CHAPTER 1

Lures and Blinders

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Hazleton's weathered downtown has seen better days. Some brick-facade office buildings sit empty, and even occupied stores at first glance appear abandoned. A much-needed face-lift along the main drag, Broad Street, has been delayed. Wood frame houses show their age. But there are signs of vitality in this small Pennsylvania coal country town in the foothills of the Pocono Mountains. Shopping centers and malls have sprouted up on the town's outskirts. Industrial parks have attracted brand-name tenants such as Amazon, Network Solutions, General Mills, ADM, Hilton, Cargill Meats, OfficeMax, and Pillsbury.

And up and down the side streets, there is other evidence of a city in transition.

"This is an Hispanic business," pointed out Ana Arias as we drove along Diamond Avenue. "This is an Hispanic business," she repeated moments later.

Arias, a local activist who works at Catholic Social Services, agreed to be my tour guide when I told her I was researching the politics and history of Hazleton. I had gone there to learn more about a place that in 2006 had made international headlines by passing one of the nation's strictest anti-illegal immigration laws. Like many of the town's arrivals over the past couple of decades, Arias is a native of the Dominican Republic who moved to Hazleton from New York City.

We passed La Bella Napoli on Locust Street. The pizza joint with the Italian name is owned by Dominicans, she told me. We turned into an upscale development with plush two-story homes on the outskirts of town. "This house is owned by a Dominican family. They own their own business," she explained.

The influx of Latinos has been striking. According to the Pew Hispanic Center, the number of Latinos in Hazleton's county, Luzerne, more than tripled between 2000 and 2007. Among counties with more than a thousand Hispanics, Luzerne has the eighth fastest-growing Hispanic population in the United States.

The growth began slowly in the late 1980s and picked up after the terrorist attacks of September 2001, when the area witnessed an economic resurgence and a population shift. Urban Easterners, many of them Latinos from New York and New Jersey, found country living, affordable housing, and jobs.

Newcomers obtained work on farms and in factories such as Pocono Knits, Chromatex, and the meatpacking plant Cargill. Jobs were coming on line thanks in large part to the economic development initiatives of Hazleton's cheerily named CAN DO (Community Area New Development Organization), which lured businesses with tax breaks and low costs. The influx of people and businesses reversed a trend. The city had been in decline, a demise that began in the 1940s after nearby coal mines began closing. Latino migrants not only came for jobs, they also opened up scores of businesses. Housing costs were cheap compared to places they had left, such as Queens in New York City; Victorian homes could be had for $30,000 to $40,000.

"The economy was good," Arias remembers. Her brother moved from New York in 1987. She and her mother followed in 1988. It was a boom town. People were buying and selling homes quickly. "You could put a house up for sale and two weeks later, it would be sold."

In addition to the cheap housing and available work, Arias said, Hazleton reminded her and other native Dominicans of their homeland. "This area was quiet and pristine. It was in the mountains like where these people came from originally."

Amilcar Arroyo arrived in Hazleton in 1989, when only about twenty-five Hispanic families lived in town. The urbane Peruvian native had been living in Miami when he spotted a newspaper ad

offering free transportation to Hazleton for a farm job. He came north, took work packing tomatoes, and then went on to take a job in a textile company, followed by one in a printing firm. He's now the editor of *El Mensajero* (The Messenger), a monthly Spanish-language tabloid newspaper, which he founded in 2003 to cater to the area's changing population.

As a journalist, he not only chronicled the influx, he also benefited from it. His office, in a Broad Street shopping mall, is comfortable. In 2007, after building up to a readership of about twenty-five thousand, he sold the paper to the Wilkes-Barre Publishing Co. and a group of Texas investors who evidently saw merit in buying a Spanish-language paper in a growing Spanish-language market. The Wilkes-Barre Publishing Co. puts out nine other publications, including the *Dallas Post*.

Arroyo explained how migrants from New York had sold their homes there for twice as much as it cost them to buy comparable places in the Hazleton area. New arrivals, he said, paid for homes in cash, "and with the rest of the money, they opened a business. And what did they do? They work; they find a job, and they work for a factory, so we're talking about people who have three incomes. Renting house, a small business—grocery, barbershop, multiservices—and work in a factory."

