

## OUR VIEW

## Wait &amp; See

On Monday, a large percentage of the U.S. workforce could come to a halt. Or, maybe not! Based on the success of immigration rallies across the country—the Los Angeles march drew 500,000—U.S. immigrant activists and groups have called for a nationwide boycott of work and school on May 1. “I don’t think we will crumble the economy of the United States on May 1, but we will make a dent,” New York City councilman Charles Barron, a supporter of the effort, told Reuters news service.

What impact this work stoppage has on the American economy remains to be seen. What is known is that immigrant labor is crucial to the stability and growth of the U.S. economy. According to Boston-based Jobs for the Future, a non-profit research, consulting and advocacy organization dedicated to creating “educational and economic opportunity for those who need it most,” there are more than 20 million immigrant workers, comprising 14 percent of the American workforce. Moreover, the advocacy organization reports that:

- “Immigrants are projected to account for half of working-age population growth between 2006 and 2015—and all the growth between 2016 and 2035.”

- “The number of foreign-born workers increased at a faster rate than did the native workforce over the past decade.”

- “From 1990 to 2000, more than 50 percent of the growth of the entire civilian workforce was due to immigrants. All of the growth of the labor force in the north-east was due to immigrants.”

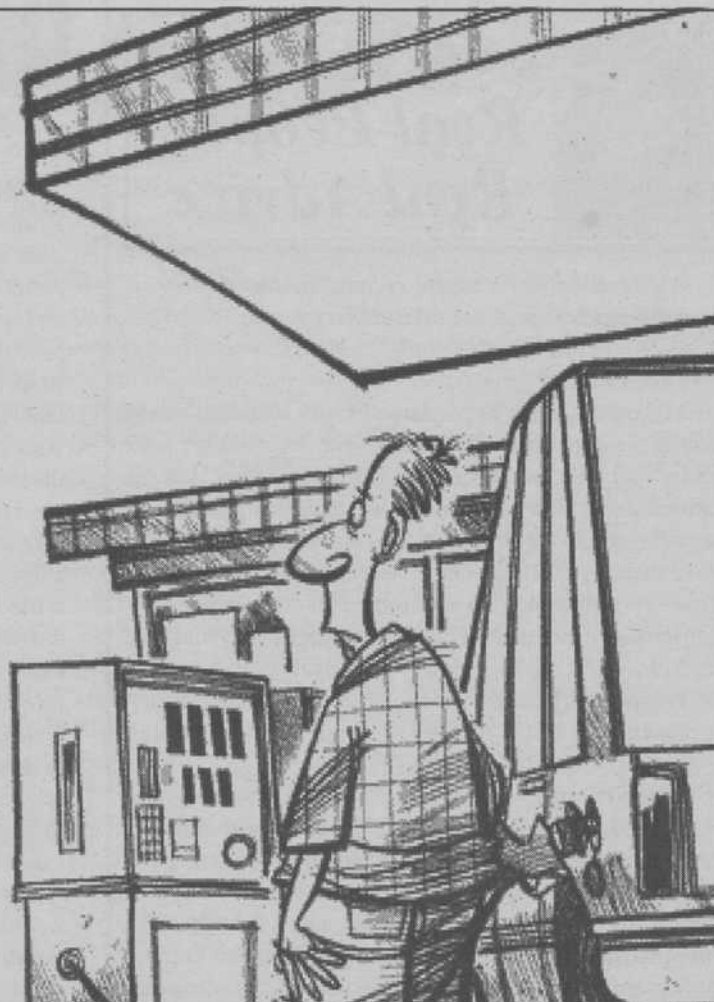
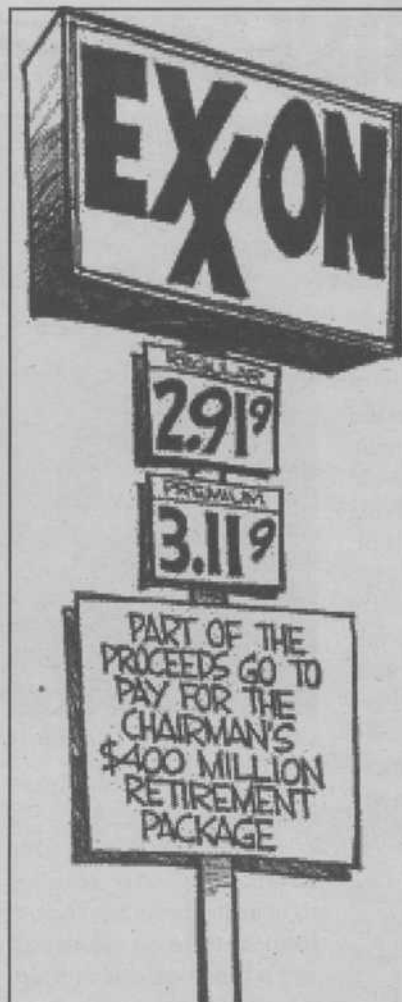
- “More than 90 percent of new immigrants who were active in the labor force found employment (although unemployment is higher for immigrants).”

