

of whom could not speak English when they entered first grade. The idea was to teach them in Spanish for a short period, until they got up to speed in their new language.

Sen. Ralph Yarborough (D., Texas), a leading sponsor of the first federal bilingual law in 1968, explained that its intent was "to make children fully literate in English." Yarborough assured Congress that the purpose was "not to make the mother tongue dominant."

Unfortunately, bilingual-education policy soon fell under the sway of political activists demanding recognition of the "group rights" of cultural and linguistic minorities. By the late 1970s the federal civil-rights office was insisting that school districts offer bilingual education to Hispanic and other "language minority" students or face a cutoff of federal funds.

Most states followed suit, adopting bilingual mandates either by law or by bureaucratic edict. The result is that, nationally, most first-grade students from Spanish-speaking homes are taught to read and write in Spanish.

The purpose in many cases is no longer to bring immigrant children into the mainstream of American life. Some advocates see bilingual education as the first step in a radical transformation of the United States into a nation without one common language or fixed borders.

Spanish "should no longer be regarded as a 'foreign' language," according to Josué González, director of bilingual education in the Carter Administration and now a professor at Columbia University Teachers College. Instead, he writes in *Reinventing Urban Education*, Spanish should be "a second national language."

Others have even more extreme views. At last February's annual conference of the National Association for Bilingual Education (a leading lobbying group for supporters of bilingual education) in Phoenix, several speakers challenged the idea of U.S. sovereignty and promoted the notion that the Southwest and northern Mexico form one cultural region, which they dub *La Frontera*.

Eugene García, head of bilingual education at the U.S. Department of Education, declared to thunderous applause that "the border for many is nonexistent. For me, for intellectual reasons, that border shall be nonexistent." His statement might surprise President Clinton, who appointed García and has vowed to beef up border protection to stem the flow of illegal aliens into the United States.

I WAS FURIOUS

Bilingual education has grown tremendously from its modest start. Currently, some 2.4 million children are eligible for bilingual or ESL classes, with bilingual education alone costing over \$5.5 billion. New York City, for instance, spends \$400 million annually on its 147,500 bilingual students—\$2712 per pupil.

A great deal of this money is being wasted. "We don't even speak Spanish at home," says Miguel Alvarado of Sun Valley, Calif., yet his eight-year-old daughter, Emily, was put in a bilingual class. Alvarado concludes that this was done simply because he is bilingual.

When my son Pablo entered school in the District of Columbia, I received a letter notifying me that he would be placed in a bilingual program—even though Pablo didn't speak a word of Spanish, since I grew up not speaking it either. (My family has lived in what is now New Mexico since 1609). I was able to decline the program without much trouble, but other Hispanic parents aren't always so fortunate.

When Rita Montero's son, Camilo, grew bored by the slow academic pace of his first-

grade bilingual class in Denver, she requested a transfer. "The kids were doing work way below the regular grade level," says Montero. "I was furious." Officials argued they were under court order to place him in a bilingual class.

In fact, she was entitled to sign a waiver, but no one she met at school informed her of this. Ultimately she enrolled Camilo in a magnet school across town. Says Montero, "Only through a lot of determination and anger did I get my son in the classroom where he belonged." Most parents—especially immigrants—aren't so lucky. They're intimidated by the system, and their kids are stuck.

Most school districts with large Hispanic populations require parents with Spanish surnames to fill out a "home-language survey." If parents report that Spanish is used in the home, even occasionally, the school may place the child in bilingual classes. Unbeknown to parents, a Spanish-speaking grandparent living with the family may be enough to trigger placement, even if the grandchild speaks little or no Spanish.

Though parents are supposed to be able to opt out, bureaucrats have vested interest in discouraging them, since the school will lose government funds. In some districts, funding for bilingual education exceeds that for mainstream classes by 20 percent or more. New York State, for example, doesn't allow Hispanic students to exist the bilingual program until they score above the 40th percentile on a standardized English test.

"There's a Catch-22 operating here," says Christine Rossell, a professor of political science at Boston University. She explains that such testing guarantees enrollment in the program, for "by definition, 40 percent of all students who take any standardized test will score at or below the 40th percentile."

FAMILY'S BUSINESS

Bilingual programs are also wasted on children who do need help learning English. Studies confirm what common sense would tell you: the less time you spend speaking a new language, the more slowly you'll learn it.

