

New Needs Without New Means

To assess the impact of any society on the environment, the formula $I=PAT$ can be used as a guideline (Ehrlich and Ehrlich 1990).

I = Impact; P=Number of people

A=Index of affluence or average consumption of resources per person

T= Technology or index of the environmental disruptiveness of the technology used

Ehrlich and Ehrlich (1990) concluded that all nations, rich or poor, have a population problem. In rich nations, the rate of population growth is low, but the multipliers A and T are large. In contrast, the multiplier P is very large in poor nations. The total impact on the environment can be decreased by lowering one of the three factors (P, A or T) as long as the other two do not increase to offset the difference.

Although I do not disagree with the Ehrlichs' conclusion, I do not believe that Somalia has an overpopulation problem. Somalia is the same size as Texas and has one-third of the population. In my view, Somalia is affected by a syndrome that could be called "new needs without new means." After years of European occupation, Somalis have learned to eat what Europeans eat and wear what Europeans wear. As a consequence, the average consumption of resources per person has increased (multiplier A). The Western lifestyle was introduced into the country, but Western know-how and technologies were not. Since Western technology was not available, the use of inappropriate technology (e.g., destruction of forests to obtain charcoal) was inevitable. After independence, Somalia became a net importer of Western products. To buy these products, Somalis had to sell their livestock. Selling livestock had an unexpected negative impact on the environment. Year after year, the imported products became more and more expensive, and Somalis had to sell more of their livestock to buy the same commodities. Consequently, the pastoralists had to increase their herds, causing the land to be overstocked and overgrazed.

In the future, the West has two choices in dealing with countries like Somalia. The first is to share technology

with them. The second choice is to give them loans to buy Western products. Debt is already a serious problem for many African countries. Timberlake (1988) quoted a World Bank conclusion of 1984: "unless corrective measures are taken the external resource position of Sub-Saharan Africa is likely to become disastrous in the next few years." The former president of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, put it in this way: "Africa's debt burden is intolerable. We cannot pay. You know it and all our other creditors know it. It is not a rhetorical question when I ask, should we really let our people starve so that we can pay our debts" (Timberlake 1988). Since these countries will not be able to pay their debts, recolonization could be an attractive alternative for the West. However, in the long run, this will make life harder for both sides. ■

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Book Review

Nations of Immigrants: Australia, the United States, and International Migration

Oxford University Press,
Melbourne, 1992

Edited by

Gary P. Freeman and James Jupp

Reviewed by Nobuaki Suyama

Comparative immigration policy is in fashion. A comparative perspective always gives innovative, fresh viewpoints. This book explores the similarities and differences between Australia and the United States, two major immigrant-receiving countries whose official language is English. The title suggests that these countries are not only receivers of immigrants, but that they have been founded and developed by successive generations of immigrants. Although this concept has been popular in the United States, it is a relatively recent one in Australia. This is perhaps because everyone in the "melting pot" is no more or less American than anyone else, although it took a long time to place black citizens on the same footing. On the other hand, Australia started as Britain's penal colony and retained British attitudes. Australians were predominantly "British" and non-British settlers were expected to conform.

The book consists of four parts: the politics regarding intake and control, the economics of immigration, settlement policy and newcomers' social integration. The chapters included are, on the whole, quite good and will be useful to students of comparative politics, immigration and ethnic affairs. However, it is a pity that with the exception of the chapter on microeconomic analysis, the others do not pursue an integrated comparison even though various contributors make occasional references to the other country. Even a chapter jointly written by an American and an Australian (Freeman and Betts) deals with each country's case under a separate heading.

Birrell discusses a recent development in Australian policy to tighten up the border control to avoid having people circumvent the rules. Miller, as well as Bean and Fix, discusses immigration policy in the United States, which put through two important pieces of tough legislation in 1986 and 1990, although their effect was not as great as expected. These chapters demonstrate that immigration policy makers in developed countries are now on the defensive in the face of migration from the South. On the other hand, Miller writes, "The capacity of the United States to absorb and integrate immigrants has thus far not shown serious signs of weakening, although most Americans clearly want to reduce immigration, particularly illegal migration" (1992, 71). Thus, the United States' failed attempts to crack down on illegal immigrants can be interpreted as a calculated response to negative public attitudes and a concession to capitalist interests.

