Persuasion of Solution – Immigration

Within the United States there is a vast array of cultures, with many holidays, traditions, and celebrations on display. This is part of what makes the U. S. the great nation it is, as well as making it one of the few places where one can see that great mix of heritage. To obtain this blended country, the United States has an abundance of immigrants from a variety of different locations around the world. However, not all immigrants are welcomed in the United States and many are the recipients of hatred. In addition, the process to legally reside in the U.S. has become backlogged and difficult, and is excluding many people. This animosity and discrimination towards immigrants is unnecessary, and is something all citizens, in addition to the government, have the power to solve. excellent

Many people have come and are still coming to the United States in search of freedom from religious or political persecution, better economic opportunities, and overall the chance for a better life source?. While many people might say that the United States does not have an obligation to take on and help these people, trying to help the portion we can is something fairly simple our country can do (Lamey). People from all over the world have taken many different paths to help settle and build the United States, and shape its identity today (Yung). Which does what?

The United States started completely open to new settlers, but over time the policy towards immigrants began to change. Many acts passed by Congress throughout time, such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882,; the Immigration Act of 1917 (anti-Asian settlement),; and the Quota Act of 1921 (in favor of Northern and Western European immigrants) all controlled

who could enter the United States simply based upon where the person resided (Yung). The determining fact of whether or not you could enter our country, no matter what you were trying to escape from or were hoping to create, was your country of origin (Yung). Good background

This discrimination was also seen in the two biggest ports of entry into the United States. Ellis Island in New York was a processing center for mostly European travelers, and most of them would only spend a few hours or days at the station. However, the Angel Island Immigration Station in San Francisco Bay processed mainly Asian immigrants source?. Due to immigration laws put in place to restrict Asians from entering the U. S., many people would spend weeks or months at that facility (Yung). ~~This mistreatment presents a problem, as if a country is trying to limit who can enter their nation it should be based upon something such as security reasons, not just the area they are coming from.~~ Set this up as the context for the problem

For most people the biggest concerns with immigrants are normally geared towards illegal immigrants. Many citizens feel that the illegal immigrants take job opportunities away from them, and therefore have resentment towards them source?. However, this is not the case. Studies have shown that most American workers do not compete directly with these immigrants and the immigrants don't have a big impact on wage rates in the United States (Egendorf 27). Also, if these illegal immigrants do take jobs that would have gone to a citizen or legal worker of the United States, other jobs are then created, as those illegal workers still require services such as food, clothing, transportation and many others (Egendorf 29).

Another problem often raised with immigrants, both legal and illegal, is drugs and violence. Violence is typically associated with many of the people in our country that are closer

to the poverty line. If immigrants and other workers didn't fill many of the jobs they do, and these jobs had to be filled by legal workers, wages would go up. Prices for goods would go up as well, and the end result would just be a different group of people in poverty, that would most likely still resort to violence (Egendorf 29). It's a similar situation with drugs. The common mindset, and one that has gotten a lot of publicity, is people from Mexico, as well as other south and central American countries smuggling drugs into the United States and fueling the usage of drugs. However even if these immigrants didn't perform this task, people with strong addictions would still find a way to obtain their various substances and bring them into our country.

What many people do not understand, which likely breeds some of the misunderstanding between immigrants and citizens, is that it is difficult to immigrate legally to the United States. If one does not fit into one of the four main ways to be a legal immigrant, they are out of luck and unable to obtain permanent legal status ("Fixing"). The four legal ways to become an immigrant or citizen? are family based immigration,~~;~~ employment based immigration,~~;~~ humanitarian based immigration,~~;~~ and an 'other' category.

Family based immigration is when a member of the United States can petition to bring in certain members of the family. If one is a U. S. citizen they can try to obtain permission to bring in foreign born spouses, parents, siblings, and children, who all then can be green card holders ("Fixing"). These green card holders then have the ability to petition to bring in their spouses and unmarried children ("Fixing"). Currently however many people trying to use family based immigration are waiting years and decades to get back together with their loved ones ("Fixing"). To try and organize the immigrant system in place to get it functioning properly, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) must clear the backlog of family based

immigrants, as well as figure out the numerical caps on this type of immigration to make the process smoother for the future ("Fixing").

