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001. fax	To Michael Cohen from Zoraida Maldonado (partial) (1 page)	04/14/98	P6/b(6)
002. fax	To The President from Rosa Castro Feinberg (partial, p. 3) (1 page)	04/14/98	P6/b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Domestic Policy Council
Michael Cohen (Subject Files)
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FOLDER TITLE:

California [Ron K.] Unz Initiative - Bilingual Education: Unz Message

2012-0160-S

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RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

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RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

Draft

Statement in Opposition to Proposition 227

I am releasing this statement as the U.S. Secretary of Education because I have been asked by many people in recent months about the impact of Proposition 227, the Unz Amendment.

I have conveyed my opinion to the President and the President supports this statement of opposition to the Unz Amendment.

While I understand the frustration many people have with some educational programs, I believe Proposition 227 is educationally unsound.

I recognize that the decision to vote for or against the Unz Amendment this coming June is ultimately a decision that is up to the voters of California. I know that there are many well-intentioned and concerned citizens on both sides of this issue and that the people of California are taking this issue seriously.

However, it is also important to recognize that how we teach English to our many new immigrants as well as our native-born children who do not speak English is something that concerns educators and other people all over America.

There are 13.7 million children under 18 who are either immigrants or the American born offspring of immigrants, and they are a rapidly growing part of our student population. About 3.2 million of these children need help in learning English. There are school districts in almost every part of our country -- from Boston to Seattle to Miami -- where children speak more than 40 languages. Arlington, Virginia -- just across the river -- is a school district that is a shining example of this increasing diversity.

Some say that these children are a liability but I welcome these children, just as the Statue of Liberty or the Golden Gate Bridge has welcomed them for years. They are a great source of strength and hope for the future of America and we want them to be full participants in the positive American experience both as children and when they grow up. These young people -- just like generations of immigrants who have come before them -- can grow up to be patriotic Americans who will add their voices to our democracy and help us expand our economy in this new global environment if we educate them well and treat them as we would like to be treated.

Indeed, a recent and, in fact, the largest survey ever conducted of immigrant children, found that these young people had higher grades and a lower school drop-out rate than other American children and overwhelmingly preferred to speak English by the time they were teenagers.

This survey --conducted by the Russell Sage Foundation, the Andrew Mellon Foundation and the National Science Foundation --noted that 88% of these young people preferred to speak English by the end of high school.

I can see why when I visit schools throughout this great nation. Their parents have come to America because they believe in the American Dream. They have stood in long visa lines, uprooted their families, left relatives behind, changed careers, often accepted menial jobs and --in many cases now --work two jobs for one great purpose --to give their children a better life here in America. Surely we can meet these people half-way by giving their children the best education possible so that they can make their contribution to the American mainstream.

Teaching these young people English is one of the great tasks of nation-building that falls to our public schools. I have come to the conclusion that Proposition 227 is not the way to go.

Proposition 227 proposes to prevent local teachers and parents from making the best decisions on how to educate their children and to eliminate bilingual education for most limited English proficient (LEP) students. Proposition 227 would provide for placement of these children in "sheltered English immersion" programs for a period "normally not to exceed one year."

This requirement could be waived only if the parent or guardian personally visits the school, provides written consent, and can show that the child already knows English, (in the case of older students) would learn English faster through an alternative instructional technique, or has special needs, in which case the waiver must be approved by the district superintendent -- a very bureaucratic, time-consuming process.

The Proposition also subjects teachers, school board members, and educational administrators --and I find this both punitive and threatening --to personal liability in litigation by parents if they fail to comply with its requirements in educating children. This is not the way to build parent-teacher cooperation -- a key to student success.

The Unz Initiative also strips from local school boards and teachers working with parents the ability to make educationally sound decisions about how to meet the needs of the children they teach. This is a direct attack on local control of education. I am surprised that so many outspoken advocates of local control have chosen not to take issue with this fundamental flaw in the Unz Initiative.

I think all Americans believe that children who come to school ought to become proficient in English as quickly as possible. This is the primary purpose of bilingual education --to teach children English even as we maintain high academic standards. I also understand the frustration of some parents who worry that their children are not learning English as fast as they should.

Some bilingual programs are excellent, some need to improve and are improving, and some really are not doing the job they should be doing and need to get fixed quickly. The demand for bilingual education currently exceeds the supply and that is particularly true in California where the number of LEP children has nearly doubled in less than a decade to reach 1.3 million.

One of the biggest problems we confront is the shortage of qualified bilingual teachers. The California State Board of Education estimates that there is a shortage of 21,000 bilingual teachers in that state. This, I suspect, is one of the root causes and real reasons why some parents have become frustrated.

Nevertheless, the one-size-for-all approach that defines the Unz Initiative fits better on a bumper sticker than it does in a classroom. The Unz initiative is simple, it is easy to understand, and it is wrong. Prop 227 may satisfy some people's sense of frustration but ultimately it is counter-productive to our common goal of making sure children learn English. The approach taken by Prop 227 simply ignores the individual needs of each child and certainly is an educational straightjacket for teachers and parents. Good teaching starts with the child's needs and moves the child along in a timely and responsible manner.

If we adopted the approach suggested by the Unz Initiative to help children learn to read, it would be a disaster. Some children are already good readers when they come to kindergarten and others learn by the end of the first or second grades. Other children need extra help even in third grade and beyond.

