

Nativism Self-implodes

I've opposed nativist know-nothings for decades, for many reasons. Their theory of wall-building-as-panacea rests on many shifting assertions, including the belief that immigrants necessarily vote for more government, and/or necessarily vote Democrat.

Both parts of that theory have always seemed suspect to me. In addition, the last claim – that immigrants tend to vote Democrat – seems to be a self-fulfilling prophecy. When you spend a great deal of time advertising your dislike of immigrants, are they supposed to happily rush to endorse your pogrom, excuse me, program?

Alex Nowrasteh tackles this fallacious marketing strategy in his commentary *Saving the GOP from Modern Know-Nothingism*

California's Gov. Pete Wilson took another path. Facing a tough re-election campaign in 1994, the Republican decided to blame illegal immigrants for all of the state's troubles. The result was that he and the rest of the state GOP were perceived as blaming all immigrants for California's woes. Mr. Wilson won re-election but doomed the GOP for decades in that state.