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MIGRATION AND POLITICS:  
EXPLAINING VARIATION AMONG RICH DEMOCRACIES IN  
RECENT NATIVIST PROTEST

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MIGRATION AND POLITICS: EXPLAINING VARIATIONS AMONG RICH  
DEMOCRACIES IN RECENT NATIVIST PROTEST<sup>1</sup>

by

Harold L. Wilensky

Rich democracies evidence convergent trends in immigration experience (cf. Gary P. Freeman, 1994, pp. 17-30; Collinson 1993, pp. 57-59; and Hollifield 1992, pp. 32-33, 84-85, 204-213):

- Increasing effort and capacity to regulate migration flows, especially absolute numbers.
- The increased moral resonance of family unification as a major criterion for admission, accounting for an increasing percentage of total immigration and decreasing state control of the social characteristics (education, skills) of the immigrants.
- An hour-glass shape of the education and skills of the recent immigration population. Although there are some national differences here, the central tendency is toward some overrepresentation of college graduates and a very big overrepresentation of the least educated and least skilled. Philip Martin (1992, p. 14) estimates that American immigrants are 30 percent highly skilled, 20 percent in the middle, and 50 percent unskilled.
- The transformation of temporary work programs into

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permanent immigration. (Like The Man Who Came to Dinner and stayed for several months, the guest workers of Europe increasingly settled down in the host countries for long periods, even their whole working lives.) Movements for expanding immigrant rights were a natural outcome.

- The uneven spread of migrants in Western Europe 1950-93. The explanation: variation in (1) the demand for and recruitment of "temporary" labor; (2) the openness to the rising tide of political refugees, East to West and increasingly South to North.<sup>2</sup>
- As legal entry routes are restricted in response to xenophobic political pressure, illegal entrants and visa overstayers have increased, although nations vary in their capacity to police their borders and control illegal immigration.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>According to Rainer Muenz and Heinz Fassman (1994), of an estimated 14,160,000 migrants from East to West (including those from the GDR, ex-Yugoslavia, Poland, Soviet Union and the Balkans) from 1950 to 1993, 68.1 percent landed in Germany, 8.1 percent in Israel, 6.6 percent in Turkey, 4.8 percent in the U.S. and 12.8 percent in other countries (Austria, Scandinavia, France, U.K, Canada, etc.) Of these 14 million about three in four can be classified as "ethnic" migrants, often the product of bilateral agreements between sender and receiver. Less than 15 percent can be classified as regular or irregular labor migrants or as dependent family of labor migrants. For much of the postwar period, the political and economic split of East and West prevented much movement of labor (or capital), except for more than half a million Yugoslavs. About ten percent can be classified as political refugees and asylum seekers escaping persecution (Hungarians 1956-57, Czechoslovaks 1968-69, Poles 1980-81, Albanians 1990-91, former Yugoslavs 1991-93). Rainer and Muenz's category of "ethnic" migrants doubtless includes some political and economic migrants.

<sup>3</sup>Employer sanctions, used by almost all our 19 countries (Britain is an exception) vary in their effectiveness: Vital to their success are adequate resources for enforcement, a secure identification system, links to broader strategies for controlling illegal migration and enforcing labor standards, and steps to prevent employer discrimination. The U.S. fails on all counts. Several European countries—Germany, France, Switzerland—approximate them. (M. J. Miller 1987.)

Openness to refugees also varies. In 1992 Germany took in two-thirds of the 572,000 asylum-seekers entering Europe as it struggled to get other countries to share the burden. On July 1, 1993 it changed its open asylum policy to accept refugees only from regimes that were persecuting them. It made it difficult for persons who passed through "presumably safe countries"—including Romania, Bulgaria, Gambia, Ghana, and Poland—to apply for asylum. Germany worked out arrangements with each adjacent country to help police its borders, giving money to Czechoslovakia and Poland for that purpose. All this sharply cut the number of applicants. The German Bundestag later approved an expansion of the number and power of the border police and raised penalties on illegal alien smugglers. Again, it is far from

Economic Effects of Immigration

The economic impact of immigration, considering all costs and benefits over the long run, is very likely positive. This reality, however, is not what plays out in politics, where immigrants are used as scapegoats for a wide range of troubles. Complicating any assessment, the real economic effects vary over time and place.