And when we ask American children to learn another language, whether it is French, Spanish, German, Japanese or some other language, we do not demand that they learn the language in one year or else -- nor do we punish their teachers by taking them to court. I believe that every student and young person in America should have the facility to speak two languages. It is the way of the world. There are young people all over Europe who are easily fluent in three languages and I see no reason why American children should not be their equals. Our children are just as smart and some come to school with a leg up on two languages. We shouldn't lose that talent. I encourage and support any school district that adopts the goal of making sure that every one of its high school graduates speak two languages fluently.

An arbitrary one year time limit may give people a sense that something is being done --but it flies in the face of years of research that tells us that children learn in different ways and at different speeds.

A recent National Academy of Sciences study released just three weeks ago on March 18 tells us that, "hurrying young non-English speaking children into reading in English without ensuring adequate preparation is counterproductive."

The report recommends that children with no English proficiency are best taught to read English by first being taught reading in their native language, if teachers and instructional materials in their native language are available. Thus, while an "English only" approach may be effective for some limited English proficient children, it is likely to be ineffective for others.

I do not oppose "English only" classes. In fact, about 25% of our current federal bilingual funds support this type of instructional approach. What I question is the arbitrary one year time limit and the demand that only this approach is the right approach to help young people learn English.

Whether the approach is bilingual education, English as a second language, structured immersion, or some hybrid of them, the success of these programs ultimately turns on the quality and commitment of the school and the teachers. The Unz Initiative strikes at the very heart of this proven approach to success and "ties the hands" of classroom teachers and parents by limiting their discretion in determining what works best for the children in their school.

The Unz Initiative would not be a helping hand for language instruction, but rather the heavy hand of overregulation. It would prevent teachers and parents from exercising common sense and professional judgment in how to serve individual children.

Now, children should not be allowed to dawdle in bilingual classes. This is why I urge schools across America to consider a three year goal as something to strive for as they teach children to learn English. Individual differences and circumstances will cause some children to take longer and that is understandable.

The goal of learning English within three years is similar to our goal of making sure that every child learns to read by the end of third grade if not earlier. Now, a goal is not a mandate, a command or a legal requirement. And a goal is certainly not a one year educational straight-jacket that limits the ability of teachers to do what is best for each child. Some children may learn English in one year or two and others may need three years or even more. The focus should be on the individual needs of each child and not on some artificial and arbitrary time frame.

I am also speaking out on the Unz initiative based on my concern that its implementation is likely to result in problems under federal civil rights laws. In the seminal case of *Lau v. Nichols*, the Supreme Court interpreted Title VI of the Civil Rights Act to require school districts to take steps to ensure that national origin minority students with limited English proficiency can effectively participate in the regular educational program. Similarly, the Equal Educational Opportunity Act requires public educational agencies to overcome language barriers that impede student participation in their instructional programs. Limiting special language development instruction to one year and preventing a school from providing bilingual instruction to students, despite the judgment of teachers and the school principal that children in that school need bilingual instruction to progress, are likely to result in violations under these laws.

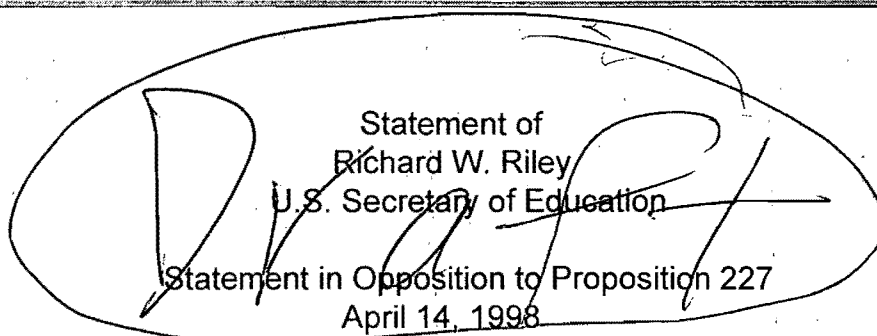
So what can we do to improve bilingual education? How do we respond in a positive way to the legitimate concerns of parents who believe that their children are not learning English as quickly as they should?

We should start by striving to reach the goal of making sure all children learn in English in three years and certainly by five. This approach is consistent with language in our 1998 Appropriations Act, which provides, "...That the Department of Education should only support instructional programs which ensure that students completely master English in a timely fashion (a period of three to five years) while meeting rigorous achievement standards in the academic content areas."

Our consistent position, based on research, should be that no one approach is by definition better than others. The purpose is to help children master the English language while they are learning to high academic standards, and any school district should be able to compete and address the effectiveness of its approach. Local flexibility to choose the approaches that work best for their students should not be constrained by a mandate for one approach over the other.

In conclusion, I urge the voters of California to consider all these educational ramifications of the Unz Initiative. They should not be satisfied with the status quo by any means. I am not either and I support their sense of urgency and desire to make sure their children are full participants in the American experience. At the same time, I urge them not to let their sense of frustration get the best of them and do something that is counter-productive to our common goal of helping children learn English.

Thank you.



I am releasing this statement as the U.S. Secretary of Education because I have been asked by many people in recent months about the educational impact of Proposition 227 or the Unz Amendment. In addition, I have been asked what impact the Unz Initiative would have on current bi-lingual programs that are now supported by the federal government in California.

I have conveyed my opinion to the President and the President supports this statement of opposition to the Unz Amendment.

I want to begin by making a few general observations and then explain the specific reasons why I believe Prop 227 is not well thought out and educational unsound.

I recognize that the decision to vote for or against the Unz Amendment this coming June is ultimately a decision that is up to the voters of California. My purposes today is to simply lay out my educational concerns to inform that debate. I know that there are many well intentioned and concerned citizens on both sides of this issue and that the people of California are taking this issue seriously.

