

**Document #1: Do Not Restrict Immigration**  
**Argument against the Immigration Act of 1924**  
**Speech by Robert H. Clancy, April 8, 1924**

[There were] fierce tirades (*a prolonged outburst of put downs*) and propaganda directed against the great waves of Irish and Germans who came over from 1840 on for a few decades to escape civil, racial, and religious persecution in their native lands.

The “Know-Nothings,” (*a political party against immigration*) bitterly denounced the Irish and Germans as mongrels (*of mixed breed, nature, or origin*), scum, foreigners, and a menace to our institutions. . . All are riff-raff, inassimilable (*not capable of mixing in*), “foreign devils,” swine not fit to associate with the great chosen people — a form of national pride and hallucination as old as the division of races and nations.

...to-day it is the Italians, Spanish, Poles, Jews, Greeks, Russians, Balkanians, and so forth, who are the racial lepers, [according to the Know-Nothings]. . .

Italian-Americans . . . are found in all walks and classes of life — common hard labor, the trades, business, law, medicine, dentistry, art, literature, banking, and so forth. They rapidly become Americanized, build homes, and make themselves into good citizens. . . One finds them by thousands digging streets, sewers, and building foundations, and in the automobile and iron and steel fabric factories of various sorts. They do the hard work that the native-born American dislikes. Rapidly they rise in life and join the so-called middle and upper classes. .

The Polish-Americans are as industrious and as frugal (*not big spenders*) and as loyal to our institutions as any class of people who have come to the shores of this country in the past 300 years. They are essentially home builders, and they have come to this country to stay. They learn the English language as quickly as possible, and take pride in the rapidity with which they become assimilated (*blend in*) and adopt our institutions.

. . . The racial discriminations of this bill are un-American. . . .

*Source: Speech by Robert H. Clancy, April 8, 1924, Congressional Record, 68th Congress, 1st Session (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1924), vol. 65, 5,929–5,932.*  
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