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My THINKING CAP

Solutions for Global Crisis

Chapter 5
A Solution for the Immigration Crisis

Brad Fregger



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My Thinking Cap

By Brad Fregger

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Editor

Barbara Foley

Book Design & Production

M. Kevin Ford

Cover Design & Production

M. Kevin Ford

Original Front Cover Image

M. Kevin Ford

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A Solution for the Immigration Crisis

The idea that the United States is somehow not living up to its heritage of welcoming immigrants is very wrong; the United States is, in fact, continuing to be the most welcoming nation in the world.

We are a society of people who care about doing what is right, and the right thing to do is to bite the bullet and take care of our current immigration issue. It seems to me that the major difficulty involves those on the two opposite sides of the issue:

- Those opposed to amnesty for “illegal immigrants” (amnesty: the act of the government granting a general pardon for an offense before a trial or conviction, especially to a large group).
- Those who believe that “undocumented immigrants” should have all the rights of citizenship, as well as a guaranteed path to citizenship.

Neither of these positions is reasonable.

We are not going to fine, jail, or deport everyone who is not legally here. The second group won't allow this, business won't allow this, and in my opinion, the

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majority of our citizens will not allow this. We, as a society, have a responsibility to the people who have come because we created the situation that brought about this issue.

Neither are we are not going to give immigrants all the rights of citizenship, nor are we going to create a guaranteed path to citizenship for those who are here illegally. I believe the majority of our citizens are concerned about fairness as much as the first group is concerned about following our laws.

We will never solve this problem as long as we insist that either of these two positions be met. And, we will never have peace if we meet the requirements of one group and not the other.

This I know for sure: we must solve the problem and we must secure our borders. And, we must accept responsibility for the situation as it exists. We voted for representatives that created this situation, and now we must deal with it.

An Intelligent Solution to the Immigration Problem

First some definitions:

- Immigrants: People who, while not United States citizens, are living in the United States legally.

- Undocumented immigrants: People who are not United States citizens and are currently living in the United States without legal immigrant status.
- Illegal immigrants: People who enter the United States illegally after the instigation of the program proposed in this paper.

Immigration Facts

The periods of highest immigration were from 1904–1914 and 1989–2006, when the United States welcomed in an average of 1,000,000 immigrants per year. From 1915–1988 the average was approximately 400,000 per year (the years of the depression and World War II were the lowest with immigration falling below 100,000 per year).¹ These figures do not include the 2.8 million undocumented immigrant workers that were legalized by the Immigration Amnesty Act signed by President Ronald Reagan in 1986. Actually, it was the 1968 Immigration Act, signed by President Lyndon Johnson (ending discrimination based on race, place of birth, gender, and country of residence) that started the current flood of immigrants which has not abated in spite of the events of September 11th, 2001.²

¹ From Homeland Security, [2006 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics](#)

² From the [Center for Immigration Studies](#)

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In the two decades around the installation of the Statue of Liberty, the United States welcomed approximately 500,000 immigrants per year. So, as far as total numbers of immigrants, the United States is welcoming many more people today than were welcomed then. However, this is a touch misleading. As a percentage of our population, the numbers of immigrants from 1840 to 1920 were much higher than today. During that time the percent of new immigrants to become U.S. citizens was approximately two-and-a-half times what it is today. However, it is unreasonable to assume that the United States can continue the same rate of immigration decade after decade.

Mexico is the largest source of United States immigrants followed by China, the Philippines, and India. These figures do not include refugees³; nor do they include undocumented immigrants. *The United States accepts almost as many immigrants as the rest of the world combined and more than twice the number of refugees as the next nine countries combined.*

³ The Immigration and Nationality Act defines "refugee" in Sec. 101(a)(42) as:

(A) any person who is outside any country of such person's nationality or, in the case of a person having no nationality, is outside any country in which such person last habitually resided, and who is unable or unwilling to return to, and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of, that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, ... [From U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services](#)

How many immigrants become naturalized citizens of the United States? The answer is approximately 50 percent of immigrants file for citizenship. This, of course, is much higher than any other country in the world. In fact, many countries do not allow any immigrants to become citizens; this is very true of all Mideast countries, who do not allow even fellow Mideast citizens to become citizens of another Mideast country. In the Mideast, newborns become citizens of the country of their ancestors, not their country of birth.