However, it is also important to recognize that how we teach English to our many new immigrants as well as our native-born children who do not speak English is something that concerns educators all over America. There are 13.7 million children under 18 who are either immigrants or the American born offspring of immigrants and they are a rapidly growing part of our student population.

About 3.2 million of these children need help in learning English. There are school districts in almost every part of our country -- from Boston to Seattle to Miami -- where children speak 40 languages in one school. Arlington, Virginia -- just across the river -- is a school district that is a shining example of this increasing diversity.

Some say that these children are a liability but I welcome these children. They are a great source of strength and hope for the future of America and we want them to be full participants in the American experience even as children as well as when they grow up. These young people -- just like generations of immigrants who have come before them -- will grow up to be patriotic Americans who will add their voices to our democracy and help us expand our economy in this new global environment.

Indeed, a recent and, in fact, the largest survey ever conducted of immigrant children, found that these young people had higher grades and a lower school drop-out rate than other American children and overwhelmingly preferred to speak English by the time they were teenagers.

This survey -- conducted by the Russell Sage Foundation, the Andrew Mellon Foundation and the National Science Foundation -- noted that 88% of these young people preferred to speak English by the end high school. As one researcher put it, "English is triumphing with breathtaking rapidity" as the preferred language of new immigrants.

And I can see why. Their parents have come to America because they believe in the American Dream. They have stood in long visa lines, uprooted their families, left relatives behind, changed careers, often accepted menial jobs and -- in many cases now -- work two jobs for one great purpose -- to give their children a better life here in America. Surely we can meet these people half-way by giving their children the best education possible so that they can make their contribution to the American mainstream.

Teaching these young people English is one of the great tasks of nation building that falls to our public schools and our public schools are doing a good job. We can always do a better job but I have come to the conclusion that Prop 227 is not the way go.

Proposition 227 proposes to eliminate bilingual education for most limited English proficient (LEP) students. Proposition 227 would provide for placement of these children in "sheltered English immersion" programs for a period "normally not to exceed one year."

This initiative would also require virtually all public school instruction to be provided in English. This requirement could be waived only if the parent or guardian personally visits the school, provides written consent, and can show that the child already knows English, (in the case of older students) would learn English faster through an alternative instructional technique, or has special needs, in which case the waiver must be approved by the district superintendent.

The Proposition also subjects teachers --and I find this both punitive and threatening -- to personal liability in litigation by parents if they fail to comply with its requirements in educating children.

The Unz Initiative also strips away from local school boards and teachers the ability to make educationally sound decisions about how to meet the needs of the children they teach. This is a direct attack on local control of education. I am surprised that so many outspoken advocates of local control have chosen not to take issue with this fundamental flaw in the Unz Initiative..

I think all Americans share the goal of the Unz Initiative that children who come to school become proficient in English as quickly as possible. This is the primary purpose of bilingual education -- to teach children English even as we maintain high academic standards. I also understand the frustration of some parents who worry that their children are not learning English as fast as they should.

Some bilingual programs are excellent, some need to improve and are improving, and some really are not doing the job they should be doing and need to get fixed quickly. The demand for bilingual education currently exceeds the supply and that is particularly true in California where the number of LEP children has nearly doubled in less than a decade to reach 1.3 million.

One of the biggest problems we confront is the shortage of qualified bilingual teachers. The California State Board of Education estimates that there is a shortage of 21,000 bilingual teachers in California. This, I suspect, is one of the root causes and real reasons why some parents have become frustrated.

Nevertheless, the "one-size-fits-all" approach that defines the Unz Initiative with its strict time limit of one year is not the way to go. The Unz initiative is simple, easy to understand and it is wrong. Prop 227 may satisfy people's sense of frustration but ultimately it is counter-productive to our common goal of making sure children learn English. The approach taken by Prop 227 simply ignores the individual needs of each child and certainly is an educational straight jacket for teachers. Good teaching starts where the child is at and moves them along in a timely and responsible manner.

If we adopted this same approach as suggested by the Unz Initiative to help children learn to read it would be a disaster. Some children are already good readers when they come to kindergarten and others learn by the end of the first or second grades. Other children need extra help even in third grade and beyond.

And when we ask American children to learn another language be it French, Spanish, German or some other language we do not demand that they learn the language in one year or else. I believe that every student and young person in America should have the facility to speak two languages. It is the way of the world. There are young people all over Europe who are easily fluent in three languages and I see no reason why American children should not be their equals. I encourage and support any school district that adopts the goal of making sure that every one of its high school graduates speak two languages fluently.

My point should be very clear -- an arbitrary one year time limit may give people a sense that something is being done --but it flies in the face of years of research that tells us that children learn in different ways and at different speeds.

A recent National Academy of Sciences study released just three weeks ago on March 18 tells

us that, "hurrying young non-English speaking children into reading in English without ensuring adequate preparation is counterproductive."

The report goes on to recommend that children with no English proficiency are best taught to read English by first being taught reading in their native language, if teachers and instructional materials in their native language are available. Thus, while an "English only" approach may be effective for some limited English proficient children -- for example -- the many children in California who speak a hybrid of English and Spanish -- it is likely to be ineffective for others.

I do not oppose "English only" classes. In fact, about 25% of our current bilingual funds support this type of instructional approach. What I question is the arbitrary one year time limit and the demand that only this approach is the right approach to help young people learn English.

