

federal governments based solely on their support have been elected very rarely, although they have comprised around three quarters of Canada's population.

To some extent, this sort of ethnic rotation has happened before, in many of America's cities. Arguably, it began with the Irish displacement of the Colonial-stock Yankees in New York and Boston, confirmed when the first Irish Catholic mayors were elected in 1881 and 1885 respectively.

But the ethnic differences the United States confronts now are exceptionally deep—perhaps unbridgeable. Here, too, previous American experience might be suggestive. No transfer of power at City Hall from one European immigrant group to another ever produced anything equivalent to the “white flight” that has followed the election of black mayors in cities like Detroit and Newark.

And now the prize is so much larger—the whole country. This time, moreover, there will be no suburban enclaves to which to flee.

All of which leads us to a follow-up question for immigration enthusiasts:

- *While explaining why they want to transform America, supporters of current immigration policy should also explain just exactly what makes them think multiracial societies work.*

WELL—DO MULTIRACIAL SOCIETIES WORK?

Over three years after I first met Julian Simon, I was having dinner with him to debate our differences. We got on to the question of whether multiethnic and multiracial societies can work.

“Yugoslavia . . .,” I began, thinking of the Serbo-Croatian-Bosnian war that had exploded into the headlines.

“Yes! Yugoslavia!” he interrupted gleefully. “That supports my case, doesn't it?”

I was so surprised that I felt my jaw drop—something that really happens, I find, and not just in cartoons. It took me several seconds to realize what he meant:

- The former Yugoslavs are fighting *despite* the fact that they are all the same race (white). Indeed, they are all members of the same

general ethnic group (South Slav). Even the language spoken by the two major contestants (Serbs and Croats) is basically the same (although written, respectively, in Cyrillic and Roman script).

So—Simon is saying—you can't blame all civil conflict on the divisive results on nontraditional immigration. Homogeneity is no guarantee against strife.

All right, all right! For the record, let me admit (in fact, assert): you can't blame *everything* on immigration or on racial differences.

But who said you could? The fact remains that the Yugoslav spectacle can only be seen as chilling—and as a Horrid Warning about current U.S. immigration policy. The differences between the Yugoslavs are indeed relatively minor—certainly compared to the differences between the American nation of 1965 and the immigrants who are now arriving. *And that's the point.* Those minor differences were still enough to tear the country apart.

I've never doubted Simon's debating skills, and this episode left me with even greater respect for his ingenuity.

I just worry about whether he's right.

MULTIRACIAL SOCIETIES: THE EVIDENCE

Of course, our follow-up question, about whether multiracial societies work, is a fairly shocking one.

It's actually much more shocking than the original question—why do the immigration enthusiasts want to transform America? No one ever thinks to ask that. But asking about whether multiracial societies work is quite obviously a direct challenge to America's recently established religion. And, since America has been biracial since Colonial times, it appears to imply a pessimistic view of the prospects for black-white harmony—the greatest problem of American life (until the post-1965 immigration).

But there's a plain fact to be considered: the evidence that multiracial societies work is—what shall we say?—*not very encouraging.*

There have, of course, been multiracial societies (strictly speaking, usually multiethnic) in the past. Famous examples are the Roman Empire, or the Arab Caliphate, which briefly ruled from