Manuel Espinal used to deliver Budweiser beer in Brooklyn. The Dominican native moved to Hazleton, took a factory job at Chromatex (a now-defunct upholstery company), and, while working there, in 1996, opened the Jazmin Grocery Store on downtown Wyoming Street. His modest shop became his life. "It was the first Spanish store in town," he told me proudly. He was even prouder of the fact that two of his three children were U.S. Marines; one was in Iraq at the time I visited his store. "Every time the phone rings . . ." His voice trailed off without completing the sentence. "But it's not in your hands."

Espinal said town leaders have a bias against Latinos. "How can you say these people are bad for the town when they come to work for twelve or fourteen hours a day?" he asked. "We're doing good here."

For old-timers, the demographic shift and rapid population increase had changed a way of life. School enrollment had escalated. Housing conditions had become more crowded.

"You've got to get in the frame of mind of what we were dealing with in a small town and how this was affecting our services," Hazleton's outspoken mayor, Louis J. Barletta, told me over breakfast. Gregarious, immaculate, and distinguished in a starched white shirt, Barletta resembled an Italian Mitt Romney.

We met in the Cyber Calf restaurant on the ground floor of Hazleton's tallest structure, the hundred-year-old Markle Building, described by its owners as a "wonderfully preserved 11-story skyscraper." The landmark bears the name of a family once known for its prominence in coal mining and banking.

Over coffee and omelets, Barletta and two of his closest associates, Joseph Yannuzzi and John Keegan, described their frustration with the town's transformation. At the time of our meeting, the Republican mayor was running for Congress. Daily, he had breakfast meetings with Yannuzzi, who was the City Council president as well as the owner of a computer company, and Keegan, a pharmacist.

"We're the mayor's brain trust—although he doesn't know that," joked Keegan.

To Yannuzzi, Keegan, and Barletta, it was as if the town were under assault by invaders.

"People were moving in; people were moving out," said Barletta, explaining that longtime residents were constantly complaining to him. "So you had a nice home, modest home that you've taken care of your entire life, and all of a sudden next door all of a sudden someone new buys it, now there's fifteen people in the house. You call City Hall to complain; we're sending people down for violations time and time again."

The character of residential neighborhoods began to change.

"It was obvious, you'd ride down the street and see a home with ten [satellite] dishes, five on each side, which meant that in every room in that house was somebody living there, as a family. That's code violations right there," added Yannuzzi.

As complaints mounted, Barletta said he felt compelled to act. "Believe me, I didn't just wake up one day and say, 'I'm going to start picking on illegal aliens.' This has happened over *years* of seeing what was happening in our neighborhoods."

What really spurred him, he said, was the crime. "We had more and more cases of incidents involving illegal aliens; our violent crime

was beginning to rise. We started noticing more gang activity and more need for a greater police presence and for more money [for law enforcement]."

In 2001, a fatal shooting, involving drug dealers with ties to the Dominican Republic, made headlines.

Barletta complained about immigrants getting drunk in the park and creating domestic disturbances. They were responsible for neighborhood blight and overcrowded apartments, he said.

"The final straw for me was May 10, 2006. We arrested a fourteen-year-old for shooting a gun into a crowded playground. He was here illegally. That night, twenty-nine-year-old Derek Kichline was working on his pickup truck and was shot between the eyes by two individuals." Two illegal immigrants were arrested in connection with the shooting, but the charges were later dropped for lack of evidence.

Barletta decided he needed to send a message.

"Our police worked thirty-six straight hours in apprehending those who took Kichline's life. Our police department spent over half of our yearly budget for overtime on that one homicide. Our overtime in the police department was 150 percent over budget and we still don't have enough police on the streets to handle it now."

So on July 13, 2006, at a boisterous meeting, the Hazleton City Council, frustrated at what they saw as Washington's inaction, and led by Mayor Barletta wearing a bulletproof vest that he said was necessary for his safety, made international headlines by adopting in effect its own immigration policy. Hazleton's Illegal Immigration Relief Act Ordinance made English the official city language, imposed fines on landlords for renting to illegal immigrants, and revoked business permits of employers who hired them.

The new law put Hazleton in the forefront of a movement. For more than a century, the power to regulate immigration was assumed to be a federal prerogative. But in 2006, states, counties, and cities took matters into their own hands, passing hundreds of immigration laws.

"Illegal aliens are a drain on our resources, and they are not welcome here," Barletta warned at the time.