Studies of the U. S. using data from before 1980 (Borjas 1990, chapter 5; Abowd and Freeman, eds., 1991a; Muller 1993) show that "... immigrants have been absorbed into the American labor market with little adverse effect on natives" (Abowd and Freeman 1991b, p. 22). In fact, in areas of greatest immigrant concentration – e.g. Miami, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco – employment of natives increased with rising immigration, except for New York (Ibid., p. 24). The reasons: immigrants purchase goods and services where they work, thereby raising demand for labor; immigrant skills complement the skills of many native workers, raising demand for them; even with their concentration in gateway cities, if immigrants had not taken the low-skilled jobs there, similarly young, uneducated Americans would have filled the gap via migration from other areas (Abowd and Freeman 1991b, pp. 22-24); and natives attenuate the negative earnings effects of recent immigration by moving to other localities (Borjas and Freeman 1992, p. 11) while at least 20 to 30 percent of the foreign born in the U.S., probably the least self-supporting, return to their birthplace or migrate elsewhere within a decade or two, thereby relieving pressure on the

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impossible to regulate immigration (Migration News, vol. 1, #7). Of course it is a beggar-thy-neighbor policy—one country's successful border control is often another country's headache, a powerful reason for international agreements on burden-sharing.

labor market (Borjas 1992, p.18).

But as the percentage of uneducated, unskilled immigrant labor rose in the 1980s when the U.S. job market for the least educated was deteriorating, studies of that decade concluded that immigration was depressing the earnings of natives, especially the relative earnings of high-school dropouts, including young Blacks and earlier-arriving Hispanics (Borjas, Freeman, and Katz 1992, pp. 238-242; Wilensky, 1992). An oversupply of cheap immigrant labor was competing with an oversupply of cheap native labor.

It is a popular idea that immigrants are a disproportionate burden on the welfare state. This is largely a myth. In the United States, immigrants are probably ripped off by American taxpayers. The reasons: First, they are overwhelmingly young workers who pay Social Security and Medicare taxes (not the native aged who use most of the expensive pension, disability, and health-care services) whose fertility rates are as low as the comparable young natives (no disproportionate use of schools). The very youth of the immigrant population is a boon for the U.S.; the immigrants will help pay for the babyboomers' retirement and medical care, partially offsetting the looming mismatch of pensioners and workers. Second, they pay state sales taxes, local property taxes, and gasoline taxes; their employers pay unemployment insurance and worker's compensation taxes. Third, if they are legal, their use of social welfare benefits in earlier decades was less than that of natives. Although such use is now slightly above the natives' (because of higher unemployment rates of the young and because the aged among them use means-tested SSI), these are the smallest parts of welfare-state burdens and have deteriorated in real value. Finally, if they are illegals they are by law denied almost all welfare benefits and

are afraid to use any services for fear of being deported.

All this leaves aside the longrun assimilation of immigrants and the economic recovery since 1992 as well as the contribution of their work to GNP. Thus cross-sectional estimates (e.g. 1990-92) capture neither business-cycle variations nor variations over the life-cycle that show more long run pay-off and less cost. Today's cross-sectional picture overrepresents new arrivals who earn less and use more state services; later, like their predecessors, they earn more, pay more taxes and use fewer public services. Even those initially in an enclave economy (e.g. Asian immigrants in ethnic neighborhoods in Los Angeles whose job histories were analyzed in the early 1990s) typically transcend the ethnic economy and enter the mainstream metropolitan economy as they gain local work experience and increase their human capital (Nee, Sanders, and Sernau 1994). As Fix and Passel (1994) show in their careful review of studies emphasizing the immigrant burden, all of them understate the revenue stream from immigrants and overstate the cost to government.<sup>4</sup>

