

the land, it's out there; I will have to deal with it, and so will everybody else. So creating anti-and pro-nuclear positions is not helpful, it doesn't facilitate the dialogue, and it would handicap me and anybody else who tries to deal fairly and rationally with the problem... We know that our communities are threatened, we know that things aren't right, and we don't have to be a rocket scientist or a nuclear physicist to know these things.

Cold War Migrations

Following on the heels of historic new civil rights legislation, in 1965 Congress altered legislation that had since the 1920s severely restricted immigration through national-origins quotas. Now, instead of favoring northern European immigrants, the new legislation allowed approximately 7 million immigrants, mostly from Latin America and Asia, to enter the United States during the 1970s. In 1970, 88 percent of Americans categorized themselves as "white." By the end of the decade, partly due to immigration, only 83 percent of Americans considered themselves white. New places—cities in the South and West; and California, rather than industrial cities of the Northeast—became the leading destinations for the immigrants of this era. The percentage of immigrants would continue to grow through the rest of the century, making the United States a more diverse nation.

U.S. immigration policies favored refugees fleeing communism in Cuba, Southeast Asia, and Eastern Europe. After 1975, when South Vietnam fell to the communist forces, many Vietnamese and Hmong supporters of the American military emigrated to the United States and formed sizable expatriate communities. Private and federal refugee assistance programs helped settle the immigrants in communities. The United States was less welcoming, however, to refugees from repressive regimes in countries that it supported, such as Haiti, El Salvador, and Guatemala. Often facing deportation and brutal reprisals when sent home, these migrants often crossed the U.S. border illegally, seeking aid from relatives, churches, and associations such as the Sanctuary Movement. The numbers of illegal Mexican immigrants also sharply increased after 1976, when Congress passed new legislation to establish annual quotas for Western Hemisphere countries.

Questions to Consider:

1. What circumstances led to migrations of people from Southeast Asian and Central American countries to the U.S.?
2. What support networks existed to assist refugees?
3. Because Bo Thao was a child when she immigrated to the U.S., how does she qualify her memories of particular events?
4. How does Ochoa-Krueger see the plight of Central American political refugees and Mexican economic immigrants as somewhat linked?

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