Some economists say that, while the Australian literature is full of examinations of the causal relationship between immigration and national aggregates, American studies focus on immigration's effects on microcosmic labour markets. Macroeconomic analysis concludes that immigration has little bearing on national demand and supply, such as household consumption, government sector demands, investment and savings. It is widely accepted among Australian economists that immigration doesn't necessarily create unemployment, have a negative impact on real wage growth or exacerbate inflation. Past research in Australia demonstrates that immigration generates only moderate output growth per capita. It is speculated that this small positive effect is derived from migrant skills, economy of scale or technological development.

The microeconomic study concludes that Australia and the United States "demonstrate an ongoing capacity to successfully integrate newcomers into varied and dynamic immigrant societies." More immigrants to the U.S. than native-born Americans are self-employed, but are not as successful as nonimmigrant small-business owners,

while immigrants to Australia are no more likely than native-born Australians to be self-employed. Still, their businesses are more prosperous. The data also show that "the average skill level of immigrants has increased through the post-war period in Australia, but decreased in recent decades in the United States." This is a direct consequence of Australia's points system, which focuses on occupational skills, and the United States' emphasis on family reunion and other considerations.

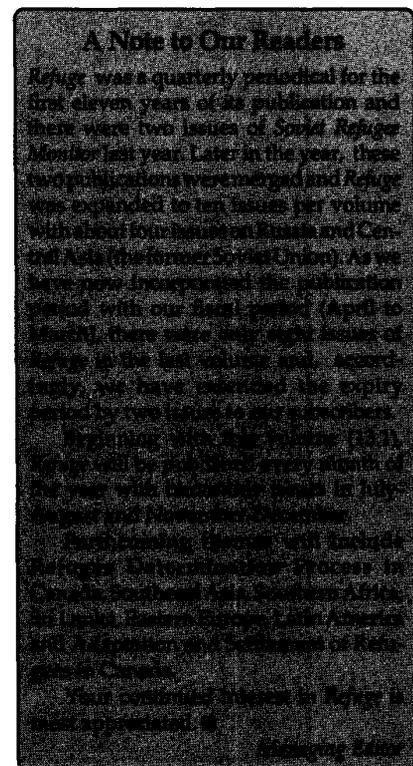
Multiculturalism is Australia's official response to a society that is increasingly less and less British. Non-British members no longer have to feel that they constitute an imperfect segment of Australian society. They can be proud that their unique background complements Australian culture. Although this policy of integrating overseas-born Aussies and first-generation ethnic communities seems good, Castles has a critical look at its socio-economic basis. Both he and Webber demonstrate that there is a correlation between ethnicity and class, and some migrant groups are likely to be disadvantaged in their economic achievement. There is an inevitable tension between universalism and particularism—a desire to be included and to remain distinct. On the other hand, DeSipio and de la Garza assert that the United States' incorporation of foreign-born naturalized citizens "on the basis of individual liberal principles is a defensible alternative to a policy of explicit multiculturalism."

Even though this book covers almost every important aspect of immigration policy, one facet that should have been given greater emphasis is international relations, especially because the book's subtitle refers specifically to international migration. The obvious difference between the two countries is their size in terms of population and their respective rank in international society. The impact of these factors on immigration to each country and their effects on immigration policy making are not sufficiently discussed, although they are occasionally touched upon. Questions like the following should have been raised. Does the United States' commitment to maintain-

ing world order in the postwar period have any relevance in shaping its immigration policy, particularly with regard to refugee admission? Has Australia's position in the Asian-Pacific region influenced its national immigration policy? How can Third World immigration to these two economically-advanced Western countries be placed in the larger context of North-South relations?

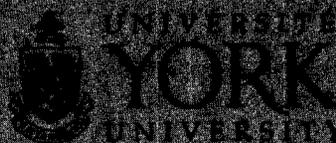
A multidisciplinary anthology tends to lack an overall theoretical framework. "The most striking difference between our two cases is that the role of the state in immigration matters has been far more longstanding, extensive, and decisive in Australia than the United States." Then it would have been interesting to integrate the writing around the theme of state-society relations. This could have been discussed from various disciplinary angles. Finally, the reader may be puzzled to find only a few tables and graphs showing immigration data, although other books in the same genre usually have more supporting information. ■

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