National experiences differ depending on institutions and policies. In Germany, for instance, although foreigners are increasingly overrepresented among the recipients of social assistance (which is only 5 percent of the Federal Republic's social expenditures), the aggregate impact of foreigners on the entire German system of taxes and transfers is positive—e.g. a fiscal gain of about 14 billion DM in 1991 (a 1992 study by Barabas et al. from a leading economic

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<sup>4</sup>Huddle's (1993) is the worst: He not only fails to take account of any positive economic impact of immigrant businesses or consumer spending; he also massively understates revenue collected (e. g. he ignores about \$50 billion of taxes immigrants paid in 1992) and omits the necessary comparisons with natives that show that they, too, receive more in services than they pay in taxes (Passel, 1994 and Clark and Passel, 1993).

research institute cited by Alber 1994, p. 5). A similar finding of net gain is reported from studies of France (Hollifield 1992, pp. 85-86). Regarding the labor market, both Australia and Germany evidence much less negative earnings impact than the U.S. because their occupational wage differentials are smaller than those of the U.S. and their unionization rates are much higher. Germany also invests more in training, job creation, and job placement. And Australia from the 1970s through the early 1980s used education and skills as criteria for admission so the differences between natives and immigrants did not grow so much (Abowd and Freeman 1991b, p.23). On the other hand, countries that match Sweden's generosity in social programs for immigrants may find that the costs exceed the benefits even in the long run.

Whatever the European political economies do about the welfare state, labor-market and social policies, and whatever the real economic effects of immigration, I suspect that they will all experience a moderate increase in ethnic-racial-religious conflict, hardly unknown to the Continent in the past, only this time without major war.

### Explaining Variation in Nativist Protest

Insofar as rich democracies converge in the number of immigrants as a fraction of the labor force, they are likely to experience cycles of nativist, xenophobic protest, some of it parliamentary, some violent, as in the history of the older immigrant nations, the U.S., Australia, and Canada. The cycles of protest are driven by the convergence of economic downturns (unemployment, downward mobility, declines in income), immigrant population numbers and

concentration, and the social distance between immigrants and natives.<sup>5</sup> How anti-immigrant sentiments are channeled, however, is another matter. National and local mobilizing structures — political parties, legislatures, prime ministers, interest groups — can either legitimize or oppose xenophobic expression, exploit mass fears and prejudices in a search for scapegoats or try to contain them.

We can see the interaction of strong economic deprivation, much immigrant concentration, big social distance, and nativist political mobilization at work in the U.S. and Germany in the early 1990s. In the Los Angeles riots of 1992 much of the violence of blacks was targeted at Koreans and Chinese; the locations were areas of high unemployment of young males. In the 1994 election in California and in most closely-contested Congressional districts in many states the Republicans used the problems of crime, welfare mothers, and illegal Mexican or Caribbean immigrants as negative symbols in a successful campaign to direct a frenzy of anger at their Democratic opponents. Media "talk-shows" poured oil on that fire. White men of the middle mass (high school or part-college educated) from the West and South who said that their family's economic situation had worsened in the last four years were especially attracted to those appeals (based on exit polls, New York Times, November 13, 1994). (See Wilensky, 1975 and 2002, on the revolt of the middle mass.)

Anti-immigrant violence and voting in Germany has similar roots. Since

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<sup>5</sup>These three forces that encourage nativist protest action—economic deprivation, large numbers and concentration of immigrants, and great social distance between immigrants and natives—are the same as the forces that foster prejudice and the perception of group threat. See Lincoln Quillian (1995), an analysis of Eurobarometer Survey #30 results on attitudes toward immigrants and racial minorities in 12 EEC countries, Fall 1988. Individual characteristics had little impact on prejudice and explained none of the country differences. Economic conditions of the country, the size of the minority group and its social composition (e.g. non-EEC immigration) are the important variables shaping both levels of prejudice and the militancy of protest movements discussed below.

