Is Raspberry right in suggesting that black Americans need to spend less time blaming racial injustice for their problems and more time creating businesses and enterprises? Why or why not?

Suggestion for Writing

Develop an argument that proposes how a minority group can best enhance its economic prosperity. Use whatever types of evidence seem appropriate.

NATHAN THORNBURGH

The Case for Amnesty

Nathan Thornburgh has been a Senior Editor for Time *magazine from 2000 to the present. He is author of a number of articles including "The Fallout from a Deportation" and "Dropout Nation." This article was published in* Time *in 2007.*

1   Amnesty has emerged as the pariah term of the immigration debate, disavowed even by those who believe in its goals. But what are the alternatives to letting illegals stay? Deporting millions? Devising other punishments? Doing nothing at all? Few places have struggled with these questions as much as rural Beardstown, Ill., where an April immigration raid at the town's largest employer exposed a community that is both dependent on its undocumented workers and deeply resentful of their presence. Why legalizing the illegals makes sense for Beardstown—and for America.

1. Amnesty Can Work Politically

2   One day before the June 5 Republican debate, Senator John McCain tried to preempt the coming criticism. He knew he would spend the debate flanked by nine candidates waiting to rip into the Senate compromise bill he helped write, which calls for a salve of legalization, border security and guest-worker programs. So in a Miami speech on June 4, he sought to distance himself from the *a* word. "Critics of the bill attack this as amnesty," he said. "(But) we impose fines, fees and other requirements as punishment." The bill, he said, is not amnesty.

3   Yes, it is. Whether you fine illegal aliens or stick them in English classes or make them say a hundred Hail Marys, at the end of the day, illegals would be allowed to stay and become citizens under this bill. That's amnesty. And that's a good thing for America. The estimated 12 million illegals are by their sheer numbers undeportable. More important, they are too enmeshed in a healthy U.S. economy to be extracted.

4   Yet the word *amnesty* was still used as a cudgel at the GOP debate—McCain's rivals clobbered him with the term, and he turned it on them as well, saying that doing nothing is "silent and de facto amnesty." Why are the bill's supporters so skittish about the word? If the past five years of immigration debate have taught us anything, it's that railing against the illegal invasion is easy, popular and effective. Now politicians are being roasted for conceding a reality: illegal or not, most of those 12 million are here to stay.

5   The heat extends from President George W. Bush to McCain and all the way down to the mayor of Beardstown, where a decade of intense immigration has

turned a nearly all-white town into a place in which 72% of the prekindergarten class is Hispanic. "If I got up and said I'm gonna run each and every Mexican out of town on a donkey, the voters here would cheer me on," says Mayor Bob Walters. "But I'm not going to say that. It's not our job to deport them all, and it's not the right thing to do."

6   Many of Beardstown's white residents were pleased by the federal raid on the massive pork-processing plant at the edge of town, owned by multinational meatpacker Cargill Meat Solutions (the April 4 operation targeted a subcontractor that was cleaning the plant, not Cargill itself). The raids netted 62 people, most of whom were sent to federal detention centers that night and later deported. "It's good they got those people," Oscar Cluney, 18, told me as he hung out with his friends in the parking lot of the local Save-a-Lot store. "The whole situation here makes me kind of mad."

7   And a lot of voters are upset too—but they are deeply conflicted about the right solution. A recent Gallup poll found that 60% of people who were following the bill closely were opposed to it. But an April USA Today/Gallup poll found that just 14% of respondents wanted to send illegal immigrants home with no chance of returning to the U.S. The public seems confused about the definition of amnesty.

