

perceived as hostile to immigrants. But that doesn't mean Californians must ignore the immigration issue.

Many of my immigrant neighbors and friends agree with me on the matter. Many immigrants who came to this country the legal way are unhappy about granting special status to those who break the nation's immigration laws. Many immigrants, legal and illegal, are starting to understand how uncontrolled immigration depresses their incomes by boosting the supply of low-wage workers. And Prop. 187 is not necessarily the kiss of political death, even among Latino voters. (In overwhelmingly Latino Santa Ana, voters recalled a Latino rabble-rouser from the school board and replaced him with a Republican who had supported Prop. 187.)

The Southern California Association of Governments recently released a report showing that the Greater Los Angeles area has lost ground in comparison to other major metropolitan areas in terms of income, housing affordability, congestion, pollution, and other quality-of-life issues. A key reason is mass immigration. As the report's executive summary gently explained, "Southern California experienced a 1.5-million net domestic out-migration during the last decade, the largest in our region's history. During the same period, the region added 1.5 million foreign immigrants. When compared with the domestic out-migrants and the general population, recent immigrants are, on average, less educated, earn lower incomes, live in larger households and rely significantly on rental housing."

Thanks in large part to the president, California Republicans no longer have to be fearful about making similar points. ■

Steven Greenhut is a senior editorial writer and columnist for The Orange County Register in Santa Ana, Calif.

From A Dead Racist

What if America had wanted to reinforce inequality?

By Fred Reed

The following is a letter recently found in the attic of a building that once served as headquarters of the American Nazi Party. The author, though unknown to me, is clearly a racist of the vilest sort. We may profit by understanding the mind of such a man.

From: George Rockwell

Date: May 6, 1955

To: James Braswell, Grand Klagon,
Knights of the Invisible Empire,
Ku Klux Klan

Dear Klagon Braswell,

In answer to your concern about preventing the rise of the Negro race after the disastrous Supreme Court decision of last year, I am somewhat more optimistic than you. I believe that, by judicious policy, we can, if not eliminate the problem of Negroes, at least control it.

We cannot place hope in extermination or deportation of Negroes *en masse*, nor is there real hope of the reinstatement of slavery. The public mood will not now countenance such measures. We need rather a means of subjugating the Negro race while appearing to have other ends in mind. Fortunately, I believe that it can be done. Permit me to suggest a plan.

First, the thorough demoralization of Negroes is essential. They must be made dependent on Whites, and then persuaded that they cannot achieve anything of worth on their own.

I believe this end may best be accomplished by instituting an all-encompassing system of public welfare. As you know, many Negroes now live in a state

of poverty. We must argue in Congress that decency requires the provision of federal payments to allow Negroes to live at a fit standard. The economy is growing at such a rate that the country can carry the burden without undue difficulty. We should stress the benefits for the children, as this invariably evokes a favorable response.

Once welfare has been instituted, I believe that it will come to be accepted as normal by Whites, and then forgotten. After Negroes have been for several generations dependent on the largesse of Whites, they will, having had no experience of self-sufficiency, lose all initiative.

However, welfare alone will prove ineffective. The next step will be to destroy all social structure among Negroes. The most we could hope for—dare we dream?—would be to frame the welfare laws in such a way that married Negro women could not receive aid. The result, if luck held, would be a sharp rise in illegitimacy. The women would not be able to raise their offspring well, and these in turn would produce further young out of wedlock.

We must strive to make universal illegitimacy seem a natural condition. Crime and further demoralization will assuredly follow.

The third essential step will be to ensure that Negroes receive as little education as possible, though of course we cannot phrase our intentions this way. Fortunately Negroes now have little tradition of academic endeavor. It may be hoped, and even expected, that if we

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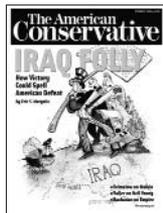
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provide them with poor schools, they will, having no experience of true education, not demand better.

Next, we must at all costs ensure that Negroes not learn Standard English. A Negro who speaks intelligible and grammatical English is likely to be accepted socially by Whites. The consequences would be incalculable. We must encourage the notion that the degraded English now spoken by Negroes is in fact a real language, to be conserved and cherished.

A grave problem is that there will inevitably arise among Negroes men of intelligence and determination who will endeavor to elevate the station of their people. These men will be very dangerous. We can better thwart them, not by opposition, which would harden their determination, but by inviting them into White society, feting them, and making much of them in the public prints. Vanity and privilege will emasculate them, while making other Negroes believe that their race commands esteem among the better classes of Whites.

In order to accomplish all of this, we must have the support of much of the public, and of influential institutions, particularly the press. I believe it is possible. We must argue, as noted above, that welfare is the road of compassion and appeal endlessly to warm feelings unaccompanied by thought. The elites of the White world crave a sense of helping the downtrodden. They do not, however, want to make difficult decisions.

Those who question any of our programs must be ruthlessly portrayed as being hard-hearted, motivated by cupidity, and filled with loathing of our African population. If we can somehow associate our opponents with Nazis, we will succeed so much the better.

The withholding of education is crucial. We cannot of course argue that Negroes need or deserve poor schools. However, the privileged of the nation transparently believe that Negroes are

inferior to the other races, but do not have the self-awareness to see that they believe it. They will fall easy prey to reasoning that avoids placing any expectations on Negroes other than those of continued helplessness. We must provide the privileged with excuses for doing this.

