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National Security and U.S. Immigration Policy, 1776–1790

Why did the U.S. federal government do so little to restrict immigration until almost the twentieth century? Most explanations of early U.S. immigration policy stress ideological and economic factors. Higham, a prominent immigration scholar, argued that America opened its doors in part to provide "an asylum, wherein the blessings of liberty would await all men." Similarly, another scholar explains that "immigration policy was guided by . . . ideological republicanism" and a "cosmopolitan outlook." Others cite economic and demographic factors, such as a need for a "great labor supply" to "increase the value of [their] land" and to "help fill their largely empty nation."[1]

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1 A recent historiographical article on immigration policy is bereft of a single reference to security: Roger Daniels, "Immigration: Federal Policy Towards," in Peter J. Parish (ed.), *Readers Guide to American History* (London, 1997), 337–338. General historiographical works about the immigration field do not mention geopolitical factors. See Philip Gleason, "Crevecoeur's Question: Historical Writing on Immigration, Ethnicity, and National Identity," in Anthony Molho and Gordon S. Wood (eds.), *Imagined Histories: American Historians Interpret the Past* (Princeton, 1998), 120–144; Erika Lee, "Immigrants and Immigration Law: A State of the Field Assessment," *Journal of Ethnic History,* XVIII (1999), 85–115; Nancy Foder, Ruben G. Rumbaut, and Steven J. Gold, "Immigration and Immigration Research in the United States," in *idem* (eds.), *Immigration Research for a New Century* (New York, 2000), 1–23. For ideological arguments, see John Higham, *Send These to Me, Immigrants in Urban America* (Baltimore, 1984), 31; Reed Ueda, "An Immigration Country of Assimilative Pluralism, Immigrant Reception and Absorption in American History," in Klaus J. Bade and Myron Weiner (eds.), *Migration Past, Migration Future, Germany and the United States* (Providence, 1997), 1, 40–41; Matthew Spalding, "From Pluribus to Unum, Immigration and the Founding Fathers," *Policy Review,* LXVII (1994), 35–141; for economic and demographic arguments, Lawrence Guy Brown, *Immigration, Cultural Conflicts and Social Adjustments* (New York, 1933), 61; Marion T. Bennett, *American Immigration Policies* (Washington D.C., 1963), 2; Daniels, *Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants since 1982* (New York, 2004), 6; Bill Ong Hing, *Defining America Through Immigration Policy* (Philadelphia, 2004), 20–21. A few political scientists have discussed the security dimension of immigration policy, though not early U.S. immigration policy: James F. Hollifield, *Immigrants, Markets, and States: The Political Economy of Postwar Europe* (New York, 1992); *idem,* "Migration, Trade, and the Nation-State: The Myth of Globalization," *UCLA Journal of International Law and Foreign Affairs,* III (1998), 595–636; Eytan Meyers, *International Immigration Policy: A Theoretical and*

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This article offers an alternative explanation of early U.S. immigration policy. It analyzes the policy area from a national-security perspective—a common analytical focus in the field of international relations—to argue that economic and ideological accounts of this issue are inadequate. Those in favor of immigration hoped to strengthen the nation, primarily by providing soldiers and money for the military; those opposed to immigration feared that it would compromise national security by causing domestic unrest and exposing the government to espionage and terrorism. These concerns were not unjustified: Other powers with territory in North America, such as Great Britain and Spain, attempted to stifle emigration to the United States to impede the new nation's growth. The debate has implications for immigration theory and contemporary policymakers.[2]

BACKGROUND AND METHOD During the "Open Door Era" from the early republic to approximately the twentieth century, the borders of the United States were legally unregulated by the federal government, except for a few minor restrictions—the Passenger Act of 1819, for one—that attempted to discourage certain un-

Comparative Analysis (New York, 2004); Christopher Rudolph, "Globalization and Security: Migration and the Evolving Conceptions of Security in Statecraft and Scholarship, *Security Studies,* XIII (2003), 1–32; *idem., National Security and Immigration: Policy Development in the United States and Western Europe since 1945* (Stanford, 2006); *idem,* "Security and the Political Economy of International Migration," *American Political Science Review,* XCVII (2003), 602–620; Michael C. Lemay, *Guarding the Gates: Immigration and National Security* (Westport, 2006); Michael S. Teitelbaum and Weiner (eds.), *Threatened Peoples, Threatened Borders* (New York, 1995); Weiner, *The Global Migration Crisis: Challenge to States and to Human Rights* (New York, 1995). For two studies of early U.S. immigration policy that use analytical frameworks with several variables, see Daniel J. Tichenor, *Dividing Lines: The Politics of Immigration Control in America* (Princeton, 2002); Aristide Zolberg, *A Nation by Design: Immigration Policy in the Fashioning of America* (New York, 2006).

2 For examples of works in international relations that analyze U.S. domestic politics from a security perspective see Gabriel Almond, "Review Article: The International-National Connection," *British Journal of Political Science,* XIX (1989), 237–259; Daniel H. Deudney, *Bounding Power: Republican Security Theory from the Polis to the Global Village* (Princeton, 2007); Peter Gourevitch, "The Second Image Reversed: The International Sources of Domestic Politics," *International Organization,* XXXII (1978), 881–911; Deborah Welch Larson, *Anatomy of Mistrust: U.S.-Soviet Relations During the Cold War* (Ithaca, 1997); *idem, Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation* (Princeton, 1985); John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York, 2001) (for Mearsheimer's interpretation of U.S. immigration policy, see *ibid.,* 244, 246); Art A. Stein, *The Nation at War* (Baltimore, 1980); on historians and international theory, Marc Trachtenberg, *The Craft of International History: A Guide to Method* (Princeton, 2006); on historical work within political science, Karen Orren and Stephen Skowronek, *The Search for American Political Development* (Cambridge, 2004).

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desirable immigrants. Scholars have long pointed out that individual states tried to regulate immigration—mostly to keep out the poor, the criminal, and the sick—but the federal government did almost nothing. The result was mass migration.[3]

More than 19 million immigrants came to the United States during this period. As Table 1 indicates, this population surge helped shape the composition and strength of the nation. One study suggests that U.S. economic gains from migration were higher than those from trade during the nineteenth century. Considering that wealth is a main building block of military power, the country's rise to international prominence may owe more to mass migration than scholars recognize. The precedent for the nation's immigration policy was set far before its implementation during the early Republic. The secondary literature reveals that the founders deemed security to be an important component of this policy, as did successive leaders throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[4]

British and colonial officials offered a blueprint for American leaders to follow long before Independence. In accord with the contemporary mercantilist doctrine, "One should never fear that there may be too many subjects or too many citizens, considering that there is neither wealth nor power but of men," British and colonial leaders viewed population as a source of strength for the state. Accordingly, as early as the 1660s, in one of the oldest surviving speeches in the House of Commons on this matter, John Holland argued that increased immigration will "enlarge the Honour and Glory of the King . . . enlarge the Trade of the Kingdom

3 On the "Open Door Era," see Michael C. LeMay, *From Open Door to Dutch Door: An Analysis of U.S. Immigration Policy since 1820* (New York, 1987), 7–10; on the Passengr Act of 1819, Zolberg, *Nation by Design,* 99–100, 110–113; on federal immigration restrictions in the nineteenth century, Daniels, *Guarding the Golden Door; idem, Nation by Design,* 185–193; for summaries of state regulatory policies during this period, Edward Prince Hutchinson, *Legislative History of American Immigration Policy, 1798–1965* (Philadelphia, 1981), 388–404; James H. Kettner, *The Development of American Citizenship, 1608–1870* (Chapel Hill, 1978), 108–110; Benjamin J. Klebaner, "State and Local Immigration Regulation in the United States before 1882," *International Review of Social History,* III (1958), 269–295; Gerald L. Neuman, "The Lost Century of American Immigration Law (1776–1875)," *Columbia Law Review,* XCIII (1993), 1833–1901; Zolberg, *A Nation by Design,* 72–76.

4 On the benefits from immigration, see Rudolph, "Globalization and Security," 14–15; Timothy J. Hatton and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *The Age of Mass Migration: Causes and Economic Impact* (New York, 1998); on wealth as the building block of national power, Mearsheimer, *Great Power Politics,* 55–82, 143–145; on the foundation of early immigration policy, Tichenor, *Dividing Lines,* 54–55. For the secondary literature supporting a security interpretation of U.S. immigration policy, see n. 44.