8   Politicians are tapping into the public's uncertainty. In the June 5 GOP debate, Rudy Giuliani summed up the bill's problem this way: "It's a typical Washington mess," he said. He's right, of course, but not for the reasons he thinks. Rather, the bill is a mess because it doesn't fully embrace its most important aim: amnesty. Instead, it is laden with punitive measures—designed to evoke a certain toughness—that will at most just keep illegals from participating. Amnesty, as defined by its opponents, has come to mean getting forgiveness for free. But under the Senate's current compromise, the path for illegals is not anything close to easy. Under the compromise, the 12 million would face a 13-year process including $5,000 in fines per person, benchmarks for learning English and an onerous "touchback" provision that calls for the head of each household to leave job and family behind and return to his or her home country for an indeterminate amount of time to queue up for the final green card. Nothing free about that.

9   The touchback clause is party designed to insulate the bill from criticism that amnesty would be unfair to those waiting in line to come legally. But that's a false comparison. If people are frustrated, as they should be, by the fact that some eligible immigrants have been waiting for citizenship for as many as 28 years, then by all means, fix that problem. Streamline the process for legal immigration. But don't blame that red-tape nightmare on the millions of low-wage illegals already here, who form a very different (and vastly more populous) group.

2. Amnesty Won't Depress Wages—Globalization Has Already Done That

10   Before you talk about amnesty, it makes sense to address the anger that many citizens feel. Across the U.S., Americans feel squeezed and threatened by the newcomers. Part of the anxiety is undeniably race based. Fox News's Bill O'Reilly leavened his reluctant support for the Senate bill with warnings that it "drastically alters" a country that is already "one-third minority." Others worry about language preservation. Republican Congressman Tom Tancredo of Colorado gave a breathless defense of the English language at the GOP debate, saying that bilingualism has failed other countries and that the U.S. was fast headed in that direction. Yes, it's true: Mexicans speak Spanish. Relax. Mexicans also know that English is the key to getting ahead in the U.S. When Beardstown

opened a bilingual program for all the kids in the elementary school. Hispanic parents were as worried as white parents about missing out on an English-only education. Assimilation is slow, but it is inevitable. Beardstown was settled in the 19th century by unapologetically German immigrants, but you won't hear so much as a gesundheit uttered there today. What is lacking, in Beardstown as in Washington, is faith in America's undimmed ability to metabolize immigrants from around the world, to change them more than they change the U.S.

11   Economic anxiety animates much of the resistance to amnesty, particularly from the left. Real wages have been stagnant for nearly three decades throughout the U.S., and for a place like working-class Beardstown, having to deal with a huge new influx of Spanish-speaking workers seems like adding insult to economic injury. But if times are tough in rural America, are illegal immigrants to blame? It turns out that the truly good jobs left Beardstown long before the Mexicans came. In the mid-'80s, the Cargill plant was owned by Oscar Mayer. Walters was the union representative at the plant back then, and he says it offered good jobs and good benefits, but globalization and other corporate pressures caught up with them. The company shuttered and sold the plant in 1987. Five months later, it reopened under a new owner, with lower wages and fewer benefits. "The starting wage went from $11 an hour to $7.50," says Walters. "The meatpacking industry ought to be ashamed of what they did to towns like ours."

12   The first Hispanics didn't come to work at Cargill en masse until years later. And as Cargill likes to point out, more white workers work at the factory than before. The plant has in fact grown, thanks in large part to hardworking migrants, not just from Mexico but from more than 20 other countries. The business seems robust for the time being. The workforce is unionized again. Salaries are creeping up. A new Wal-Mart Supercenter is on the way. Cargill's strength has turned Beardstown into, if not a boomtown, at least a place that investors are paying attention to. And the town is leading its pitch with the fact that it has a large Hispanic workforce, a bellwether for economic growth. "That's all I need to tell them," says Steve Twaddle, the county's director of economic development. "Businesses understand."

13   That progress, in Beardstown and in similar towns throughout the U.S., is imperiled by illegality. Cargill has long struggled to rid its rolls of illegal workers who are using false documentation. Most notably, a rumor that another raid was imminent swept through the night shift last month. Those workers who had false papers had to make a decision: stay and risk detention and deportation if the rumor were true, or leave and expose themselves as illegal workers. Cargill wouldn't comment on the incident, but locals say that dozens fled the plant that night and were fired or quit after having outed themselves by leaving.

