topeka Board of Education ruling declares "separate but equal" educational facilities unconstitutional.

1955 Rosa Parks spurs Montgomery Bus Boycott.



1955 Cuban Refugee Program handles influx of immigrants to Miami. 300,000 immigrants relocated across the U.S. during the next two decades.

1962 César Chávez organizes the National Farm Workers Association.

1965 The Bracero Program ends after temporarily employing almost 4.5 million Mexican nationals.

1965 The Immigration and Nationality Act abolishes national origins quotas and turns focus to non-European countries.



1966 The Black Power movement begins.

1968 Martin Luther King, Jr. is assassinated.

1977 Amendment to the Immigration and Nationality Act abolishes separate quotas for the western and eastern hemispheres changing the quota to 290,000 immigrants worldwide annually with a maximum of 20,000 for any one country.

1977 Civil Liberties Act provides compensation of \$20,000 and a presidential apology to all Japanese-American survivors of the World War II internment camps.

1987—IRCA



The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) legalizes illegal aliens residing in the U.S. unlawfully since 1982.

1990 Immigration Act sets an annual ceiling of 700,000 immigrants per year to enter the U.S. for the next three years, and 675,000 per year thereafter.

1994—NAFTA



The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) stimulates trade between the United States and Mexico, creating massive increases in border populations.



1996 Clinton promises Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo that he will avoid "mass deportations" under the U.S. immigration policy.

2000 In a peak year, more than 1.5 million immigrants come to the U.S.

2001—9/11



September 11th changes the way the U.S. looks at immigration.

2002 The Department of Homeland Security is created, beginning the phase out of the INS

2002 The Department of the Treasury tells banks that Mexican matricula consular cards may be used by Mexicans to open bank accounts in the U.S. Mexican immigrants begin opening bank accounts at a startling rate.

2003—DHS



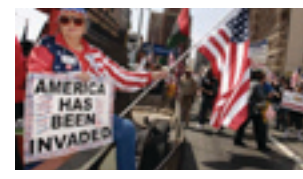
2003 INS functions are moved to the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), under the Department of Homeland Security. Border patrol is placed under the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), also under DHS. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) now investigates illegal immigration.

2006 On March 24-25 1 million immigrants hold protest marches in many cities, including Los Angeles and Phoenix.



2006 May 1 becomes the first "Day Without Immigrants" boycott and strike.

1789 1808 1838 1861 1863 1886 1910 1922 1940 1953 1964 1977 1988 1994 2001 2008



Who we've hated:

Native Americans

1838 "Trail of Tears" Cherokee Indians forced on thousand-mile march to the established Indian Territory. Approximately 4,000 die.

Irish

1862 The "Anti-Coolie" Act discourages Chinese immigration to California and institutes special taxes on employers who hire Chinese workers.

1870 The Naturalization Act of 1870 expands citizenship to both whites and African-Americans. Asians are still excluded.

Chinese

1882 Chinese Exclusion Act is passed in order to prevent an excess of cheap labor in the U.S.

1891 Supreme Court rules in Plessy v. Ferguson "separate but equal" case. This decision allows for legalized segregation.

Italians

1901 President William McKinley is shot and killed by a Polish anarchist. Congress enacts the Anarchist Exclusion Act prohibiting the entry into the U.S. of people judged to be anarchists and political extremists.

Germans

Jews

Japanese

1913 California's Alien Land Law prohibits "aliens ineligible for citizenship" (Chinese and Japanese) from owning property in the state.

1922 The Supreme Court rules in Ozawa v. United States that first-generation Japanese are ineligible for citizenship and cannot apply for naturalization.

Mexicans

Russians

1924 Immigration Act of 1924 establishes fixed quotas of national origin and eliminates Far East immigration.

1942 The Alien Registration Act requires the registration and fingerprinting of all aliens over the age of 14.

Mexicans

Middle Easterners

1953 The U.S. Immigration Service executes "Operation Wetback," deporting more than 3.8 million people of Mexican heritage.

1968 A new law limits 120,000 immigrants annually from the western hemisphere with visas on a first come first serve basis.

2001 Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Form Act provides for more border patrol agents, requires schools report foreign students attending classes, and requires that all foreign nationals in the US carry biometric IDs.

2005 1,000 volunteers, calling themselves the "Minutemen," start patrolling the Arizona border.

Some Facts:

The largest wave of immigration to the U.S. since the early 1900s coincided with our lowest national unemployment rate and fastest economic growth.⁽¹⁾

The percentage of the U.S. population that is foreign-born now stands at 11.5%; in the early 20th century it was approximately 15%.⁽²⁾

No matter how poor or violent the country is, only a small percentage of people would move, even if they could:
- Bangladesh: Only 3% would move to another country
- Ethiopia: 7%
- Iraq: 21%⁽³⁾

Hispanic workers earn less than non-Hispanic workers. In 1999, 23.3% of Hispanics and 49.3% of non-Hispanic Whites earned \$35,000 or more. In this same year, 22.8% of Hispanics were living in poverty, compared with 7.7% of non-Hispanic Whites.

Hispanic children represented 16.2% of all children in the US, but constituted 29% of all the children living in poverty.⁽⁴⁾

Prior to the mid-20th century, immigrants came primarily from northwestern Europe (Great Britain, Ireland, Germany, Scandinavia, France) and from Canada. By 1999, there had been a dramatic shift. Over half of the

foreign-born population now originated from Latin America. Europe accounts for only 16%, and Canada for 3%. Only 2% of the foreign-born originated in Africa.⁽⁵⁾

This Land is Our Land

In 1803 Thomas Jefferson purchased the Louisiana Territory from France for \$23,213,568.