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Table 1 U.S. Share of World Wealth, Population, and Immigration, 1820–1900

U.S. RELATIVE SHARE OF WORLD WEALTH								
	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900
	12%	12%	15%	13%	16%	23%	35%	38%
U.S. POPULATION (IN THOUSANDS)								
	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900
	12,866	17,089	23,192	31,443	38,558	50,189	62,980	76,212
IMMIGRATION TO THE U.S. (IN THOUSANDS)								
	1821–30	1831–40	1841–50	1851–60	1861–70	1871–80	1881–90	1891–00
	143	599	1,713	2,598	2,315	2,812	5,246	3,688

NOTE Because the federal government did not keep track of the number of immigrants who entered the country prior to 1820, it is difficult to ascertain how many foreigners arrived during this period, but several scholars have attempted estimates, which range from approximately 250,000 to 534,000 immigrants for varying periods between 1781 and 1819. See Aaron S. Fogleman, "From Slaves, Convicts, and Servants to Free Passengers: The Transformation of Immigration in the Era of the American Revolution, *Journal of American History,* LXXXV (1998), 44, 66–67, 73–76; the discussion and sources cited in Aristide R. Zolberg, *A Nation by Design: Immigration Policy in the Fashioning of America* (New York, 2006), 62–63.
SOURCES Wealth data are from John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York, 2001), 248 (for his definition of *wealth,* see 71). Population and immigration data are from B. R. Mitchell, *International Historical Statistics: The Americas, 1750–1988* (New York, 1993), IV, 90–92.

. . . [and] weaken our encreasing Neighbours that may possibly become the worst of our Eneymes." With this mercantilist principle in mind, British officials devised ongoing incentives to boost the population of its North American territories, at least until the colonists seemed likely to revolt. But because Britain did not want to deplete its own citizenship to populate the colonies, it often preferred to invite industrious foreign workers, whose manpower would simultaneously strengthen the Empire and deprive the enemy. Acting under the assumption that "the increase of People is a Means of advancing the Wealth and Strength of any nation or Country," Parliament enacted a naturalization law in 1740 to attract foreign emigration to America.[5]

5 The mercantilist comment is by Jean Bodin, quoted in Zolberg, *Nation by Design,* 28. Sir John Holland, the House of Commons, May 4, 1664, in Caroline Robbins, "A Note on General Naturalization under the Later Stuarts and a Speech in the House of Commons on the Subject in 1664," *Journal of Modern History,* XXXIV (1962), 177. For the quotation on popula-

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This measure suggests a simplicity about British policy that belies the intricacy of the security measures involved in migration. British officials were hardly averse to use migration as if it were a precision-guided weapon or to treat those belonging to certain ethnic, racial, religious, or other groups as if they were pieces on a chess board. "National security and mercantilist concerns" were behind a 1709 measure, explicitly approved by the queen, to emigrate 3,000 Palatines from London to the New York frontier "to serve as a defensive barrier against the French and the Indians" and to provide raw materials for the British fleet. To ensure the preservation of Canadian holdings, moreover, the British attempted forcibly to move French-speaking Acadians, suspected of abetting the enemy, from Nova Scotia to the colonies "in Order to terrify the other Inhabitants from Clandestine Practices of betraying the English Subjects into the Indians' hands." Similarly, British, as well as other European, leaders, sought to bolster homeland security by sending convicts, drunkards, insolvents, the sick, and such misfits as elk killers, sheep stealers, and forest burners to the colonies, even sometimes paying their passage.[6]

Colonial leaders also attempted to use migration for security purposes, as reflected in the preambles of the legislation that they devised to attract foreigners, which included incentives like tax exemptions, land, naturalization, and other political advantages, tools, and provisions. The Georgia assembly passed an act in 1757 to encourage immigration under the premise that it is "of the

tion and strength, see John Duncan Brite, "The Attitude of European States toward Emigration to the American Colonies and the United States 1607–1820," unpub. Ph.D. diss. (University of Chicago, 1937), 178–179; on the British general naturalization law of 1740 and the quotation, Kettner, *Development of American Citizenship,* 74. For further analysis of British immigration and population policy, see Bernard Bailyn, *Voyagers to the West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the Eve of the Revolution* (New York, 1986), 29–57; Brite, "Attitude of European States," 160–224; Milfred Campbell, "'Of People either too Few or too Many': The Conflict of Opinion on Population and Its Relation to Emigration," in William Appleton Aiken and Basil Duke Henning (eds.), *Conflict in Stuart England: Essays in Honour of Wallace Notestein* (New York, 1970), 169–203; Emberson Edward Proper, *Colonial Immigration Laws: A Study of the Regulation of Immigration by the English Colonies in America* (New York, 1900), 73–76; Zolberg, *Nation by Design,* 26–51; on British naturalization law, *ibid.,* 39.

6 On British migration policy regarding the Palatines, see Philip Otterness, *Becoming German: The 1709 Palatine Migration to New York* (Ithaca, 2004), 72–73; on British action against the French-speaking Acadians and the related quotation, Geoffrey Plank, *An Unsettled Conquest: The British Campaign Against the Peoples of Acadia* (Philadelphia, 2001), 1; on shipping undesirables, see A. Roger Ekirch, *Bound for America: The Transportation of British Convicts to the Colonies, 1718–1775* (New York, 1987); Bailyn, *Voyagers to the West,* 260–262, 292–295; Brite, "Attitude of European States," 265–287; Zolberg, *Nation by Design,* 26, 35–36.

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greatest Importance to the safety of the British Empire in America that the Province of Georgia should be peopled with a Number of Inhabitants sufficient to repel any Invasion or Incroachment of foreign Powers, and to prevent any Incursion of the Indians." The South Carolina assembly passed a similar statute because "nothing contributes more to the safety and flourishing estate of any country than the multitude of people." From 1696 to 1741, South Carolina enacted ten laws to attract immigrants, including one that naturalized the deceased, conferring valid titles to estates on those born in another country. Many of the other colonial governments employed promotion agents to spread word of these enticements throughout Europe.[7]

The security measures taken by colonial leaders regarding immigration were often more complex than they seemed on the surface. Franklin's controversial *Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind, Peopling of Countries, Etc.,* which helped to lose him a seat in the Pennsylvania Assembly, is a case in point. Beyond its standard mercantilist talk, Franklin conditioned his recommendation with a decidedly racist corollary, advising the exclusion of *"Palatine Boors"* and "the Sons of *Africa*" because they were a threat to domestic stability and security. Similarly, Massachusetts officials attempted to emigrate Jesuits to other colonies out of suspicion that they "by subtile insinuations seduced and withdrawn the Indians from obedience, and stirred them up to sedition and open rebellion." South Carolina officials developed the Headright System and related land-grant programs to "limit the future importation of Negroes and . . . encourage the immigration of whites"; the colonists there lived in fear of slave revolts, since blacks outnumbered whites in many parts of the state at the time.[8]

7 For the Georgia and South Carolina statutes, see Erna Risch, "Encouragement of Immigration as Revealed in Colonial Legislation," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography,* XLV (1937), 2, 4 n.; on colonial efforts to entice foreigners, Edward A. Hoyt, "Naturalizaton Under the American Colonies: Signs of a New Community," *Political Science Quarterly,* LXVII, (1952), 262–263; on colonial laws, Proper, *Colonial Immigration Laws; idem,* "Encouragement of Immigration," 1–10; Zolberg, *Nation by Design,* 39; on South Carolina's laws, *idem, Colonial Immigration Laws,* 69 n.; on promotion agents, Brite, "Attitude of European States," 127–160; on recruitment practices, Bailyn, *Voyagers to the West,* 296–323.

8 Benjamin Franklin, "Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind, Peopling of Countries, etc.," in J. A. Leo Lemay (ed.), *Benjamin Franklin: Writings* (New York, 1987), 373–374. Franklin sought to restrict entrance to the colonies for Germans and slaves primarily because the former would "establish their Language and Manners to the Exclusion of ours" and the latter would "darken its people." On Franklin's loss of a seat in the 1764 election, see

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Although colonial and British policies were similar in many respects, the eighteenth-century British practice of dumping criminals upon the colonies became a point of contention, leading Franklin to exclaim, "Thou art called our MOTHER COUNTRY; but what good *Mother* ever sent *Thieves* and *Villains* to accompany her *Children,*" and "We do not ask Fish, but thou givest us *Serpents,* and worse than Serpents!" British leaders, however, disregarded colonial attempts to ban the importation of criminals. Later, when the British feared that "the continual emigrations from Ireland and Scotland will soon render our [American] colonies independent on the mother-country," Parliament attempted to curtail further emigration to North America, disallowing the acts designed by the colonists to entice foreigners. Thomas Jefferson and his fellow revolutionaries, as discussed below, considered these policies adequate grounds for independence.[9]

Colonial leaders were obviously cognizant of the connection between national security and immigration. However, the founders, perhaps because they were convinced that the strength of a country depended on the size of its population, never directly subjected the topic to national debate or officially "recorded" an immigration policy: The doors to the United States remained ajar because no national legislation was in place to close them. Nonetheless, the nation's architects were not oblivious to what one scholar called their "non-decisions" about immigration.[10]

William S. Hanna, *Benjamin Franklin and Pennsylvania Politics* (Stanford, 1964), 154–169; on Massachusetts leaders attempting to emigrate Jesuits, Proper, *Colonial Immigration Laws,* 27; on Pennsylvania leaders' attempt to restrict Palatine immigration, *ibid.,* 46–49; on South Carolinian immigration policy, Robert K. Ackerman, *South Carolina Colonial Land Policies* (Columbia, 1977), 4, 48–49, 89–90; Rachel N. Klein, "Ordering the Backcountry: The South Carolina Regulation," *William and Mary Quarterly,* XXXVIII (1981), 663; Jane Revill, *A Compilation of the Original Lists of Protestant Immigrants to South Carolina, 1763–1773* (Columbia, 1939). South Carolinian officials also sought white immigrants for help "defending the southern frontier against the Indians, the Spanish, and the French" (Ackerman, *South Carolina,* 48). On the fear of slave revolt, see Walter C. Rucker, *The River Flows On: Black Resistance, Culture, and Identity Formation in Early America* (Baton Rouge, 2006), 91–119.

