

# ART HOPPE

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## Refugees, We Need You

DEAR PRESIDENT: I, Joe Sikspak, American, take pen in hand with which to pat you on the back. You got the right idea about these Vietnamese refugees.

I wasn't sure, myself, until the other night down at Paddy's Place. "The President is absolutely right, Joe," says Paddy. "It's the humanitarian thing to do."

"For them?" says I.

"No, for us," says Paddy. "We should welcome these 125,000 poor souls of the Oriental persuasion with open arms."

"What for?" says I. "We already got a transcontinental railroad."

"Good for you, Joe," says Paddy. "I haven't heard an anti-Chinese joke in years. And that's the point."

"What this great land of ours desperately needs is a fresh batch of pioneering immigrants who wish to become proud and free Americans like us."

"What for?" says I.

"To pick on," says Paddy.

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"GIVE ME another Seven-high, Paddy," says I, "and kindly explain."

"Look at our history, Joe," says Paddy. "First it was us Irish, then the Jews, the Chinese, the Greeks and the what have-you. Now we're down to Polish and Italian jokes."

"I don't mind Italian jokes," says I. "But us Poles are sensitive."

"And in a couple of months you'll never hear another," says Paddy. "It'll be, 'Hey, did you hear the one about the two Viet guys who...'"

"That wouldn't offend me," says I.

"We're already making a start, Joe, with bumper stickers saying, 'Jobs for Vets — not Viets,'" says Paddy. "Pretty soon it'll be signs reading, 'No Viets need apply.'"

"That's good?" says I.

"Sure, Joe," says Paddy. "They'll have to take the lousiest jobs, pushing the rest of us up the ladder of success. They'll have to live across the tracks in the ghetto, forcing the present residents to flee to the good life in the suburbs."

"Not all of them," says I.

"No, but the decent, kindly, American mothers who remain will enjoy healthy, outdoor exercise," says Paddy, "heaving rocks at their school buses. Believe me, Joe, they'll bring us all together and restore our national pride."

"Our national pride?" says I.

"Sure. The reason we're a proud nation," says Paddy, "is that there's hardly an American alive who doesn't feel superior to some other American. But even in this land of opportunity, there's a grave danger with new immigrants like these."

"I knew it," says I.

"The danger is they'll find out what opportunities await them," says Paddy, "and they'll turn around go an home."

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SO IT'S a fine, humanitarian thing you're doing, President, for us. Like Paddy says, "This is a great melting pot we got here — and the last one in's a rotten egg."

Truly Yours,

Joe Sikspak, American