1961 the percentage of foreigners in the German population rose from 1.2 percent to over 8 percent (Alber, 1994, p.5) – about the same as the 8.7 percent of the United States in 1994. As Alber shows (Graph 7 and Table 1) bursts of nativist violence (acts/1000 asylum seekers) occurred in 1983-84, a time of accelerating unemployment, and 1991-1993 (combining recession, the economic strain of reunification, and rising immigration). He reports an average of nearly 6 violent acts per 1000 asylum seekers every day, including several arson fires during 1991-1993. Regarding social distance, although Germany's proportion of resident foreigners is not as large as Belgium's, its percentage of immigrants from non-European countries (6%) puts it first among countries of the European Union. Regarding mobilization, in the 1990 election male East German voters below the age of 25, whose unemployment was greatest, gave the extreme right nativist Republican Party its best election result of 7 percent (Alber 1994, p.8). The party broke through first in Bremen, a port city with a declining industrial center, a high rate of unemployment and a heavy concentration of Turks, Poles and other immigrants. The combination of youth unemployment and social distance is also captured in Solingen, where the killers of a Turkish girl in May 1993 were members of a youth gang who had been kicked out of a Turkish restaurant (Alber 1994, p.11); five other Turkish females, long-term residents, were killed in a single gruesome arson fire in the same city that month.

That public policies toward immigration shape the intensity of anti-immigrant violence and voting is suggested by a comparison of two countries with substantial recent immigration, generous social policies, and low rates of poverty and inequality, but contrasting immigration policies: Germany, where the principle of jus sanguinis is dominant and nationality is conferred mainly by blood ties, and Sweden, where the principle of jus soli is dominant and

nationality is conferred mainly by place of birth. In 1992 Germany accepted 5.3 times as many asylum seekers as Sweden but experienced 29 times as many acts of anti-foreign arson or bombing attacks (Alber, 1994, p.3). In a rough comparison of nativist violence in the early 1990s in five European countries (France, Britain, Switzerland, Sweden, and Germany), Alber suggests that while Britain, Switzerland, Sweden, and Germany all experienced an increase in violent incidents, the number and intensity of anti-foreign violence is highest in Germany (*Ibid.*, p.3). An explanation of Sweden's much lower rate of violence is its policy of assimilating immigrants by aggressive education, training, and integrative social programs and by giving immigrants the right to vote and run for office in community and regional elections after three years of residence. Sweden is also first among 12 European countries in its naturalization rate.<sup>6</sup>

### Voting vs. Violence

Comparing Germany and France yields a hint of an inverse relationship between anti-immigration voting and anti-immigrant violence.<sup>7</sup> It also validates the idea that integration policies reduce the rate of violence even where perceived economic deprivation and social distance are similar.

First, the similarities. The supporters of anti-immigrant, populist-right groups and parties in both countries are concentrated in areas of exceptional immigrant concentration and economic instability or at least perceived instability. These groups draw support from both the losers and winners of

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<sup>6</sup>In the most recent year available (circa 1991) naturalizations as a percentage of the stock of foreign population in the year before was 5.4 percent in Sweden, 2.7 percent in Germany (Guimezanes, 1994, p. 25).

<sup>7</sup>The next six paragraphs draw on data developed in a 1993 paper by my assistant, Karen Adelberger, from French and German surveys and recent literature. See also Wilensky (1975, p. 57-59 and 1976, pp. 12-34).

structural readjustment. It is not only economic deterioration alone that provokes protest; it is any major economic change, up or down, that heightens the sense of insecurity. For instance, among the German winners are Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria; among the French winners are Paris and the Ile-de France and Alsace. German losers include Schleswig-Holstein and Bremen; French losers include Marseilles and Bouche du Rh<sup>TM</sup>ne. All of these areas are either strongholds of protest voting or evidence above-average support for anti-immigrant politicians.