In discussing immigration, Barletta carefully sticks to issues involving crime and the demands put on a cash-strapped city. But

he has had some trouble with actual proof and hard facts. He's been unable to document how many illegal immigrants live in Hazleton or their impact on city services. And while crime definitely increased as more people moved into town from big cities, in the six-year period between 2001 and 2006, Hazleton police identified no more than thirty crimes involving illegal migrants.

"I never say that illegal aliens commit all the crimes," Barletta explained. "I never attribute all these problems to illegal aliens. What I do say is that the drain on this city's budget, this very fragile city budget, affects the quality of life and our ability to protect the people of this community."

By the time of our conversation, Barletta had become used to the national limelight and sensitive to intimations of racism. He had been the subject of a profile by CBS's *60 Minutes*. He had been interviewed by the *New York Times* and was a frequent CNN guest. But while Barletta was circumspect, choosing to focus on high-minded public policy issues of budgets, tax bases, city resources, and competition for jobs, the other members of his breakfast "brain trust" did not feel similarly constrained about crossing the line that the mayor had carefully drawn. For Yannuzzi and Keegan, cultural stereotypes and broad-brush descriptions were very much a part of the conversation.

Keegan suggested that many Latino migrants were prone to violence. "How they dealt with conflicts in their country is what they brought in dealing with conflicts here, and it's not the way we deal with conflicts," he said. "I don't know if 'terror' is the right word, but [it's] the concern of the community because you didn't bring out a knife and gun to settle a conflict."

The men agreed that the new migrants had not made an effort to become part of community life. "They tried to establish their own Hispanic Little League, when our Little League was more than willing and continues to be open to every child," complained Keegan.

Yannuzzi chimed in with his own example. "The first thing they did, was they started their own Chamber of Commerce," he observed. "The Latino Chamber of Commerce. I think that's wrong."

In the minds of all three men, from high crime rates, to the disproportionate use of public resources, to the failure to assimilate, this wave of migration is unprecedented. And they should know.

Barletta's grandparents came from Italy, as did Yannuzzi's. Keegan's father's family was Irish. His mother's was Italian.

"They came here to become American," said Yannuzzi. "They came here to assimilate! The grandparents spoke Italian only when they didn't want you to know what was going on. 'We're in America! You speak English!' That's what was told to us by my grandmother and all, and that was the difference. Today, they're immigrating here for the benefits and I can't blame them, but they're looking for more than just the benefits."

"What do you think they're looking for?" I asked.

"They're looking for the programs, free medical, that kind of stuff," he answered.

Such generalizations about the Hazleton area's new arrivals sound as if they could have been uttered a century ago; in fact, they were.

- "Perhaps the most obvious result of the racial mixture is to be seen in the incapacity of the local government, and the wasteful administration of public funds."
- "Among the Italians, violence is more the result of quick temper than intoxication. . . . The Italians resort most often to the use of knives in their acts of violence."
- "The fact is there are some respected citizens in all the races except possibly the Italians. The average English-speaking person regards all of the immigrants as purchasable, ignorant, and vicious in a high degree."
- "The large number of Germans in Hazleton in 1880 made it almost a bilingual town. Attorneys and doctors advertised their ability to hold consultations in either English or German."

The first three quotations come from a 1911 U.S. government report on immigration to a town near Hazleton. The fourth is from a book by the historian Harold Aurand documenting life in Hazleton in the late nineteenth century.

The fact is that Hazleton is in a sense reliving its past. Present-day patterns of economic opportunity, ensuing migration, and the reactions to the influx of newcomers are recycled versions of old stories.

As they did then and as they do now, migrants move to where they can find jobs and opportunities. News of successes (sometimes exaggerated) travels through networks of families and friends, encouraging new settlers to take the leap and make homes in communities where the languages and cultures are familiar. While the consequences of migration (various degrees of hostility or acceptance) may vary, the magnet is usually the same: businesses need the labor and rely on warm bodies being in place at the right times and for the right costs. The effects on the destinations, the residents, or the migrants themselves are afterthoughts—if they are thoughts at all.

European migration to northeastern Pennsylvania propelled America's Industrial Revolution. It followed the development in the early nineteenth century of new technology that turned anthracite, a hot-burning coal, into the country's premier source of fuel for factory steam engines and for the home stoves of growing urban populations.

