

in the context of advocating “a system that will give illegal immigrants a way to earn citizenship” as well as immigration reform. Rasmussen Reports and Zogby International report that 67–79% of Americans do not support amnesty. Does that make them “hate-mongers”?

Similarly, most U.S. citizens recognize that immigration isn’t victimless; cheap immigrant labor impacts poor and working-class Americans. A National Academy of Sciences study found that immigration has caused 44% of the decline in wages for America’s poorest workers. The massive importation of poverty is a significant threat to our social safety net.

Mexicans, the largest immigrant group, are not assimilating successfully; only 19.8% have naturalized. Most are still loyal to Mexico, raising legitimate concerns about how their irredentist attitudes affect America’s social cohesion and sovereignty.

Rabbi Yoffie’s ostensibly irreproachable social ethic is much more complex than he admits.

*Dr. Stephen Steinlight
Washington D.C.*

Rabbi Eric H. Yoffie Responds

Thank you, Dr. Steinlight, for your letter. I would suggest that “giving illegal immigrants a way to earn citizenship” is not amnesty. I do agree that this topic is complex and difficult. Nonetheless, Jews need to remember that the arguments used against Mexican immigration and “cheap immigrant labor” are often, word for word, precisely the same arguments that were used to halt Jewish and Eastern European immigration in the 1920s. I do not know of a single Jewish leader or organization, whether liberal or conservative, who believes those argument were compelling when applied to us. I simply do not see how we can now in good conscience find them acceptable when they are applied to others.

Healthcare—Single-Payer Is Better

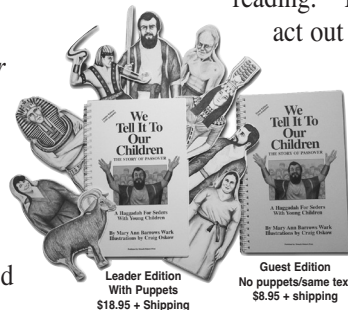
Your recent article on “Confronting the Healthcare Crisis” (Winter 2008) fails to acknowledge the important work of single-payer activists in Reform congregations in this country,

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