The core supporters of Le Pen in France and the Republikaner in Germany are not especially marginal. They are citizens of the middle mass (lower white collar, upper working class, self-employed). In both countries, most are males with vocational training or high school but no higher education. Whether they are employed or not they have a strong sense of insecurity – economic and physical – that is much more intense and widespread than among voters for other more established parties. They rank insecurity, law-and-order and crime at the top of their concerns. Even the lawless skinheads in Germany identify their biggest worry as Zukunftssicherheit or "future security." Responding to political demagogues, they blame their job insecurities and other troubles on immigrants.

In both countries the targets of protest voters and violent gangs are distant in language and appearance; they are typically Islamic – e.g. "guestworker" Turks and Balkan refugees in Germany, Arabs from North Africa and the Sub-Sahara in France. In both countries ethnic segregation in substandard housing and poor neighborhoods is common. Both include immigrants in universal welfare-state benefits, whose alleged drain on the taxpayer-citizen is a centerpiece of political propaganda. All this should sound familiar to television

viewers in the United States who were exposed to saturation advertising on crime, immigrants and welfare during the poisonous Congressional campaign of 1994.

With all these French-German similarities it is striking that Germany has much more anti-immigrant violence than France while France has much higher populist right anti-immigrant voting than Germany. For instance, per capita acts of extreme right xenophobic violence in Germany after 1990 were at least 2.5 times higher than in France. But electoral support shows the reverse pattern: Le Pen's Front National received between 26 and 28 percent of the vote in 1988 Presidential elections in areas of high immigrant concentration in Southwest France – Marseilles, Toulon, and Nice (Frears 1991, p. 116); in February 1997, the Front National won its first absolute majority of the vote in a municipal election in the Marseilles suburb of Vitrolles. In contrast, from 1973 to 1989 German support for similar extreme right-wing parties at its peak in the 1989 Euro-elections was only 7.1 percent (excluding Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg the other Länder ranged between 4 and 6 percent of the vote going to the REPs). At its peak in national elections since unification that vote was less than 5 percent. In fact, in the 1994 national election the Republikaner got only 1.9 percent of the vote.

Contrasts in public policy and politics as well as rates of immigration provide a reasonable explanation. The German policy of ethnic exclusion based on descent and combined with wide open access to refugees up to 1993 (perhaps driven by historical guilt) makes the cultural and social integration of minorities difficult, no matter how long they stay (some of the Turks are third-generation

workers).<sup>8</sup> Sheer numbers add to nativist resentment and violence.<sup>9</sup> In contrast, French policy, while not as assimilative as that of the U.S. or Canada, is inclusive (Esman, 1992, pp. 3-4, 36,39). French official administrative classifications from the first have been socioprofessional or "national"; from the Third Republic on, the French forbade all Census questions about ethnic, religious, and linguistic origins. The French version of the melting pot myth is that the fusion of peoples came to an end with the Revolution and no redefinition of "French" can come from subsequent waves of immigration (Noiriel, 1992, pp. 72-73; and Brubaker 1992, pp. 104-110). French universalism has had a paradoxical result: it exaggerates the social distance between nation-conscious Frenchmen and foreigners; at the same time it shapes the law of immigration in more liberal directions. Encouragement of assimilation may reduce violence but still permit political expression of nativist sentiments. As an added explanation of Le Pen's strength, France has run a much higher rate of unemployment than Germany for many years. Vitrolles, where LePen's party reached its first majority, has not only a large concentration of North African immigrants; it also has an abundance of alienated French workers hard hit by 19 percent unemployment (New York Times, February 10, 1997).