In a story for the monster.com employment website on the U.S. workforce reaching the 150-million person milestone, senior contributing writer John Rosshem wrote: “Diverse workers are entering the workforce—not just from American schools, but also from across borders and abroad. And with a rapidly globalizing labor economy, immigrant workers are coming from a much wider variety of countries and cultures.” In the article, he quotes Michael Hyter, president of Novations Group, a human resources consulting firm in Boston: “The immigration component is shifting the race issue. Now Sudanese immigrants are going into Minneapolis; Chinese immigrants are going to Atlanta.”

So, if indeed the masses of the immigrant worker nation decide to take Monday off—to stop going to school, shopping, buying groceries, cashing in bus tokens, getting gas, paying bills, picking fruit, mowing lawns, making beds, cleaning restrooms (but immigrant labor isn’t just low-skilled, it spans the gamut), running and owning restaurants, programming computers, translating for government entities, making and enforcing the law, managing corporate accounts (etc., etc., etc.)—then the impact could cause more than a dent.

If this is the case, then African-Americans will have learned a crucial, albeit too late, lesson: That there’s strength in numbers and clout. Throughout the years, Black activists have called for similar national boycotts and, inevitably, these economic insurrections fizzle like the fizz in a can of Sprite. Part of the reason is that not enough people believe that enough people are going to heed. Too few of us are willing forego what, in some cases, are creature comforts (snacks, movie rentals and so on) to help make a statement. Nor has the payoff been fully articulated by organizers of these events. “Okay, so what the work stoppage is accomplished, what did it prove?” someone might ask. “How did it change the way we’re treated by the people who make the decisions that govern our lives?” The answer is a big, fat, “I don’t know.”

As the years after the Civil Rights Era passed, Blacks made substantial gains in every aspect of U.S. socio-economic life and became the political demographic du jour. Those were better times for boycotts. Now, with Hispanics supplanting African-Americans, the idea of work blackout carries little weight. Alas, if the immigrant school and work stoppage fails, we’re back at square one.



## Understanding teen violence

By Dora LaGrande  
Sentinel-Voice

What is this world coming to when innocent people, who are at work minding their own business, are arbitrarily subjected to a barrage of attacks by a group of teenagers carousing around town and committing petty crimes in the wee hours of the morning?

A week ago this past Saturday, a group of about 10 to 15 teenagers (male and female) and young men in their early 20's terrorized people in a slew of random, brutal beatings that took place across Las Vegas. The slew of crimes allegedly committed happened as follows:

The attacks began with a robbery at 12:55 a.m. Saturday with the beating of a security guard and a woman at the North Las Vegas Walmart located on Craig Road.

They robbed and beat an MGM Grand maintenance worker at 2:30 a.m. and attacked his co-worker as he attempted to summon help.

They beat and robbed a tourist outside a nearby Travelodge about 3:00 a.m. Saturday as that victim was headed to a party inside the motel.

They robbed a Green Valley Grocery store at 2:29 a.m. Sunday on Vegas Drive and struck the clerk that was on duty there.

They robbed and beat a couple at 2:59 a.m. at Woofter Family Park, on Tenaya Way and Vegas Drive, about one mile away



## ON THE RECORD

By Dora LaGrande

from the convenience store. They culminated their attack with the shooting of a man in the same park at 3:04 a.m.

When young people are this brash and brutal are any of us safe? After looking at the tapes of what these young people did, I believe that we all have to seriously be concerned about our safety and the safety of other people. None of us should ignore or minimize the possibility of violence occurring in our lives and we should all try to figure out what has happened, or is happening, to our children and why?

Psychologists suggest that there are many reasons for teenage violence, some valid and some, from my perspective, invalid. Top among them is peer pressure and the desire to be accepted in some circles, including gangs. These are emotional needs and beliefs that make some teens demonstrate violence and anti-social behavior. But the wish to seem strong is not the only reason for teen violence. Very closely connected with this reason is also the desire to establish a certain reputation with peers and, maybe, adults.

Another reason for being violent as a teen is the desire

to protect his/her freedom. Violent behavior of a teenager may also represent an attempt to punish other people or to obtain justice or revenge. If a teen feels suppressed or oppressed by the environment, he/she might seek a way to freedom through violent behavior.

Feelings of guilt may cause violent behavior as well. Violent acts in such cases are used to provoke punishment, which in turn reduce feelings of guilt.

Exposure to a group of violent people creates a perception that violence may be justified and that the individual is not going to be singled out for their own violent behavior. This is the reason that some observers and social behaviorist and psy-

chologists are giving for the actions of one of the young men involved in the melee in Las Vegas.

If a teen experienced violent acts early in life from his/her parents, most likely he/she will behave similarly with other people.

Violent acts are sometimes the result of impaired thinking and strange beliefs that are caused by illness, disease, alcohol, drugs, or severe medical problems. Demonstration of violence among teens is often caused by substance abuse. Consumption of drugs or alcohol seriously influences the way of thinking and reactions and may provoke teens to violent acts—even when there are no obvious reasons.

Media and TV show violence in very bright colors and can distort the reality of a child or adolescent. In an average action movie, there is often a character who achieves his/her goals by killing people, smashing cars

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**Contributing Writers:**  
Asmeret Asghedom  
Chelsi Cheatom  
Tanya Flanagan  
Tasha Pope  
Lés Pierres Streater  
**Photographer:**  
Isaac Sawyer

**Ramon Savoy, Publisher, Editor-in-Chief**  
**Parker Philpot, Copy Editor**  
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