

## No, Immigrants Aren't 'Poisoning the Blood of Our Country'

Paul Krugman Nov. 13, 2023 (*The New York Times*)

Does Donald Trump ever visit Queens, the land of his youth? If he did, he would presumably be horrified. According to the census, Queens is the most racially and ethnically diverse county in the continental United States; it's hard to think of a nationality or culture that isn't represented there. Immigrants are almost half the borough's population and more than half its work force.

And I think that's great. When I, say, take a stroll around Jackson Heights I see the essence of America as it was supposed to be, a magnet for people around the world seeking freedom and opportunity — people like my own grandparents.

And no, Queens isn't an urban hellscape. It may not be leafy and green, but it has less serious crime per capita than the rest of New York City, and New York, although nobody will believe it, is one of the safest places in America. It's also relatively healthy, with life expectancy around three years higher than that of the United States as a whole.

But Trump has declared that migrants are “poisoning the blood of our country”. Look, I know there's a debate over whether the MAGA movement fully meets the classic criteria for fascism, but can we at least agree that its language is increasingly fascist-adjacent?

And so are its policies.

On Saturday *The Times* reported that Trump, if returned to office, intends to pursue drastic anti-immigration policies — scouring the country for undocumented immigrants and building huge camps to, um, concentrate them before deporting them by the millions.

Given all this anti-democratic rhetoric, it seems almost crass to point out that a Trumpian war on immigrants would also be an economic disaster. But it would.

That's apparently not what the Trumpists believe. That *Times* article quotes Stephen Miller, who headed anti-immigrant operations when Trump was in the White House, as claiming that mass deportations will be “celebrated by American workers, who will now be offered higher wages with better benefits to fill these jobs.”

Very few economists would agree.

To the extent that there's anything beyond raw xenophobia behind Trumpist hostility to foreign workers, it seems to be the view that America has a limited number of jobs to offer and that immigrants take those jobs away from the native-born. In reality, however, except during recessions, the number of jobs, and hence the economy's growth, is limited by the available work force rather than the other way around.

And the contribution of immigrants to America's long-term growth is startlingly large. Since 2007, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the U.S. labor force has increased by 14.6 million. Of these additional workers, 7.8 million — more than half — were foreign born. America doesn't need to be made great again, because it's already great. But if you wanted to destroy that greatness, the two most important things you would do would be to reject its commitment to freedom and

close its doors to people seeking a better life. Unfortunately, if Trump returns to office, he seems determined to do both of these things.

Written comprehension

- 1) What is the nature of this document? Justify your answer.
- 2) Explain the title - No, Immigrants Aren't 'Poisoning the Blood of Our Country' - in your own words.
- 3) Concentrate on paragraphs 1 and 2. Describe, in your own words, what Queens and Jackson Heights look like in terms of their population.
- 4) Concentrate on paragraph 3. Which two factors does the journalist cite as being positive in Queens? Answer using your own words.
- 5) If Donald Trump is re-elected, what does he plan to do in terms of immigration, according to *The Times*? Answer using your own words.
- 6) Concentrate on paragraph 8. Why do Trumpists believe that fewer immigrants is positive news for American workers? Answer using your own words.
- 7) Concentrate on the last paragraph. Explain, using your own words, why immigrants are so vital to the American economy.
- 8) The journalist believes that America is 'great'. What two things make America great, according to him?

Written expression: answer question 1 OR 2. You should write **at least 150 words**.

1. 'America [is...] supposed to be a magnet for people around the world seeking freedom and opportunity.' Comment on this statement, giving examples of how people from all over the world have seen America as a place where they can be free and as a place where they can better themselves.
2. You are likely to have many years of studies ahead of you and English could be an important part of those. Give your opinion on the option of spending some time in America as part of your studies. You may wish to highlight the benefits of such an experience, but also the challenges it could bring.