9 Franklin, "On Transported Felons," *Pennsylvania Gazette,* 11 April 1751, in Lemay (ed.), *Franklin,* 358; Franklin, "Rattle-Snakes for Felons," in *ibid.,* 9 May 1751, in Lemay (ed.), *ibid.,* 359–361. On the potential effect of emigration to the colonies, see Bailyn, *Voyagers to the West,* 38; on the British restricting emigration to the colonies, *ibid.,* 49–66; Proper, *Colonial Immigration Law,* 75–76 (Mark Petracca found that Proper may have mistakenly identified the proposal on page 76 as an act; see Zolberg, *Nation by Design,* 490, *n.*); Zolberg, *Nation by Design,* 37–38; on European leaders' attempts to restrict emigration, Brite, "Attitudes of European States," 195–224.

10 Although the founders never directly discussed or "set" an immigration policy, the Con-

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The absence of legislation and of any national forum about immigration during the early republic constrains any straightforward explanation of the forefathers' position on immigration. But indirect evidence is available from three sources: key policy debates on issues related to immigration, such as naturalization; private correspondence between leaders on immigration; and academic and public debate about immigration. This approach may not amount to a comprehensive history of early immigration policy, but it can reveal the extent to which issues of national security were factored into U.S. policy. The analysis focuses primarily on the pro-immigration sentiment, since it ultimately translated into the open door policy.[11]

PRO-IMMIGRATION SENTIMENT Geopolitics can reveal much about early U.S immigration policy. As the colonies grew in population and strength, Britain, concerned that "the great increase of people in the said colonies [would have] an immediate tendency to produce independency," began desperately to inhibit emigration there, eventually imposing formal and informal restrictions against English and Scottish travelers after the colonies were de-

stitution reveals that they had a liberal policy in mind. For example, it provided, "The Congress shall have the power . . . to establish a uniform rule of naturalization" (Article I, Section 8), and in 1790, at its first opportunity, Congress set generous naturalization terms: Any free white person who resided for two years "within the limits and under the jurisdiction of the United States" could acquire American citizenship (Act of March 26, 1790). Furthermore, the constitutional architects, despite objections from several deliberators, protected the slave trade for twenty years, a major source of immigration and labor for the early Republic (Article I, Section 9). The most significant action taken by the framers to promote immigration was to make natives and immigrants eligible for every political office except the vice-presidency and the presidency (Article I, Section 2; Article I, Section 3; Article II, Section 1). See William S. Bernard (ed.), *American Immigration Policy—A Reappraisal* (New York, 1950), 4–5. On "non-decisions," see Tichenor, *Dividing Lines,* 53.

11 On three occasions before 1800, Congress changed the number of years a foreigner had to reside in the U.S. before becoming eligible for citizenship, but not the open-border policy. See Frank George Franklin, *The Legislative History of Naturalization in the United States: From the Revolutionary War to 1861* (Chicago, 1906), 33–97; Kettner, *Development of American Citizenship,* 235–246.

The shortcoming of this article's methodological approach is the difficulty of determining direct causation. If the forefathers had discussed and voted on immigration legislation during the early republic, the extent to which security played into their decisions would be subject to direct analysis. Fortunately, the founders discussed immigration in relation to other policies, such as the naturalization act of 1790. For historical accounts of immigration policy during the early Republic, see Tichenor, *Dividing Lines,* 49–55; Zolberg, *Nation by Design,* 58–98.

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clared in rebellion on August 23, 1775. Eager for the security advantages of a robust population, the colonists were not pleased. The Declaration of Independence—the first document of the new nation—accused King George III of "endeavor[ing] to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the Laws of Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither." Why was the first security decision by the founders, to wage war against a significantly stronger superpower, based in part on immigration?[12]

Colonial officials and early U.S. leaders feared for their survival on a continent in which Native Americans, the British, the French, and the Spanish had been fighting for control for more than a century. The Confederation of States was surrounded by external powers on its northern, southern, and western borders; it had ample reason to be wary of them all. British leaders refused to surrender their northeastern forts as the Treaty of Paris had mandated; Spanish provocateurs paid American authorities to persuade their countrymen to defect; and both Britain and Spain attempted to undercut American strength by inciting American Indians to attack settlers and by denying the states access to the Mississippi, the West Indies, and the North Atlantic fisheries. Moreover, "as American settlers pushed further west, they often forcibly removed Indians from their lands, and, in turn, the Indians, often countenanced by Britain and Spain, attacked settlers, stole livestock, and destroyed crops."[13]

12 Many scholars of the early republic are quick to cite the forefathers' anti-immigrant and "nativist" remarks. See Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860–1925* (New Brunswick, 1955), 4–8; Roy L. Garis, *Immigration Restriction* (New York, 1927), 22–27; Dale T. Knobel, *"Americans for the Americans": The Nativist Movement in the United States* (New York, 1996). The comment by the British Parliament is from Proper, *Colonial Immigration Laws,* 75–76. On British emigration restrictions to the states, see Bailyn, *Voyagers to the West,* 91; on the Declaration of Independence, http://www.constitution.org/usdeclar.pdf.

13 Totten, "Security and the Making of the U.S. Constitution," unpub. paper. Francisco Rendón to Jose de Gálvez, January 30, 1784, in Mary A. Giunta (ed.), *The Emerging Nation: A Documentary History of the Foreign Relations of the United States under the Articles of Confederation, 1780–1789* (Washington, D.C., 1996) [hereinafter FRUS], II, 293. On the international climate in the late eighteenth century, see Daniel George Lang, *Foreign Policy in the Early Republic: The Law of Nations and the Balance of Power* (Baton Rouge, 1985); on British and Spanish attempts to undermine U.S. security, Alfred Leroy Burt, *The United States, Great Britain, and British North America from the Revolution to the Establishment of Peace after the War of 1812* (New York, 1961); Frederick W. Marks III, *Independence on Trial: Foreign Affairs and the Making of the Constitution* (Wilmington, 1984), 5–12, 21–36, 19–21, 52–95; Arthur P. Whitaker, *The Spanish-American Frontier, 1783–1795* (New York, 1927); on the American Indian threat, see Marks, *Independence on Trial,* 3–52.

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Complicating matters further, the federal government, because it had little control over the states under the Articles of Confederation, did not have the power to collect taxes from its citizens to protect the thirteen states. For part of this period, it had fewer than 200 soldiers under its command, few fortifications, and not a single dependable battleship to defend against a foreign power invading by sea. American leaders often revealed their acute awareness of the extent to which the Confederation was susceptible to attack. John Jay, the secretary of foreign affairs during much of the Confederation's existence, corresponded privately with William and Robert Livingston, Robert and Gouverneur Morris, Philip Schuyler, Egbert Benson, and Alexander Hamilton—all close associates—to that effect. He concluded, as did John Adams—also a foreign diplomat—that because the Confederation did not have the "capacity to repel force by force," "it will be but a few years . . . before we are involved in another war."[14]

The evidence indicates that, in an effort to find ways to protect the nation, America's early leaders looked to immigrant manpower as a possible resource to generate the wealth needed to establish the military in case of war and to occupy and protect the land, especially the frontier. Although immigration policy never received a public hearing during the Confederation—possibly because its purpose was so obvious—private correspondence between leaders shows that security was a consideration. Robert Morris, who, as superintendent of finance, masterfully funded the Revolutionary War, explained exactly how foreigners could

14 See the discussion in Totten, "Security and the Making of the U.S. Constitution." On the thirteen states acting as sovereigns, see Madison, "Vices of the Political System of the United States," April 1787, in William T. Hutchinson and William M. E. Rachal (eds.), *The Papers of James Madison* (Chicago, 1975), IX, 345–358; on the Confederation's susceptibility to foreign attack, David C. Hendrickson, *Peace Pact: The Lost World of the American Founding* (Lawrence, 2003); Marks, *Independence on Trial;* on founders' comments about foreign attack, Grayson to Madison, March 22, 1786, in Edmund C. Burnett (ed.), *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress* (Washington, D.C., 1962), XXIII, 205–206; Jefferson to Monroe, November 11, 1784, in Giunta (ed.), *FRUS,* II, 498; Hamilton to Gouverneur Morris, May 19, 1788, http://oll.libertyfund.org/Home3/HTML-voice.php?recordID?0249.09 (accessed April 1, 2007); Madison to Jefferson, September 7, 1784, in Giunta (ed.), *FRUS,* II, 436; Randolph to Madison, December 27, 1787, in John P. Kaminski and Gaspare J. Saladino (eds.), *The Documentary History of the Constitution* (Madison, 1981), IX, 981–983; VIII, 275–276; Washington to Henry Knox, March 3, 1788, in Marks, *Independence on Trial,* 50; on Jay's private letters, Gottfried Dietze, *"The Federalist": A Classic on Federalism and Free Government* (Baltimore, 1960), 74–75; for the Adams and Jay quotations, Marks, *Independence on Trial,* 29, 46; Federalist No. 4, in Jacob E. Cooke (ed.), *The Federalist* (Middletown, 1961), 100.

