

While America Sleeps

by Joe Scotchie

America Extinguished: Mass Immigration and the Disintegration of American Culture

by Samuel T. Francis

Monterey, VA: Americans for Immigration Control; 215 pp., \$6.95

◆

Ten years ago, it appeared that immigration restrictionists were poised to win some real political victories. In 1992, Pat Buchanan had raised the previously untouchable issue in his presidential primary challenge to George H.W. Bush. That same year, *National Review*, under the editorship of John O'Sullivan, joined *Chronicles* in calling for deep cuts in legal immigration. Two years later, California voters ignored their media betters and voted overwhelmingly for Proposition 187, the ballot initiative that would deny certain welfare benefits to illegal aliens. Bills restricting immigration had the support of numerous members of Congress.

By the summer of 1996, all of that momentum had collapsed. After Buchanan shocked the political world by winning the New Hampshire primary, he was savaged by the media with a tidal wave of hate-filled rhetoric unseen before in American history. Congress's attempts to make mild cuts in legal immigration were defeated when 77 Republicans voted with open-borders Democrats. In time, O'Sullivan would be fired from *National Review*, and the author of this collection would lose his regular column at the *Washington Times*. Finally, in 1999, federal courts ruled Proposition 187 "unconstitutional," a decision unopposed by California's governing class.

Samuel Francis's collection of columns on immigration reflects this gloomy situation. His 1997 essay collection, *Revolution From the Middle*, allowed for some optimism that a Middle American populist movement might succeed. That volume had a blue cover with a flickering light at the center. The artwork for *America Extinguished*, on the other hand, shows a lighted American-flag candle in the process of steady meltdown.

Francis has not been the only writer to confront the immigration issue. However, no other columnist has written so relentlessly or so courageously on the subject. The 59 columns collected here attack mass immigration on economic, political, and cultural grounds. Large-scale immigration floods the labor pool, driving down wages. Pro-immigration conservatives, usually in the employ of big business, complain about a labor shortage, especially in the area of high-tech jobs. In fact, no such shortage exists. Less immigration would mean higher wages for American workers. In addition, had massive immigration been halted three decades ago, there would be nine million fewer poor people in the United States today.

Where politics is concerned, immigration has helped to create the now-infamous red/blue American divide. The red zone is the traditional America ranging from West Virginia to Nevada, a nation far more conservative than the first-generation Texan it elected in 2000. Much of the blue zone (the East Coast and the West Coast, as well as urban centers in the Midwest) has long been liberal; nowadays, it is, among other things, as much hispanophone as anglophone and seethes with resentment of the heritage of 18th- and 19th-century America. The Republicans' incessant pandering to the Hispanic vote, detailed by Francis, has only moved the GOP further to the left, allowing the party to accept the leftist *status quo* on immigration, affirmative action, and funding for bilingual education. And yet the Hispanic vote remains solidly Democratic. Meanwhile, benighted white males continue to form the base of the Republican electorate. For now, they have no place to go.

The most striking examples of how immigration and changing demographics have upended the Old America are apparent in the culture wars. California legislators consider an official holiday for *Cinco de Mayo* and another for the 1960's radical Cesar Chavez. Meanwhile, events and symbols of Western civilization, most notably the Columbus Day parade and the Confederate Battle Flag, remain under attack from multiculturalist fanatics.

The rise of anti-Western ideologies is the cause of the restrictionists' greatest frustration. Most Americans care nothing for the nostrums of multiculturalism; at the same time, they care little about preserving the Western culture that gave birth to our liberties. For the vast majori-

ty, it seems, "American culture" does not signify the political philosophy of Patrick Henry, the collected works of Mark Twain, or a national holiday for George Washington. Rather, it means whatever junk the television and film industry in Hollywood and Manhattan churns out.

Such complacency is not the restrictionists' only dilemma. In the 1980's, an immigration crisis existed, but it was confined mostly to urban areas. This is no longer the case. Now, once-pleasant small towns such as Dalton, Georgia, and Rogers, Arkansas, find themselves overwhelmed by illegals serving the cheap labor "needs" of American industrialists. Not to be outdone, the governor of Iowa, Tom Vilsack, recently concocted a plan that would bring no fewer than 310,000 Third World immigrants to that tranquil Midwestern state. The state's "business and civic" leaders endorsed the plan, but a solid majority of Iowans strongly opposed it.

Does public opinion count for anything? Not even the events of September 11, 2001, could break through the immigration impasse. Why? "Mass immigration is a deliberate, politically created policy, deeply rooted in the material interests of the ruling elites of the United States," writes Francis.

It serves to depress wages and lower labor costs for large corporations; it serves to replenish a dwindling number of members in labor unions; it offers entire new constituencies and voting blocs to the two established political parties; it provides a new underclass for which an immense welfare bureaucracy can deliver services and social therapy; and it promises a new "multicultural" society in which cultural elites, already deeply alienated from traditional American institutions, and vast new cultural and political ethnic lobbies can gain power. When a policy is as closely entwined with material interests . . . as immigration now is, it tends to become impervious to ideas and arguments, and it will take more than the terrorism of Sept. 11 . . . to change it.

