

## American Immigration Policies

James J. Norris

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Americans concerned with or about those problems, whatever their own disciplines or

religious convictions, would profit from reading his book.

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AMERICAN IMMIGRATION POLICIES  
by *Marion T. Bennet*

Public Affairs Press, Washington, D.C., 1963. Pp. 362. \$6.00.

*Reviewed by*

JAMES J. NORRIS\*

With a Presidential election year ahead of us, American immigration policies are sure once again to become a political football. Both parties will discuss immigration in their platforms, and will probably pass resolutions proposing an overhaul of the restrictive and discriminatory features of the present immigration law. In the past these platform planks sank in the quicksand of post-election inertia.

For those who are interested in the history of American immigration policies, the book under review gives a detailed development of American immigration policies and, in particular, American immigration laws and their revisions and amendments.

The author has undertaken a great deal of research and has put together in one volume information which for the most part is scattered in a number of documents, reports and other texts on United States immigration laws.

In spite of the thoroughness of the work of the author, one gets the impression that most of his consultation was with the texts

of those who favor restrictive immigration policies, or was the result of discussions with those who oppose a liberalization of American immigration legislation.

One example might be cited, namely, the reporting of the so-called "laxity" in the screening of the displaced persons under the Act of 1948. One might ask if the screening of the displaced persons was as lax as indicated, and if the country was subjected to a flood of security risks, what happened to those security risks in the United States, and what have they been doing here since they were admitted under the Displaced Persons Act? It is safe to say that the number of those who have been deported for security reasons, or who have engaged in subversive activities, is extremely limited. The author did not complete his research into this aspect of the charges made concerning the laxity in screening.

It might also be said that throughout the book the author's "prejudices are showing." Those who sought a liberalization of existing laws, or criticized the administration of one or another piece of legislation, are accused of coming forth with "shrill outcries." Those who were endeavoring to bring about revisions in the basic immigration law "chipped away" at the law. Those favoring

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\* European Director, Catholic Relief Services — National Catholic Welfare Conference.

liberalization of immigration policies were described as working through "political pressure from the usual quarters."

It is unfortunate that the "good guys" and "bad guys" attitude has been permitted to creep into this otherwise thorough docu-

mentation of United States immigration policies over the years because it thereby loses the objectivity and professional historical approach such as is evidenced in a work like Robert A. Divine's *American Immigration Policy, 1924-1952*.

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### LOCKE'S PHILOSOPHY

*(Continued)*

the law of nature is seen to be a utilitarian

interpretation of the law in terms of the public good, and natural right, as such, is connected with the peace and security of the nation.

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