I ultimately believe that whether the approach is bilingual education, English as a second language, structured immersion, or some hybrid of them that the success of these programs ultimately turns on the quality and commitment of the school and the teachers. The Unz Initiative strikes at the very heart of this proven approach to success and "ties the hands" of classroom teachers by limiting their discretion in determining what works best for the children in their school.

The Unz Initiative is oddly enough an extreme form of overregulation that will prevent teachers and parents from exercising common sense and professional judgment of how to serve individual children. Exceptions can be made only by school officials who are removed from the classroom. And the proposed requirement regarding the personal liability of teachers is surely good news for litigators and increases the prospects of court intrusions in educational matters.

In addition, our experience in administering the Bilingual Education Act and in reviewing programs for possible violations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act indicates that one year of special instruction -- whether in Bilingual Education or an English immersion approach -- rarely is sufficient to enable a child who starts the program with almost no proficiency in English to become proficient enough to participate in regular classes.

Now, children should not be allowed to dawdle in bilingual classes. This is why I urge schools across America to consider a three year goal as something to strive for as they teach children to learn English. Individual differences and circumstances will cause some children to take longer and that is understandable.

The goal of learning English within three years is similar to our goal of making sure that every child learns to read by the end of third grade if not earlier. Now, a goal is not a mandate, a command or a legal requirement. And a goal is certainly not a one year educational straight

jacket that limits the ability of teachers to do what is best for each individual child. Some children may learn English in one year or two and others may need three years or even more. The focus should be on the individual needs of each child and not on not some artificial and arbitrary time frame.

I will also tell you that based on the educational problems described above, the Unz Initiative may very well implicate federal civil rights laws. In the seminal 1974 case of Lau v. Nichols, the Supreme Court interpreted Title VI of the Civil Rights Act to require school districts to take steps to ensure that national origin minority students with limited English proficiency can effectively participate in the regular educational program.

So what can we do to improve bilingual education? How do we respond in a positive way to the legitimate concerns of parents who believe that their children are not learning English as quickly as they should?

We should start by striving to reach the goal of making sure all children learn in English in three years and certainly by five. This approach is consistent with language in our 1998 Appropriations Act, which provides, ". . . That the Department of Education should only support instructional programs which ensure that students completely master English in a timely fashion (a period of three to five years) while meeting rigorous achievement standards in the academic content areas."

I also urge a strong emphasis on local flexibility, targeting funds on research-based programs, regular testing at the end of each year to make sure that children are making progress, and real incentives for school districts that apply for or receive grants to move LEP children into regular classes taught in English as quickly as possible.

I also believe that we should eliminate the current 25% funding cap on non-bilingual education programs such as English immersion. This cap creates a federal preference for funding bilingual education programs and sends a signal that we disfavor alternative programs that may be effective in meeting the needs of limited English proficient children.

Our consistent position, based on research, should be that no one approach is by definition better than others. The purpose is to help children master the English language while they are learning to high academic standards, and any school district should be able to compete and address the effectiveness of its approach. Local flexibility to choose the approaches that work best for their students should not be constrained by a national priority for one approach over the other.

In conclusion, I urge the voters of California to consider all these educational ramifications of the Unz Initiative. They should not be satisfied with the status quo by any means. I am not either and I support their sense of urgency and desire to make sure their children are full participants in the American experience. At the same time, I urge them not to let their sense

of frustration get the best of them and do something that is counter-productive to our common goal of helping children learn English.

Thank you.

**Secretary's Announcement of Opposition to California Proposition 227
Questions and Answers**

1. Why are you announcing this instead of the President?

This is the President's position, and he has asked me as his primary spokesman for education to speak to the issue. My staff and I worked along side White House staff to analyze the impact passage of this initiative would have on limited English proficient students. Our concern about the potential harm brought to these children by the passage of Proposition 227 is the impetus for my announcement today.

2. Why are you making this announcement now?

We have been considering the issue for some time in consultation with education groups in California and here. The announcement is being made today because we are concerned that the educational message is getting lost in the politics of the debate. In deliberating the issue, we considered the educational and legal aspects. It was our conclusion that passage of Proposition 227 would cause educational harm to the 1.3 million limited English proficient children in California. Many groups including the President's Advisory Commission on excellence in Education for Hispanic Americans have urged the President to state his position. The recent National Academy of Sciences report indicating that children should be taught to read in their primary language when the appropriate resources are in place also gave us the impetus to make this announcement now.

3. Have you talked to President about this announcement?

The President and I discussed this announcement. He is very concerned about improving educational services provided to limited English proficient children. That is why he recommended a 17% increase in the budget for Bilingual Education in Fiscal Year 1999.

4. Is California Proposition 227 a violation of federal civil rights requirements?

School districts are required to take steps to rectify language deficiencies in order to provide access to instructional programs for limited English proficient students. Districts must:

- the district chooses a program that is educationally sound,
- the district is effectively implementing the approach it has chosen by allocating adequate and effective staff and resources, and
- the district is evaluating the program and taking action if the program does not produce results.

Passage of Proposition 227 can be expected to result in violations of federal civil rights laws if children who are judged by their teachers to need bilingual education in order to progress are denied it or if children who are not prepared for regular classes are placed into them after just one year of special support. The one size fits all approach is inconsistent with educational practice and research that tells us that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

5. Does the three year goal relieve districts from their Civil Rights obligations?

No. Districts must comply with applicable civil rights requirements for all children, including requirements applicable to limited English proficient students. Districts would continue to be required to serve limited English proficient students appropriately if they did not transition into regular all English classes in three years. Appropriate exit criteria should be used to determine if limited English proficient students are ready to be mainstreamed. In addition, districts should follow former limited English proficient students over time to ensure that students continue to achieve in mainstream classrooms.