Last year, bilingual and ESL programs in New York City were compared. Results: 92 percent of Korean, 87 percent of Russian, and 83 percent of Chinese children who started intensive ESL classes in kindergarten had made it into mainstream classes in three years or less. Of the Hispanic students in bilingual classes, only half made it to mainstream classes within three years. "How can anyone learn English in school when they speak Spanish 4½ hours a day?" asks Gail Fiber, an elementary-school teacher in Southern California. "In more than seven years' experience with bilingual education, I've never seen it done successfully."

Rosalie Pedalino Porter, former director of bilingual education in Newton, Mass, and now with the Institute for Research in English Acquisition and Development, reached a similar conclusion. "I felt that I was deliberately holding back the learning of English," she writes in her eloquent critique, *Forked Tongue: The Politics of Bilingual Education*.

Native-language instruction is not even necessary to academic performance, according to Boston University's Rossell. "Ninety-one percent of scientifically valid studies show bilingual education to be no better—or actually worse—than doing nothing." In other words, students who are allowed to sink or swim in all-English classes are actually better off than bilingual students.

The overwhelming majority of immigrants believe that it is a family's duty—not the school's—to help children maintain the native language. "If parents had an option,"

says Lila Ramirez, vice president of the Burbank, Calif., Human Relations Council, "they'd prefer all-English to all-Spanish." When a U.S. Department of Education survey asked Mexican and Cuban parents what they wanted, four-fifths declared their opposition to teaching children in their native language if it meant less time devoted to English.

SENSE OF UNITY

It's time for federal and state legislators to overhaul this misbegotten program. The best policy for children—and for the country—is to teach English to immigrant children as quickly as possible. American-born Hispanics, who now make up more than half of all bilingual students, should be taught in English.

Bilingual education probably would end swiftly if more people knew about last November's meeting of the Texas Association for Bilingual Education, in Austin. Both the Mexican and U.S. flags adorned the stage at this gathering, and the attendees—mainly Texas teachers and administrators—stood as the national anthems of both countries were sung.

At least one educator present found the episode dismaying. "I stood, out of respect, when the Mexican anthem was played," says Odilia Leal, bilingual coordinator for the Temple Independent School District. "But I think we should just sing the U.S. anthem. My father, who was born in Mexico, taught me that the United States, not Mexico, is my country."

With 20 million immigrants now living in our country, it's more important than ever to teach newcomers to think of themselves as Americans if we hope to remain one people, not simply a conglomeration of different groups. And one of the most effective ways of forging that sense of unity is through a common language.

DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE, JUSTICE, AND STATE, THE JUDICIARY, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 25, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2076) making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce, Justice and State, the Judiciary, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes:

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Chairman, I had intended to offer an amendment to restore funding in the State-Commerce-Justice appropriations bill for the State Justice Institute. Since filing the amendment, I realized that a number of Members are not familiar with the work of the State Justice Institute, thereby leading me to conclude that it was not an opportune time to debate SJI funding. I withdrew the amendment.

But I want to let my colleagues know that there is a clear Federal interest in supporting programs like SJI, which promotes a just, effective, and innovative system of State courts. State courts have been the beneficiaries of more than 800 projects improving the quality of the justice they deliver, and the Federal judiciary has worked closely with SJI to improve the working relationship between the State and Federal courts.

Federal assistance to State courts is as appropriate as Federal assistance to State law enforcement, prosecution, and corrections agencies. By helping the State courts to deliver justice more efficiently and effectively, SJL promotes their greater use by litigants, thereby reducing the number of cases filed in Federal court. Continued funding for SJL would provide the administration and Congress with the opportunity to improve the State courts' response to important issues, such as family violence, the rights of children, drug abuse, and crime.

As a Member of Congress who has been active on the issue of domestic violence, I can attest to SJL's many contributions in improving the State courts' response to family violence. For example, the State Justice Institute is the entity responsible for implementing my legislation, approved by Congress in 1992, to develop training programs for judges and other court personnel about domestic violence, especially its impact on children, and to review child custody decisions where evidence of spousal abuse has been presented. The Judicial Training Act addresses problems that many battered women have when they step into the courtrooms in this country to fight for custody of their children or to fight for equal justice in criminal cases. The response of our judicial system to domestic violence has been one of ignorance, negligence, and indifference, often with tragic consequences. The State Justice Institute has moved expeditiously to implement this act, and it has provided important assistance in improving the State courts' response to family violence.