Objective

This is a proposal that enables the United States to secure the border, and identify and register all undocumented immigrants within 30 days of instigation. In other words, the United States can solve the major issues—the registration and border problem—in one 30-day period. In addition, I have proposed basic solutions to other issues regarding undocumented immigrants. I believe these solutions would be acceptable to the majority of U.S. citizens.

Additionally, while there may be other benefits to following this proposal (90 percent of the cocaine that enters the United States is trafficked through Mexico, Mexico is the United States' largest foreign supplier of

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marijuana, and 99 percent of all methamphetamine produced in Mexico is exported to the U.S.⁴), this proposal is focused on the two issues of controlling the border and handling the millions of undocumented immigrants currently residing in the United States.

I believe this proposal offers an opportunity for consensus⁵; a complete solution that a large majority of Americans will support, even though they may not agree with all of the specifics.

First, those of you who believe that any of the following statements are non-negotiable might as well stop reading. I do not believe consensus can be reached on these issues in a reasonable time frame, and, therefore, cannot be part of a solution that can, and should be, implemented immediately.

- The United States should not have limits on Immigration; the United States needs to provide a haven for any and all who wish to come here.
- Undocumented immigrants must be offered a path to citizenship; we owe them this opportunity for numerous reasons.

⁴ From [Foreign Exchange](#) PBS television program, February 22, 2008

⁵ Consensus: willingness to support a decision even though you do not completely agree with it. Consensus is critical because it is impossible to create a solution that will have universal agreement.

- Undocumented immigrants have a right to the same benefits and protections as the citizens of the United States have.
- All undocumented immigrants currently in the United States should be deported and forced to reapply for immigrant status.

This proposal assumes the vast majority of United States citizens believe that our country has a responsibility to those individuals and family units who are currently undocumented immigrants. This is due to the fact that, as a society, the United States has created the environment that has resulted in the current situation. However, the United States does not necessarily owe undocumented immigrants a path to citizenship, or the rights and privileges of citizens of the United States.

The Criteria

The following are essential criteria for an effective solution to the immigration issue:

- The undocumented immigrant problem must be solved in a way that is fair and reasonable. This means the concerns and issues of the undocumented immigrant must be taken into account, along with the public's concern about the necessity of following the laws, and the needs of companies and organizations

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for labor to provide the products and services our society needs and/or desires.

- Accusations of racism directed toward fellow U.S. citizens, who are genuinely concerned about the rule of law, must be stopped. It must be accepted that these are honest, caring people who believe that breaking laws is unacceptable regardless of ethnicity or reason.
- It must be acknowledged that being against illegal immigration does not necessarily mean being against immigration. Indeed, the vast majority of U.S. citizens understand clearly the advantages of having a robust immigration process.
- It must be accepted that it is morally correct to challenge a bad law, but that ultimately the citizens of the United States will decide if an existing law is flawed and must be changed. Until such changes, those (individuals, companies, organizations, and local governments) who break the law must accept the consequences of their actions.
- It must be recognized that the U.S. is the most welcoming country in the world, receiving into its borders the majority of all the immigrants and refugees of the world, and making almost as many new citizens of immigrants and refugees as the rest of the world's countries combined.
- There must be a separation of the undocumented immigrant issue from the national security issue. Directly relating the two is only causing confusion and exacerbating the problem.
- It must be recognized that since the vast majority of undocumented immigrants are entering the United

States by crossing its boarder with Mexico, that border must be the first priority.

- A solution must be developed that enables all undocumented immigrants, whose only crime is being undocumented, to become immigrants within the shortest possible time frame.
- All immigrants must commit to following all laws regardless of their own thoughts or religious beliefs.
- Immigrants who commit misdemeanor or felony crimes will be prosecuted, judged, and sentenced, if convicted, according to the same laws as citizens who commit similar crimes. Once the immigrant's sentence is completed, the immigrant will be deported with no opportunity to return to the U.S. The United States has no moral responsibility to immigrants who harm its citizenry through criminal activities.
- It must be accepted that those already following current guidelines in applying to become immigrants or U.S. citizens have priority over those who become immigrants under this plan.
- It must be accepted that undocumented immigrants who become immigrants under this plan, and have an interest in becoming U.S. citizens, will have to meet all requirements for citizenship.
- It must be accepted that there will be many immigrants who have no intention of becoming citizens.
- It must be agreed that immigrants have the right to distribute their net earnings according to their desires; if this means sending much of it outside the United States, so be it.