14   It is not easy to replace them. Meatpacking is a hard job at any salary. There's plenty of new technology in the meatpacking industry, but no machine has yet been invented to take over some of the toughest positions, like the role of gut snatcher, whose sole job is to tug the offal out of each freshly killed hog that comes down the line.

15   The economics of immigration remain a mysterious science. Everyone has a pet study proving immigration suppresses wages or it builds economies. A less malleable truth is that many towns, like many companies, are faced with a stark choice in the global economy: grow or die. So Beardstown is growing, a healthy economy surrounded by dying rural towns. The U.S. is in the same situation. For all the stresses of immigration, it is the only industrialized nation with a population that is growing fast enough and skews young enough to provide the kind of

workforce that a dynamic economy needs. The illegals are part of the reason for that, and amnesty ensures that competitive advantage.

3. Amnesty Won't Undermine the Rule of Law

16   Google "This is a nation of laws," and you'll find a thousand online Cassandras warning that our failure to prosecute illegals is an invitation to anarchy. They are right about the U.S. being a nation of laws. But our legal system is not a house of cards, one flick away from collapse. U.S. jurisprudence has in fact always been a series of hedged bets, weighing the potential harm of a violation against the costs of enforcement. That's why people get arrested for assault but not for jaywalking. It's time to think seriously about exactly where the act of illegal immigration lies in the spectrum of criminality. Consider the complicity of U.S. employers ranging from multinational corporations to suburbanites looking for gardeners. Factor in the mixed signals that lax law enforcement sent to would-be immigrants throughout the '80s and '90s, and the crime should rank as a misdemeanor, not a felony. Even if we step up border enforcement in the future—as we should—it is true that for a long time, crossing the Rio Grande was akin more to jaywalking than breaking and entering.

17   Sure, there is a very real national-security threat in having a porous border. But a large—if unquantifiable—percentage of the people crossing that line illegally are not newcomers but rather people who have already established lives in the U.S. and would qualify for amnesty. If they were legalized and free to circulate, we could concentrate on the serious criminals and terrorists crossing the border, not a worker going back to his family.

18   In Beardstown, amnesty would also help authorities tackle crime. Right now, they spend a lot of their energy sorting out who is who in the community because illegals present local police with a bewildering maze of identities. The illegals of Beardstown work under one name and go to church under another. Parents give their kindergartners fake names to use in school. "We are absolutely unable to identify our own people," says Walters. It sounds counterintuitive, but with immigration, forgiving a crime may be the best way to restore law and order.

4. Amnesty Won't Necessarily Add to the Social-Services Burden

19   Many of the undesirable traits of illegal populations stem in large part from the simple fact that they are illegal. They use expensive emergency rooms because they lack insurance or are afraid a primary-care doctor might create a paper trail. They often don't file tax returns because of the same fear, and they turn to welfare or other social services because their illegal status consigns them to the lowest rung of the economy. We infantilize undocumented workers by relegating them to second-class status, and then we chastise them for being dependent on the nanny state.

20   "(White people) think we have it easy, that we don't pay taxes," says Fernanda, 19, whose parents were deported in the April raid. "They don't know how hard it is to get ahead here."

21   Fernanda has been in the U.S. since the eighth grade and graduated last year from Beardstown Middle/High School. Those five years of public education represent a significant investment by the U.S. government. And what's the return on that investment? Fernanda had dreams of going to college to study nursing, and Beardstown badly needs bilingual nurses. But she's illegal, and after the deportation of her parents, she has to support the entire family. So she's looking for work at local hog farms, a manual-labor job that does not make the most of her talents. "There's a great human potential in this town that doesn't see the light of day because of the legal status," says community organizer Julio Flores.

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22   Some would argue that Fernanda should not have been schooled on our dime in the first place. But the reality is that Fernanda is here in the U.S. to stay. She's not going back to Mexico. Amnesty would offer millions like her a fighting chance at self-sufficiency and social mobility.