Federal policies can have serious consequences for the State courts and often impose substantial responsibilities on the State courts. The State Justice Institute has provided important Federal assistance to help the State judiciaries cope with federally imposed burdens, such as the Child Support Enforcement Act of 1984, the Family Support Act of 1986, and the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980. These Federal programs should be accompanied by Federal assistance for State courts to meet these increased demands. The State Justice Institute has filled this important role.

OUR CHILDREN ARE OUR FUTURE

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 2, 1995

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman and colleagues, I rise today to remind us all that the future of our Nation lies with our children. We hear those words so often that they are almost a cliché—but do we listen? Do we understand what that must mean as we develop our budget priorities?

As an educator, a former university professor, and a former president of the San Diego Board of Education, I am in a unique position here in Congress—I have first-hand knowledge of the importance of Federal funding to students of all ages and all communities. And I want you to know that I have serious concerns about the direction we are taking in the current budget deliberations.

For example, the San Diego School District—one of the school districts in my congressional district—stands to lose a minimum of \$12 million in fiscal year 1996. Although students in every school in the district will be affected, the students most in need will be hit the hardest if we vote to slash title I as is currently proposed. Schools with a high number of students and families in poverty and low achieving students will receive the deepest and most severe cuts.

Title I funding helps disadvantaged children to better learn and achieve high educational standards. The proposed cuts in title I funding will devastate this program currently operating in the San Diego schools. A total of 50 schools will be eliminated from the program, and more than 11,000 children will not be served. Supplemental reading and math programs will be eliminated, as well as parental involvement activities. The very resources needed to raise student achievement and to meet the high standards we all want will be taken away.

In addition, the 127,000 students served by Impact Aid, the 31,000 students served by the Bilingual Education Program, the 17,000 students served by School-to-Work funding, and the 127,000 students affected by the Safe & Drug-Free Schools funding will suffer from the \$700,000 cut to Impact Aid, the \$1 million cut to Bilingual Education, the \$140,000 cut to School-to-Work and the \$500,000 cut to Safe & Drug-Free Schools. These cuts are for one school district. Multiply that by the thousands of districts in the Nation.

Perhaps the most foolish action in the bill pending before us is the cut of \$137 million for Head Start. The money we spend to give our youngsters a head start makes for productive citizens and pays dividends in the future. We should be putting more money into Head Start—not less.

In California, the economic decline of the past several years means that State and local economics cannot absorb the huge financial burden that will be shifted to them. The loss of instruction, the lay-offs of teachers and staff, and the lessening of the quality of education resulting from these proposed cuts cannot be replaced at the local level. The Federal Government has a role, an obligation, and a responsibility to participate in the education of our children.

Our children are our future. Let us make them a priority. I urge my colleagues to do our

part. Support the Federal investment in the future and reject the severe cuts proposed for the coming fiscal year.

ELIMINATE THE MAGNET FOR IMMIGRATION!

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 2, 1995

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, today I am introducing legislation to attack one of the most critical problems facing the residents of San Diego County and California—illegal immigration.

The Eliminating the Magnet for Illegal Immigration Act gets at the root of the problem. It will stop people from trying to cross the border in the first place by eliminating the illegal jobs that attract people to the United States.

My bill finally clamps down on employers that encourage illegal immigration by violating our laws and knowingly hiring undocumented workers.

In San Diego, I represent the district that runs along the border and has the most border crossing—both legal and illegal—in the world. I am acutely aware of the strain illegal immigration puts on communities in my district, and I have always been a firm believer in gaining control of our borders.

In the last 2 years, we have made significant progress. We have increased the number of Border Patrol agents and have begun to give them the tools and technology to get the job done.

But these changes have had limited success in stopping illegal immigration. The critical next step in the fight to stop illegal immigration is to eliminate the magnet and enforce our laws against the hiring of illegal immigrants.

In 1986, Congress underscored the need to eliminate the job magnet and made it illegal to hire undocumented workers—but these laws have been largely ignored. The INS simply has not had the resources to do its job.

Some employers hire undocumented workers because their status makes them easy targets for exploitation and abuse. These employers know they can force them to work in substandard conditions. These employers know they can get away with paying them substandard wages. It is a wonder that we have this problem?

My legislation gives the INS the resources it needs to aggressively enforce employer sanctions and gives the Department of Labor the resources to aggressively enforce wage and hour laws.