The Louisiana Purchase encompassed portions of 15 current U.S. states and two Canadian provinces. The land purchased contained all of present-day Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, parts of Minnesota that were south of the Mississippi River, most of North Dakota,

nearly all of South Dakota, northeastern New Mexico, northern Texas, the portions of Montana, Wyoming, and Colorado east of the Continental Divide, and Louisiana west of the Mississippi River, including the city of New Orleans. (The Oklahoma Panhandle, and southwestern portions of Kansas and Louisiana were

still claimed by Spain at the time of the Purchase.) In addition, the Purchase contained small portions of land that would eventually become part of the Canadian provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. The land included in the purchase comprises around 23% of the territory of the United States today.

The western part of New York had been settled by the six nations of the Iroquois Confederacy for at least 500 years before Europeans came. The Iroquois had maintained the area between Seneca and Cayuga Lakes as a grassland prairie, which abounded in wild game including grazing American Bison herds. In

colonial times, the Iroquois were prosperously growing corn, vegetables and orchards, and keeping cows and hogs; fish were also abundant.

In 1626, Peter Minuit acquired Manhattan from native people in exchange for trade goods, often said to be worth \$24.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed on February 2, 1848 by American diplomat Nicholas Trist, ended the war and gave the U.S. undisputed control of Texas, established the U.S.-Mexican border of the Rio Grande River, and ceded to the United States the present-day

states of California, Nevada, Utah, and parts of Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, and Wyoming. In return, Mexico received US \$15,000,000.⁽⁶⁾

"In the whole scene there was an air of ruin and destruction, something which betrayed a final and irrevocable adieu; one couldn't watch without feeling one's heart wrung. The Indians were tranquil, but somber and taciturn. There was one who could speak English and of

whom I asked why the Chactas were leaving their country. "To be free," he answered, could never get any other reason out of him. We... watch the expulsion... of one of the most celebrated and ancient American peoples."

—Alexis de Tocqueville

(1) http://www.all.org/exhibit/ex_mexican_files/mexicans04e4ehib1.asp

(2) http://borderhatters.ssrc.org/Rumbaut_Ewing/

(3) http://app.ica.gov.sg/pressrelease/pressrelease_view.asp?pr_id=131

(4) http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/0/1/8/3/8/p18389_index.html

(5) <http://www.etricharvest.org/mission/immigratfacts.htm>

(6) <http://www.mexica.net/guadhdia.html>

Yes, it is "Made in Downtown LA"

Why does American Apparel care about immigration reform?

Simple answer: humanity. Self interested answer: because we do everything in Los Angeles (as illustrated here), and this city's economy as a whole is deeply dependant on immigrant labor. The fashion, food and furniture industries here alone—known for their reliance on this workforce—represent half a million jobs, \$18.3 billion in salaries, and \$106 million in tax revenues. If these industries were forced to move offshore (as so many have already done) because of stepped-up enforcements, the damage to the economy would be irreparable. But so many of these businesses are, understandably, afraid to speak up...

Well we've been talking for years now. We love L.A. We want to stay here. We want to keep creating jobs here. At last count we had 3,608 people working at our downtown factory, 500 at our off-site knitting facility and dye houses, and another 3,405 everywhere else—across America and around the world. American Apparel plans to hire 750 additional L.A.-based manufacturing employees this summer.

The Roof

Solar Panels, Makeout Corner, Smoker's Hangout

7th Floor:

Administration, Accounting, Reception, Dov's office, Wholesale Showroom, Manufacturing Planning + Administration, Sewing, Fabric Planning, Product Development, Retail Administration, Quality Control, Maintenance, Housekeeping

(Building 2)

The second building on our campus, at 400,000 square feet, is the same size as the factory. It is used primarily as a warehouse, as well as for shipping and distribution.

6th Floor:

Sewing, Mechanic's Workshop, Isla (Quality Assurance)

5th Floor:

Graphics Department, Photo Studio, Marketing Department, Public Relations, Web Department, I.T., Community Relations, Payroll, Lunchroom, Human Resources, Health and Safety, Legal Department, Medical Clinic, Conference Rooms, Fabric Storage

4th Floor:

Trims Department, Braiding Machine, Cutting Department

3rd Floor:

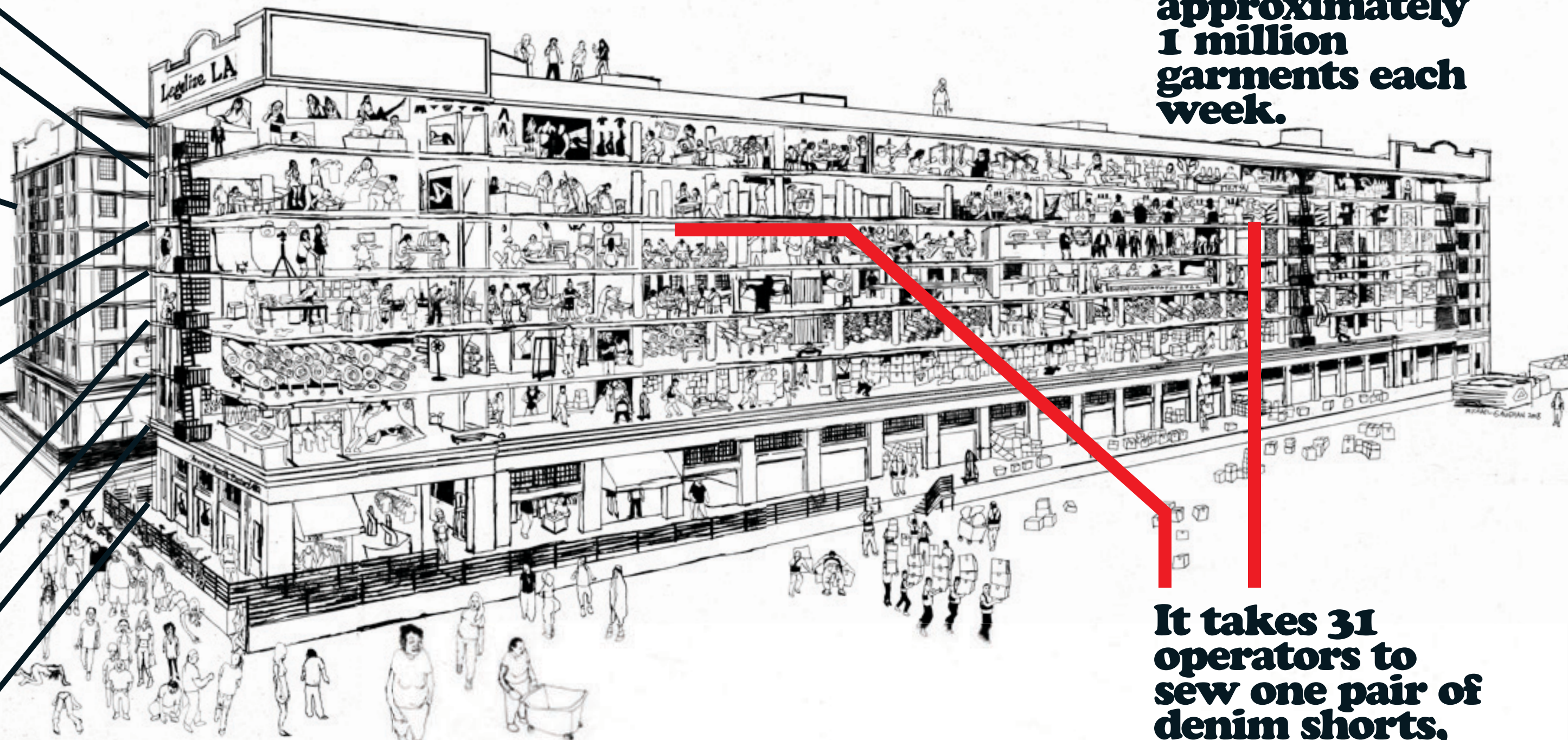
Fabric Storage...hundreds of thousands of rolls of fabric.

2nd Floor:

California Select, Viva Radio, Shipping, Sorting, Distribution, Hosiery Department, Sock and Nylon Machines

1st Floor:

Factory Store, Security, Lunchroom, Wholesale Customer Pickups, Receiving, Fresh Air (in-house logistics company), Fabric Storage, Taco Trucks



We sew approximately 1 million garments each week.

It takes 31 operators to sew one pair of denim shorts, and six to sew a basic tank top.



American Apparel employs almost 10,000 people worldwide. Here's where a few of us are from:



Mexico 1942	Japan 70	Spain 11	South Africa 4	Denmark 2	Albania 1	Greece 1	Russia 1
USA 1668	Sri Lanka 41	Nicaragua 10	Chile 3	Ecuador 2	Algeria 1	Guinea 1	Nicaragua 1
Guatemala 850	China 36	Australia 8	India 3	Hong Kong 2	Austria 1	Hungary 1	Scotland 1
Canada 558	Israel 25	Brazil 7	Iran 3	Jamaica 2	Belgium 1	Serbia 1	Singapore 1
Germany 257	Philippines 20	Morocco 6	New Zealand 3	Macedonia 2	Belize 1	Togo 1	Togo 1
El Salvador 262	Netherlands 18	Dominican Republic 5	Portugal 3	Nigeria 2	Cuba 1	Trinidad 1	Trinidad 1
UK 158	Italy 17	Puerto Rico 3	Poland 2	Poland 2	Czech Republic 1	Zimbabwe 1	Zimbabwe 1
France 121	Colombia 15	Ireland 5	Romania 2	Romania 2	Republic 1		
Korea 104	Sweden 15	Sweden 5	Somalia 2	Somalia 2	Egypt 1		
Honduras 101	Peru 14	Venezuela 5	Turkey 2	Turkey 2	Finland 1		
	Switzerland 13	Vietnam 5	Croatia 2	Croatia 2	Ghana 1		

A 40 Hour Week

• Most immigrants arrive in the United States in the prime of their working years. More than 70% of immigrants are over the age of 18 when they arrive in the United States. That means there are roughly 17.5 million

immigrants in the United States today whose education and upbringing were paid for by the citizens of the sending country, not American taxpayers. The windfall to the United States of obtaining this human capital at

no expense to American taxpayers is roughly \$1.43 trillion. This makes immigrants a fiscal bargain for our country.⁽¹⁾

"Significantly opening up immigration to skilled workers solves two problems. The companies could hire the educated workers they need. And those workers would compete with high-income people, driving more income equality."⁽²⁾

—Alan Greenspan

1986:

"Are great numbers of our unemployed really victims of the illegal alien invasion, or are those illegal tourists actually doing work our own people won't do? One thing is certain in this hungry

world: No regulation or law should be allowed if it results in crops rotting in the fields for lack of harvesters."⁽³⁾

—Ronald Reagan

2008:

Pennsylvania's largest farmer of tomatoes (and one of the biggest Northeast tomato farmers), Keith Eckel, has shut down his tomato growing operation because he cannot find anyone to pick them.

