

trying to preserve their environments from exploitation. Efforts by the NIYC and others led to the halting of coal gasification plants worth \$6 billion on the Navajo reservation.

Today, NIYC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and is overseen by a seven-member board of directors. It relies heavily on federal funding sources to maintain its operating costs and programs. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) is the primary funder, but private donations and grants supplement the NIYC budget as well. With DOL funds, NIYC operates a job training and placement program for off-reservation American Indians in the New Mexico cities of Albuquerque, Farmington, and Gallup.

As a nonpartisan organization, NIYC advocates increasing American Indian political participation in the U.S. political system. It holds voter registration drives in Native American communities and conducts its own political behavior poll. It has published an Indian Elections Directory and serves as a national resource for Indian political data. It has also filed lawsuits regarding unfair voting practices. Other domestic initiatives include litigation promoting the protection of treaty rights and sacred Native sites and efforts to educate the public about Native American concerns.

The international focus of NIYC is on raising awareness of problems faced by indigenous people in the Western Hemisphere. NIYC has nongovernmental organization (NGO) consultative status with the United Nations.

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See Appendix B

See also American Indian Movement; Bureau of Indian Affairs; National Congress of American Indians; Native Americans; Pan-Indianism; Red Power; Trail of Broken Treaties

Further Readings

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NATIONAL ORIGINS SYSTEM

The U.S. Immigration Act of 1924, which launched what has come to be known as the National Origins System, was the apex of a restrictionist movement 3 decades in the making. Also known as the Johnson-Reed Act, after its congressional sponsors, the National Origins Act replaced a hastily passed emergency immigration bill in 1921 that served as a stop-gap measure to an anticipated massive immigration from Europe following World War I. This emergency bill limited the number of immigrants to 3% of the foreign-born population of a given nationality resident in the United States based on the 1910 census. Viewed as insufficient in stemming the immigrant tide and as discriminatory toward the U.S. native-born population, the 1924 National Origins Act addressed these perceived deficiencies. Using the 1890 census, the bill restricted the number of entrants to 2% of the U.S. native-born White population as determined by their national origins—a nebulous concept that required a series of adjustments.

Historical Development

While efforts to restrict immigration to the United States extend to the 1830s, wholesale efforts to limit admissions did not begin until the latter part of the 19th century. Early efforts sought to exclude "undesirables"—such as convicts, sexual deviants, and the mentally ill—from the larger immigrant pool. As the flow of immigrants shifted from northern and western Europe to southern and eastern Europe, calls for immigration restrictions emerged. Seen largely as inferior to their northern and western European cousins, the often swarthier, olive-skinned newcomers (such as Slavs, Italians, and Jews) were of concern especially to the adherents of the newly emerging area of pseudoscientific inquiry known as *eugenics*. Concerns about their "poor racial stock" and the evils that could result by allowing them into the United States were voiced by Immigration Restriction League founder Prescott Hall, as well as by members of the American Breeders Association and the Eugenics Record Office, among others.

Opposition to immigration from southern and eastern Europe was heightened by economic recession, labor unrest, anti-Catholic sentiment, and events surrounding World War I. Fears that southern and

eastern Europeans were unassimilable were intensified by persistent ties to the “old world” among even the earliest immigrant groups during World War I.

With the restrictionist sentiment building, efforts to restrict immigration ensued. Indeed, it became the main mission of the Immigration Restriction League. Formed in 1894 by Harvard graduates, the League had its political allies, including Senator Henry Cabot Lodge (later a member of the influential Dillingham Commission), who in 1896 introduced an immigration bill requiring all immigrants to read forty words in any language as a condition for entry. Although the bill passed Congress, it was vetoed by President Grover Cleveland in 1897 on the grounds that it contradicted traditional American values. This pattern was repeated three times—vetoed by President Taft and then by President Wilson (1915 and 1917). Yet Congress was able to successfully override Wilson’s 1917 veto, making literacy requirements another provision of U.S. immigration law. Similarly, legislation containing quota restrictions was introduced over several legislative sessions before achieving success in 1921 and 1924.

Key Provisions

Writing shortly after passage of the 1924 National Origins Act, New York University sociology professor Henry Pratt Fairchild provided a summary of the key provisions of this law. The act specified that for 3 fiscal years, beginning July 1, 1924, immigration to the United States would be limited by quotas of 2% of the foreign-born individuals of each nationality resident in the United States as determined by the census of 1890. After July 1, 1927, the total quota was fixed at 150,000 annually, to be distributed among the different quota nationalities in the proportions according to the number of the original nationality as counted in the census of 1920. Determining national origin and national stock was left to a quota board under the jurisdictions of the secretaries of state, commerce, and labor, assisted by the U.S. Census Bureau.