Northeastern Pennsylvania had the world's largest deposits of anthracite, but getting the mineral out of the ground and moving it to market were labor-intensive businesses requiring armies of men and boys who worked in construction crews and in the mines, extracting, hauling, crushing, and cleaning the coal. Those were jobs for migrants. They poured in, many of them experienced miners from coal regions in England, Scotland, Wales, and the German states. Later, they were joined by Irish immigrants—men who had earlier built the canal system that connected landlocked anthracite fields to inland rivers and eastern cities.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the anthracite industry grew in importance as coal barons became railroad magnates and as anthracite-fueled furnaces were put to use producing rails and locomotives, transportation that was far more efficient than the canals.

Industrialization, the demands of the Civil War, and the growth of the national railroad industry boosted the demand for hard coal. Anthracite production doubled to thirty million tons during the decade of the 1870s, and doubled again by the turn of the century. Increased production required more migrant workers. Between 1890 and 1908, the anthracite industry added nearly fifty thousand men.

But around 1875, the composition of the workforce started to change. Fewer miners were coming from English-speaking and northern European countries. Instead they moved from southern and eastern Europe. They were hungrier, willing to work more cheaply, do more dangerous jobs, and put up with the increasingly decrepit conditions in the overcrowded, company-owned "patch towns" around the collieries. Coal mine owners sent recruiters to New York to bring in workers in boxcars. Some company agents went across the Atlantic to try to lure cheap, compliant laborers who could replace more defiant union members. Poles, Lithuanians, Slavs, and Slovaks came first. They were followed by Russians, Hungarians, Croatians, Slovenians, Italians, and eastern European Jews.

The newest arrivals were typically at the lowest rungs on the job ladder, relegated to the most difficult and hazardous work. A derisive U.S. government report, sympathetic to the coal operators, defended the practice, suggesting that the workers' inferiority made them well suited for unsafe conditions. "The element of danger," it said, "does not act deterrently upon the immigrants, as their limited imagination shields them from the fears which would harass a more sensitive class of persons in such hazardous employment."

With jobs as the magnet, over a span of two decades, the anthracite-producing area of Pennsylvania saw a dramatic demographic shift with the influx of nearly ninety thousand immigrants from Italy as well as from eastern and central Europe. In 1880, settlers from those areas had accounted for fewer than 2 percent of the total foreign-born population, but by the turn of the century, they made up 46 percent of all immigrants.

Social and ethnic conflicts flared. Old-timers derided the "filthy habits and queer languages" of the "foreigners." Coal operators exacerbated the tensions by offering newcomers lower wages and providing worse housing than the first arrivals, who were rising socially and economically. As the earlier settlers were supplanted, the patch towns went through a "startling social change," as a contemporary writer put it. The newcomers could be "exploited—through company stores, company shanties, and other methods well understood by coal mine owners—in a manner that the old miners who were self-respecting English-speaking citizens would not have endured for a moment. . . . Their houses are now occupied by the newcomers from the polyglot

proletariat of southeastern Europe; and under the roof where one miner's family formerly dwelt in humble decency there will now be found four or five families huddled together after the manner of the slums of Polish and Hungarian towns."

It turns out that the present-day depiction of old-time Hazleton ("They came here to assimilate!") with *kumbaya*, well-integrated migrant communities, is pure fantasy. In Hazleton, the Germans clustered in the southeastern and northwestern sections of town, the Irish in the south, the English in the central and northern parts, the Poles and Slavs mostly on South Vine Street, the Polish Jews on North Church, and the Italians and Slovaks north of Diamond Avenue.

"They all had their own churches, their own neighborhoods, their own social clubs," explained history buff Jane Waitkus.

Waitkus is an English instructor at Penn State who is fascinated by her grandparents' roots—Slovakian on her father's side, Lithuanian on her mother's. I met her at her house in Mountaintop near Hazleton and talked about the area's ethnic history as she and her eighty-six-year-old mother, Ann Michaels, placed silverware into napkins that they folded in preparation for the wedding of Jane's daughter. It was to be a Slovakian wedding, Ann explained, offering me a plate of homemade Slovakian jellied pastries called *kolachy* filled with *lekvár*, a prune jam imported from Slovakia.

"Until this day, I call Sacred Heart in Plains the Irish church, because that's the way we were brought up," said Jane. "That was Irish. The Polish church was St. Peter and Paul in Plains; the Lithuanian church was St. Francis in Miners Mills."

Instruction in the public schools was in English, of course, but preschoolers generally learned their parents' language first.