Eckel pays an average of \$16.59/hour for the work—and he still can't find native-born Americans to take the job.⁽⁴⁾

(1) <http://www.dosomething.org/node/170508>

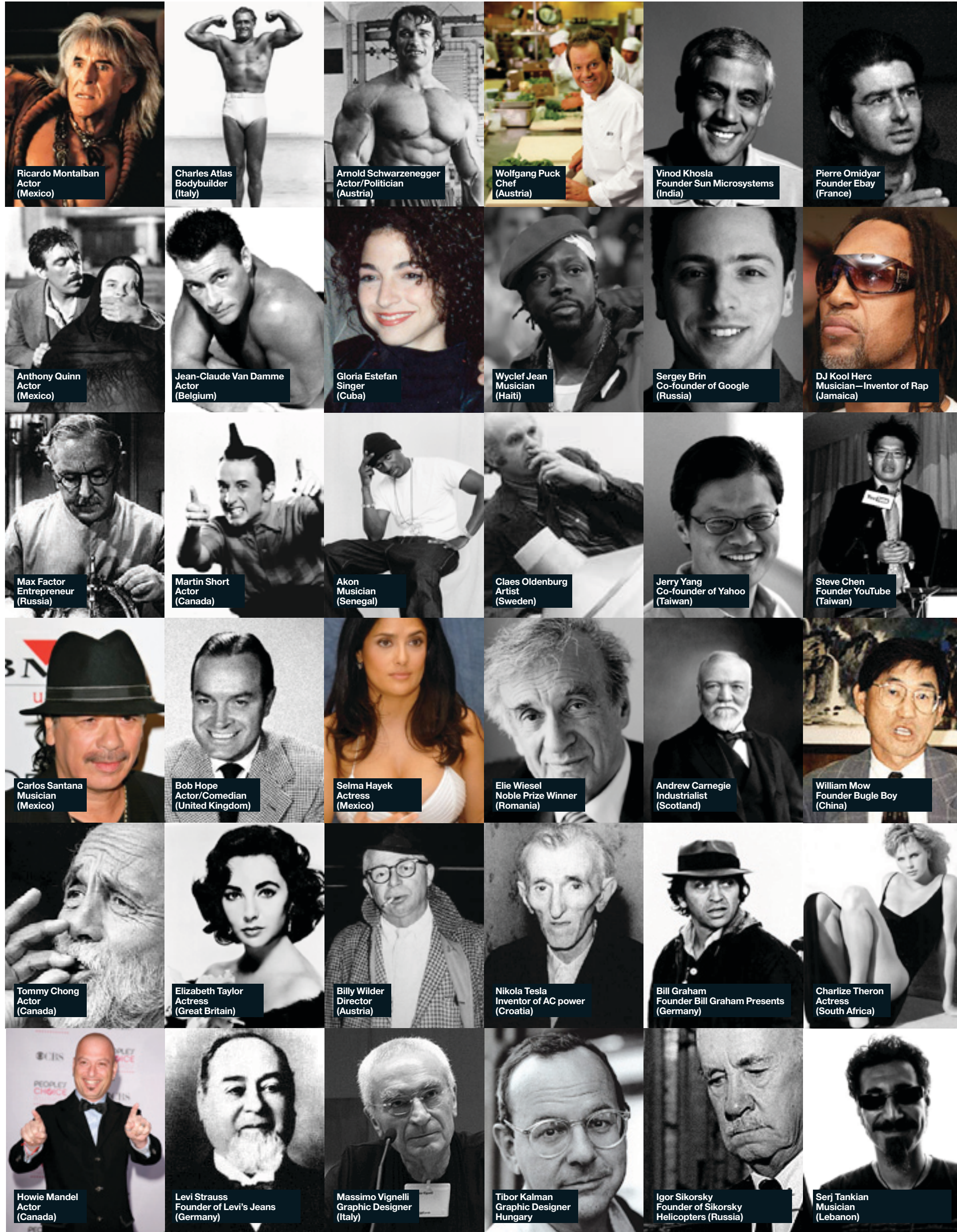
(2) <http://www.opinionjournal.com/editorial/feature/html?id=110008406>

(3) http://www.eveningsun.com/ci_8690071?source=most_emailled

(4) <http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/dn/latestnews/stories/021508dnbusgreenspan.ci1699a5d.html>