6. Is the three year goal supported by the research?

Research indicates that three years can be a reasonable goal, recognizing that additional language instruction may be necessary depending on the needs of particular students.

7. What should districts be doing to help limited English proficient students learn English?

First districts ensure that limited English proficient children have access to high standards. Districts should also ensure that teachers of limited English proficient students are appropriately trained to meet the students' linguistic needs. Teachers must provide specially adapted English instruction and instruction in the content areas tied to high standards. Children should be assessed to determine their progress, and instruction should be modified as necessary. The program should be evaluated on an ongoing basis to determine its effectiveness.

Additionally, districts should be ensuring that limited English proficient children are served well through other federal programs such as Title I.

8. How will the administration support districts to achieve the three year goal?

The President's budget for fiscal year 1999 includes a 17% increase for bilingual education. This funding would provide grants to schools and universities to train teachers, ensure that the curriculum is tied to high standards, and develop high quality assessment.

To address the 73% of limited English proficient students who are Hispanic, in February the President announced a Hispanic Education Action Plan which would also:

- strengthen basic reading and math skills

- help adults learn English
- help transform schools with high dropout rates
- prepare disadvantaged youth for college
- improve education programs for migrant youth adults

9. How long do districts keep limited English proficient students in bilingual or English as a second language programs?

Districts report that limited English proficient children exit bilingual and English as a second language programs in three to five years depending on the age and educational background of the student. Research indicates that four to seven years of high quality instruction ensures that by the end of high school, typical limited English proficient students will perform as well as typical native speakers of English.

10. Has English as a second language instruction been more effective than bilingual education?

We are not prescribing one approach over another. Both approaches work better than one year of instruction or nothing at all. Both programs are effective when implemented well.

11. How many children are in bilingual classes?

Of the 3.1 million limited English proficient children in the United States, 1.2 million are in bilingual classes.

Fresno Pacific Graduate School

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April 13, 1998

Michael Cohen, Special Assistant to the President
Domestic Policy Council
(202) 456-5581-fax

Dear Mr. Cohen:

I am faxing you this letter to express my concerns about the position President Clinton will be taking on California's Proposition 227.

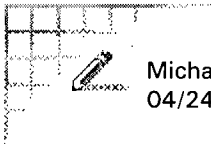
While I applaud his stance against Proposition 227, a bill that is meanspirited, ill conceived, and bad education, I am very concerned about his plan to suggest a three year time limit.

The research, including a great deal done by educators and a recent review of ALL the research done by education policy researcher (Greene, March 2, 1998), shows that it takes a long time to succeed academically in a second language and that first language support for a longer period actually produces better ENGLISH academic success IN ENGLISH.

Please consider carefully the stance that is taken concerning Proposition 227.

Sincerely,

Yvonne S. Freeman, Ph.D.
Director Bilingual Education



Michael Cohen
04/24/98 05:13:57 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP, Laura Emmett/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject: Unz

Below are talking points for Riley. Based on all my experience with Riley, I am convinced we should not try to overscript him on this--we should lay out the key points, signal if there are any key phrases we want him to use--and then assume he will stay on basic message, using his own unique style.

Draft Unz Talking Points

1. It is essential to educate all of our students, including particularly the growing proportion of our school children who are immigrants or American born children of immigrants. A well educated population is key to a growing economy and a health society. We must help all of our students reach the high standards and acquire the knowledge and skills needed for the 21st Century.

2. We must help every child, especially children whose native language is not English, become proficient in English.

3. The Unz Initiative is the wrong way to do this. It will result in fewer LEP students learning English, lower academic achievement in other subjects, and greater frustration for students and parents.

Kids learn at different rates; The one year time limit in Unz is an extreme, one-size-fits-all approach that will harm kids rather than help them.

Unz limits the discretion of teachers to choose the approach that is best suited for the children they teach. Unz would subject teachers, school board members and administrators to personal liability if they fail to comply with its requirements. This is not the way to build cooperation between parents and teachers.

Unz would fly in the face of local control and strip from local school boards the ability to make educationally sound decisions about how to meet the needs of the children.

Unz will in all likelihood result in problems under federal civil rights laws.

4. The right way is to strengthen our public schools overall and improve how our schools help LEP students learn English.

We can help LEP kids learn English and do well in academic subjects if we give them the same tools that other students need in order to succeed: higher standards, safe schools, smaller classes, well prepared teachers, and a challenging curriculum, and schools that are accountable for success. This is what the Administration is already trying to help schools in every state and community accomplish.

No one approach to educating LEP students works best all the time; *we must give local schools the flexibility* to fashion an approach that will work the best for their students.

We must provide LEP students with fully qualified bilingual and English-as-second-language teachers. LEP students will succeed if they are given well-prepared teachers who know how to teach reading and who are knowledgeable about second-language acquisition.

Local school districts must be accountable for performance and results. School districts should be accountable for helping students become proficient in English as rapidly as possible. They should measure progress regularly, report publicly on how well they are doing, and take corrective action if students are not making adequate progress.

BOLD *If we do these things, we can expect students to meet a goal of becoming proficient in English within 3 years.* This is a reasonable goal--many students can learn English faster than they do at present if we set clear expectations and give them the help they need. ~~Some will learn faster, and some students may need more time.~~ A goal is not a mandate or a one-year straight-jacket; if a student needs additional time, he or she should get it, along with the help they need.