For example, we should argue that requiring Negro students to learn grammar and mathematics constitutes a racially arrogant imposition of European culture. Because pampered Whites do not think Negroes able to succeed, they will, given any excuse at all, favor the lowering of standards in Negro schools. They will then censor any who point to failure and thus, by hiding it, ensure its perpetuation.

Finally we need to engender among the well-off and the press a visceral intolerance of any policies toward Negroes other than ours. The attitude we need to inculcate among reporters, who fortunately are not very intelligent, is that if you don't agree with the means to a high-sounding end, then you disagree with the high-sounding end. Intolerance fortified by righteousness is invincible.

You may find this an excessively optimistic program. No. If we can carry it off, I say to you that in the year 2000 Negroes will be concentrated in urban ghettos, speak English barely comprehensible to Whites, live in shameless bastardry, and be so devoid of both schooling and self-respect as to be without hope of advancement.

Trust me. All things are possible with enlightened social policy.

Yours in hope,
George

OK, OK, Rockwell didn't really write this letter. But couldn't he have? ■

Fred Reed's writing has appeared in the Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, Harper's, and National Review, among other places.

Arts & Letters

FILM

[*Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter ... and Spring*]

The Five Seasons

By Steve Sailer

A POPULAR FAVORITE on the film festival circuit, “Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter ... and Spring” is a quiet, exquisite-looking South Korean movie about a modern Buddhist monk’s surprisingly lurid life on his floating mini-monastery. It opens in Los Angeles and New York on April 2 and should eventually play in art houses nationwide.

Filmed at tree-rimmed Jusan Pond in mountainous Juwangsang National Park, the only sets are the hermitage-on-a-raft, an ornate gatehouse on the shore, and the rowboat that connects them. Most Buddhist monasteries in Korea are hidden away amidst picturesque crags because the Confucianism-espousing Choson dynasty that came to power six centuries ago drove organized Buddhism out of the cities and villages.

G.K. Chesterton pointed out in “Orthodoxy,” “No two ideals could be more opposite than a Christian saint in a Gothic cathedral and a Buddhist saint in a Chinese temple The Buddhist saint [sculpture] has a sleek and harmonious body, but his eyes are heavy and sealed with sleep. The mediaeval saint’s body is wasted to its crazy bones, but his eyes are frightfully alive.” Meditation, though,

is notoriously un-cinematic, so writer-director Ki-duk Kim injects a fair dose of worldly action.

He structured his film like Vivaldi’s “The Four Seasons.” It begins in flowery spring with the protagonist as a child-monk bored by all the serenity. With boyish cruelty, he ties stones to a fish, a frog, and a snake. When he wakes up, he finds that his mentor, the old monk (who bears a disconcerting resemblance to Billy Crystal), has tied a heavy, lesson-teaching rock to him.

In the next segment, it’s high summer at the two-man temple and the young monk is now 17. A woman drops off for some spiritual healing her ill daughter, who is pallid but still movie-starlet beautiful. The lad has never laid eyes on a girl before, but he likes what he sees. His initial approaches are dorkiness personified, but eventually he gives her some of that old Marvin Gaye-style sexual healing, which puts the glow back in her cheeks after weeks of contemplating the universe had failed.

Finding them entwined in the rowboat, the old monk says that it’s only natural. Celibacy, not chastity, is what’s important: the problem with lust, he explains, is that it awakens the desire to possess, which leads to . . . murder! (My wife whispered, “This whole monk thing is just a fear of commitment.”) The young monk stubbornly rejects the wisdom of his teacher, and rows off to join his girlfriend in the outside world.

One colorful fall, 13 and a quarter years later, he paddles back, a wanted man. Sure enough, he murdered his wife when she ran off with another man. The old monk paints 200 square feet of Prajnaparamita sutras on the raft’s floor and sets him to work carving them out. Two

armed detectives appear, but they let him toil in expiation all night, and then haul him off to the hoosegow. The old monk peacefully rows out into the lake, covers his face with paper, sets himself on fire, and turns into a snake. Don’t ask me to explain.

In the single most beautiful portion of the film (and that’s saying a lot), the now middle-aged man (played here by director Kim—in fact, three of the four actors are named “Kim”) returns to the frozen lake and the abandoned monastery. While American jailbirds pump iron, Korean cons evidently master the martial arts, as our hero practices his impressive leaping kicks on the ice, shirtless. The contrast between this religion from tropical India and its Korean adherents, their very bodies molded by Ice Ages past, becomes almost palpable.

Then, a masked woman leaves him a baby boy, and the great cycle begins again.

“Spring, Summer . . .” is certainly distinctive and memorable, although it is so symmetrical that some might find it a bit contrived. Others might find their minds wandering to less spiritual questions, such as: how do you get ashore during the shoulder seasons, when the ice is too thin for walking and too thick for rowing?

And what are the economics of the hermit business? Apparently, they’re rather lucrative, as the late Nineties saw two major street melees in Korea between hundreds of steel-pipe-swinging monks representing two factions battling for control of the wealthy monasteries. That would make an equally fascinating, but very different, movie. ■

Rated R for some strong sexuality.