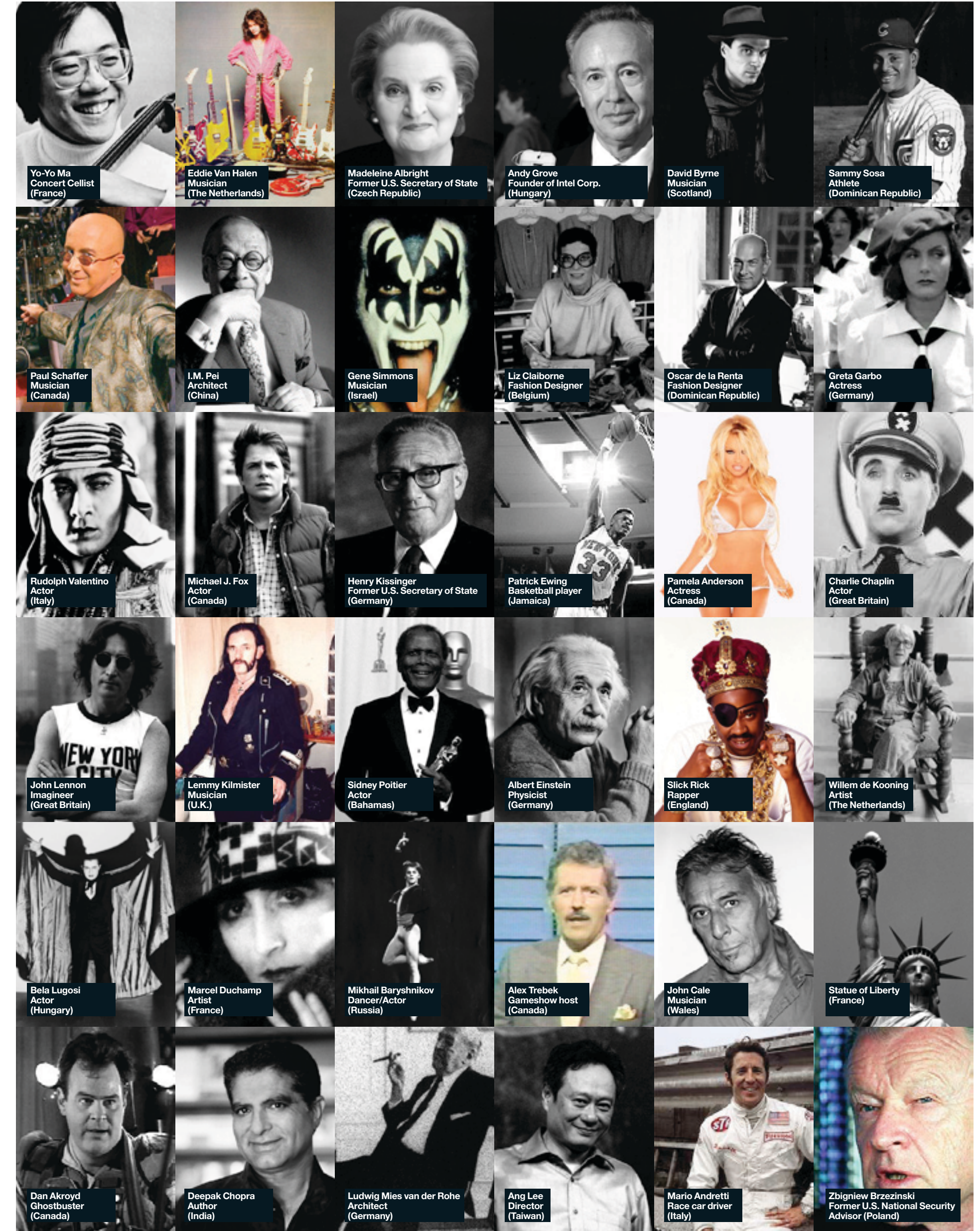


Some...



Being the cultural melting pot that it is, it's easy for United States citizens to overlook just how many immigrants are surrounding them on a daily basis. Immigrants, children of immigrants, and grandchildren of immigrants are everywhere in every facet of everything you do. Embrace this. It is pretty amazing. It will make you feel good.

Whether founding companies, inventing time saving gadgets, helping you find pornography on the internet, playing the Terminator, or fully ripping at guitar here are some first-generation immigrants who have managed to grab their piece of the American Dream.



U.S. Companies Started by Immigrants:

Bell Telephone Company, DuPont, MGM, Bank of America (started as the Bank of Italy, founded by an Italian immigrant), Goldman Sachs, Sun Microsystems, Intel, Solectron, eBay, Google, Yahoo, Infosys, Carnegie Mellon University (founded by Andrew Carnegie), Bausch and Lomb, YouTube, LiveNation, Paramount Pictures, Anheuser-Busch, Levi's.

• 25% of U.S. public companies in the past 15 years were started by immigrants.⁽¹⁾

• Indian and Chinese entrepreneurs founded over 30% of Silicon Valley's tech companies.
- Those companies generated 72,000 jobs!
- Those companies accounted for \$19.5 billion in sales⁽²⁾

• In 2005, publicly traded, venture-backed companies started by immigrants generated over \$130 billion in revenue.⁽³⁾

• Out of the six US-residing 2007 Nobel Prize winners, three were immigrants. That statistic would be a lot less amazing if they weren't in the US!⁽⁴⁾

• In 2006, foreign nationals at U.S. universities studying engineering and technology earned:
- 40% of master's degrees
- over 60% of Ph.D.'s.