"I never spoke English when I was a child, it was Lithuanian," Ann explained. "And I learned the other languages, too, because in the neighborhood, if I had friends who were Slovak or Polish and their mothers were baking something, I wasn't gonna get any unless I asked in their language. Nobody spoke English. I'll tell you, when I became a nurse, I was an interpreter in the emergency room more than once, because nobody could speak the languages. I could understand the Slovak, Russian, and Polish, and I spoke Lithuanian very well."

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, ethnic divisions led to undisguised conflicts and hostilities. Hazleton newspapers called Slavs and Hungarians "peculiar," described Hungarians as "an ignorant, immoral and filthy race who create disgust wherever they locate," and labeled Italians as "the most disreputable."

Divisions and resentments among migrant communities were aggravated by working conditions and pay. Mine owners, motivated by the desire to maximize profit and production, showed little regard for the safety of their employees, whom they could easily replace, since there were more workers than jobs. Tunnel explosions and cave-ins were common. For every one million tons of coal extracted, close to fifteen workers perished on the job.

While cultural changes, ethnic differences, and outright racism often bubble to the top in immigration arguments, time and again, at the core of the real divide are underlying issues beyond the control of people they affect. When one group loses good jobs, and another finds itself in precarious straits, finger-pointing and power struggles inevitably thrust immigration issues and migrants into the spotlight.

In Hazleton, class and professional differences intensified ethnic rivalries. Ann Michaels remembers stories told to her by family members who worked in the mines: "My brothers came in contact with the Irish because they were the bosses in the mines, and they hated them. Our people hated the Irish because they really made them work very hard. From what I hear, they used to come home and they were actually abused, and they used to call them 'dirty Irish.'"

Tensions rose when times were tough and had particularly tragic consequences in 1897, a bad year for the anthracite industry and for newly arrived southeastern European immigrants.

The nation was at the end of the "Long Depression," and long-time residents blamed newcomers for depressing coal miners' wages. Pennsylvania legislators came up with two laws to protect the existing workforce—both with startling parallels to Hazelton's Illegal Immigration Relief Act Ordinance, which came 109 years later. One statute was a language test that required job applicants to

"answer intelligently and correctly at least twelve questions in the English language pertaining to the requirements of a practical miner." Another became known as the "alien tax." It was supposed to penalize employers for hiring immigrants by requiring them to pay a tax of "three cents for each day of such foreign-born un-naturalized male person as may be employed." In fact, the levy on employers became a worker tax, since bosses typically paid the money by garnishing the miners' wages.

For miners, the problems were piling up. Coal prices were low, so to save money, operators cut workers' wages and hours and stopped paying them on time. In the late summer of 1897, miners began staging protests. At the Audenreid Colliery, miners went on strike. Communities were in turmoil as miners marched from one colliery to another to gather support and to shut down coal mines. By Labor Day weekend, some ten thousand northeastern Pennsylvania coal miners, largely Polish, Slovak, Italian, and Lithuanian, were involved in protests.

On September 10, 1897, miners began a march with the intention of shutting down the mine in Lattimer, about two and a half miles northeast of Hazleton. When they got to West Hazleton, the local sheriff, James Martin, ordered them to disperse. Instead the miners agreed to take a different route, and set off, led by Steve Jurich, a Slovak carrying an American flag.

As three hundred to four hundred marchers approached Lattimer, they were met by the sheriff and his posse. Martin had deputized more than eighty volunteers, a force consisting mainly of professional men with English, Irish, or German backgrounds, many with connections to the coal operators. The posse was armed with new Winchester rifles. The sheriff again ordered the marchers to disperse, but they refused. Shots rang out. The first man killed was the flag bearer, Steve Jurich. In all, the sheriff's deputies shot and killed fourteen Poles, four Slovaks, and one Lithuanian. As the wounded cried out for help, one deputy reportedly responded, "We'll give you hell, not water, hunkies!"

The following year, Sheriff Martin and eighty-three deputies were tried for murder. All the men were acquitted.

The site of the shooting is now an intersection in a quiet suburban neighborhood. A blue and gold marker put up by the Pennsylvania

Historical and Museum Commission describes the Lattimer Massacre as "one of the most serious acts of violence in American labor history."

During the century that followed the massacre, ethnic divisions among Europeans dissipated and were forgotten. Mayor Louis Barletta's wife is of Irish descent, an intermarriage that would have been unthinkable fewer than a hundred years ago.