A final piece of this puzzle is the role of electoral laws as they shape protest voting. Both France and Germany have mixed proportional-plurality

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<sup>8</sup>For an account of recent German immigration debates, policies, and administrative practices, see Halfmann, 1995. Brubaker (1992) describes the evolution of French and German citizenship policies

<sup>9</sup>Alber (1994), using Eurobarometer surveys and data from Wiegand and Fuchs, Gerhards and Roller, devises an index of "rejection of foreigners" (respondents who say that there are too many foreigners in their country, that the presence of foreigners is disturbing, that the rights of foreigners should be restricted, and that asylum seekers should no longer be accepted). For 11 EC countries this index of xenophobia correlates .82 with the percentage of foreigners from non-EC countries in each nation, underscoring the importance of numbers.

electoral systems with two-stage voting. But the two ballots in the French case are cast a week or two apart; only the second is decisive. The two ballots of the Germans – one for the candidate, one for the party – are simultaneous and both ballots shape the final political composition of the government. French voters can therefore indulge their xenophobic sentiments in a first-ballot protest against the political establishment with little consequence in most cases; German voters are denied any second thoughts. In short, the German combination of much higher numbers of socially-distant strangers, an exclusionary naturalization policy, and an electoral system that discourages pure protest voting (and incidentally makes neo-Nazi parties illegal) encourages violence; the French combination of lower numbers of immigrants, universalistic ideology and assimilative policies, greater unemployment but electoral laws and traditions favorable to protest voting minimizes violence and provides xenophobic movements with an abundance of voters.

#### Nativism and Tax-Welfare Backlash Go Together<sup>10</sup>

As part of the larger project of which this is a part, we analyzed tax-welfare backlash in 19 rich democracies -- the universe of democracies in the upper one-sixth of GNP per capita with a million or more population. By tax-welfare backlash I mean strong social-political movements and/or parties that emphasize anti-tax, anti-social spending, anti-bureaucratic ideological themes and achieve electoral success for substantial periods. In independent coding we arrived at scores for each of 19 countries focused on intensity and duration for each of four expressions of backlash emphasizing the period 1965-75 when these

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<sup>10</sup> This section is based on chapter 10, "Tax-Welfare Backlash: How to Tax, Spend, and Yet Keep Cool" of my Rich Democracies (2002) and Wilensky (1976).

movements and parties burst forth. Because of my interest in the direction of social and political change, the weighting favors social-political movements of reasonable duration (weight 3) which achieve recurrent electoral success and political influence (weight 4). Less important are other forms of collective behavior such as political strikes, demonstrations, and riots (weight 2). These may or may not constitute the seedbed for the eventual growth of social movements and party organization; more important, in most of our countries they are episodic, even ephemeral and often local as are the Poujadistes in France. Least important are mass sentiments uncovered by sample surveys or close observers (weight 1); such opinions seldom come in unmixed or coherent form and even if predominantly anti-welfare state, can be channeled in diverse directions. In the end, if we eliminated mass sentiments from the index, it would make no change in the rank order of the 19 countries.<sup>11</sup> Updating the analysis for 1975-1996 suggests that very little change in the rank order is necessary, that the coding and explanation detailed in Wilensky (1976) was amazingly predictive of subsequent developments.

What is most interesting for our understanding of nativism is that when we analyzed tax-welfare backlash, it proved impossible to separate anti-tax, anti-social spending, anti-bureaucratic protest movements and parties from nativist, xenophobic or racist protests; these two themes appear together in all the high-scoring countries except Denmark in the 1970s. (Even in Denmark the Progress Party began to complain about immigrants in the 1980s.) When Hollywood-actor

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<sup>11</sup> The scores (intensity-duration+ ideological theme x weight) ranged from 55 (Denmark) to 20 (Japan). That index was then reduced to the final six-point index of tax-welfare backlash (0-5). I think that this index avoids spurious precision and is both reliable and valid (for details see Wilensky, 1976, pp. 14-21, 56-68).

