

DBQ – Immigration

Task - Analyze the continuities and changes in the nativist response to immigration during the period 1840 to 1929 and the extent to which this response influenced the Federal Government's policies toward immigrants.

Document 1 – 1848 Cartoon

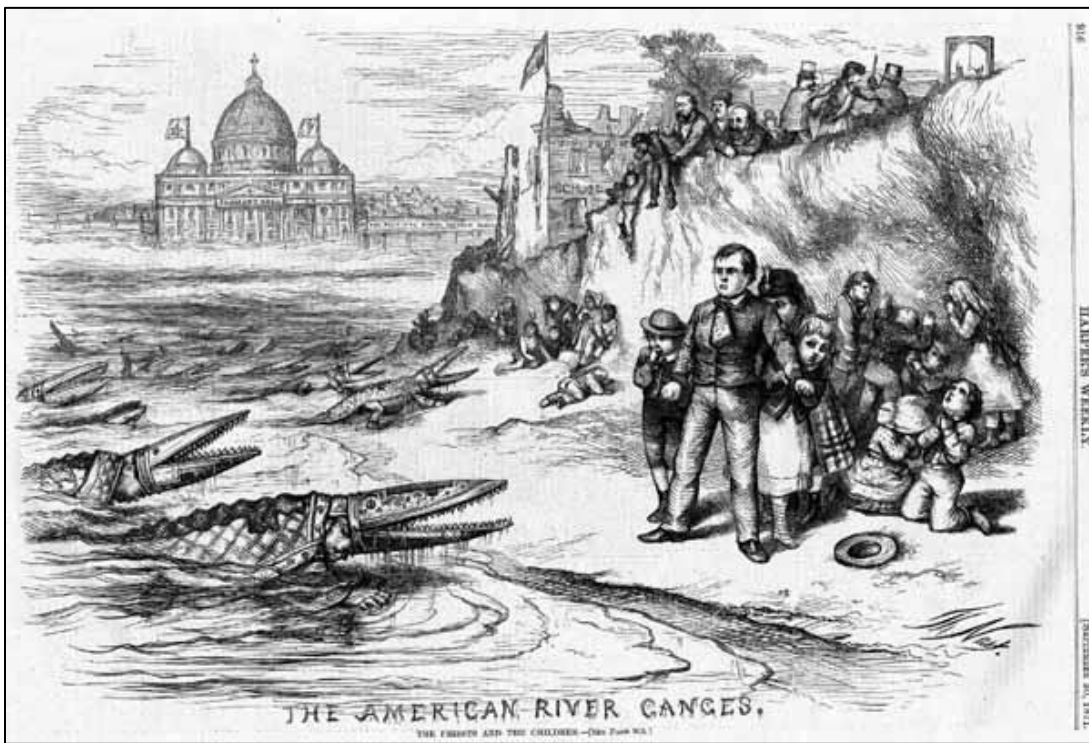


Document 2 – The American Party (Know Nothing) Platform – 1856

3. Americans must rule America, and to this end native-born citizens should be selected for all State, Federal, and municipal offices of government employment, in preference to all others.
4. Persons born of American parents residing temporarily abroad, should be entitled to all the rights of native-born citizens.
5. No person should be selected for political station (whether of native or foreign birth), who recognizes any allegiance or obligation of any description to any foreign prince, potentate or power*, or who refuses to recognize the Federal and State Constitution (each within its sphere) as paramount to all other laws, as rules of political action.

* reference to the Pope

Document 3 – Thomas Nast Cartoon from Harper’s Weekly, 1871 (Hint – carefully look at the crocodiles. Whom do they represent? You may want to google this cartoon – Thomas Nast’s “The American River Ganges” to get background information)



Document 4 “Our Misery and Despair”: Denis Kearney, President Workingman’s Party, 1878

Our moneyed men have ruled us for the past thirty years. . . .

To add to our misery and despair, a bloated aristocracy has sent to China—the greatest and oldest despotism in the world—for a cheap working slave. It rakes the slums of Asia to find the meanest slave on earth—the Chinese coolie—and imports him here to meet the free American in the Labor market, and still further widen the breach between the rich and the poor, still further to degrade white Labor.

These cheap slaves fill every place. Their dress is scant and cheap. Their food is rice from China. They hedge twenty in a room, ten by ten. They have no wives, children or dependents.

They are imported by companies, controlled as serfs, worked like slaves, and at last go back to China with all their earnings.

California must be all American or all Chinese. We are resolved that it shall be American, and are prepared to make it so. May we not rely upon your sympathy and assistance?

Document 5 – The Secret Oath of the American Protective Association, 1893

I do most solemnly promise and swear that I will always, to the utmost of my ability, labor, plead and wage a continuous warfare against ignorance and fanaticism; that I will use my utmost power to strike the shackles and chains of blind obedience to the Roman Catholic church from the hampered and bound consciences of a priest-ridden and church-oppressed people;

I furthermore promise and swear that I will not countenance the nomination, in any caucus or convention, of a Roman Catholic for any office in the gift of the American people, and that I will not vote for, or counsel others to vote for, any Roman Catholic, but will vote only for a Protestant, so far as may lie in my power. Should there be two Roman Catholics on opposite tickets, I will erase the name on the ticket I vote; that I will at all times endeavor to place the political positions of this government in the hands of Protestants, to the entire exclusion of the Roman Catholic church, of the members thereof, and the mandate of the Pope.

Document 6 – Henry Cabot Lodge, Speech before the Senate, 1896.

There is no one thing which does so much to bring about a reduction of wages and to injure the American wage earner as the unlimited introduction of cheap foreign labor through unrestricted immigration. Statistics show that the change in the race character of our immigration has been accompanied by a corresponding decline in its quality. The number of skilled mechanics and of persons trained to some occupation or pursuit has fallen off, while the number of those without occupation or training, that is, who are totally unskilled, has risen in our recent immigration to enormous proportions. This low, unskilled labor is the most deadly enemy of the American wage earner, and does more than anything else toward lowering his wages and forcing down his standard of living. An attempt was made, with the general assent of both political parties, to meet this crying evil some years ago by the passage of what are known as the contract-labor laws.

Document 7 – Madison Grant – *Passing of the Great Race*, 1916

These new immigrants were no longer exclusively members of the Nordic race as were the earlier ones who came of their own impulse to improve their social conditions. The transportation lines advertised America as a land flowing with milk and honey, and the European governments took the opportunity to unload upon careless, wealthy, and hospitable America the sweepings of their jails and asylums. The result was that the new immigration, while it still included many strong elements from the north of Europe, contained a large and increasing number of the weak, the broken, and the mentally crippled of all races drawn from the lowest stratum of the Mediterranean basin and the Balkans, together with hordes of the wretched, submerged populations of the Polish Ghettos

Document 8 – 1919 Cartoon



Document 9 - 1921 Cartoon

The Only Way to Handle It (Library of Congress.)



END OF DOCUMENTS