Employment based immigration is for people who fit into one of the employment categories and wish to come to the U.S. on an employment based visa. They must have a job offer in the United States, that has an employer who is able to sponsor the immigrant – which is a time consuming and expensive process. Employment based immigration is typically just used for scientists, professors, and executives, and isn't very practical for the typical employee looking to improve their economic situation in the U.S. ("Fixing").

Humanitarian based immigration is for a limited number of individuals that are fleeing persecution from their home country. Each year the U.S. allows entry to a certain number of people, who must prove they have a "well-founded fear of persecution" due to their religion, race, or political views ("Fixing"). The 'other' category of entry is for the limited ways one can obtain a green card outside of the aforementioned paths. Often called the 'diversity lottery', this way is quite restrictive and limited to a very small quantity of individuals ("Fixing").

No matter what way you look at it, there are a large number of illegal immigrants in the United States. At least ten to eleven million, if not more, unauthorized immigrants are present in this country, with no real aspiration to become a legal citizen ("Fixing"). One step in solving the immigrant problem within the United States is being able to document all of these people. The U.S. would have to be careful in how they go about this, as asking for these people to come forward and register might make them think they would be punished or deported for being here illegally. A program would have to be created to try and cover as many people as possible, and be about integrating into the community and becoming a legal permanent resident ("Fixing").

While certain people might not appreciate these people being here illegally, the fact of the matter is they are, and many of them have been living here for a while. Documenting them wouldn't change the number of people in the United States, it would just make them accounted for. President Obama has recently released a few programs to allow certain immigrants that are here illegally to be able to stay, with the hopes of eventually becoming legal immigrants. In 2012 Obama launched the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which provides deportation relief and work visas to illegal immigrants brought to the U.S. before their sixteenth birthday (Masters). Two years later, the Deferred Actions for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) was released, providing similar benefits (Masters). Our current president is willing to document the illegal immigrants that are already here; the government just needs to create a program that is able to do so.

Documenting these illegal immigrants would eventually help employers. It is likely that Congress will be changing the way workers are verified by their employers. The employee would have to be documented in the government databases, as failure to be documented could cost the employee their job and paycheck ("Fixing"). Along with legalizing these immigrants, enforcement of labor laws would need to be established as well, since many conditions immigrants work in currently would not necessarily pass inspection. If these immigrants were validated, adequate anti-discrimination laws would need to be established to give these workers a chance at jobs, even if they have to be paid the same rate as a legal employee ("Fixing").

While documenting the current illegal immigrants in our country is needed, the U.S. also needs to work on border control for the future, as right now one of the biggest problems with the immigration system are the borders. Even though the U.S. government has spent billions of

dollars on border patrol and enforcement, problems still remain, so new policy would need to be put in place to allow border patrol to function more efficiently and be tailored to the area where the problem is ("Fixing"). Going along hand in hand with the government fixing the methods to legally immigrate to the United States, issues at the border would then likely go down as well.

All immigration reform that needs to be made would ultimately lead back to smoothing the process for the future flow of immigrants. The future of the United States economy would need to be looked at, and the government would need to create a flexible system that has the ability to adjust to various economic conditions ("Fixing"). Research and data would most likely be necessary to observe the conditions now, and be able to show how the U.S. should adjust visas and the flow of immigrants for certain market situations, while also looking out for natural born employees ("Fixing").

Many people opposed to allowing immigrants into our country say to just "turn immigrants away" or "send them back where they came from" (Lamey). However, it's not that simple, especially depending upon where the immigrant is coming from. While the U. S. could acceptably be justified in turning immigrants away as long as they are from a country that is able to protect and fulfill their rights, for many immigrants that come to this country, that is not the case (Lamey). Many professionals feel that the United States has at least somewhat of a moral obligation to provide these people with a better life that our country has the ability to offer (Lamey).

The immigrant problem in the United States is something not just the government needs to work on, but the citizens of the U.S. as well. There are many changes to our currently battered immigration system the government needs to make, to both speed up and facilitate the process.

However, while these immigrants are here, no matter how they got here, citizens of the United States should treat them kindly and with respect, as they are looking to make a life for themselves and are a part of what makes the U.S. the country it is.

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