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# Nation's Middle Class Is Shrinking

A CHARACTERISTIC of dictatorships is that the people generally fall into two classes — the very rich and the very poor.

A strength of a republic is that the majority of the people are middle class. There are rich and there are poor, but most citizens are earning their livelihoods and rank somewhere in between. They love their country, their homes, their families, their churches, and other institutions that help to make a better life for self-reliant people.

In the past the United States has admitted millions of immigrants who aspired to freedom of opportunity and who were willing to work to acquire the basic comforts of life. Our citizenship and our national leadership have been influenced, mostly for the better, by the peoples who have moved here from other nations.

It is evident that millions of immigrants now entering this country also will carry considerable weight in determining future patterns of living, religion, politics and workmanship.

The move by Congress to grant mass amnesty to millions of aliens who entered this country illegally is controversial largely because many of them are willing to do jobs Americans won't take.

Mexican nationals have flocked across the border to harvest vegetables and fruits while unemployed native Americans live off government relief checks, food stamps, and other handouts.

Oriental immigrants are demonstrating the benefits of diligent study, careful attention to details, and courtesy.

Major changes in characteristics of our native population are taking place, too. A high proportion of the people are classified as elderly. More families are headed by women. Civil rights legislation has given greater freedom to ethnic groups, subversives, homosexuals, and criminals. Patriotism, morality and integrity have declined.

Some liberal scientists and demographers are saying that the nation's middle class is shrinking. More conservative analysts tend to

disagree, although statistics show that the proportion of people classified as poor is increasing. More may be getting richer, too.

Numerous entitlement programs enacted by Congress have plunged the United States into debt now authorized up to \$1.57 trillion.

Assimilation of immigrants into our population is bound to influence what is expected of government and of American citizens. A letter from Milton E. Sheid of Oklahoma City contains several suggestions that Congress might do well to consider.

"The United States is not the United Nations," Sheid wrote. "The rights and responsibilities of citizens of the United States to register and to vote supersedes participation in our socio-economic system. Pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States and to the country for which it stands is a paramount condition for aliens becoming legal citizens of America."

Patriotic Americans should set good examples for aliens to honor our country, our flag, and our freedoms.