• In electrical engineering, foreign nationals earned:
- 51% of master's degrees
- 71% of Ph.D.'s

"Many US firms, including Microsoft, have been forced to locate staff in countries that welcome skilled foreign workers to do work that could otherwise have been done in the United States, if it were not for our counterproductive immigration policies."⁽⁵⁾

—Bill Gates

(1) <http://www.americanventuremagazine.com/news.php?newsid=2012>

(2) http://www.ictcr.org/news/pdf/imm_entrepreneurs.pdf

(3) http://www.ictcr.org/news/pdf/imm_entrepreneurs.pdf

(4) <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/10/12/AR2007101201640.html>

(5) <http://www.miracollation.org/press/general-news/right-us-immigration-forces-outourcing-bill-gates>

The Opposition

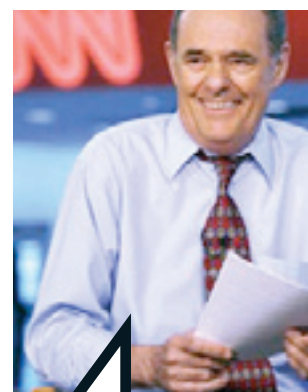
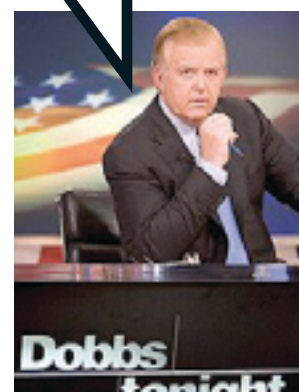
“These people are destroying America...”⁽¹⁾

Michael Savage

Radio host, political commentator

“This nation is English-only. Illegal immigrants should be in jail. I know it's tough, but you know what? There's a legal way to do business.”⁽²⁾

Lou Dobbs, News Anchor (CNN)



“Half the 100 million Mexicans are still mired in poverty. Tens of millions are unemployed or underemployed. Because of devaluations, real wages are below what they were in 1993. Thus the great migration north continues. Some 1.5 million are apprehended every year on our southern border breaking into the United States. Of the perhaps 500,000 who make it, one-third head for Mexifornia, where their claims on Medicaid, schools, courts, prisons, and welfare have tipped the Golden State toward bankruptcy...Ten years after NAFTA, Mexico's leading export to America is still—Mexicans. America is becoming Mexamerica.”

“One of the great social crises of this country is unrestricted immigration and an invasion from the south...I will cut back legal immigration to 250,000 a year and I will defend America's border, if necessary with American troops.”⁽³⁾

—Pat Buchanan
Former presidential candidate, commentator, author

“I'd build a wall. In fact, I'd hire illegal immigrants to build the wall.”⁽⁴⁾

Anne Coulter

Author, Commentator



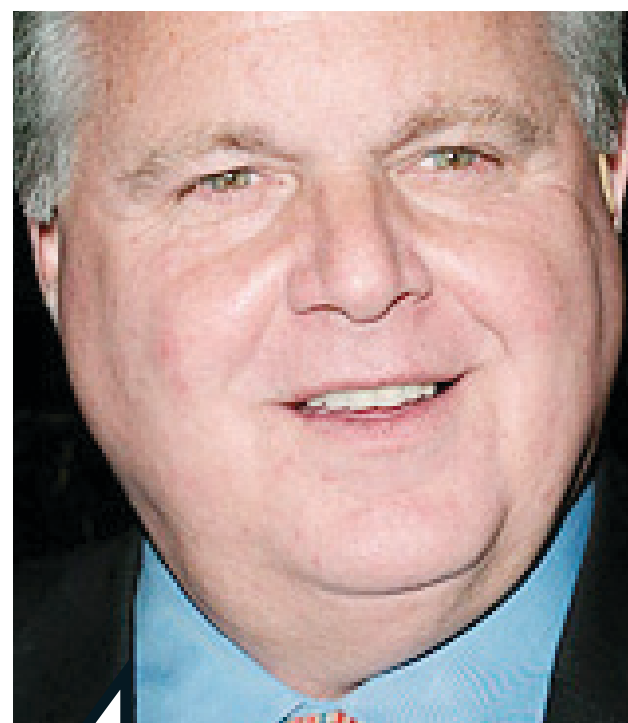
“You have human rights. You do not have legal rights. I'll treat you like a human being and I'll treat you with dignity, but if you break into my country you know what, I'm gonna take your DNA, I'm gonna put you on a plane and I'm gonna send you the hell back to your fucking country.”⁽⁵⁾

—Glenn Beck
Television host (CNN), conservative political commentator



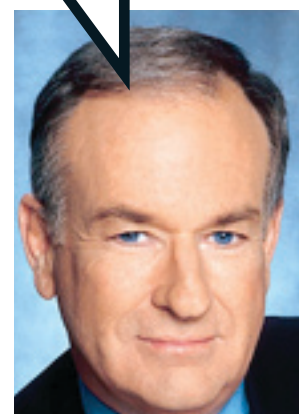
“America's illegal aliens are becoming ever bolder. March through our streets and demand your rights. Excuse me? You have no rights here, and that includes the right to tie up our towns and cities and block our streets. At some point this could all turn very violent as Americans become fed up with the failure of their government to address the most pressing domestic issue of our time.”⁽⁶⁾

—Jack Cafferty
Television commentator (CNN)



“America is run primarily by white, Christian men, and there is a segment of our population who hates that, despises that power structure. So they, under the guise of being compassionate, want to flood the country with foreign nationals, unlimited, to change the complexion—pardon the pun—of America.”⁽⁷⁾

—Bill O'Reilly,
Television host (Fox News)



“You don't have the right to protest you're allowed no demonstrations no foreign flag waving no political organizing, no bad mouthing our president or his policies... You're a foreigner.... Shut your mouth or get out! And if you come here illegally you're going to jail.”⁽⁸⁾

—Rush Limbaugh
Radio Host

“First of all, these aren't ‘immigrants.’ They're invaders. This is not immigration. This is an invasion.”⁽⁹⁾

—Niel Boortz
Radio Host, Author



The Minutemen!