But the twenty-first-century wave of migrants ushered in modern conflicts. Once again, old-timers resent the newcomers. Descendants of those Slavic, English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, Italian, and Lithuanian mineworkers, who once engaged one another in a maelstrom of ethnic tumult, united in common cause in speaking out against their new Latino neighbors. Like a long-abandoned coal mine, Hazleton's old vein of resentment and hostility found a new life.

Cycles of short memories and disassociation are stitched into the fabric of the immigration debate. The eighteenth-century remarks of one noted son of a migrant and grandson of an indentured servant imported from England serve as a poignant reminder of historical myopia. German migrants were "the most ignorant Stupid Sort of their own Nation," Benjamin Franklin famously declared.

Despairing about the preponderance of Germans and of German speakers, he wrote, "They begin of late to make all their Bonds and other legal Writings in their own Language, which (though I think it ought not to be) are allowed good in our Courts, where the German Business so encreases that there is continual need of Interpreters; and I suppose in a few years they will be also necessary in the Assembly, to tell one half of our Legislators what the other half say." Survival, said Franklin, required immigration restrictions: "[U]nless the stream of their importation could be turned from this to other colonies . . . they will soon so out number us, that all the advantages we have will not in My Opinion be able to preserve our language, and even our Government will become precarious."

As I finished the kolachys that Ann Michaels had so hospitably served, our conversation turned to the latest wave of migrants. We had talked

about intolerance toward Lithuanians and Slovaks. I wanted to know what she thought about Latinos.

"I'm not saying all of them, but they're certainly not morally fit, believe me," she said. "They're committing crimes, and you never saw that, you never saw that before, and drugs and anything to make money. I don't see them working. I'm not saying all of them, but they don't have a job promised to them here when they come here illegally. They should go back to the old days, I'm telling you—make sure they had a sponsor if they were coming here, make sure they have a job."

Hazleton's Latino leaders view the familiar denunciations with consternation. "It's been happening throughout history and we haven't learned anything," said Ana Arias.

Amilcar Arroyo, the newspaper editor from Peru, is worried about the pattern continuing.

"You know what will be the funny part to this one?" he asked rhetorically. "I hope I'm wrong. I say, 'God tell me that I'm wrong.' You know what's going to happen? I hope not. This Hispanic people of the second or third generation, they will forget, so the next wave of immigrants to this area probably, they will have the same problems as I have . . . and they will be doing the same as [they] did, the same generation of Irish, Italians, Polish people to this Hispanic people who came now. Because it's like that. It's a cycle. Believe me, it's a cycle, but I hope that doesn't happen. I hope so."

Modern-day restrictionists take umbrage at any suggestion that race or national origin shapes their view. "People think we're after Hispanics," Hazleton City Council president Yannuzzi explained. "We're not. We're after illegals."

"People ask, 'Don't you have compassion for those who came here?' Of course," added the mayor. "I would sneak into this country, too, if my family depended on it. . . . We're seeing small-town America, the life being taken out of it, because we don't have the money to deal with the problem."

But legal avenues to attack the "problem" have themselves proved problematic. In 1898, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Pennsylvania's "alien tax," affirming a lower-court judge's ruling that declared it a "hostile" and "arbitrary" law that discriminated against noncitizens in violation of the Constitution's equal protection guarantees.

As for Hazleton's 2006 Illegal Immigration Relief Act Ordinance, it was struck down as unconstitutional by a district court judge. "Whatever frustrations officials of the City of Hazleton may feel about the current state of the federal immigration enforcement, the nature of the political system in the United States prohibits the City from enacting ordinances that disrupt a carefully drawn federal statutory scheme," wrote federal judge James Munley, criticizing officials for enacting their own municipal immigration policy. As of this writing in December 2009, the case, *Lozano v. Hazleton*, was on appeal and seemed destined to make its way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Still standing in Hazleton law is the preeminence of English. The declaration did not come under legal challenge. As a result, "the English language is the official language of the City of Hazleton," so no other languages shall be required in City documents, and Hazleton officials are obligated to "take all steps necessary to insure that the role of English as the common language of the City of Hazleton is preserved and enhanced."

Score one for Barletta, although his 2008 bid to unseat the twelve-term Democratic congressman Paul E. Kanjorski was less successful. Barletta lost by 3 percentage points, a narrow defeat he attributed, with a dexterous spin, to his popularity. "Many people tell me they didn't want me to leave," he told a reporter.

The Hazleton saga has an interesting coda, one in which anti-immigrant resolve gave way to economic pragmatism. Just eighty-five miles to the southeast, another small town whose character also had been altered by an influx of migrants took note of the Hazleton example and decided to follow suit.