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strengthen the nation: "[E]migrants who will come to us from Europe [will help to] "get us to get back on our feet," by generating money to pay America's increasing debt and by helping to "establish immediately a respectable navy; to avoid war we propose to stand ready to wage one well." Morris' advice was heeded. Only a few decades later, approximately one-third of the national army and many of the state militias were comprised of men who had immigrated.[15]

Similarly, John Livingston of Virginia, a former secretary of foreign affairs, writing under the pseudonym "Primitive Whig" in 1785, pleaded to his countrymen that America should "give the greatest possible encouragement to the influx of foreigners," since it "would be a real addition to our strength," most likely referring to the security advantages of a robust population. Even those not in the national "limelight" looked to immigration as a source of security. An officer stationed at Fort McIntosh, for example, rejoiced over the benefits of the "astonishingly great" foreign migration to the Ohio region, which would presumably help to secure the nation's western settlements against Indian attack.[16]

Some of those who acknowledged immigrants' contribution to security during this period were not always disposed to consider the territorial Confederation their "national" unit. Most likely because of the polity's weak central structure, they were often primarily concerned for the security of their own particular area within it. Recent studies show that the founders discussed the possibility of war between parts of the Confederacy more often than is commonly thought. As Hamilton privately commented in 1780, "A little time hence some of the States will be powerful empires; and we are so remote from other nations, that we shall have all the leisure and opportunity we can wish to cut each other's throats." Because leaders from certain states or regions were often distrustful of leaders from other states or regions, they were often disinclined

15 Robert Morris, April 10, 1783, in E. James Ferguson (ed.), *The Papers of Robert Morris, 1781–1784* (Pittsburgh, 1988), VII, 691–696; Clarence L. Ver Steeg, *Robert Morris, Revolutionary Financier: With an Analysis of His Earlier Career* (Philadelphia, 1954). On the composition of the U.S. military, see Vernon M. Briggs, Jr., *Mass Immigration and the National Interest* (Armonk, 1992), 45.

16 "Primitive Whig" feared that the nation would adopt a new paper currency, which would attract domestic schemers and speculators and thus dissuade hard-working foreigners from coming to America. "Primitive Whig, No. 5," *New-Jersey Gazette,* 6 Feb. 1786; "Extract of a letter from Fort McIntosh," *Connecticut Courant,* 7 Nov. 1785.

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to see parts of the Confederation other than their own benefit from foreign numbers. They had the same concern for their nation's security; they simply had different conceptions of what exactly their nation was.[17]

The eastern states worried that the western states would grow too powerful. James Madison feared that immigration to the West could threaten the Confederation by "multiplying the parts of the Machine"; the depopulation of the eastern states would "delay . . . that maritime strength which must be their only safety in case of war." William Grayson, who sat on a committee that planned settlements in the West, explained to George Washington in private that eastern leaders, because they "[were] apprehensive of the consequences which may result from the new States taking their position in the Confederacy," devised policies to make their states more appealing to immigrants than the western states. Timothy Bloodworth, a member of the Continental Congress, wrote to the Governor of North Carolina, "The Eastern Delegates . . . [want] to embarrass the population of . . . [the western states], which they seem to view with a [jealous] eye and [they] openly declare on the floor of Congress, their desire if possible to prevent emigration [to the West]." Northern leaders expressed similar concerns. Witness, for example, Rufus Putnam—the surveyor of western lands in 1785—who wrote that Massachusetts and New York officials wanted to prevent emigration to the Ohio region so that foreigners would remain in their own states.[18]

Regional and state rivalries within the Confederation eased after the Constitution created a strong central government, and

17 On the rivalry between individual states, see Totten, "Security and the Making of the U.S. Constitution"; Hendrickson, *Peace Pact;* Peter S. Onuf, *The Origins of the Federal Republic: Jurisdictional Controversies in the United States 1775–1787* (Philadelphia, 1983); *idem,* "Anarchy and the Crisis of the Union," in Herman Belz, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert (eds.), *To Form a More Perfect Union: The Critical Ideas of the Constitution* (Charlottesville, 1992). Hamilton to James Duane, September 3, 1780, in *The Works of Alexander Hamilton* (New York, 1904), I, 217.

18 Madison to Jefferson, August 20, 1784, in Robert A. Rutland and Rachal (eds.), *The Papers of James Madison: The Congressional Series* (Chicago, 1973), VIII, 108; Grayson to Washington, April 15, 1785, in W. W. Abbot and Dorothy Twohig (eds.), *The Papers of George Washington: The Confederation Series* (Charlottesville, 1992), II, 498–501; Bloodworth to Richard Caswell, August 28, 1786, in Burnett (ed.), *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress,* VIII, 455; Putnam to Washington, April 5, 1784, in Abbot and Twolig (eds.), *Papers of George Washington,* I, 263–265; Rufus King to Elbridge Gerry, June 4, 1786, in Charles R. King (ed.), *The Life and Correspondence of Rufus King* (New York, 1894–1900), I, 175–179; Onuf, *Statehood and Union: A History of the Northwest Ordinance* (Bloomington, 1987), 4.

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leaders turned to immigrants to strengthen the nation as a whole. "It is clear, that the present situation of America, renders it necessary to promote the influx of people," Coxe, a member of the Continental Congress, advised in a speech before the Society for Political Enquiries at Franklin's house in 1787. Similarly, Jefferson explained, "The present desire of America is to produce rapid population by as great importations of foreigners as possible." Although early officials in the United States, like those before them in the Confederation, never publicly or directly discussed why the need for immigration was "clear," the founders at the Federal Convention in Philadelphia inserted clauses in the Constitution that granted easy terms of naturalization to foreigners, protected the slave trade, and allowed foreigners to run for most political offices, thus laying the foundation for mass migration. Indeed, the nature of the debates during the state conventions to ratify the Constitution, the private comments by prominent leaders, the writings of contemporary academics, and the public discourse suggest that national security factored prominently into these pro-immigration decisions.[19]

The deliberation at the Virginia convention, which many of the most prominent founders—such as Madison, Patrick Henry, and James Monroe—attended, reveals that leaders intended to use immigration to strengthen the nation. Edmund Randolph, the former governor of the state, urged his fellow delegates to ratify the Constitution to prevent Virginia from falling to foreign aggressors: "Our militia amounts to 50,000. . . . In case of an attack,

19 Tench Coxe, "An Enquiry into the Best Means of Encouraging Emigration from Abroad, Consistently with the Happiness and Safety of the Original Citizens. Read before the Society for Political Enquiries, at the House of Dr. Franklin, April 20th, 1787," *American Museum,* X (1791), 114. The Jefferson quotation is in Zolberg, *Nation by Design,* 58. In a debate about the number of years a foreigner must reside in America before becoming eligible for political office, delegates made it clear why they wanted immigrants—to attract their wealth, which can be consistent with a national security perspective. Hamilton, for instance, noted that "the advantage of encouraging foreigners was obvious & admitted. Persons in Europe of moderate fortunes will be fond of coming." Madison wanted more "respectable Europeans . . . ready to transfer their fortunes hither." James Wilson cited his own state of Pennsylvania as "among the foremost [state] in population & prosperity" because it aggressively recruited immigrants. The forefathers' discussion in private letters and at the ratifying conventions indicates their connection of wealth with security. Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics,* 143–144; Madison, August 9, 1787, Hamilton, August 13, 1787, and Wilson, August 13, 1787, in Max Farrand (ed.), *The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787* (New Haven, 1966), II, 236, 268, 269. For references to immigration in the Constitution, see n. 10. The founders, in addition to taking steps to protect the slave trade, also took steps to end it.

