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Limiting the Parity of Aliens Residing in the United States

Liberties are inevitably compromised when population burden exceeds the capacity of available resources. More than two-thirds of domestic population growth results from legal and illegal immigration.¹ Because US demands on natural resources already outpace most of the world, increases in population significantly affect the world environment. Since currently immigration is the source of the majority of population growth and birthrates of non-citizens are higher than citizens, limiting the birthrates of aliens would slow population growth. This legislation aims to curb population growth and the increased demand on resources that this growth would create by withholding citizenship to non-citizens who have more than two children domestically before becoming citizens. We do so in order to maintain our greater liberties and to preserve the standard of living we expect in the United States.

As Americans we passionately defend the right of choice and our personal freedoms. But at times these values conflict. When dealing with issues of population burden, however, conflict and ambivalence inevitably arise. Everyday we hear examples of overcrowding: rush-hour gridlock, prisons, slums, inner-city schools. Our standard of living is still better, though, than the majority of the world. Perhaps we may be able to sustain greater numbers, but with exponential growth we cannot expect to maintain our high standard of living. We are unlikely to change our expectations, thus ultimately for most people the desire for opportunity overrides the right to procreate absolutely. To

¹ From essay prompt.

maintain our freedom of choice, personal liberties must be limited. To allow American citizens to continue to enjoy the opportunities they have today, some population control is necessary.

In America, we do not realize how much our personal liberties are based on the physical space to exercise them. For example, we take for granted the fact that our children can safely crawl on the floor in their own homes. Other nations do not have that privilege. The Chinese swaddle their children because there is not enough floor space for them to crawl safely. Additionally, due to inadequate infrastructure and the presence of open raw sewage in most public restroom facilities, the floor is perceived as an unclean space in any context. The way we conceive of our realities and the things we take for granted are not possible for the majority of the world. Without space, we are restricted in the exercise of our liberties.

We do not experience scarcity of space to that degree in America. Our constant personal comfort often blinds us to the ongoing depletion and scarcity of the world's resources. Without adequate awareness of population burden and the disproportionate demand America places on those resources, we are not acting responsibly. Resources are not unlimited. While we may presently be able to buy and trade for energy and water, that debit cannot go on forever, especially as availability of those resources decline. Societal resources such as infrastructure and social benefits also become strained as the demand exceeds the capacity. To be prudent in our handling of any holdings we must restrict population growth, the source of which is usually legal and illegal immigration.

Penalizing non-US citizens for having more than 2 children does not affect the racial balance. Currently the birthrates of non-citizens exceeds those of citizens, which

are currently at replacement levels.² Encouraging the begetting of two children amongst aliens maintains a static racial dynamic and a zero-growth rate. With less strain on social services and infrastructure, citizens and non-citizens could more fully partake in the social benefits to which all US citizens are entitled. People could more easily better their lives and the lives of their children with more concentrated personal resources.

Examining the policies of another world power with stringent population control measures, although the People's Republic of China determines birthrates for all its citizens, the United States could never enact such extreme measures. We do not live in an authoritarian state. To know that a removed authority controls all your opportunities and choices destroys every glimmer of light and hope in your life. Additionally, draconian measures can easily backfire. For example, because of the cultural preference for male heirs, the implementation of the One-Child Policy exacerbated an already precarious gender imbalance. As a result, the sex ratio of those born in China is 1.06 male(s)/female as opposed to in America where the sex ratio is 1:1.³ With a population of approximately 1.3 billion, the imbalance magnifies to millions of men who will never have wives. The Chinese government has created a generation of men cruelly raised with a Confucian expectation of family that will never be fulfilled. Though an extreme case, in America we cannot conceive of this problem because the freedom of choice and the liberty to exercise that choice are at the core of American values.

The US government bases itself on a principle of social contract. Those who enter the social contract do so because in return they receive greater benefits than could be achieved without society. Consequently, the inherent rights of all US citizens include

² From prompt.

³ *The World Factbook*. "China: People." Accessed 9.11.04
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ch.html#People>

societal benefits such as infrastructure, education, and social services. At a certain point, however, liberties must be curbed to maintain equality amongst citizenry. As a non-communist state, absolute equality cannot exist. Admittedly, though, not everyone has access to the same advantages, thus the government serves to insure the general public's needs. At the government's discretion, liberties are limited for the sake of the greater good.

