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HIS 114 NA - World Civilization II

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Extra Credit - The Restriction of Immigration

1 - What economic arguments does Lodge make in favor of immigration restriction?

Lodge complained that the influx of Chinese workers infiltrated the labor market, causing the “good rates of wages among American workingmen” to be ravaged. Also, business owners brought in foreigners from many different countries to his land and supplied them with contracts to work for salaries that were competitively lower than what the average American would receive. This hindered US citizens from finding or keeping jobs. He welcomed the Chinese-Exclusion Act and the Alien Contract-Labor Law, calling such prohibitions on outside workers “wise” and “sound.”

2 - What do you think his real reasons are for restricting immigration? What frame values lie behind his views?

I think that Lodge’s real reasons for restricting immigration and hidden frame values can be found in his word usage. Described as a “100% Americanist,” he referred to Chinese immigrants as “low-class” laborers whose work ethic “threatened to lower the quality of American citizenship.” He also reported that the countries from which other immigrant workers came were “unfavorable,” and various “elements” compromised “the standard of civilization in the United States,” as they grouped themselves in “dangerous masses” while living in run-down neighborhoods.

Surely, Lodge was concerned about the American economy and the integrity of his fellow constituents. However, he seemed more driven by racial supremacism. He wanted lines of division to be drawn.