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what defense can we make?" "[We need] men sufficient in number to defend ourselves . . . We must have a navy . . . to guard our coasts and defend us against invasions." But given the nation's considerable debt from the Revolutionary War, he asked "[How] can we get money for this [navy]. . . ? How shall we raise it?" His answer was that the establishment of a strong central government would attract immigrants: "Merchants and men of wealth will be induced to come among us, [and] emigration will encrease." Without an influx of foreigners, he asked, "Can you find men to defend you? If not men . . . can you have a navy [without money]?" Virginia, he concluded, would suffer from its "inability to raise and man a navy" without foreign numbers.[20]

Washington agreed with him. He wrote to Jefferson that the United States could benefit from Europe's wars by attracting their citizens: "[If] we wisely & properly improve the advantages which nature has given us, we may be benfitted by their [Britain, France, and Russia's] folly." In a tone different from that of his ideological public speeches, which scholars often cite for his position on immigration, he wrote, "I conceive under an energetic general Government [the government proposed under the Constitution] such regulations might be made, and such measures taken, as would render this Country the asylum of . . . industrious characters from all parts of Europe—would encourage the cultivation of the Earth by the high price which its products would command—and would draw the wealth, and wealthy men of other Nations, into our own bosom, by giving security . . . to its holders."[21]

Why was Washington so excited to attract wealthy immigrants at Europe's expense? As a successful military leader, he was aware of the Confederation's vulnerability to foreign attack. In a private letter written to the Marquis de Lafayette, his trusted friend, only a few days later, he explained, "To guard against . . .

20 Randolph, the Virginia convention, June 6, 1788, in Kaminski and Saladino (eds.), *Documentary History of the Constitution,* IX, 981–983.

21 Washington to Jefferson, January 1, 1788, http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/documents/constitution/1788/jefferson1.html. To represent Washington as a leader who presented America as a great democracy that opened its doors to immigrants, scholars often cite the first president's speech to newly arrived Irish immigrants in 1783. But many of his private correspondences (see n. 22), which have a different tone, are probably more indicative of his true thoughts and intentions. Washington, "Letter to the members of the Volunteer Association and other Inhabitants of the Kingdom of Ireland who have lately arrived in the City of New York," Dec. 2, 1783, http://founding.com/library/lbody.cfm?id?191&parent?60.

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foreign interposition . . . is now the important subject that engrosses the attention of all our part of America." Washington also wanted Europeans to emigrate to the West to subdue the Native American tribes and secure the frontier. He recommended to James Duane, a former Indian commissioner, that the West should "admit such emigrations . . . not only from the several States of the Union but from Foreign Countries. . . . Measures of this sort would not only obtain Peace from the Indians, but would, in my opinion, be the means of preserving it." In line with his expressed awareness of the connection between national security and immigration, Washington's first address to Congress as President in 1790 enthusiastically urged the legislature to devise a "liberal" naturalization law to attract immigrants.[22]

Madison—the "Father of the Constitution" and a main contributor to *The Federalist*—also viewed immigration as a way to bolster frontier security. In a letter to Nicholas, he wrote, "Western strength is unable at present to command the use of the Mississippi [from the Spanish]," adding even more ominously, "Southern Indians are encouraged and armed by the Spaniards" to attack American settlements. But he was confident that the new government under the Constitution would induce "emigrants . . . from Europe" to the West, thus enabling the United States to "take the requisite measures for getting into our hands the Western posts which will not cease to instigate the [Native Americans], as long as they remain in British hands." He was convinced that taking possession of the forts near the Great Lakes, which the British had refused to surrender, would help to secure the frontier. Western

22 Washington to Lafayette, January 10, 1788, http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/etcbin/ot2wwwwashington?specfile=/texts/english/washington/fitzpatrick/search/gw.02w&act=surround&offset=36768298&tag=Writings+of+Washington,+Vol.+29:+To+MARQUIS+DE+LAFAYETTE&query=&id?. On wealth as the building block of national power, see n. 4. Washington to Duane, September 7, 1783, in Lawrence B. Evans (ed.), *Writings of George Washington* (New York, 1908), 480. In a letter to Congress a few months earlier, he had recommended that several of his former army officers be given land on the Western frontier to help "combat the [Native Americans], and check their incursions—A Settlement formed of such Men would give security to our frontiers" (Washington to the President of Congress, June 17, 1783, *ibid.,* 475). Washington also often wanted to see the West settled. He wrote to Lafayette, for example, that he hoped to see immigrants "increase and multiply" on the "fertile plains of the Ohio." Many scholars argue that Washington sought to settle the West because he had an economic interest in the region. But to provide security for the young nation should also be considered as an explanation. Washington to Lafayette, July 25, 1785, *ibid.,* 501; Washington to Richard Henderson, June 19, 1788, *ibid.,* 510. On the naturalization law, see Washington, "First Annual Message to Congress," January 8, 1790, *ibid.,* 331.

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leaders also believed that emigration was essential for their security. In a letter intended to be read at the Federal Convention, a group of prominent politicians from Kentucky opposed the Constitution on the grounds that it would impede immigration. "[Our] population will cease," they worried, "[and] leave us in a defenceless State and subject us to the ravages of the [American Indians.]"[23]

The evidence shows that this sort of thinking was pervasive throughout the thirteen states. Jay maintained that population growth, generated naturally or by immigration, was a source of power that foreign leaders feared. In his view, America's allies "rejoice[d] to see her become great and powerful," but he warned that "such other foreign nations . . . who, jealous of our growing importance . . . behold our rapid population growth with regret." John Howard, a delegate to New York's convention, wrote in private that the Constitution would induce immigrants to "transplant themselves into this happy soil, and enrich the United States at the expence of our enemies"—namely, Britain and possibly other European powers.[24]

During the Pennsylvania convention, Wilson, recognized as the "second" father of the Constitution, observed that "it is a maxim of every [nation], and it ought to be a maxim with us, that the increase of numbers increases . . . the security . . . of governments." He added, "The power of the states, I apprehend, will increase with the population . . . of their inhabitants." He urged the states to ratify the Constitution, which would "draw numbers from the other side of the Atlantic." Otherwise, "we shall be unhappy from foreign restraints and internal violence." On another occasion during the convention, he expounded that the new Constitution will "draw from Europe many worthy characters [and thus] secure us from danger and procure us advantages from foreign nations. . . . We are still an inviting object to one European power at least, and, if we cannot defend ourselves, the temptation may become too alluring to be resisted. . . . This system will

23 Madison to George Nicholas, May 17, 1788, in Kaminski and Saladino (eds.), *Documentary History,* XVIII, 24–32; McDowell et al. to the Court of Fayette County, Kentucky, February 28, 1787, *ibid.,* XVI, 261–263.

24 Jay, "A Citizen of New-York: An Address to the People of the State of New York," April 15, 1788, *ibid.,* XVII,101–120; Howard to George Thatcher, February 27, 1787, *ibid.,* XVI, 229–231; Robert R. Livingston to Marquis de la Luzerne, May 7, 1788, *ibid.,* XVII, 393.

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not hurry us into war; it is calculated to guard against it." Wilson may have articulated the connection between security and immigration more elegantly than anyone else at the time, but he certainly was not alone in acknowledging it. The evidence shows that leaders from most of the states repeatedly made similar arguments during the ratifying conventions and in private.[25]

Politicians were not the only ones to connect immigration, population, and national power during that era; so did academics. William Barton, in a speech read before the American Philosophical Society, proposed, "There is not, perhaps, any political axiom better established, than this,—That a high degree of population contributes greatly to the . . . strength of a state. . . . If these observations be applied to the United States of America, it will appear, that this country possesses, in a superior degree, an inherent, radical and lasting source of national vigor [strength] and greatness:—For, it will be found, that, in no other part of the world, is the progress of population so rapid, as in these states." Barton, as he acknowledged in a written version of his speech, was merely affirming the policy advice already given by the British scholar Richard Price, "The encouragement of population ought to be one of the first objects of policy, in every state."[26]

Newspapers were the primary medium for leaders to advocate policy during the early Republic; prominent politicians—such as Hamilton, Jay, and Madison—often assumed pseudonyms

25 James Wilson, the Pennsylvania convention, December 4, 1787, *ibid.,* II, 477–478, 583–584. At the Massachusetts convention, General Samuel Thompson declared that because of immigration and natural growth, "we are encreasing in numbers." As a result, "we are able to stand our own ground against a foreign power–they cannot starve us out–they cannot bring their ships on the land." Thompson and other delegates who presented similar arguments presumably thought that a robust population, through the manpower and resources it provided for an army, was vital for deterrence. David Ramsay, a South Carolinian leader, also believed that America's growing population, stimulated in part by immigration, would strengthen the nation, declaring that because of "our growing numbers the citizens of the United States will probably be five times as numerous as the inhabitants of Great Britain." Consequently, with a robust population and a strong central government, Ramsay concluded, "we shall be protected from foreign invasion." Thompson, *ibid.,* VI, 1316. For similar speeches at the Massachusetts convention, see James Bowdoin, January 23, 1788, *ibid.,* VI, 1317–1323; Thomas Dawes, January 12, 1788, *ibid.,* VI, 1287–1289; Bowdoin to George Ewing, August 12, 1788, *ibid.,* XVIII, 324; "David Ramsay Oration," *Charleston Columbian Herald,* 5 June, 1788, *ibid.,* XVIII, 164.