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The following issues are also part of this plan:

- There is no need to fine undocumented immigrants; there is only a need to document their presence in the United States. In addition, any fees associated with becoming immigrants should be reasonable and no greater than any other applicant for immigrant status would pay.
- All immigrants must have an immigration card that includes the immigrant's name, place of residence, place of employment (if applicable), and nation of citizenry. The immigrant will be responsible for keeping this information up-to-date.
- Immigrants will not have the automatic right to government paid education, social services, and health care. These services will only be provided when reasonable, i.e. K-thru-12 education for immigrant children, and reasonable emergency room services.
- Immigrants will be eligible for all employee benefits offered by the employing organization, including health care, paid holidays, and equal pay for equal services.
- Companies, organizations, and individuals currently employing undocumented immigrants will not be penalized as long as their undocumented immigrants are registered under this plan.
- The right to vote will be limited to only those U.S. citizens who are allowed to vote. To assure that this law is followed, voter registration will demand, in addition to current requirements, proof of U.S. citizenship.

The Process

Once the citizens of the United States have agreed to support the criteria above, getting the immigration problem solved is relatively easy. The critical steps are:

- 1) Secure the border. The United States must immediately use all of its available resources to make sure that illegal entry is minimized as much as possible. This includes the Border Patrol, National Guard, local law-enforcement agencies, and whatever technology we can put in place.
- 2) Immediately deport anyone entering illegally; take them to a drop-off point and put them back into Mexico. Remember, initially, this is the high-priority border; this is where our major effort regarding illegal immigration will be expended.
- 3) Allow a 30-day period for all undocumented immigrants currently residing in the United States to register as immigrants.

Applying for and receiving immigrant status:

- 1) The United States government will contract with all of the major event-ticketing agencies in the United States, having them provide an “Immigration Ticket” to every undocumented immigrant, or undocumented immigrant family unit (defined as: husband, wife, and naturally-born or legally-adopted children) with a priority number for signing up with the United

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States government for legal status. Until the actual government meeting, their Immigration Ticket is their “proof” of legal status. The ticket shows their name, residence, place of employment, and contact information. If it is determined that there needs to be a charge for the Immigration Ticket, it will be a reasonable charge.

- 2) Undocumented immigrants will be given 30 days to obtain their Immigration Ticket. A massive advertising campaign will assure every undocumented immigrant that they will be treated fairly and that there should be no concern for government backlash. Immigrant leaders will also be assured of this so that we have their cooperation in encouraging the undocumented immigrant workers to sign up. Not signing up within the 30-day period, will result in a change of status to illegal immigrant and their ultimate deportation.
- 3) The government will receive the information from the ticket and will contact each individual or family unit, as to when their meeting will be held with the Department of Immigration; at which time they will receive their official immigrant status.
- 4) Undocumented immigrants who are currently unemployed will have 90 days from the time of their meeting with the Department of Immigration to find employment. If employment is not found, they will be deported.
- 5) The Department of Immigration will hire additional staff so that they are able to process the millions of individuals and family units as quickly as possible.

The final immigration card will be their identification and will enable them to open checking accounts, find work, get a driver's license, etc. The Immigration Ticket will serve the same purposes until the immigrant receives their official identification card.

- 6) The Department of Immigration will notify the media when they have completed the registration of all immigrants. At this time, all Immigration Tickets will be voided.
- 7) Any undocumented immigrants who have warrants for their arrest (excluding parking or speeding tickets), or are considered criminals in the native country, will not be able to receive immigrant status.
- 8) Any illegal immigrants caught after the 30-day sign-up period for the Immigration Ticket, or after the Department of Immigration announces that they have registered all undocumented immigrant workers, will be deported to Mexico, or their home country, immediately.
- 9) Companies, organizations, and individuals employing illegal immigrants after the 30-day sign-up period, will be fined. The fines will be significant, making it extremely undesirable and unprofitable to hire illegal immigrants.

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Conclusion

It is understood that, going forward, there will be official requirements for receiving immigrant status; this proposal does not address the specifics of any following rules and regulations. It is important for any rules or regulations developed to take into account the need for immigrant workers; and the government must see as its responsibility the supplying of these workers to those companies, organizations, and individuals in need. Likewise, it will be the government's responsibility to assure United States citizens that their ability to be employed will not be negatively impacted by the immigration worker program.

There will be a system set up in Mexico, and possibly some other countries, where employers can contact government agencies (or private agencies contracted by the government) to recruit needed workers. Workers with assurances of employment in the United States will receive their immigration papers quickly. Any research needed to assure National Security authorities that the new immigrants are not a threat to U.S. citizens or national security will be handled with a high-priority status. It will be recommended that the recruiting agencies vet (get approval for) all potential applicants well in advance. In other words, potential immigrant workers should be

identified prior to their being requested by U.S. companies, organizations, or individuals.