5. Amnesty Doesn't Have to Spawn Even More Illegal Immigration

23   A popular reading of recent history holds that the amnesty of 1986, which offered a path to citizenship for 3 million illegals, sparked the much larger wave of unlawful immigration that followed. According to that logic, the '86 amnesty showed would-be migrants from around the world that the U.S. was weak-willed and would eventually relent and give citizenship to its illegals. Duly encouraged, Mexicans and others stormed our borders with unprecedented vigor.

24   Illegal immigration did soar, but that's not why. Studies show that the valleys and peaks in migration have depended far less on changes in policy or policing and far more on the basic economic conditions in the U.S. and Mexico. If you want to truly tamp down illegal immigration, you could induce a recession in the U.S. A better idea might be to help Mexico create more jobs that pay better. A recent Council on Foreign Relations study found that when Mexican wages drop 10% relative to U.S. wages, attempts to cross the border illegally rise 6%. As complex and corrupt as the Mexican economy is, we ignore it at our peril.

25   While Mexico patches itself up, at least the security options are better today than in 1986. There is both the political will and the technology to make enforcement a serious part of any amnesty plan. National ID cards, real employer verification, high-tech border controls can all aid in making sure that this would be the last amnesty of this size.

26   Over fried catfish at the Riverview restaurant, Walters says he calls the feds about illegals in his town a few times a month. But he is tired of the hassle and ready for legalization. "If I could wave a magic wand, I'd rather have no Hispanics and have this town be like it was in the '50s. But that's just not going to happen," he says. "Amnesty is touchy, but we can't keep doing nothing."

27   The need for action is one thing that unites all the presidential candidates. And the coalition for immigration reform is strong enough—and wide enough—to take principled stands. The President, much of the Democratic Party, and a clutch of GOP lawmakers all support legalization. It's not too much to hope that together they could make a frank and forceful argument for amnesty and win over a conflicted nation.

Discussion Questions

1. Like many arguments, this one is written at a particular time in relation to ongoing situations, such as the 2007–08 primary season to which this article makes mention. Does the article manage to have an impact beyond its specific context and if so how?
2. The argument starts by identifying a lot of the political difficulty surrounding the idea of amnesty for illegal immigrants and yet embraces the term and idea of amnesty. Why does the author do this? Is this approach effective?
3. Much of the argument attempts to answer common objections to amnesty. Why does the author adopt this approach? What kinds of reasons or evidence does he use to answer these objections? Is it effective?
4. The author makes few positive arguments for amnesty. Where does the writer make such supportive arguments? Are they effective? Why or why not?

Toward Key Insights

The author approaches this issue as if it were simply a matter of measuring the benefits and harm of granting amnesty. Others approach the issue as one of principle: "we need to enforce the law or the concept of law is meaningless." Is there any way these two approaches can find common ground to carry on the discussion? Has the author achieved such a common ground?

The author attempts to assure the reader that granting "amnesty" will not result in harmful consequences. The problem of induction is that a few cases do not guarantee future results. Does he provide sufficient evidence to make this case? What would be necessary for him to make a convincing case for you as a reader?

Suggestion for Writing

Take one of the issues that the author addresses such as "amnesty won't undermine the rule of law" and argue for and against the author's position.

MARK KRIKORIAN

Not Amnesty but Attrition

Mark Krikorian is the Executive Director of the Center for Immigration Studies, a Washington D.C. think-tank that argues for stricter immigration policy. He is a regular contributor to National Review *and has also published articles in* The Washington Post, New York Times, *and* Commentary. *He is the author of* The New Case against Immigration, Both Legal and Illegal. *This article was Published in the* National Review *in March 2004.*

1   The issue of what to do about illegal aliens living in the United States is often presented as a Hobson's choice: either launch mass roundups to arrest and deport 9-million-plus people, or define away the problem through legalization.