26 Barton, *Observations on the Progress of Population* 1–2, n.1. On Barton, see Milton Rubican, "A Memoir of the Life of William Barton, A.M. (1754–1817)," *Pennsylvania History,* XII (1945), 179–193.

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to promote policy without formally acknowledging responsibility. The articles in prominent newspapers that encouraged immigration for geopolitical reasons show, unlike the existing literature about the early republic, that security was a significant part of the public discourse. A contributor to the *New York Daily Advertiser* wrote that the new Constitution would encourage "thousands in Europe, with moderate fortunes, [to] migrate to this country" and that the resulting wealth and population would enable "the Floridas [to] be conquered in a campaign" and "the spoils of the West-Indies and South-America [to] enrich the next generation." A writer at the *Virginia Independent Chronicle* feared that France, Spain, Holland, and England, "tempted by our distracted and defenceless situation [may] divide the states amongst them . . . to acquire additional territory . . . [and] cut off at a single stroke the head of their formidable rival." But he was also confident that the immigrants attracted by the new Constitution would make the nation the recipient of a "great increase of wealth and population," which would afford it "perfect security against foreign invasions." The *Pennsylvania Packet* reported that America's increase in population due to immigration and its capacity to absorb a large population within its vast expanse would result in an "extensive western empire, rich in territory. . . , [and] nervous [meaning strong] in war."[27]

Leaders continued to think in this way after ratification of the Constitution. During the first congressional debate under the new government, Madison addressed the immigration issue explicitly: "It is no doubt very desirable that we should hold out as many inducements as possible for . . . mankind to come and settle amongst us." He described the purpose of immigration as "not merely to swell the catalogue of people . . . [but] to increase the wealth and strength of the community; and those who acquire the rights of citizenship, without adding to the wealth and strength of the community are not the people we are in want of. . . . I should be ex-

27 Marcus," *New York Daily Advertiser,* 15 Oct. 1787, in Kaminski and Saladino (eds.), *Documentary History,* VIII, 383; "A Freeholder," *Virginia Independent Chronicle,* 9 April 1788, *ibid.,* IX, 728–729; *Pennsylvania Packet,* 3 June 1788, *ibid.,* VI, 149–151; "A Delegate Who Has Catched Cold," *Virginia Independent Chronicle,* 18 June 1788, *ibid.,* X, 1640–1643; "One of the People," *Massachusetts Centinel,* 17 Oct. 1787, *ibid.,* XIII, 394–395; "A True American," *Massachusetts Centinel,* 29 Sept. 1787, *ibid.,* XIII, 267; *Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer,* 22 Aug. 1787, *ibid.,* XIII, 189; "A Jerseyman: To the Citizens of New Jersey," *Trenton Mercury,* 6 Nov. 1787, *ibid.,* III, 146–151; *Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer,* 5 May 1788, *ibid.,* XVII, 386.

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ceedingly sorry, sir, that our rule of naturalization excluded a single person . . . [who] would be a real addition to the wealth and strength of the United States." Lawrence, a representative from New York, thoroughly agreed.[28]

Similarly, in an often-cited legislative report from the 1790s, Hamilton linked the wealth generated from immigration to national security. His "Report on Manufacturers" recommended that Congress "open every possible avenue to emigration from abroad." Because foreigners were "an important resource, not only for extending the population . . . but likewise for the prosecution of manufactures," he proposed to offer them inducements to come to America, such as an exemption from taxes, which was necessary because the "security of [the] Country appears[s] to be materially connected with the prosperity of manufactures." Hamilton believed so strongly in this maxim that he sent agents to Scotland on his own accord to attract skilled immigrants.[29]

ANTI-IMMIGRATION SENTIMENT According to many scholars, anti-immigrant sentiment was rife during the early Republic, stirred primarily by "nativist" and xenophobic attitudes. But this perspective misses part of the story. As evident during key policy-making sessions, as well in private letters, the anti-immigrant sentiment was primarily a result of security concerns. The founders, in particular, repeatedly warned that immigration could expose the nation to foreign spies, cause certain regions to separate from the Confederation, and disrupt society through ethnic and racial violence, like the slave revolts that had occurred in Haiti and other Caribbean islands.[30]

Events occurring in and around the Confederation gave the founders good reason to be circumspect about immigrants. During the Revolutionary War, British authorities had set up an extensive (at least by eighteenth-century standards) intelligence system, including espionage networks comprised of colonists who remained loyal to the Crown. As one West Point scholar wrote, British co-

28 Madison, *Annals of Congress,* 1st Congress, 2nd session, 1150; John Lawrence, *Annals of Congress,* 1st Congress, 2nd session, 1154.

29 Hamilton, "Report on Manufacturers," December 5, 1791; Zolberg, *Nation by Design,* 70.

30 On "nativist" sentiment, see Higham, *Strangers in the Land;* Garis, *Immigration Restriction,* 22–27.

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vert operations were so advanced by the 1780s that leaders were able to pinpoint the "locations and strengths of rebel units, identities of rebel commanders, the placement and construction of supply depots, locations of general officers and militia posts, activities near British lines, troop movements, enemy intentions, and standing orders." Conceivably, the British government could have sent immigrants after Independence to reinforce this pre-existing underground network to conduct operations against the country.[31]

Soon after the Revolutionary War, Thomson, long-time secretary of the Continental Congress, wrote to Franklin in private that immigrants could pose a security threat. He feared, in particular, that Britain would seek revenge by using foreigners to infiltrate America: "There is no doubt but Britain will watch for advantages . . . and that every thing will be attempted and every artifice used, which malice can suggest, to break our connection with France and to sow dissensions among the states. The easy access which foreigners have to these states and the ready reception they meet with afford favourable opportunities of putting their arts in practice. . . . I think it therefore highly necessary both for France and America to be on their guard and not suffer themselves to be duped by the arts of their common enemy."[32]

This concern was not uncommon. At the Constitutional Convention, Gerry, a Massachusetts delegate, observed, "Foreign powers will intermeddle in our affairs. Persons having foreign attachments will be sent among us & insinuate into our councils, in order to be made instruments for their purposes. Every one knows the vast sums laid out in Europe for secret services." Other delegates feared that immigrant "spies" would breach the American political system. As George Mason commented, "A rich foreign Nation, for example Great Britain, might send over her tools who might bribe their way into the Legislature for insidious purposes." Butler, Pinckney, and Morris, all prominent founders, expressed similar viewpoints.[33]

Jay, in his capacity secretary of foreign affairs, and Washing-

31 Roger Kaplan, "The Hidden War: British Intelligence Operations during the American Revolution," *William and Mary Quarterly,* XLVII (1990), 115–138 (quotation, 124).

32 Charles Thomson to Franklin, August 13, 1784, in Giunta (ed.), *FRUS,* II, 426–427.

33 Elbridge Gerry, August 13, 1787, in Farrand (ed.), *Records of the Federal Convention of 1787,* II, 268; Mason, August 8, 1787, *ibid.,* II, 216; Charles Pinkney, August 9, 1787, *ibid.,* II, 235; Pierce Butler, August 9, 1787, *ibid.,* II, 236; Morris, August 9, 1787, *ibid.,* II, 235, 237–238.

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ton, who supervised covert operations for the colonies during the Revolutionary War, were particularly concerned about foreign espionage. "Permit me to hint," Jay wrote in private to the former general, "whether it would not be wise & seasonable to provide a strong check to the admission of Foreigners into the administration of our national Government." "The Command in chief of the American army," he added, "shall not be given to, nor devolve on, any but a natural *born* Citizen." Clarifying what leaders like Jay meant by this statement, and indicating that these fears were more pervasive throughout society than is commonly thought, a writer for the *Massachusetts Centinel* warned, "In case of a war" [the enemy] will derive from this continent, many valuable men amongst us." This prediction, the writer noted, was "founded on our own experience," referring to British use of loyalists during the late war.[34]

The debate about the Naturalization Act of 1790 saw many congressmen warning that granting rapid citizenship to immigrants could jeopardize national security. A Pennsylvania representative advised that "some security for [immigrants'] fidelity and allegiance" was necessary to protect the nation. Burke, a South Carolinian representative, argued that "some residence is required" for an immigrant to become a citizen; otherwise, "in large cities, like Boston, New York, or Philadelphia, an election" may come under the influence of foreigners at the expense of the national interest. Jackson of Georgia expressed one of the most intriguing security concerns during the debate, "The whole Western Territory [could] be purchased up by the inhabitants of England, France, or other foreign nations[.] [T]he landholders might combine and send out a large tenantry" to usurp these lands from America. His recommendation was that a "person owing no allegiance to a Sovereign ought not to hold lands under its protection, because he cannot be called upon and obliged to give that support which invasion or insurrection may render necessary."[35]

34 On Washington's spy network during the Revolutionary War, see Morton Pennypacker, *George Washington's Spies: In Long Island and New York* (Brooklyn, 1939). Jay to Washington, July 25, 1787, in Farrand (ed.), *Records of the Federal Convention of 1787,* III, 61; "The Republican Federalist VI," *Massachusetts Centinel,* 2 Feb. 1788, in Kaminski and Saladino (eds.), *Documentary History,* V, 844.