Ronald Reagan swept California in the 1966 gubernatorial election he sounded not only the familiar anti-tax, anti-social spending, anti-bureaucratic themes but at the same time baited welfare mothers. He brought the house down when he asserted that welfare recipients (code words for black welfare poor) are on a "prepaid lifetime vacation plan." In 1970, after four years in office, with taxes rising, welfare costs soaring, and campus disruption recurring (all of which he vowed to stop), Governor Reagan ran and won on the same slogans: "We are fighting the big-spending politicians who advocate a welfare state, the welfare bureaucrats whose jobs depend on expanding the welfare system, and the cadres of professional poor who have adopted welfare as a way of life" (Wall Street Journal, October 9, 1970). That movement culminated in eight years of the Reagan Presidency, and ultimately a Republican takeover of Congress in 1994 with identical campaign themes – anti-tax, anti-spend, anti-bureaucracy combined with the complaint that immigrants and other poor racial and linguistic minorities were creating immense burdens of welfare and crime. For backlash politicians the slogan "no welfare for immigrants" is a "two-fer": it encapsulates two unpopular targets, recipients of social assistance (the undeserving poor) and despised minority groups. As President, Reagan repeatedly referred to mythical "welfare queens" as symbols of welfare fraud and abuse.<sup>12</sup>

Similarly, in the U.K. in the early 1970s, Conservative Enoch Powell, the Cambridge-educated establishment version of George Wallace or Ronald Reagan, became the charismatic hero of the middle mass. He not only targeted

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<sup>12</sup>Chapter 6 of Wilensky (2002) explains why "welfare"—means-tested public assistance, a small fraction of public expenditures-- became a political obsession in the United States.

social spending and taxing as a drag on the British economy; he also railed against the hordes of West Indian blacks and other immigrants who were unEnglish and would undermine the British way of life. Although Powell failed to become top man of the Tories — they were embarrassed by his racism — Margaret Thatcher managed to become their top person articulating all of Powell's arguments except the overt complaints about racial minorities.

Switzerland, too, has blended tax-welfare backlash with nativism. James Schwarzenbach in 1970 reached his peak of 46 percent of the total vote in a national referendum which proposed to limit the admission of foreign workers, a measure that his party claimed essential not only to preserve the Swiss way of life but to avoid an ultimately staggering burden of social services. In the late 1970s, a Schwarzenbach-type movement was still operating — various right-wing populist parties rose in votes in the late 1970s and early 1980s and remained strong in the 1991 election. They include the Swiss Democrats, especially strong in Berne, Zurich and Graubünden; the Lega Ticinese (anti-tax, anti-spend, anti-bureaucratic, anti-corruption) in Italian-speaking Ticino; and more recently the Motorist Party ("Parti des Automobilistes") who favor privatization of transportation, denial of social benefits to foreign workers, and are generally anti-government and anti-Green. In the 1990s, the populist, charismatic leader of the right, Christopher Blocher of Zurich, was orchestrating the themes of these disparate parties and groups. Although small right-wing parties lost votes in the 1995 election, Blocher's People's Party was a winner (up 3 percent); the total backlash vote remained steady. Finally, Canada, with an above-average backlash score (3) based largely on the populist tax revolts confined to Alberta and British Columbia, evidences the same merging of anti-tax, anti-social spending, anti-bureaucratic sentiments with a rising Western resentment of the Francophones of Quebec and the politicians in Ottawa who coddle them. (The

Social Credit Party, in office in Alberta from 1935 to 1971, also appealed to anti-Semites.) More recently, the Reform Party, emerging in Alberta, then BC, rose to third in popular vote nationally in 1993; it even more clearly combined tax-welfare backlash with hostility to Francophones and all foreigners.<sup>13</sup> And in June 1997 it became the official opposition to the ruling Liberals in Parliament.