The right of procreation is a penumbral right of all those who participate in the social contract. Non-citizens, however, have not entered this social contract and consequently are not entitled to procreate absolutely. The ability of non-residents to readily obtain citizenship arguably has led to greater diversity than any other country has every known and is the major *strength* of US immigration policy. The US thrives on the industry and renewed vigor that immigrants provide. They faithfully do the jobs that no one else wants to do. As a result, immigrants deserve equal opportunity and social benefits such as access to education, driver's licenses, and medical care. In order to fulfill the aim of limiting procreation, immigrants must have access to full social benefits for family planning and access to contraception. By choosing to have many children, though, those aliens overstep their legitimate boundary of entitlement and would be placing an unfair burden on others.

With population control, the US will become an even more prosperous nation, because the overall income levels will be higher. Lesser unemployment and competition for basic amenities such as housing and medical care will follow. Traffic congestion will be less, and there will be more access to opportunity. We will focus our resources on

matters of immediate concern rather than anticipating the maintenance of an ever-increasing population.

The mention of immigrants and birth rates immediately draws images of teen welfare moms abusing social services. The media created these myths to serve the agenda of those who profit from a racially-divided lower-class. Immigrants as the backbone of the American workforce provide invaluable service and labor. Leaving their homeland in search of work after all contradicts the notion that they would immediately seek social welfare.

This prejudice exists, however, because the majority of immigrant populations in the US belong to the lower classes of society. Presumably, limiting the number of children resident aliens have before obtaining citizenship will slow the growth of the lower classes. Immigrants thus will be able to focus their resources on a fewer number of children. As a result, this legislation will encourage the fruitful development of an otherwise disadvantaged segment of the population.

The extreme population burden and low standard of living in China are unlikely to occur in the United States. To begin with, the United States has far more available resources and wealth than China. Yet, the disparity of wealth in our nation remains one of the highest in the industrialized world.⁴ In fact, the wealthiest 1% of America controls 95% of its riches.⁵ Curbing population growth and focusing the resources of the immigrants and future citizens of the United States will actually lessen economic

⁴ *World Factbook*. "Field Listing: Distribution of Family Income, Gini Index." Accessed: 9.11.04
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/fields/2172.html>

⁵The World Revolution. "Economic Inequality in the United States." Accessed: 9.11.04
<http://www.worldrevolution.org/Projects/Features/Inequality/USInequality.htm>

disparity. As social services and infrastructure are no longer taxed beyond their limits poverty will be alleviated, and everyone will benefit.

Opponents will point out that we choose to impose our values and our way of life on those who may not wish it. The cultures from which many immigrants originate may value large families more so than financial gain. At the same time, immigrants often come to the United States seeking economic opportunity and financial security for their families. We cannot pretend that to succeed in America does not presume also assuming a set of values and mores consistent with greater America. It is cruel to not begin the indoctrination into dominant values from the very beginning. We say anyone can go to college if they really want to. If a child cannot focus on academics because they have to watch over their four siblings while both parents work 70 hours a week, what real opportunity is that? Then those same opponents will blame lower-class immigrants for their poverty because of their inability to succeed at a set of norms in which they cannot participate. Social relativism exists only in the vacuum of academia. Employers, college admissions people, and society as a whole have a set of values to which those who wish to succeed must conform. Even with hard-work and perseverance, it is still difficult to succeed. Opportunity begins at birth, and we cannot ignore the contribution of high birthrates of the lower classes on the cycle of poverty.

Once immigrants obtain citizenship, they can have as many children as they care to. As incentive to curb the population growth of aliens beyond replacement levels, however, a permanent bar for citizenship will be placed on those who choose to have more than two children. Fundamental in rhetoric as well as in practice is the idea of choice. People who wish to participate in the social contract as citizens of the United

States must also choose to abide by regulations imposed in that contract. As a process of indoctrination, limiting reproduction benefits immigrants who will then be able to partake in the opportunity of the United States. Ultimately to preserve the opportunities of all citizens, the birthrate of non-citizens should be limited.