



Voter

LEAGUE OF WOMAN VOTERS
Glendale/Burbank

President's Message

I'VE BEEN SPENDING part of the summer preparing for the immigration consensus meetings on October 11, and November 14.

I've been on the committee, ably led by Tom Carson, where we've discussed the issues of immigration, and, just as important, how to present the issues to the group at the consensus meetings.

I've been reading the League material, which is carefully balanced, and listening to talk radio, which is not. Research, I call it.

I'll be presenting two of the six questions at the consensus meetings. I hope to offer a clear and balanced analysis, followed by lively and reasoned discussion. I know my colleagues on the committee will be doing the same.

I hope you will enjoy reading the material on immigration contained in this issue of the Voter, and that you will join us at the consensus meeting on October 11.

Monica Marquez

October 2007 Calendar

Thursday

October 11

7pm

Immigration Study Consensus Meeting I

Community Room

Glendale Fire Station 21

421 Oak Street

Glendale

Wednesday

November 14

7pm

Immigration Study Consensus Meeting II

Community Room

Burbank Fire and Police

Headquarters

200 North Third Street

Burbank

(Note date change)

Background Information

LWV-US Immigration Study Consensus Meeting

IMMIGRATION IS AN EXTREMELY complex subject—and this complexity is reflected in the number and length of the consensus questions developed for this study by LWV-US. So that we can adequately address and reach consensus on all six questions, the LWVGB Board of Directors has decided that we should hold two consensus meetings. The six questions are being broken up into two groups of three questions, so that a different group will be presented, discussed and consensus reached at each of the meetings.

The first consensus meeting will be 7-9 PM on Thursday, October 11th, at Fire Station 21, 421 Oak St., Glendale 91204 (west of the Glendale Galleria

parking structure, 1 block north of Colorado & Columbus). **Please RSVP to Tom Carson at tpjcarson@att.net by Sunday, October 7th so we can properly plan the meeting and its logistics. *We must start the meeting very promptly at 7 PM as there is so much material to cover during our discussion.***

At this first meeting we will be addressing Questions 1, 3 and 6, which are set forth below. Due to time constraints, during the meeting we will not be presenting much if any background information for these questions, so it is ***very important that you do your own reading and research in advance and come well prepared to participate in the discussions.***

Reading and Research Materials

*The LWV-US Immigration Study Committee has very useful information including articles and a listing of additional resources on the **LWV-US web site** (www.lwv.org). See also the **October issue of the National Voter magazine**, which features Immigration Study Brief # 3 – Border Enforcement, and Immigration Study Brief # 4 – Family Reunification and Diversity Policies.*

Immigration Study Consensus Questions

QUESTION 1: Federal immigration laws should take into consideration criteria such as:

(Rate each lettered item “high priority,” “lower priority” or “disagree.” At the end of the question, we will ask you to rank your top three of these criteria.)

a. Ethnic and cultural diversity

high priority lower priority disagree

From its founding, this country has been made up of an ever-changing mixture of ethnic groups. In recent years, large numbers of unauthorized/undocumented and authorized/documented immigrants have come to the U.S., especially from Mexico and Central America, to work and live, once again changing the demographics of large parts of the country. We have benefited from contributions to American culture (food, art, music, literature, traditions etc.) by immigrants from different parts of the world. But what problems arise if immigrants stay overly connected to their native countries and continue to speak their native languages, rather than becoming assimilated?

b. Economic, business and service employment needs in the United States

high priority lower priority disagree

Historically, large numbers of immigrants have come to this country for economic opportunity, and the U.S. economy has accommodated 1.5 million skilled and unskilled immigrants per year. However, annual legal quotas admitted only about a million immigrants. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 56 million new jobs will be created between 2002 and 2012. By 2010, nearly 43 percent of all job openings will require only minimal education. Should Federal immigration policy make the annual legal intake of workers more or less equal to the flow generated by supply and demand? Could employers be successful in paying higher wages in order to attract native-born workers to fill most of the jobs currently held by immigrants?