Finally, we need to change our laws so that children born in the United States of illegal immigrants would not automatically become U.S. citizens. It is not acceptable that individuals can sneak into the United States to have their babies, guaranteeing that their children will become citizens of the United States. This is the ultimate reward for breaking our laws and cannot be allowed.

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Author's Bio

Brad Fregger has 45 years combined experience in retailing, corporate training, publishing, and software development. He has worked in large and small companies, started three of his own businesses, and worked as a senior executive in two other startups. He is currently President/CEO of Groundbreaking Press, an author-services book publishing company. Additionally, Brad is a lecturer (professor) at Texas State University-San Marcos (Business Communications) and a member of the adjunct faculty at Franklin University (Business Ethics for Leaders) in Columbus, Ohio.

Brad taught graduate-level courses at Saint Edward's University in Austin, Texas for over five years, including one year (2002) as the Executive in Residence for the Graduate School of Management. Fregger helped develop and then teach courses in the MBA Program: Introduction to eCommerce and Managerial Communications; and the Master of Science in Organizational Leadership & Ethics: Leadership & Imagination.

He also designed and taught the on-line version of Introduction to eCommerce, which received strong reviews from the Instructional Technologies department at Saint Edward's. He also taught two other courses for

both the Graduate School of Management (Human Relations) and New College (Business Communications).

Brad is a practitioner/scholar, using the skills and knowledge he has learned to amass a remarkable record of accomplishment over the past 25 years, in addition to the numerous programs he developed as founder of three major corporate-training departments (Mervyns, Atari, and Activision).

He has produced more than 50 videos, 12 audio books, over 100 consumer and business enterprise software products, including the most successful computer game in the world (Shanghai) and the most played computer game in the world (computer solitaire), and published over 50 books on a wide variety of subjects.

He has completed every project begun in the past 25 years, and, even more important, during that time not a single team member left during the development of a product. This is what Brad calls "employee retention."

Brad is an expert in many critical areas of business, from customer service to the management of technology. He's an international speaker providing programs to major companies throughout the Middle East (Tunisia, Dubai, Beirut, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Qatar), Europe, and Canada in a broad spectrum of subjects including, Effective Leadership, negotiation, project management, technical risk management, creativity, and team building.

As an author, in addition to *My Thinking Cap - Solutions for Global Crisis*, he's written four other books, *Get Things Done - Ten Secrets of Creating and Leading Exceptional Teams*; *One Shovel Full - Telling Stories to Change Beliefs, Attitudes, and Perceptions*; *Lucky That Way - Stories of Seizing the Moment While Creating the Games Millions Play*; and *Why Publish - Making the Right Choices for Your Book*. Brad is currently writing his sixth book, *The Art of Leadership – A Practical Guide to Creating and Leading Organizational Teams*.

In addition, Brad has published articles in professional journals, including a series on book publishing for *Sharing Ideas* magazine (Los Angeles, California), an article on career change for *Career Planning and Adult Development Journal* (San Jose, California), and he wrote a column, "On a Tangent" for *Creative Pulse* magazine (Austin, Texas).

Brad's amazing ability to complete projects on time and on budget, plus his creative management style, caught the attention of Tom Peters (*In Search of Excellence*), who then featured Brad in his book, *Liberation Management*.

Brad is especially skilled in facilitation toward solving motivational and managerial communication issues. Brad believes that ineffective communication is at the heart of most personnel issues, but that these issues are often not solved by learning listening techniques.

“Courses that teach listening skills can be a waste of time. Why? Because we already know how to listen, we just choose not to at times. The secret is learning why we make this choice and why it’s important to make other choices.”

Brad holds a Master's Degree in Futuristics (San Jose State University). His speech, "Earthward Implications of Cosmic Migration," was given at the American Astronautical Society's proceedings in honor of the tenth anniversary of Apollo 11's landing on the moon. He is a frequent guest on radio-talk shows across the nation, usually discussing the future of our society in the areas of genetic engineering, space travel, virtual reality, and extinction-level events.

Brad and his wife/business partner, Barbara Foley, live in the Texas Hill Country south of Austin.

Brad can be contacted at:

Website: www.groundbreaking.com

Email: brad@groundbreaking.com