In short, while nativism is widespread among all rich democracies, only a few rank high on tax-welfare backlash; these few cases almost always combine hostility to taxing, spending, and government bureaucracy with hostility to socially-distant minority groups. Facilitating the merger of tax-welfare backlash and nativism is the social locus of both in the middle mass. Politicians

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<sup>13</sup>A careful analysis of the 1993 election showed that the defectors from the Progressive Conservatives who went in droves to the Reform Party, while they shared the Reform Party's protest against taxing and spending, were virulently anti-immigrant and anti-Quebec—more xenophobic than other Tory voters (Nevitte et al., 1995). With the victory of the Conservative party of Ontario in June 1995, a third provincial backlash movement with explicit inspiration from the campaigns of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, came to power (*Wall Street Journal*, June 12, 1995 and October 3, 1995). Thus, developments in the 1990s might justify a score for Canada of 3.5 rather than 3, which would strengthen the results reported in my earlier analysis (1976). (Interviews with politicians and journalists confirm this.) In my update I note that recent developments in Norway and Finland would move their above-average scores of 3 toward Sweden's 2, strengthening the idea that corporatist consensus insulates a democracy against backlash. Similarly, a study of 16 of the most threatening ethno-regional parties in five West European democracies (Britain, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Finland) shows that their electoral success from 1980 to 1992 is related to the degree of centralized corporatist bargaining. These parties had less success in corporatist Belgium and Finland, more where such structures are non-existent (Britain) or weak (Italy) (Müller-Rommel, 1994, p. 194 and Table 2. Müller-Rommel (1994) confines analysis to ethno-regional parties that contested at least two national and regional elections from 1980 to 1992, polled at least 3 percent of the regional vote, and actually gained seats in the national parliament—a fair test of serious challenges to established parties. In the United Kingdom these include separatists such as the Ulster Unionists and Loyalists and United Ireland/Sinn Féin, as well as the left-libertarian federalists, the Scottish National Party and the Social Democratic Labour Party. In Belgium, it includes parties that demand autonomy and language rights within the nation-state—the Christelijke Vlaamse Volksunie and the Front Démocratique des Bruxellois Francophones. In Finland, it includes the Svenska Folkpartiet, which aims to defend the interests of a linguistic community without secession or a major restructuring of the state. In Italy, the Union Valdotaïne fought for linguistic rights and regional decentralization; today the Northern League advocates federalism, threatens secession, and expresses great hostility to the backward, corrupt South as well as all immigrants (see chapter 8). The secessionist Parti Québécois in Canada, like the Basques in Spain, would fit the more-militant secessionists in the Müller-Rommel study.

Finally, a study of the radical right in Europe similarly concludes that its greatest electoral successes occur when it couples a fierce commitment to free markets with equally-fierce xenophobia or racism (Kitschelt, 1995).

mobilizing lower-middle class and upper working-class people who feel economically-squeezed between the privileged top and the competing bottom can easily add racial-ethnic resentments prevalent in the same population.

### Summary and Conclusion

Migration from poor areas to rich is new neither in its rate nor in its consequences. Rich democracies are now converging in their cultural and social diversity and in their conflict focused on immigration. They differ, however, in their openness to political and economic refugees, their policies toward immigrant integration, and the intensity of anti-immigrant mobilization. Anti-immigrant sentiments are most intense where the number and concentration of immigrants are heavy, the social distance between natives and strangers (in education, religion, language, ethnicity, and race) is great, and the economic instability of industrial readjustment is most widely experienced. Most important, industrial democracies differ in their ways of channeling mass prejudices and populist-right movements. A country that makes a serious effort to minimize illegal immigration, and to assimilate immigrants via inclusionary naturalization policies, job creation, training, and placement, and language and citizenship education will minimize nativist violence. It may ultimately reduce the electoral appeal of political demagogues who intensify mass fears and hatreds to achieve power.

Finally, I doubt that European democracies and Japan, as they experience increased immigration, must necessarily produce an alienated underclass, the target of a middle-mass revolt, American style. Only if they abandon the public policies that encouraged labor peace and kept their poverty rates low – family policies, an active labor-market policy, an accommodative framework for

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industrial relations, a universalistic welfare state – will they drift into the Anglo-American pattern. Some may choose that road; but the choice is there.

There is no tidal wave of immigrants to the affluent democracies. In relation to world population international migration is a rare event. In general, the negative economic effects of increased migration are exaggerated and the political effects can be contained.

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