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## **Immigration: Global Warming on the Right**

**by Scott McPherson**

Honest debate on issues such as national health care, free trade, energy policy, and environmental controls is nearly impossible today. Something wicked this way comes, claims the Left, and it trumps any quaint old arguments about freedom and individual initiative. You see, man-made global warming is wreaking havoc on our delicate planet. Doomsday is near.

Unless. Unless we stop all this talk about freedom, individual rights, and the dangers of big government. There simply isn't enough *time* to have these discussions. We have to *do something*.

Of course, the rub is in the *doing* of that *something*. Precisely those issues we most *need* to debate — the importance of private choice over government planning — become nonissues in the shadow of looming death and destruction. That's the great coup of global warming's disciples: we can't stand around *talking* about these things while Mother Earth suffers. Just give them the power to fight the menace *now* — along with power over all that other stuff — and they'll take care of it. No need to even say thanks.

Well, the Right has its own trump card, and it's immigration. Naturally, the anti-immigrant types always assure us that they're not opposed to immigration. No, they just oppose "illegal" immigration. (Like the allegations listed below, differentiating between "legal" and "illegal" immigration is a red herring.) That, we're told, is the real danger we face. Little brown people — 12 million at last count — are coming to take away our jobs, drain our welfare programs, ruin our schools, fill up our hospitals, dilute our culture, and change our language. Doomsday is near.

Unless. Unless we stop all this talk about the value of immigration and the tremendous benefits it has always brought. Or our country's proud history of open borders. Or freedom, individual rights, and the dangers of big government. We have to do *something*.

Once upon a time we could afford to have these discussions, and those of us who support immigration were largely winning the argument. While the federal government would eventually come to micro-manage immigration with a point system or work visas or guest-worker programs, the idea that immigration was a "problem" was largely overshadowed by an implicit understanding that immigration is *good*.

But everything has changed in our post-9/11 world. Just as global warming threatens our very security, so too does the illegal immigrant, we're told. Among his other debits, he could also be a *terrorist*.

And the anti-immigrationists have the solution: mass deportations; a national ID card; fences along the border; more border-patrol agents; activation of the National Guard; re-activation of the state militia; allowing workers "displaced" by an "illegal" to sue (now the law in Oklahoma); local police departments investigating people's citizenship status; regular raids on employers of migrant labor; English-only initiatives. The list could go on and on. Enough of this *talk* about the dangers of big government. Just give them the power to fight the menace *now*. No need to even say thanks.

It's no good to remind them that a pro-immigration policy, even completely open borders, does not mean baring our throats; law-enforcement officers would retain the authority to investigate and apprehend anyone suspected of committing a crime.

No. Government can be made big enough, they say, to keep out *millions* who want to come here to make a better life for themselves. But it can't be trusted to do its job, and keep out a handful that may be up to no good.

We should oppose anyone who wants government to have more control over people's lives — especially if that person wants all debate to cease *now* so that they can *do something*. Usually more skeptical about government power, folks on the Right show a strange faith when it comes to immigration. While they rightly raise alarm over the Left's power grab under the guise of battling global warming, they embrace big government to fight a battle of their own — and, like the Left, ask that we not allow all this silly talk about freedom, oppressive government, and individual rights to stand in the way.

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