Q. Is the Administration planning on proposing changes to the federal bilingual education program now?

A. No, we are opposed to Unz, and we have discussed the principles we think should be used to strengthen efforts to help LEP students learn English. Congress is scheduled to reauthorize the bilingual education program along with other elementary and secondary education program. We will send Congress our reauthorization proposal at that time.

POTUS TALKING POINTS ON UNZ

1. We must educate all of our kids; we can't leave anyone behind. Hispanic Americans are the fastest growing group in our society; all Americans have an interest in providing them with a good education and the knowledge and skills they need to succeed, including proficiency in English.
2. The Unz Initiative will leave kids behind. It will lead to less proficiency in English for LEP kids, lower achievement, and greater frustration for students and parents. Its the wrong way to go, and that is why I am opposed to it.
3. I believe that all kids can learn, if we expect them to and give them the help they need. And I believe that all LEP kids can and must become proficient in English.
4. We must set a national goal for all LEP kids to learn English in 3 years. We must also set a national goal of providing enough well trained teachers who can teach kids English, so our kids can succeed. And we must hold our schools accountable for reaching these goals. High standards, good teachers, real accountability--that's the right way to go.

In the press paper, we can elaborate by (1) challenging districts to increase each year the percentage of kids who learn English within 3 years (2) acknowledge individual differences among kids and recognize that in some instances kids will take longer than 3 years (3) highlight the President request for increased funding for bilinual education, especially for teacher training, as well as other relevant parts of the Hispanic Education Initiative.

5. All of our students deserve a world class education. If our students are to prepare for the 21st century, we must have higher standards, smaller classes, an end to social promotions, master teachers, etc. That's why I proposed national standards, a national effort for smaller classes in the early grades, etc.....

Bruce--I think we'd have a shot at keep Becerra on board with this approach, if that goal is important. Do you think there is enough reform in this for POTUS?

Call tonight if you want to
talk more.

Mika

Record Type: Record

To: Karen E. Skelton/WHO/EOP, Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP
cc: Mickey Ibarra/WHO/EOP, Janet Murguia/WHO/EOP, Michael Cohen/OPD/EOP, Maritza Rivera/WHO/EOP
Subject: outreach calls--UNZ

This is a more formal list of people our office would call (than what I scribbled yesterday):

NCLR--Charles Kamasaki, Raul Yzaguirre

MALDEF--Antonia Hernandez

LULAC--Brent Wilkes, Belen Robles

Hispanic Education Coalition--(Maritza could schedule a quick conference call

Karen Narasaki/Daphne Kwok--Asian advocates

Jim Lyons--NABE

Deborah Escobedo--education advocate--calif

HACU--Antonio Flores/Jacobo Fraire

Ana Guzman--Commission on Hispanic Education/Sarita Brown

Monica Lozano--La Opinion

Latino Civil Rights Task Force--California

Folks--we still don't have closure on how and when the President will articulate his views?

Elena--will you be staying on top of this??

36. San Diego Union Tribune

April 21, 1998 *Democracy and bilingual education*

By Jill Kerper Mora

Bilingual education has become one of the most hotly debated topics on the current political landscape.

On April 1, a legislative Appropriations Committee voted 11-5 to send SB 6 by Sen. Dede Alpert, D-Coronado, to a vote of the full Assembly. Many political analysts say that the bill was spurred on by the treat of Proposition 227, which would virtually eliminate bilingual education. Others point to a recent ruling by Judge Robert Robie in Superior Court in Sacramento that decreed that school district "waivers" to implement alternative types of programs were unnecessary, since the legislation governing bilingual education had expired in 1987.

The vote to push the Alpert bill forward was split across party lines, with only Democrats voting against it along with four Republicans. Assembly Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa called the bill a compromise. It provides for local control over decisions regarding the best programs for educating one out of every four California public school student who is learning English, while requiring accountability to ensure their academic achievement through sound program implementation.

While voters, and especially the education community, watch the debate over bilingual education in the media and among politicians, there is an important lesson to be learned about ethnic relations in a democracy. Sentiments about immigration, languages and cultures run very deep among all groups in society. Values about the use of English and other languages in the schools strike a chord about patriotism or what it means to be an American. Many believe the English language is the glue that holds an ethnically diverse community together.

On the other hand, ethnic minorities, Hispanics in particular, see any law that restricts the free use of other languages in public schools as a threat to both their cultural identity and their economic well-being. Bilingualism is a resource that enhance opportunities within the English-speaking and Spanish-speaking communities in the United States and globally.

Moreover, a high-quality education is essential for advancement. Bilingual education addresses both these concerns. Having seen the popular vote often favor policies that are detrimental to their interests, minority groups look to legislation and the courts to protect their rights to self-determination and equal opportunity in all aspects of civic life, including education.

Opponents of bilingual education may dismiss the actions of the Legislature as irrelevant, considering that whatever compromises made to enact a bill can be overturned by a majority vote on Proposition 227. Many may feel that the opinions expressed in the initiative process represent "the will of the people."

The Founding Fathers established a government, including the executive, legislative and the judiciary branches, with a system of checks and balances. The authors of the Constitution, especially James Madison, warned that the majority could become indifferent to the concerns of the minority, endangering the possibility that in a heterogeneous community, the majority would not represent all competing interests.