2   The second option—amnesty—is the one President Bush chose in his January 7 speech on immigration. It also underlies many congressional proposals, from the McCain-Kolbe-Flake and Hagel-Daschle bills in the Senate to the House Democratic leadership's plan unveiled in late January.

3   Few among the political elite entertain any alternative. At a recent panel discussion on the president's immigration proposal, Margaret Spellings, the president's chief domestic-policy adviser, reacted with a demure chuckle to the suggestion that we enforce the law.

4   The commentariat is more explicit. Not content to politely ignore the notion of enforcing the law, the *Wall Street Journal*, for instance, has flatly asserted that it's not possible, a "fantasy" of the "extreme," "nativist," and "restrictionist" Right. Meanwhile, the Manhattan Institute's Tamar Jacoby wrote in *The New Republic* of "futile law enforcement" and how "the migrant flow is inevitable."

5   Fortunately for America there is a third way, between the politically impossible and disruptive approach of mass roundups on one hand, and the surrender of our sovereignty by the open-borders Left and its libertarian fellow-travelers on the other. This third way is attrition, squeezing the illegal population through

consistent, across-the-board law enforcement to bring about an annual reduc-
tion in the illegal population rather than the annual increases we have seen for
more than a decade. Over a few years, the number of illegal aliens would drop
significantly, shrinking the problem from a crisis to a manageable nuisance.

Of Velvet Fists . . .

6   This isn't just a wonkish daydream. There is significant churn in the illegal
population, which we can use to our advantage. According to a 2003 INS report,
thousands of people stop being illegal aliens each year. From 1995 to 1999, an
average of 165,000 a year went back home; the same number got some kind of
legal status, about 50,000 were deported, and 25,000 died, for a total of more
than 400,000 people each year subtracted from the resident illegal population.
The problem is that the average inflow of new illegal aliens was nearly 800,000,
swamping the outflow and creating an average annual increase of close to
400,000.

7   The solution, then, is to increase the number of people leaving the illegal
population and to reduce the number of new illegal settlers, so that there is an
annual decline in the total number. This is a measured, Burkean approach to the
problem. It doesn't aspire to an immediate, magical solution to a long-brewing
crisis, but rather helps us back out of an untenable situation that we helped cre-
ate through our inattention to the law.

8   This begs the natural question: "But aren't we already enforcing the law?" If
not, as a *Wall Street Journal* editorial has asked, "Then what is it we've been doing
for 20 years now?" The answer lies in the old Soviet joke: "We pretend to work
and they pretend to pay us."

9   Since 1986, Congress has passed muscular immigration laws and then made
sure that they were not enforced. In that year, the Immigration Reform and
Control Act (IRCA) was enacted, which traded an illegal-alien amnesty for a first-
ever ban on the employment of illegal aliens. The point was to demagnetize the
strong pull of good jobs—the main reason illegals come here in the first place.

10   More than 2.7 million illegals got legalized up front, with promises of
tighter enforcement in the future. But the law itself was hobbled such that it
became unworkable. Only if employers had a means of verifying the legal status
of new hires against Social Security or INS databases could the law succeed—but
Congress refused to require the INS to start developing such a system. Instead,
employers were expected to do the verifying themselves, by examining a bewil-
dering array of easily forged documents, and then they were threatened with dis-
crimination lawsuits by the Justice Department if they looked too hard. It would
be hard to imagine a system more obviously intended to fail.

11   Eventually, even this handicapped setup was sabotaged. After catching flak for
workplace raids, the INS in 1998 decided to try a new approach to enforcing the
hiring ban. Instead of raiding individual employers, Operation Vanguard sought
to identify illegal workers at all the meatpacking plants in Nebraska through audits
of personnel records. The INS then asked to interview those employees who
appeared to be unauthorized—and the illegals ran off. The procedure was
remarkably successful, and was meant to be repeated every two or three months
until the whole industry was weaned from dependence on illegal labor.