CONCENSUS QUESTIONS continued on page 3

c. Environmental impact/sustainability

high priority lower priority disagree

Any increase in the population of the U.S. helps accelerate the continued expansion of the economy, which frequently creates conditions harmful to local environments. On the other hand, most major environmental impact issues have global impact and are not limited by borders.

d. Family reunification of authorized immigrants and naturalized citizens with spouses and minor children

high priority lower priority disagree

Many believe that naturalized citizens and legal permanent residents are more productive workers and more invested in their communities if their spouses and minor children are allowed to join them in the U.S. in a timely manner. However, this must be balanced against admitting persons with skills needed by U.S. businesses. Some people think that meeting the needs of the economy is more beneficial to the country as a whole than indirect benefits from family reunification.

e. History of criminal activity

high priority lower priority disagree

Research shows lower crime rates among immigrants than among native-born. Consider if it's fair that under current immigration law minor offenses that would be considered misdemeanors for American citizens can be grounds for exclusion or deportation of immigrants.

f. Humanitarian crises/political persecution in home countries

high priority lower priority disagree

Historically, Americans have prided themselves on providing safety to those fleeing persecution in their homelands. However, refugees rarely bring financial resources when they flee their homelands and may become financial burdens on their communities. Do Americans have an obligation to provide safety to those fleeing persecution in their homelands, as well as a special obligation to those refugees who can no longer remain safely in their homelands because of the aid they gave to U.S. troops during time of war?

g. Immigrant characteristics (health and age)

high priority lower priority disagree

Federal law has historically included provisions for medical examinations to identify immigration applicants with inadmissible health-related conditions. Age, on the other hand, has not been regulated, except to

determine eligibility for a child as a minor in order to accompany a parent. Should we refuse entrance to immigrants with serious communicable diseases that have been virtually eliminated in this country, even those that can be eliminated and/or controlled by modern medicine? Should immigration policy give preference to relatively young and productive immigrants so that fewer older or retired immigrants are granted visas?

h. Rights of all workers to safe working conditions and livable wage

high priority lower priority disagree

Many feel that ensuring safe working conditions and a livable wage for all workers improves the country as a whole. Others are concerned that these improved conditions would make unauthorized immigration more appealing and exacerbate current border control problems. Should Federal law limit immigrating workers to those who are guaranteed a job with safe working conditions and a livable wage, taking into consideration that such a guarantee could increase costs to be passed on to consumers and that workers who are citizens would not have the same guarantee?

i. Rights of families to remain together

high priority lower priority disagree

The pull of family ties is one of the most powerful motivations for immigration. Many believe that immigration policies that ignore this motivation unintentionally promote unauthorized immigration. Others believe that immigrants are aware of the possibility of a lengthy separation when they decide to emigrate. (Also see discussion under 1 d above.)

j. Rights of all individuals in U.S. to fair treatment under the law (fair hearing, right to counsel, right of appeal and humane treatment)

high priority lower priority disagree

The Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution forbids depriving any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law and denying any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. Non-citizens must be accorded these constitutional rights, but many would not receive these rights in their home countries. Should immigrants, including unauthorized immigrants, be afforded this Fourteenth Amendment protection?

k. Education and training

high priority lower priority disagree

Studies have shown that high skilled immigrants contribute more to the U.S. economy. However, while education and training are important, the U.S. badly needs workers with little or no education and training to fill jobs in manufacturing, service industries, agriculture, construction, and restaurants. Should immigrants with specialized training and strong academic credentials receive priority admission?

Of the 11 lettered items above, select the 3 most important criteria and list them, with 1 being the most important.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

QUESTION 3: Federal immigration law should provide an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry into the U.S. for immigrants who are:

a. Immediate family members, joining family members already admitted for legal permanent residence in the U.S.

high priority lower priority disagree

(See discussion under 1 d and 1 i above.)

b. Entering the U.S. to meet labor needs

high priority lower priority disagree

(See discussion under 1 b above.)

c. Entering the U.S. as students

high priority lower priority disagree

Students come to this country on non-immigrant visas with expiration dates. They are here temporarily and for a specific purpose — to attend school. These students are a major part of the life of most American universities, especially at the graduate level in science and technology, and academia competes for them. Because of this country’s excellent educational opportunities, should we encourage students from abroad to come here to go to school so that they will be able to use their expertise to help people in their home countries and elsewhere, as well as in the U.S.? Should we reduce the number of visas granted to foreign students

because some may overstay their visas, becoming unauthorized immigrants, and because study in the U.S. contributes to a “brain drain” in developing countries?

d. Entering the U.S. because of persecution in home country

high priority lower priority disagree

(See discussion under 1 f above.)