35 Hartley, *Annals of Congress,* 1st Congress, 2nd session, 1147–1148, 1151–1152; Aedanus Burke, *Annals of Congress,* 1st Congress, 2nd session, 1160; James Jackson, *Annals of Congress,* 1st

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The founders also worried that other parts of the Confederation would follow the example of New Connecticut (now Vermont), and Franklin (now part of Tennessee), which declared independence and formed sovereign nations. Washington thought that if foreign immigrants "form[ed] commercial intercourses . . . with the Spaniards on their right rear, or the British on their left, they will become a distinct people from us—have different views—different interests, [and] instead of adding strength to the Union, [would] in case of a rupture with either of those powers, be a formidable [and] dangerous neighbour." Monroe imagined foreign immigrants in the West causing the entire region to "separate from the Confederacy, so as effectually to exclude any new State from it." Foreign leaders also recognized that the Americans could lose the West, and perhaps sensed an opportunity.[36]

Not unlike the political alarm about the possibility of losing the West or the general insecurity about the risks of foreign migration, the terror about slave revolts was unrelenting in the South. After all, the leaders of the Revolution in Sant-Domingue (now Haiti) had successfully overthrown the French government there. Governor Pinckney of South Carolina wrote in private that the

Congress, 2nd session, 1161; William Smith, *Annals of Congress,* 1st Congress, 2nd session, 1150–1151. The naturalization law of 1790 provided that "all free white persons" who have immigrated to the United States and resided in the country "for two whole years shall be entitled to all the rights of citizenship." As several immigration scholars have observed, this was, by any comparison, a "liberal" and "generous" naturalization law. Kettner, *Development of American Citizenship,* 236; Tichenor, *Dividing Lines,* 53. The debate about the naturalization bill of 1790 was similar to that in the Federal Convention: The representatives wanted to encourage immigration to spur growth but also protect the nation from foreign harm and conspiracies. Franklin, *Legislative History,* 38.

36 On Vermont, see Onuf, *Origins of the Federal Republic;* on Franklin, Samuel Cole Williams, *History of the Lost State of Franklin* (Johnson City, 1924). Washington to Knox, December 5, 1784, in Abbot and Twohig (eds.), *Papers of George Washington,* II, 171; Washington to Governor Benjamin Harris on October 10, 1784. *ibid.,* II, 89–99; Monroe to Patrick Henry, August 12, 1786, in William Wirt Henry (ed.), *Patrick Henry: Life, Correspondence, and Speeches,* (New York, 1969), II, 296–297; Monroe to Madison, August 14, 1786, in Rutland and Rachal (eds.), *Papers of James Madison,* IX, 104; King to Gerry, June 4, 1786, in King (ed.), *Life and Correspondence of Rufus King,* I, 175–179. For comments by foreign leaders, see Charles Gravier, comte de Vergennes to François Barbé-Marbois, May 10, 1785, in Giunta (ed.), *FRUS,* II, 624–626; Marbois to Vergennes, February 23, 1785, *ibid.,* II, 560–562; Don Diego María de Gardoqui to José Moñino y Redondo, conde de Floridablanca, August 23, 1785, *ibid.,* II, 764–767.

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Black Republic of Haiti has lit "a flame which will extend to the neighboring islands, and may eventually prove not a very pleasing or agreeable example to the Southern States." Jamaican slaves had attempted revolts in 1730, 1769, and 1776, and American slaves had planned and/or caused similar upheavals dating back to the colonial era. The presumption was that the origin of, and solution to, the threat lay partly in the nation's immigration policies; the fact that imported slaves outnumbered foreign white immigrants in many areas of the South heightened the risk of revolt.[37]

The founders' attitudes about immigrants coming to the states have much to say about U.S. immigration policy. Their views about British and Haitian "terrorism" is eerily similar to those expressed by American politicians today, suggesting that the challenges that the United States currently face concerning immigration are not new.

SUPERPOWER INTERACTION WITH REGARD TO IMMIGRATION The founders revealed themselves to be deeply sensitive to the security components of migration policy. But were their fears about immigration based on actual foreign threats? European leaders certainly made persistent attempts to retard migration flows to the thirteen states, imposing emigration bans on certain classes of people, proscribing written propaganda by promotion agents, spreading pamphlets that depicted American life negatively, and significantly increasing travel costs for immigrants.[38]

Were these actions taken because foreign powers were apprehensive about rising American power? Bond, the British consul in Philadelphia, wrote to the foreign office of Great Britain, "I have great satisfaction in observing that the spirit of migration has of late years remitted exceedingly. Still however numbers do arrive upon this continent annually; particularly from Ireland." A few days later, he outlined just how his country should check "the rage for emigration" to the United States, explaining that "the distracted

37 See Matthewson, *A Proslavery Foreign Policy: Haitian-American Relations During the Early Republic* (Westport, 2003) (Pinckney's quotation, 22–23); Rucker, *River Flows On,* 17–119.
38 On attempts by European leaders to restrict emigration to America, see Brite, "Attitude of European States," 195–224; Maldwyn A. Jones, "The Background to Emigration from Great Britain in the Nineteenth Century," *Perspectives in American History,* VII (1973), 12; Zolberg, *Nation by Design,* 60, 103–107.

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situation of the United States affords a most favorable opportunity to encourage migrations from hence into Canada" and that Britain should therefore issue a "promulgation of the terms and advantages of settlement" in Canada to entice "laborious sober people [to] remove into a country where they can enjoy once again the blessings of his Majesty's Government."[39]

Though gratified by Britain's measures to stop the emigration of "artificers from Great Britain and Ireland" to the United States, Bond also ventured that the British Crown should pay the travel expenses for any of its former citizens, particularly artisans, who would journey back across the Atlantic to their home country: "[It] would be but a small national expenditure productive of a great national benefit—for thus numbers would be reclaimed." Attempts to curb emigration from Britain, however, were not successful. A frustrated Bond was eventually to lament, "The passenger trade from Great Britain and Ireland is a constant source of population and advantage for this country . . . we suffer a severe depopulation and America derives vast benefit from it."[40]

The British were not alone in their misgivings about increasing the American population. Rendón, the future Spanish *Intendente* in the New World, explained to Governor Bernardo de Gálvez of Louisiana that "enmity between the [United States and Spain]" was brewing on the western frontier about control of the Mississippi. He counseled Spain to negotiate immediately because "The American population . . . is multiplying so rapidly that the settlement called Kentucky alone has added thirty thousand souls . . . and emigration from the . . . many families from Europe is continuing." Otherwise, he warned, "His Majesty's possessions" would soon endure "very disagreeable results." Barbé-Marbois of France, who would later negotiate the Louisiana Purchase as minister of finance under Napoleon, noticed the tension between Spain and the United States, but he could not envision a peaceful compromise; instead, he reported that Spain was actively trying to "impede" the growth of American settlements by sending soldiers

39 Phineas Bond to Lord Carmarthen, November 16, 1788, in Giunta (ed.), *FRUS,* III, 868–870; Bond to Evan Nepean, November 16, 1788, *ibid.,* III, 870–874.

40 Bond to Nepean, November 16, 1788, *ibid.,* III, 870–874; George Miller to Carmarthen, November 30, 1788, *ibid.,* 889–892; Bond to Lord Grenville, September 10, 1791, in Edith Abbott (ed.), *Historical Aspects* of the *Immigration Problem* (Chicago, 1926), 222; Bond to Grenville, November 23, 1794, *ibid.,* 222–223.

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to its North American posts: "New Orleans and the Posts of the Floridas are being considerably reinforced, a thousand men have recently been sent there from Havana."[41]

According to Mearsheimer, "Great powers not only seek to gain power over their rivals, they also aim to prevent those foes from gaining power at their expense." The reaction of foreign leaders to mass migration to the United States provides strong support for his claim: Whereas American leaders attempted to attract immigrants to strengthen their nation, foreign leaders attempted to prevent them. The interaction of great powers with regard to North American immigration offers insight into the forces underlying U.S. immigration policy.[42]

The findings of this article have a direct bearing on the existing historical and theoretical literature about U.S. immigration policy, as well as on contemporary policymaking. That security factored more prominently into early U.S. immigration policy than scholars recognize warrants against the popular myth that the founders opened the nation's borders for ideological and moral reasons. Support for this traditional claim comes frequently from such public pronouncements as Washington's declaration to newly arrived Irish immigrants in 1783, "The bosom of America is open to receive not only the Opulent and respectable Stranger, but the oppressed and persecuted of all Nations and Religions." But an analysis of what the founders said in private contexts, including letters to trusted friends and colleagues, suggests that the true record has been distorted in favor of "images that glorify the past." Contrary to romantic notions of the American founding, the founders welcomed foreigners to the United States partly to increase wealth and military strength within a competitive international system.[43]

American political leaders throughout the nineteenth and the

41 Francisco Rendón to Don José de Gálvez, February 12, 1785, in Giunta (ed.), *FRUS,* II, 551–552; François Barbé-Marbois to Vergennes, February 23, 1785, in *ibid.,* II, 560–562; Vergennes to Marbois, May 10, 1785, *ibid.,* 624–626.