In 2005, U.S. Marine Corps veteran Jim Gilchrist decided that even though America was pumping hundreds of millions of dollars into “Homeland Security” our southern border just wasn't safe enough. So he decided to take matters into his own hands. He and his buddies got some guns and some radios and some flashlights and a few pick-up trucks and formed a group to help. They are called the Minuteman Project. VBS TV recently had a chance to sit down with Gilchrist. Here's what he had to say.

“I say we start nuking Mexico today.”

Jim Gilchrist

Hear this off-the-record statement on VBS TV's immigration special. vbs.tv



“La Migra”

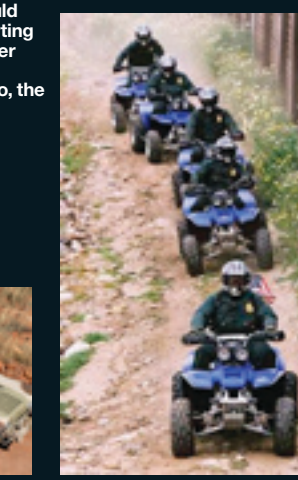
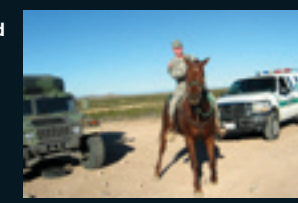
Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the largest investigative branch of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The agency was created after 9/11, by combining the law enforcement arms of the former Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and the former U.S. Customs Service.⁽¹¹⁾

In fiscal 2007, ICE made more than 4,900 work-site arrests, a 45-fold increase over the number in 2001, authorities said. Los Angeles mayor Antonio Villaraigosa said ICE has targeted “established, responsible employers” in industries that have a “significant reliance on workforces that include undocumented immigrants.”

“In these industries, including most areas of manufacturing, even the most scrupulous and responsible employers have no choice but to rely on workers whose documentation, while facially valid, may raise questions about their lawful presence,” he wrote. He said ICE should spend its limited resources targeting employers who exploit wage and hour laws.

“At a time when we are facing an economic downturn and gang violence at epidemic levels, the federal government should focus its resources on deporting criminal gang members rather than targeting legitimate businesses,” said Matt Szabo, the mayor's spokesman.⁽¹²⁾

—L.A. Times, April 2008



• A 2007 White House report said that immigrants increase the earnings of native-born workers by \$37 billion per year. Immigrants also make native-born workers more productive.

• While immigrants do depress the wages of high-school dropouts, a White House report stated this is not the primary issue facing high-school dropouts; if immigration is reduced or eliminated, it will not solve their problems.

According to the same White House report, immigrants and their children contribute more in taxes than they receive in benefits.⁽¹³⁾

• The National Research Council estimates that immigrants add an average value of \$89,000 to the economy. Immigrants who have more than a high school education add \$200,000 to the economy.⁽¹⁴⁾

• Within ten years of arrival, more than 75% of immigrants speak English well; moreover, demand for English classes at the adult level far exceeds supply.⁽¹⁵⁾

• Immigration from 1980-2000 raised wages of the average U.S. worker by 2%.

• The New York Times reports that illegal immigrants are paying up to \$7 billion a year into Social Security—money that legal citizens will use, but these immigrants will never see. In 2004, this was 10% of the Social Security surplus (what's left over from what is paid into Social Security after benefits are paid out). The Social Security Administration actually figures this in to all their budgets and plans.⁽¹⁶⁾

• 5% of the U.S. workforce is illegal.

• Main jobs done by illegal immigrants:

1. Farming: 50% (Facing shortages, beginning to go offshore)
2. Meat and poultry: 24% (Facing shortages)
3. Dishwashers: 21%
4. Drywall/ceiling tile installers: 7%⁽¹⁷⁾

“An enforcement-only approach will not address the full breadth of the nation's immigration challenges over the long term. Only congressional action will achieve that goal.”⁽¹⁸⁾

—Michael Chertoff

Secretary of Homeland Security

(1) <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/060327/dob01.html>

(2) <http://mediamatters.org/items/20070531008>

(3) <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/060410/savroom.03.html>

(4) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZHPmTz29Rk>

(5) http://www.ontheissues.org/Celeb/Pat_Buchanan_Immigration.htm

(6) http://www.wnd.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=36788

(7) http://www.ontheissues.org/Celeb/Pat_Buchanan_Immigration.htm

(8) http://www.ontheissues.org/Celeb/Pat_Buchanan_Immigration.htm

(9) http://www.wnd.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=36788

(10) <http://www.vbs.tv>

(11) <http://www.ice.gov/about/operations.htm>

(12) <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/16/us/politics/16imm.html>

(13) <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/16/us/politics/16imm.html>

(14) <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/16/us/politics/16imm.html>

(15) <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/16/us/politics/16imm.html>

(16) <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/16/us/politics/16imm.html>

(17) <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/16/us/politics/16imm.html>

(18) <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/16/us/politics/16imm.html>

(19) <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/16/us/politics/16imm.html>

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(22) <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/16/us/politics/16imm.html>

(23) <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/16/us/politics/16imm.html>

(24) <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/16/us/politics/16imm.html>

(25) <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/16/us/politics/16imm.html>

(26) <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/16/us/politics/16imm.html>

(27) <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/16/us/politics/16imm.html>

Feeling overwhelmed yet?