QUESTION 6: Federal immigration law should be coordinated with U.S. foreign policy to proactively help improve economies, education and job opportunities, and living conditions of nations with large emigrating populations.

agree disagree

Development aid has the potential to reduce some of the attractions of emigration to the United States. In Europe, the lowering of trade barriers within the EU, coupled with targeted economic development has turned countries like Ireland and Spain from net out-migration to in-migration countries. In addition, remittances (the funds sent home by foreign-born workers in the U.S.) act as a form of foreign aid that far exceeds the dollars passed from government to government. To the extent that migration is motivated by poverty and unemployment, aid programs that reduce poverty and create jobs are likely to reduce the pressure to leave the country in search of employment and higher wages. However, development aid is no panacea. Economic motives are not the only or even the primary reason for migration to the United States. The largest number of immigrants comes to be reunited with family members, and smaller, but significant numbers come as refugees fleeing persecution. Furthermore, some forms of aid may actually make it easier for developing country governments to postpone the kinds of economic reforms that will create local jobs and reduce economically motivated out-migration. From a humanitarian perspective, conditioning development aid on policies that limit out-migration could have disastrous consequences if it reduces aid to countries where the need is greatest. To the degree that immigration and foreign policy aims differ, coordination may be very difficult.

Bringing Reason to Terror

by Ann K. Williams Staff Writer, "The Lookout News"

Several Glendale/Burbank League members participated in the program described in this article. **Chris Carson** was part of the facilitation team. **Tom Carson** and **Monica Marquez** were part of the discussion groups. Reprinted with permission from "The Lookout News," online at <http://surfsantamonica.com>.

July 26, 2007 — Nearly 100 policy aficionados got an inside look at the kind of top-level analysis that's shaping America's response to international terrorism at the RAND Corporation Monday.

Following a provocative overview of the war on terror by RAND terrorism expert Brian Michael Jenkins, the audience broke out into workshops to identify and compare the assumptions underlying four alternative anti-terrorism plans at the interactive program sponsored by RAND and the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS).

"It's not important that people agree or not agree," said Jenkins, a rugged former Special Services man wearing a blue and white checked shirt and wide-striped orange and gray tie. "It's important that people think about these things."

"We need to get people over the fear of talking about terrorism, thinking about terrorism," said Xandra Kayden, a UCLA senior fellow and political scientist.

The RAND workshop was part of a larger project spearheaded by the LWVUS designed to inspire rational discussion and analysis of the war on terror and its effect on civil liberties.

Jenkins, whose clients have included the Catholic Church, the U.S. Department of State and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, painted a picture of American shortsightedness he says has played right into Al Qaeda's hands.

While we hold a pragmatic view of the War on Terror as a finite struggle, the Jihadists see it as a centuries-old drama, "a perpetual struggle against evil... war until evil is eliminated or judgment day, whichever comes first," Jenkins said.

"They know that with their superior determination, they will wear us down," he said. "God promises them victory."

In Bin Laden's sense of "flattened" history, warriors of Islam brought down the Byzantine Empire (the Roman Empire in Bin Laden's eyes), the Persians under Mongol rule, and the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, said

Jenkins. America is just the next in a long line of belligerent infidel empires out to destroy Islam.

"The U.S. plays a convenient role in Bin Laden's ideology," he said. Al Qaeda "needs a global enemy.

"Al Qaeda has transcended its international boundaries to become an ideology," Jenkins said.

The War in Iraq gives the terrorists a new training ground, and justifies their narrative, he added.

"The legacy of Iraq is that for the next 15 years, we're going to be dealing with a cohort of Iraqi veterans who know how to operate in an urban environment," he said.

And through the Internet, the "continuous epic narrative, inspiring to young men" attracts recruits the world over.

"Get a 17-year old, give him a rifle, give him a narrative, you've got him for life," Jenkins said.

The key to winning the war is to understand the mindset of our adversaries, something America seems reluctant to do, he said.

During the Cold War, American policy makers put a lot of effort into understanding their Soviet adversaries, said Jenkins.

"When it comes to terrorists, we tend not to do that," preferring instead to see them as "crazy or evil."

"To understand can be misunderstood as being understanding of" the terrorists, said Jenkins.

Fortified by Jenkins' call to dispassionate analysis, the audience, mostly League of Women Voters members with a sprinkling of stray RAND professionals and unaffiliated academics, was instructed in the tenets of "Assumption Based Planning," before breaking out into small groups to try it themselves.

The key to APB, as it's called at RAND, is to avoid value statements, such as "is this assumption good or bad, right or wrong," but instead to identify whether it's necessary to support a proposed course of action.