The Immigration Act of 1924 also marked the beginning of the end for Ellis Island, which created American consular offices abroad to issue foreign visas. One of the negative consequences of the hastily passed immigration bill of 1921 and its assignment of quotas was that immigrants would make their passage across the Atlantic only to be denied entry into the United States because a particular quota had been filled. The creation of the visa system in the 1924 act

and the assigning of counting responsibilities to the foreign consular office prevented such tragedies.

Consequences of the National Origins Act

The goal of the National Origins Act was to control both the quantity and quality of U.S. immigrants in an effort to prevent further erosion of the ethnic composition of U.S. society. The law accomplished this goal using three mechanisms: capping the overall number of immigrants allowed into the United States in a given month and year; favoring immigrants from certain countries; and screening out otherwise qualified immigrants as unsuitable to the United States during the visa screening process. The sorting mechanism heavily favored northern and western European countries. The temporary formula of 2% of the foreign-born of each nationality in the 1890 census gave 85% of the quotas to northern and western European nations. The national origins system fully implemented in 1929 continued the trend of both overall restriction and nation bias. Indeed, the act virtually halted all immigration from southern and eastern Europe. Thus, European immigration dropped from more than 800,000 in 1921 to less than 150,000 by the end of the decade.

In addition to controlling the volume of immigration from Europe, the National Origins Act also allowed a mechanism for selection of immigrants as well. In its creation of consular offices abroad, the act provided a frontline screening mechanism for selecting out those deemed unsuitable for the United States.

Lingering Effects of the National Origins Act

The National Origins Act racialized the world and its inhabitants. While the act differentiated Europeans according to nationality and then ranked them along a hierarchy of desirability, the very act of their inclusion for immigration conferred upon them a designation of assimilability and the right to U.S. citizenship. Given that the U.S. Supreme Court had already legally codified citizenship along two racial lines (White and Black), all Europeans—whether from northern, western, southern, or eastern Europe—were thusly categorized as White. In the act’s delineation of groups ineligible for citizenship, these groups were placed into the non-White category and their immigration restricted.

The National Origins Act specified that quotas be based on nationalities in proportion to the original nationality of the White population of the United States in 1920. Non-European peoples residing in the country were omitted from the population universe governing the quotas, including (a) all Blacks and mulattoes; (b) residents of groups deemed ineligible for citizenship, including Chinese, Japanese, and South Asians; and (c) populations of Hawai'i, Puerto Rico, and Alaska. In effect, the National Origins System effectively ignored and indeed excluded all non-White, non-European peoples from the future vision of the United States.

In these designations and omissions, the act created variable ethnicities, while at the same time affixing a racial category of White onto European immigrants. For those not White, the law fixed both racial and ethnic designations. To be Asian, for example, is to occupy both the same racial and ethnic category along with the broader categories of "non-White" and "nonassimilable."

Nevertheless, American citizens, including those falling outside the official definition of "American" as conceptualized by the quota board, already had a long and established presence in the United States. Today, the same groups excluded by the Quota Board in the 1920s continue to occupy the second-class status prescribed for them in the National Origins Act. Racial and ethnic categories remain nebulously defined along a continuum between White and Black, with White remaining a fairly fixed and protected category, the benefits conferred by the designation going largely unacknowledged. The significant role the National Origins Act played in demarcating this color line also goes largely unacknowledged.

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See also Assimilation; Citizenship; Dillingham Flaw; Immigration, Economic Impact of; Immigration, U.S.; Immigration and Race; McCarran-Walter Act of 1952; Muslim Americans; Racialization; Xenophobia

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NATIONAL RAINBOW COALITION

Introduced in 1984 by social and political activist Jesse Jackson, the National Rainbow Coalition (NRC), based in Washington, D.C., was established as "a progressive, Black-led, multiracial, anti-corporate, and anti-imperialist movement that took an electoral form." As such, it became an informal subgroup within the Democratic Party that served as the vehicle of Jackson's 1984 and 1988 voter registration drives and presidential bids.

In 1983, during a climate of disenfranchisement of the politically underrepresented in the United States, Jackson formed a "rainbow coalition" to encourage millions of potential voters to register for and participate in the upcoming 1984 presidential election. As a result, he formally created the National Rainbow Coalition, which reached out to Blacks, Hispanics, Asian Americans, American Indians, homosexuals, poor Whites, females, those with family-run farms, and those living in poverty. The effort was both a success and a failure.

Despite the acquisition of parity for minorities gained with the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, during that time there existed only a handful of organizations that represented the national political interests of Blacks, among them the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Congressional Black Caucus. In 1972, the meeting of the National Black Political Convention discussed the formation of an independent political party; also during that year, Black congresswoman Shirley Chisholm ran for president. By 1984, a group of political leaders called the "Black Leadership Family" were again considering the pros