Californians should heed the lessons learned by the fact that Proposition 187 has been declared unconstitutional. The courts must rule based on established law whether or not the interests of minority groups are being violated by any new laws that are enacted, whether by legislation or through the initiative process. Experts in educational law have raised questions about Proposition 227's constitutionality, based on the provisions that guarantee language-minority students the right to a "meaningful and effective" education in the 1974 Lau vs. Nichols Supreme Court decision.

As an ethnically diverse population in our state, we must learn to live together. This means that we must struggle with practical realities of how we compromise and cooperate with each other to improve education for all our children, regardless of what language they speak and what cultural values they hold dear.

If the majority is seen as arbitrary and uncompromising in considering the wishes and concerns of the minority, it will harm ethnic relations and poison the well of the democratic process for all of us. The true glue that holds us together as a nation is not English. Rather, it is a respect for democracy that balances the interests of the whole community to provide equal opportunity for "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" so we can advance as a united people.

MORA is an assistant professor of teacher education at San Diego State University specializing in preparing teacher candidates for English-language-development classroom assignments. ■

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MORA is an assistant professor of teacher education at San Diego State University specializing in preparing teacher candidates for English-language-development classroom assignments. ■

By Edgar Sanchez Bee Staff Writer

To its students and teachers, bilingual immersion is an example of what's right with education in the Sacramento City Unified School District — a program that teaches Spanish-speaking students how to read and write.

But to the Sacramento City Taxpayers' Rights League and its leader, accountant Mark Whisler, the program is "holding students back" by its approach.

The two sides met head-on Monday night at the school board, where participants in bilingual education came to demonstrate their progress and Whisler called for the program's elimination.

Throughout California, the issue of bilingual education is a hot one and voters will cast ballots in June on Proposition 227, which would largely eliminate bilingual education in public schools statewide.

Monday's Sacramento City controversy stems primarily from the program's approach to reading instruction, which has Spanish-speaking students learning first in their native language before learning in English.

The program, launched four years ago, now serves about 300 students at Fruitridge, Edward Kemble and Bowling Green elementary schools. Participation is voluntary and requires parental permission.

The goal is to make students bilingual and biliterate in Spanish and in English, said Linda Ventriglia, director of the district's Center for Research and Teaching Excellence.

"Students only learn to read once," Ventriglia said in a written report to district officials. "Research indicates that it is best for students to be instructed to read first in the language they speak."

Test results suggest the immersion program is working, Ventriglia said.

But Whisler, whose group last year led opposition to a \$225 million Sacramento City school bond measure, contends that teaching kids initially in Spanish dooms them to failure. "I'm not against a program that teaches English in the morning and Spanish in the afternoon," he said before Monday's meeting. "But not to teach kids English at the earliest possible moment is wrong."

The best time for children to learn a second language is between infancy and 5 years old, Whisler said, citing a recent news report.

"So every day that you don't teach a kid English, you put them at a disadvantage," he said. "Every day that they don't learn, it's harder for them to learn."

Superintendent Jim Sweeney, interviewed before Monday's meeting, said he was "surprised and disappointed" by Whisler's statements.

He also questioned Whisler's knowledge of the bilingual program, noting that Whisler's letter to the district noted a "proposed plan" when none is anticipated.

"If Prop. 227 is approved, and if it holds up in the courts, the (immersion) program will be discontinued," Sweeney said. "(But) we won't be asking someone from the Taxpayers' Rights League for advice." ■

There is a consensus among psycholinguists that most aspects of both first and second language acquisition are universal across humans, and are the result of highly specialized learning mechanisms (Steven Pinker, Jerry Fodor, Howard Gardner). What we know about this learning mechanism is that it is very robust and active. Another way of putting it is that there is very little that can be done to either disturb or accelerate its development, as long as there is adequate exposure to the language to be learned. Studies in first and second language acquisition that have tried to accelerate the rate of acquisition, for example by increasing the amount of language to which children are exposed, have generally failed (Courtney Cazden conducted the original studies of first language acquisition that failed to show effects of language modelling; and her analysis of the Ramirez study in which she interpreted the findings as a failure of the "time on task" theory). There is thus no reason to expect increased emphasis on the development of English language skills to result in accelerated English language development.

What, then, determines the rate of English language acquisition? Most of it is explained by the language aptitude of the children in their native language as well as the educational level of the parents. Children with strong native language skills and parents who are well educated learn English quickly; those with weaker native language skills and parents with little formal education learn English more slowly.

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
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001. fax	To Michael Cohen from Zoraida Maldonado (partial) (1 page)	04/14/98	P6/b(6)
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COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Domestic Policy Council
Michael Cohen (Subject Files)
OA/Box Number: 13362

FOLDER TITLE:

California [Ron K.] Unz Initiative - Bilingual Education: Unz Message

2012-0160-S

ry1207

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
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- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

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PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

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To: Michael Cohen, Special Assistant to the President
Domestic Policy Control
Date: April 14, 1998

I do not agree that creating time limits will deter the efforts of those supporting the Prop. 227. In allowing for time limits on bilingual programs, the educational programs will be set up for failure and will eventually refuel the fires to do away with any and all efforts to effectively teach the large numbers of children in public schools for whom English is not the first language spoken. These failures (as occur now with poorly designed or under-funded programs) are then used to justify the elimination of any attempts to educate our future generations. We are in no position to jeopardize the education of the children we need to bring us to the 21st century. We surely do not need to waste 2 and 3 generations while they learn "the old way" when there are better and more effective ways of doing so now than ever before.