Francis's intention is not to drive the reader to despair but to action. Late as it is, grassroots political action can persuade the power elites to enact long-overdue policies. If even a small fraction of Americans were dues-paying members of

the various anti-immigration lobbies currently at work in Washington, then such groups could have real clout. At present, the only grassroots action taking place is by Arizona ranchers. Fed up with the government's refusal to patrol the border, they have armed themselves in order to defend their property from what is, literally, a foreign invasion. (The elites in Washington believe that the ranchers are the ones who are out of line.)

Still, it is likely that, grassroots activism or not, the Republican Party will once again be forced to address the immigration issue. If immigration continues at current rates, blue America will soon gain the political upper hand. And as already has happened in numerous small towns in red country, a blue culture will make great inroads into Middle America. Whether the GOP will do the right thing—and whether it will do so before it is too late—remains an open and very troubling question.

Joe Scotchie is the author, most recently, of Revolt from the Heartland: The Search for an Authentic Conservatism (Transaction) and Street Corner Conservative: Patrick J. Buchanan and His Times (Alexander Books).

Light Slander, Heavy Artillery

by Paul Gottfried

**Slander: Liberal Lies About
the American Right**

by Ann Coulter

New York: Crown Publishers;
256 pp., \$25.95

Why the Left Hates America

by Daniel J. Flynn

Roseville, California: Prima-Crown
Publishers; 223 pp., \$23.95



Both of these books are written by young, self-styled conservatives; both demonstrate indisputably the unfounded charges made against the “right” by the media and academics; both easily devastate the biased and factually inaccurate statements about Republicans, conservatives, and the American past and present

that emanate from the cultural left. The TV personalities Ann Coulter goes after, such as the simpering pinheads Katie Couric and Matt Lauer, treat Republican centrists as if they were closet members of the “extreme right.” And the intellectual left’s lies about the United States (which attribute to it a racist, sexist, and “homophobic” character) can be refuted—as, indeed, Flynn does—with minimal difficulty, as nearly all of them involve judging American life by angelic multicultural standards that no society outside of the contemporary Western world could hope to approach.

While understanding that what Coulter and Flynn deplore is widespread in all Western “democracies,” I am left nevertheless to wonder why the cultural-political left behaves in the manner they describe, since—from where I stand—it has already won its wars. If John Gray and John O’Sullivan are correct, the United States represents the “utopia of the left,” the instantiation of political correctness and the social reconstruction by state managers for which every post-Marxist leftist yearns. The Republican Party feverishly pursues Democratic constituencies: Having given us the 1964 Civil Rights Act and affirmative action, it is now trying to outdo the Democrats by advocating bilingualism and Hispanic immigration. Why do misnamed liberals bother to attack these wussies at all? I am not denying that what Coulter and Flynn tell us about biased reporting is true: I am merely perplexed as to why the “slanders” and “lies” they address are issued in the first place.

A possible answer is suggested by Coulter’s recurrent complaint—starting with the first sentence of her book—that “political ‘debate’ in this country is insufferable.” The insufferability, of course, is deliberate: Intemperate assaults are a tactic by which the established left and the neoconservatives keep conservative opinion from being heard and considered. Although certifiable lightweights can be found in this crowd, most of the media left see verbal intimidation as useful for advancing their agenda—and preventing American politics from veering rightward. The media find it useful as well to have me-too Republicans occasionally alternating with liberal Democrats, and they incessantly slobber over George Will and Bill Kristol; nevertheless, they understand the need to keep things under control by treating Rush Limbaugh as a far-right personality—as if to indicate that

anyone to the right of this Republican shill will feel the full brunt of their anger. Thus the “slander” and the “hate America” language that Coulter and Flynn attack are guardrails set up to restrict political discourse and political policy to the left side of the field.

A year ago last September (obviously before December 2002’s Lottgate), David Broder labeled Jesse Helms—who had just announced his impending retirement—“the last racist senator.” The evidence Broder adduced for his accusation is that Helms had voted against Martin Luther King, Jr., Day as a national holiday and had made an issue in his 1983 senatorial race of the fact that his black liberal opponent had grown rich on racial set-asides. Broder, who is now in his 70’s, must remember that many congressmen, as well as President Reagan, expressed strong reservations about the King holiday for nonracial reasons (e.g., King’s less than honorable past). Moreover, challenging the merits of affirmative action, or criticizing the material advantages that one’s opponent obtained from this arrangement, is not the equivalent of teaching or practicing a doctrine of racial inequality. What Broder was really saying is that those who control the communications business will not tolerate those who move right—even as far to the right as where a Humphrey Democrat once stood. His real message was, *Republicans had better accept the changes we have brought about, or we’ll bring out the heavy artillery, the way we did against Helms and Buchanan.*

Convincing as their illustrations of leftist splenetics are, both Flynn and Coulter slip at times into the rigidity of movement conservatism. Flynn’s concluding chapter, “America’s True Legacy,” reads like a spin-off from a Dinesh D’Souza lecture series at the Heritage Foundation, while Coulter feels obliged to compliment neoconservatives who have been coddled by the media empire. Should conservatives take grave offense that the media refuse to treat Bill Bennett as a serious scholar or that they have taken notice of the repetitiveness of his anthologies (the sales of which are as inexplicable to me as they are to the *New York Times*)?

Coulter devotes several paragraphs to complaining about the insufficient regard that the publishing world has accorded Dinesh D’Souza, who received an advance of \$150,000 on his last book, compared with the \$600,000 payment made to feminist author Naomi Wolf for hers. She never mentions that authentic