Culture Essay, Research Paper

factories and steel mills, left behind to perform the jobs once carried out by the soldiers who were abroad fighting the war. After World War II, immigration to the United States increased once again. Many people who had survived Nazi persecution in Europe fled to the United States. Additionally, Chinese immigrants were entering the country. A big construction boom marked these years. The suburbs were growing rapidly and the automobile industry was flourishing. Many of the Western European immigrants took jobs in construction or in the manufacturing plants. Until the 1960?s, most immigrants to the United States came from Europe. A major change occurred in 1965 with the lifting of national-origin quota restrictions. Mexican immigrants began entering the country. Immigrants from the Eastern Hemisphere were given visas to enter as well. Additionally, special status was given to individuals that possessed special job skills in short supply in the United States. The majority of immigrants arrived from Asia or Latin America. Most have settled in California and the Southwest. Except for the Mexican immigrants, most of the immigrants from the Caribbean and Latin American settled along the East Coast, primarily in Florida and New York. As in the past, the majority of these immigrants worked in low-paying service industry or agricultural jobs. A large wave of Cuban-American refugees seeking political asylum entered the country. Many settled in Miami and New York. During the 1960?s the country saw a major tax cut and the unemployment rate drop. However, increased government spending brought about another recession in the 1970?s which would not be brought under control until the mid-1980?s. The early 1970?s marked the weakest U.S. economy of the post-World War II era. Rising inflation, unemployment and increased government spending marked the period. During the Carter Administration, the nation was introduced to the term stagflation, a combination of stagnation and inflation. Petroleum prices multiplied. The rate of economic growth slowed down. Inflation increased rapidly. When Ronald Reagan took office in 1981, he introduced Reaganomics, or lower taxes and increased output. Reagan?s economic policy was based on the idea that investment in industry and consumer spending would eventually increase tax revenues. The Gulf War and increased taxes in order to reduce the federal deficit marked the Bush Era. During this time, hundreds of thousands of immigrants entered the country as a result of lenient immigration laws. However, many of these more recent immigrants were well educated. Many immigrants have high levels of scholastic achievements and their children have prospered from the American public schools. Today, during the Clinton Administration, the nation is enjoying a booming economy. The unemployment rate is at a record low and immigrants are once again shaping the economy. Many immigrants are working in leading edge technological jobs in an information-age economy. Companies in Silicon Valley, California have reduced the price of computer MIPs and memory bits by a factor of some 10,000 in 2? decades. Over one-third of the work force in Silicon Valley is made up of immigrants. Cultural changes and economic conditions give way to anti-immigration sentiment in this country periodically. The most recent arrivals may experience greater difficulty in finding jobs than those at the turn of the century, a time of booming industry and unmechanized farms. One cannot help but note, nevertheless, that our country continues to be a nation of immigrants. Our economy will continue to be shaped, however directly or indirectly, by the continuing inflow of immigrants. It is this cultural diversity that has helped shape the nation since the beginning.

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