On July 26, 2006, two weeks after Hazleton enacted its immigration policy, a crowd of some three hundred people came to a meeting of the Riverside Township Council, whose members had prepared a copycat ordinance. The small New Jersey community had witnessed an influx of newcomers, mostly illegal migrants from Brazil, many of whom had moved into Riverside and surrounding areas to work in housing construction. Estimates of their numbers ranged between 2,000 and 5,000, a massive and jarring adjustment in a community whose population the 2000 census pegged at just 7,911.

"They're everywhere. There's more of them than there are of us," lifelong resident Carolyn Chamberlain told newspaper reporter Jennifer Moroz, who wrote a three-part series on Riverside in 2005. "Brazilians are taking over this whole town."

The immigration issue aroused such passion and interest that to accommodate the crowds, the hearing on the Hazleton-like ordinance had to be moved from Town Hall to the Riverside High School auditorium. The vote was preceded by screaming and shouting matches. Eight police officers—half the force—came to keep order. By a 5 to 0 vote, the council adopted the Riverside Township Illegal Immigration Relief Act, seeking to yank the licenses of businesses that hire illegal immigrants and to impose fines starting at $1,000 on landlords who rent or lease to them.

The immediate consequences were, in part, predictable. Within three weeks, church groups sued the township in federal court in an attempt to get the law overturned. Business groups that formed the Riverside Coalition of Business Persons and Landlords soon followed their lead and filed suit in New Jersey Superior Court.

But as the lawsuits proceeded, the new statute remained in place, resulting in repercussions beyond the courthouse. News reports indicated that Brazilian migrants, the ordinance's intended targets, were leaving town by the hundreds. Business owners boarded up stores and residents abandoned their homes.

"The exodus is insane," said the owner of a rental property vacated by immigrants. "People just left their lives in the trash."

With legal bills mounting, fourteen months after its passage, Riverside officials rescinded the law, which had never been enforced. Attorney fees had reached $82,000, costs which forced the delay of road-improvement projects and repairs to Town Hall.

The new mayor, George Conard, who had voted for the original ordinance, conceded that the law's supporters had not fully considered its consequences. "I don't think people knew there would be such an economic burden," he said. "A lot of people did not look three years out."

It's easy to see the moral to these stories as "See how much immigrants are needed?" Or, "See how quickly people forget their

own immigrant heritage?" Or even, "Locals have every right to defend and preserve their way of life, even at the risk of jeopardizing economic stability." But the key lesson is about how closely immigration and economics are linked. Often, the public responds to immigration and cultural change as it does to a power plant, a prison, or a big new mall—NIMBY! (not in my backyard). In those cases, ensuing debates involve spreadsheets and calculators and determinations about whether gains outweigh losses. But for all the attention and time devoted to the immigration debate, the simple truth is that global migration is just a part of global trade. Developing resources, manufacturing, and trading commodities is sometimes a good idea, and sometimes it isn't, but in the end, when government or corporate decisions help create opportunities, often people are moved to cross borders to take advantage of them—regardless of local consequences.

For employers throughout the developed world, migrants make perfect economic sense. Often they perform work that many long-time residents will not do—at least not for the wages offered. Just as in the United States, where a common refrain is "Mexicans will do the jobs Americans won't," in the United Kingdom it is said that eastern Europeans will perform labor that the English won't. In Poland, Ukrainians and Belarusians will work for wages and in conditions not tolerated by Poles. In Argentina, Bolivians fill low-paid jobs that Argentinians shun.

Global and local businesses rely on human mobility and on ready, vulnerable pools of labor often available at bargain basement prices.

In turn, migrant incomes are lubricants for the often extensive networks of recruiters, traffickers, and smugglers who get them to their destinations. Industries rely on the billions of dollars migrants send back to their homelands.

The complex and interconnected machinery and interrelated businesses that comprise today's global market for labor has been called the "migration industry." It's an apt description with an implicit message for those concerned about "immigration reform." That is, addressing migration on a piecemeal, local, or even national basis flies in the face of the obvious. The NIMBY approach favored in the industrialized world has no more chance of success than efforts to

resolve global warming by exporting coal-fueled industrial production from the United States to China. Destination countries are just one piece of the larger picture. To grapple seriously with global migration requires at the very least an understanding of why migrants leave home to begin with.