12   Local police were very pleased with the results, but employers and politi-
cians vociferously criticized the very idea of enforcing the immigration law.
Nebraska governor Mike Johanns organized a task force to oppose the opera-

tion; the meat packers and the ranchers hired his predecessor, Ben Nelson, to lobby on their behalf; and, in Washington, Sen. Chuck Hagel made it his mission in life to pressure the Justice Department to stop. The INS took the hint, and all but gave up on enforcing the hiring ban nationwide.

13   Nor is this the only example of tough-looking laws that go unenforced. In 1996 Congress passed a large immigration bill, which included a provision that sought to punish long-term illegal residence by barring illegals from future re-entry for three or ten years, depending on the length of the initial unlawful stay. Its scope was limited in any case, since it applied only to people who actually left the country and then tried to return, but it was denounced at the time by the usual suspects as "radical" and "draconian." But an examination of the law's results shows that, in its first four years, the bar prevented fewer than 12,000 people from re-entering the United States.

14   Even the expansion of border enforcement follows this pattern of ineffectuality. The Border Patrol has doubled in size since 1996, accounting for the lion's share of increased resources for enforcement. Its 10,000 agents are better equipped and doing a better job than ever before. But since, as any agent will tell you, the Border Patrol alone can't control illegal immigration, there's little danger that such increased capacity will actually curtail the flow. Again, it's a policy that appears tough, but isn't—a velvet fist in an iron glove.

Networking

15   Why does this happen? It is a manifestation of the yawning gap between public and elite opinion on immigration. The laws need to look tough, with promises of robust enforcement, to satisfy public concerns. But immigration's relatively low political importance for most people ensures that the elite preference for loose enforcement will be satisfied in the end.

16   But isn't the elite right in this case? Isn't immigration inevitable? Hardly. No one wakes up in Paraguay and decides, "Today, I will move to Sheboygan!" Immigration can take place only if there are networks of relatives, friends, and countrymen directing immigrants to a particular place. And these networks are a creation of government policy, either through proactive measures or through permitting networks to grow through non-enforcement of the law.

17   As an example, look at the Philippines and Indonesia. Both are populous, poor countries on the other side of the world, and yet the 2000 Census found about 19 times more Filipino immigrants in the United States than Indonesians, 1.4 million versus 73,000. Why? Because we ruled the Philippines for 50 years as a colony and maintained a major military presence there for another 50 years, allowing extensive networks to develop, whereas we have historically had little to do with Indonesia.

18   Granted, interrupting such networks is harder than creating them, but it is not impossible—after all, the trans-Atlantic immigration networks from the turn of the last century were successfully interrupted, and atrophied completely. And, to move beyond theory, the few times we actually tried to enforce the immigration law, it worked—until we gave up for political reasons.

19   During the first several years after the passage of the IRCA, illegal crossings from Mexico fell precipitously, as prospective illegals waited to see if we were serious. Apprehensions of aliens by the Border Patrol—an imperfect measure but the only one available—fell from more than 1.7 million in FY 1986 to under a million in 1989. But then the flow began to increase again as the deterrent effect of the hiring ban dissipated, when word got back that we were not serious

about enforcement and that the system could be easily evaded through the use of inexpensive phony documents.

20 As I've written in these pages before, when we stepped up immigration enforcement against Middle Easterners (and only Middle Easterners) in the wake of 9/11, the largest group of illegals from that part of the world, Pakistanis, fled the country in droves to avoid being caught up in the dragnet.

21 And in an inadvertent enforcement initiative, the Social Security Administration in 2002 sent out almost a million "no-match" letters to employers who filed W-2s with information that was inconsistent with SSA's records. The intention was to clear up misspellings, name changes, and other mistakes that had caused a large amount of money paid into the system to go uncredited. But, of course, most of the problem was caused by illegal aliens lying to their employers, and thousands of illegals quit or were fired when they were found out. The effort was so successful at denying work to illegals that business and immigrant-rights groups organized to stop it, and won a 90 percent reduction in the number of letters to be sent out.