42 Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics,* 155, 157.

43 For the Washington quotation, see n. 21. On U.S. public opinion of immigration, see Nancy Foner, "Immigrant Commitment to America, Then and Now: Myths and Realties," *Citizenship Studies,* V (2001), 27–39; Kenneth K. Lee, *Huddled Masses, Muddled Laws: Why Contemporary Immigration Policy Fails to Reflect Public Opinion* (Westport, 1998). Rudolph, "Globalization and Security," 5, and Hollifield, "The Politics of International Migration: How Can We 'Bring the State Back In?" in Caroline B. Brettell and *idem* (eds.), *Migration Theory: Talking Across Disciplines* (New York, 2000), 152, argue that the security dynamic of

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twentieth centuries upheld the founders' view of security as an important component to immigration policy. During the Civil War, President Lincoln declared immigration to be "one of the principal replenishing streams, which are appointed by Providence to repair the ravages of internal war, and its wastes of national strength and health." He approved one of the only direct federal efforts to recruit foreigners to the United States. During the early years of the Cold War, a private memorandum by the National Security Council suggested that the Refugee Relief Act of 1953, packaged to the public as a humanitarian gesture, was actually intended to "encourage the defection of all USSR nations and 'key' personnel from the satellite countries," thus to "inflict a psychological blow on communism." Soon after the attacks of September 11th, a government spokesman stated the obvious, "The current terrorist threat to the United States comes almost exclusively from individuals who arrive from abroad." The secondary literature on immigration policy provides evidence that security factored into most, if not all, of the significant pieces of immigration legislation throughout U.S. history, including the recent bills proposed in Congress concerning border policy. A comprehensive analysis of U.S. immigration from the nation's founding until the present day could be undertaken profitably to analyze its security dimension.[44]

The existing theories of immigration policy primarily use economic, cultural, geographical, ideological, and interest-group factors to explain national behavior. Few of these works integrate the role of the international system and security into their research agenda. Yet, Hollifield, Lemay, Meyers, Rudolph, Tichenor, Tietelbaumb, Weiner, and Zolberg suggest that international variables play a critical role in migration policy, as they did when the

immigration has been neglected because scholars consider international migration to be "low" (social and economic) rather than "high" (military) politics.

44 Abraham Lincoln, "State of the Union Address, 1864" (December, 1864), http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid?29505 (accessed June 10, 2005). For the quotation regarding the Refugee Relief Act, see Rudolph, *National Security,* 48; for the quotation regarding September 11, Zolberg, "Guarding the Gates," in Craig Calhoun, Paul Price, and Ashley Timmer (eds.), *Understanding September 11* (New York, 2002), 285; for secondary literature explicitly connecting security to U.S. immigration policy, see Meyers, *International Immigration Policy; idem, National Security;* Zolberg, "Guarding the Gates"; for secondary literature implicitly supporting a security interpretation, Tichenor, *Dividing Lines;* Zolberg, *Nation By Design*.

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founders of the United States made their observations about immigration and security.[45]

The analysis herein also corroborates Rudolph's theory of immigration policy, which focuses primarily on security as a determinant. A state's perception of geopolitical threat, he argues, can account for its border policy. Yet, because this variable cannot predict how and when a state will react to external threat. Rudolph incorporates "ideas"—neoclassical economic beliefs, nationalism, and xenophobia—as intervening factors to help his model to make accurate predictions of policy. Ideas, however, are difficult to measure and manipulate. The findings herein offer more concrete ways to structure the security components underlying state immigration policy—ethnic assimilation, economic strength, espionage, border security, population, manpower for the armed forces, and terrorism.[46]

Huntington and Schlesinger predict that today's rapidly accel-

45 For an excellent overview of international migration and immigration policy, see Hollifield, "Politics of International Migration," 137–186. For examples of cultural and ideological theories, see David Jacobson, *Rights Across Borders: Immigration and the Decline of Citizenship* (Baltimore, 1996), 8–13; Debra DeLaet, *U.S. Immigration Policy in an Age of Rights* (Westport, 2000); for examples of economic and International Political Economy theories, Hollifield, "Migration, Trade, and the Nation-State"; Alan Kessler, "Guarded Gates: Factor Mobility, Domestic Coalitions, and the Political Economy of American Immigration Control," unpub. Ph.D. diss. (University of California, Los Angeles, 1999), 12–17, 20–52; for examples of social and interest-group theories, Freeman, "Modes of Immigration Politics in Liberal Democratic States," *International Migration Review,* CXXIX (1995), 881–902; LeMay, *From Open Door to Dutch Door,* xiv–xv; for a political geography theory, Jeanette Money, *Fences and Neighbors: The Political Geography of Immigration Control* (Ithaca, 1999); for discussions of international migration within international systems, Hollifield, *Immigrants, Markets, and States,* 19–41; *idem,* "Migration, Trade, and the Nation-State"; Lemay, *Guarding the Gates;* Rudolph, "Globalization and Security"; *idem. National Security and Immigration; idem,* "Security and the Political Economy of International Migration"; Teitelbaum and Weiner (eds.), *Threatened Peoples, Threatened Borders;* Tichenor, *Dividing Lines,* 9–10, 43–45; Weiner, *Global Migration Crisis;* Zolberg, *Nation by Design,* 11–14.

46 Rudolph's theory purports to show that neoclassical economic and nationalist ideas cause a state to enact "open" policies during times of high geopolitical threat because robust economic production, sparked in part by immigrant labor, is thought necessary for strength and security, and because citizens feel a sense of commonality in the face of external threat, making them less disposed to exclusionary thoughts. Neoclassical economic and xenophobic ideas cause a state to enact "closed" policies during times of low geopolitical threat because the state is less concerned with the economic components of security, and because xenophobic tendencies are likely to manifest absent a motive for citizens to unite. Rudolph's theory applies primarily to postwar U.S. immigration policy, not necessarily across the board. Nonetheless, Rudolph's model provides an excellent foundation for thinking about U.S. immigration policy, identifying three main security components in the postwar period—terrorism, immigrant labor, and assimilating diverse ethnicities (Rudolph, *National Security,* 11–40).

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erated international migration—the "global migration crisis"—will pose one of the twenty-first century's greatest security challenges. U.S. policymakers will have to contend with the effect of immigration on the nation's economy, ethnic assimilation, and terrorism, among other things. Will the United States be able to prevent terrorists from entering the country's porous borders, attract the immigrant labor to compete in a global economy, and develop programs to assimilate diverse immigrant groups without creating domestic insecurity? As this article's survey of the nation's early immigration policy shows, these challenges are not unique to the twenty-first century.[47]

47 On the migration crisis, see Arthur Schlesinger, *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society* (New York, 1992), 10; Samuel P. Huntington, "The West: Unique, Not Universal," *Foreign Affairs,* LXXV (1996), 28–46; Hollifield, "Politics of International Migration," 139–141; Weiner, *Global Migration Crisis;* on the challenge of diverting terrorists, Graham Allison, *Nuclear Terrorism: The Ultimate Preventable Catastrophe* (New York, 2004); Otis L. Graham, Jr., *Unguarded Gates: A History of America's Immigration Crisis* (Lanham, 2004); Rudolph, "Globalization and Security," 28–29; Zolberg, *Nation by Design,* 442; on modern terrorism, Max Abrahms, "Why Terrorism Does Not Work," *International Security,* XXXI (2006), 42–78; on the geopolitical importance of attracting labor, Marc Rosenblum, "High-Skilled Immigration and the U.S. National Interest," in Wayne A. Cornelius, Thomas J. Espenshade, and Idean Salehyan (eds.), *The International Migration of the Highly Skilled* (San Diego, 2001), 373–400; Michael Peter Smith and Adrian Favell (eds.), *The Human Face of Global Mobility: International Highly Skilled Migration in Europe, North America, and the Asia-Pacific* (New Brunswick, 2006); Rudolph, "Globalization and Security," 12; on assimilating immigrants, Geroge F. Kennan, *Around the Cragged Hill: A Personal and Political Philosophy* (New York, 1993), 152; Hollifield, "Politics of International Migration," 151–162; Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenge to America's National Identity* (New York, 2004), 158–181; Cheryl Shanks, *Immigration and the Politics of American Sovereignty, 1890–1990* (Ann Arbor, 2000); Rudolph, "Globalization and Security," 20, 22; Roger Waldinger, "Transforming Foreigners into Americans," in Mary C. Waters and Ueda (eds.), *The New Americans: A Guide to Immigration since 1965* (New York, 2007), 137–148; *idem,* "The Bounded Community: Turning Foreigners into Americans in Twenty-First Century L.A.," *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* XXX (2007), 341–374.

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