REASON continued on page 6

Join a Discussion List Today

Participate in the Discussion

Do you have some concerns about the state of our civil liberties? Or want to discuss natural resource issues with other League members? Then JOIN a League discussion e-mail list today! Some additional topics include campaign finance reform, healthcare, and immigration. To see all the great discussions that you can participate in,

visit the “Get Involved” area of the “For Members” section on www.lwv.org – or click here. You will need to log in to access and sign up for these discussion lists. Remember to log in you use your email address as your “username” and the password you’ve created. If you’ve never logged in or if you need assistance with your login information, please contact membership@lwv.org.

REASON continued from page 5

Those assumptions are called “load-bearing” and if they fail, the whole course of action comes tumbling down.

For instance, if a plan contains the assumption that introducing democratic practices in a nation will lower that nation’s support for terrorism, and that assumption turns out to be erroneous, democracy-building will have been a failed, perhaps even counterproductive, action along with all the military and other actions taken to support democracy-building.

The working groups’ challenge was to identify load-bearing assumptions and then to compare and contrast them among four real-time proposals:

The 2003 U.S. National Counter-terrorism Strategy, the plan that guides the Bush administration, Philip Heymann’s Enhanced Law Enforcement Strategy, which calls for international policing based on common law and respect for civil liberties,

Michael Scheuer’s Disengagement and Deterrence Strategy, which calls for a simultaneous U.S. withdrawal from the Middle East while okaying all out war on terrorist enclaves and their supporters, and

Thomas P.M. Barnett’s Gap-to-Core Strategy, in which the have-not nations are brought into the “core” of nations that have benefited from globalization.

After two hours of argument, arrow-drawing and filling out giant charts, a picture emerged.

Among other differences, the U.S. plan views terrorists as an “existential” threat — they’re just evil. The law

enforcement plan sees them as criminals, the disengagement plan sees them as rational political enemies, and the gap-to-core plan sees them as marginalized victims of globalization.

And while the U.S. plan and disengagement both feature the use of military force, the law enforcement and gap-to-care plans see its usefulness as limited.

Some groups took as long as an hour to put their biases and political passions on hold for the duration of the discussion, a number of participants noted.

But once they did, many felt their understanding deepen and grow more sophisticated.

And some felt that they had given RAND something to think about.

“Two head are better than one and many heads are better if they aren’t dumb, and not all of us are dumb,” said a young Middle Eastern professor of communications commented to appreciative laughter.

If funding comes through, the LWVUS will train a cadre to go out to communities throughout the country to train locals to “replicate” Monday’s program, Kayden said.

“Our goal is really to get more communities discussing this,” she said.

For more information on the continuing dialogue on counter-terrorism and civil liberties, see the LWVUS website. RAND Corporation also has information on its website

News from LWVUS

League of Women Voters Education Fund Receives A Major Grant

WE ARE THRILLED TO ANNOUNCE that the American Express Corporation has awarded the LWVEF with a grant to support election related work in 16 local priority communities during 2008. Participating Leagues in these communities (Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, South Florida, Greensboro, NC, Houston, Los Angeles, New York City, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Portland, Salt Lake City, San Diego, San Francisco, and Seattle) will focus on voter registration, education and outreach, as well as candidate and issue forums and debates.



Membership Application

It is easy to join the League of Women Voters of Glendale/Burbank. All Citizens of voting age are welcome. Associate Membership is open to all others.

YES! I want to add my voice to yours by joining the League of Women Voters as part of your voice for citizens and force for change. I enclose: (please check one or more of the following)

- \$60.00 for a one-year individual membership
(includes a copy of our VOTER, nine times per year)
- \$100.00 for a one-year household membership for two members who share the same address
(includes a copy of our VOTER, nine times per year)
- \$30.00 for a one-year student membership

I am unable to join League at this time, but enclose a contribution of \$ _____

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I would like to receive my VOTER by email.

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Make check payable to League of Women Voters. Mail to Vera Naylor, 7714 Via Capri, Burbank CA 91504

Gifts made payable to "LWV Education Fund" are tax deductible.



The Voter

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The **League of Women Voters**, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education advocacy.

The League never supports or opposes any political party or candidate. We advocate only on issues that members have studied and come to a consensus on. In an era of proliferating and powerful special interests, the League's advocacy in the public interest is increasingly recognized as an essential voice of democracy.

FALL PARTY AT GORDON BIRSCH

A SPECIAL THANK YOU to **Mary Dickson**, the host of our chapter's party at Gordon Biersch on September 20th. Those attending enjoyed good food, drink and conversation. As an introduction to the LWVUS immigration study, **Tom Carson** led a thought provoking discussion on the topic of what it means to be an American. We also celebrated the 13th birthday of Mary's daughter, **Katie**.

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