There are politicians at various levels of government pushing for reform. We try to track their efforts and other pertinent immigration-related coverage here: www.legalize.la

The United States is far less divided on immigration than the current debate would suggest. An overwhelming majority of Americans want a combination of tougher enforcement and earned citizenship for the 12 million illegal immigrants in the country. Washington's challenge is to translate this consensus into sound legislation that will start to repair the nation's broken immigration system.⁽¹⁾

—Tamar Jacoby
Senior Fellow, Manhattan Institute

“Having something that gives them permanent status and some road to citizenship is a big step forward.”⁽²⁾

—Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor, New York City



“Together with the region’s business leadership, I am gravely concerned that ICE’s current apparent focus on non-exploitive employers in and around the City of Los Angeles could have severe and lasting effects on our local economy.”⁽³⁾

—Antonio Villaraigosa
Mayor, Los Angeles



“I think this is all ridiculous. We have become incredibly addicted to this workforce — I don’t know what California would do without the Latino immigration that we have, whether it’s legal or illegal... we’d be up a creek without a paddle.”⁽⁴⁾

—Frank Barbaro

Orange County Democratic Party Chairman

“Like millions of Americans, the immigrant story is also my story. My father came here from Kenya, and I represent a state where vibrant immigrant communities ranging from Mexican to Polish to Irish enrich our cities and neighborhoods. So I understand the allure of freedom and opportunity that fuels the dream of a life in the United States. But I also understand the need to fix a broken system.”⁽⁵⁾

—Barack Obama
Senator, Presidential Candidate



Stay on top of where the candidates stand on immigration and other issues here: www.ImmigrationProCon.org www.ontheissues.org

We'll admit it's a lot of information to take on all at once. Even in putting this together it felt at times like we were stuck at the end of a long dark tunnel, or maybe at the bottom of a hole we just couldn't seem to climb out of. Fortunately, as issues go, there are a few small steps we can take as a country to push ourselves toward an eventual solution.

It is an election year after all. That's something you might want to think about—registering to vote, then voting. If you think about it that is one of the exact freedoms that these hordes of invaders are coming here to abuse, and regardless of your opinion on it all it would be a shame if you didn't make yourself heard.

You can buy the Legalize LA T-shirt at an American Apparel retail store or online.

Want a free one? Send a letter to support@legalize.la and give us three original thoughts about immigration in the United States.

Include your physical address and men's/unisex T-shirt size and we'll send you one, while supplies last. Please note, we may forward your letters to politicians and/or news media, with your personal information protected, of course.



And if you really want to know and do more, here are some resources that you may find useful:

Web resources on Immigration:

Compete America—Alliance for a competitive workforce: competeamerica.org

Pew Hispanic Center—Nonpartisan research organization: Pewhispanic.org

AlterNet: Immigration—Alternative media coverage of the issues: Alternet.org/immigration

Immigrant Voice—Grass-roots organization of highly skilled immigrants to U.S.: Immigrationvoice.org

National Immigration Forum—25 years of ensuring America keeps its vibrancy by remaining a melting pot: Immigrationforum.org

Register to vote: Declareyourself.com

Find out about U.S. immigration policy: Uscis.gov

Join us: Legalize.la

Support: Borderfilmproject.com

Read:

“The Politics of Immigration” Questions and Answers by Jane Guskin and David L. Wilson

“They Take Our Jobs!” and 20 Other Myths about Immigration by Aviva Chomsky

10 Facts About Immigrants

1. Immigrants pay taxes
2. Immigrants come to work and reunite with family members
3. Immigrants and their businesses contribute \$162 billion in tax revenue
4. Immigrant entrepreneurs create jobs for U.S. and foreign workers
5. Immigrants fill jobs in key sectors, start their own businesses, and contribute to the economy
6. Within ten years of arrival, more than 75% of immigrants speak English
7. Today's immigrants are not that different than those of 100 years ago
8. Most immigrants come to the US legally
9. Despite more strongly enforced US border security, the number of undocumented immigrants has not decreased
10. The war on terrorism cannot be won through immigration restrictions⁽⁶⁾

(1) <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20061101faessay05066/tamar-jacoby/immigration-nation.html>

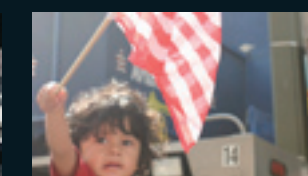
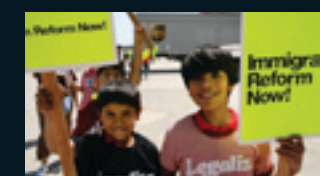
(2) <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9D06E4DD1430F9AA15756CA9619CB83>

(3) http://www.dailynews.com/cj_9125909

(4) <http://www.americanapparel.net/contact/legalize/>

(5) http://obama.senate.gov/speech/090403-f_oor_statement_3/

(6) <http://www.americanapparel.net/presscenter/articles/20030001immigration.html>



www.legalize.la

Immigration Reform Now!

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