War of Attrition

22 We know that when we actually enforce the law, eroding the illegal-immigration population is possible. So what would a policy of attrition look like? It would have two key components. The first would include more conventional enforcement—arrests, prosecutions, deportations, asset seizures, etc. The second would require verification of legal status at a variety of important choke points, to make it as difficult and unpleasant as possible to live here illegally.

23 As to the first, the authorities need to start taking immigration violations seriously. To use only one example, people who repeatedly sneak across the border are supposed to be prosecuted and jailed, and the Border Patrol unveiled a new digital fingerprint system in the mid '90s to make tracking of repeat crossers possible. The problem is that short-staffed U.S. attorneys' offices kept increasing the number of apprehensions needed before they would prosecute, to avoid actually having to prosecute at all.

24 It would be hard to exaggerate the demoralizing effect that such disregard for the law has on the Homeland Security Department's staff. Conversely, the morale of immigration workers would soar in the wake of a real commitment to law enforcement. We've already seen a real-world example of this, too. I met with deportation officers in a newly formed "fugitive operations team" in Southern California who, unlike other immigration personnel I have spoken with, were actually excited about their jobs. They still have gripes, but the clear political commitment to locating and deporting fugitive aliens communicates to them that their work is genuinely valued by their superiors all the way up to the White House.

25 Other measures that would facilitate enforcement include hiring more U.S. attorneys and judges in border areas, to allow for more prosecutions; passing the CLEAR Act, which would enhance cooperation between federal immigration authorities and state and local police; and seizing the assets, however modest, of apprehended illegal aliens.

26 But these and other enforcement measures will not remove most of the illegal population—the majority of illegals will have to be persuaded to deport

themselves. Unlike at the visa office or the border crossing, once aliens are inside the United States, there's no physical place, no choke point at which to examine whether someone should be admitted. The solution is to create "virtual choke points"—events that are necessary for life in a modern society but are infrequent enough not to bog down the business of society.

27   This is the thinking behind the law banning the employment of illegal aliens—people have to work, so requiring proof of legal status upon starting a job would serve as such a virtual choke point. As discussed above, in the absence of a verification mechanism, such a system couldn't succeed. But the president signed into law at the end of last year a measure to re-authorize and expand the verification pilot programs that immigration authorities have been experimenting with since the mid 1990s.

28   Building on this fledgling system, we need to find other instances in which legal status can be verified, such as getting a driver's license, registering an automobile, opening a bank account, applying for a car loan or a mortgage, enrolling children in public schools, and getting a business or occupational license.

29   An effective strategy of immigration law enforcement requires no booby traps, no tanks, no tattoos on arms—none of the cartoonish images invoked in the objections raised routinely by the loose-borders side. The consistent application of ordinary law-enforcement tools is all we need. "Consistent," though, is the key word. Enforcement personnel—whether Border Patrol agents, airport inspectors, or plainclothes investigators—need to know that their work is valued, that their superiors actually want them to do the jobs they've been assigned, and that they will be backed up when the inevitable complaints roll in.

30   And, finally, this isn't root-canal Republicanism, bitter medicine we swallow for the greater good. Enforcement of the immigration law may not be popular among the elite, but actual voters across the political spectrum are all for it. As Alan Wolfe wrote in *One Nation, After All*, the difference between legal and illegal immigrants "is one of the most tenaciously held distinctions in middle-class America; the people with whom we spoke overwhelmingly support legal immigration and express disgust with the illegal variety."

31   If only our political leadership felt the same way.

Discussion Questions

1. Why does the author not argue directly against amnesty but rather on how a program of attrition can work?
2. What is the main organization of the author's argument? Is the argument simple or complex? How does this influence the effectiveness of the argument?
3. What kinds of evidence does the author use mostly? How does this evidence affect the credibility of the argument?
4. Why does the author use the examples of the Philippines and Indonesia? How does this strengthen and/or weaken his argument?
5. What is the function of paragraph 29 in the author's argument?