The research of the past 30-50 years is very clear on how language learning occurs and how to teach a second language. It has been documented recently by two 8 and 10 year longitudinal studies (Ramirez and Collier) showing once again that second language acquisition is best achieved through the native language and that it takes 6-7 years to achieve complete bilingualism. Recent reports also prove that bilingual persons have higher earnings than monolingual citizens and so it benefits the economy and its people to be well versed in more than one language. It behooves the government to use the research to justify not only maintaining current bilingual programs but expanding them to the general population by making bilingual education part of the total educational curriculum for all children in American schools.

Sincerely,

Zoraida Maldonado

P6/(b)(6)

[001]

April 13, 1998

Michael Cohen
Special Assistant to the President

Dear Mr. Cohen,

It was with great pleasure that I learned that the Clinton Administration is expected to publicly announce its opposition to the California Proposition 227. I was happy to see that more and more of our government officials from across the nation are visibly standing up against such a mean-spirited concept. The eventual defeat of this mindless attack on our increasingly significant immigrant communities and their invaluable linguistic resources will allow our educational practitioners the flexibility to use proven to be effective strategies based on the varied needs of their unique student populations. I'm sure that it has been your experience in your many years within political arenas that "for every complicated problem there is a simple but wrong solution"!

Unfortunately, it was also with great sorrow that I heard that your administration was contemplating establishing their own "simple solution" of a three-year time limit to bilingual education. Again, it still appears that there are many at your level that are truly unaware of the complexity of the issue and that the reality is that for this complicated problem there are a variety of complicated solutions. In our community we have been wrestling with this difficult challenge for more than two decades and are beginning finally to see positive results. Our major problem was not with the "idea". The problem was that we did not have the sufficient material and, more importantly, human resources to implement this idea. It was as if we were fighting a war and we were losing the air battles because we didn't have enough trained pilots or aircraft. Finally, we began to "hold our own" in the air because more and better planes and pilots were being placed on the battlefronts. Wouldn't it have been mindless for us to ground our pilots forever because we currently weren't winning the war? Instead, what we should have been doing was more aggressively building more efficient aircraft and training expert pilots based on the experiences in the battles that we had won.

The simple one-year or three-year solutions are not based on the battles that we have won. They are based on poor leadership that is satisfied with short-term gratification and safety. The problem is that these types of leaders end up losing the wars -- wars that must be fought if we are to be protected from the complexities to be found within our future societies.

Your administration has stood firm on many issues that clearly focus on what the future will bring, not just on what is safe for today. Please reconsider. The three year solution is another "safe for today" payment that will cost us dearly in the future.

Sincerely,



Paul E. Guevara
Coordinator, Bilingual Services
Merced City School District
1730 E. Brookdale Ave.
Merced, CA 95340
(209)385-6666 or FAX (209)385-6673

Tuesday, April 14, 1998

To: Secretary of Education Richard Riley

CC: Special Assistant to the President Michael Cohen

From: Rosa Castro Feinberg

Re: Proposition 227

A copy of a message I e-mailed to President Clinton follows, for your information and consideration.

April 14, 1998

Mr. President:

I retired last year from ten years of service as a member of the Dade County School Board, as the first Hispanic woman elected countywide. I am an Associate Professor at Florida International University, and a former schoolteacher. My specialty is educational policy development for language minority populations. I have been an educator, and a Democrat, all my life. My first political action was as a volunteer for President Kennedy's campaign.

I understand you are planning to make a statement in opposition to California's Proposition 227. I am glad to hear that. I have the following recommendations for your consideration, designed both to assist students and to prevent damage to the party.

1. **Do not set limits on the time it takes a child to learn English, or on the number of years programs for that purpose will be funded.** It would be better for the Party for you to remain silent than to oppose Proposition 227 in a way that damages children and angers Hispanics and other language minority communities, and educators of any ethnicity, through out the country. It has been very difficult keeping Hispanics in the Democratic Party in Florida. Please don't drive away those we still have, particularly while we are gearing up for the race for governor.

2. Instead, couch your statements in concert with the following key ideas:

A.

This is America. Anyone who does not learn English in this country is at a disadvantage. I call upon all educators to strive to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of second language education programs in ways suggested by the latest research, and to increase access to those programs, in every way possible. Toward that end, my budget priorities include \$x.00 for programs administered by the Office of Education, programs whose purpose is to assist students to learn English; \$x.00 for the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, which disseminates the latest research in this area, and \$x.00 for support of research centers such as the Center for Research in Excellence, Diversity, and Education (CREDE), at the University of California in Santa Cruz. For the same reasons, I call on the voters of California to vote NO on the UTZ initiative, which limits second language instruction to only one year and limits opportunities for parents to be part of the educational process.

B.

This is America. In this country, we have a strong tradition of local control of education. I oppose Proposition 227 because it flies in the face of that tradition. In response to the critical shortages of properly qualified teachers identified by school boards and state education agencies, I have asked the Office of Education

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to develop a plan to dramatically increase the numbers of teachers for second language learners by encouraging those with college training in their own countries who apply for residence in our country to become teachers and professors here.

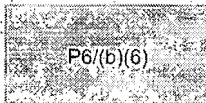
C.

This is America. We have made a national commitment to educational reform, to reaching high academic standards of world class education, for all our students, for the benefit of all of us in this country. All over the world, a mark of an educated person is literacy in more than one language. In addition, biliteracy is a means to economic development. Note research findings announced last month in Miami, which report that the highest incomes are earned by biliterate persons, the next highest by English monolinguals, and the lowest by Spanish monolinguals. Whether in prestigious International Baccalaureate Programs, or in the poorest neighborhood schoolhouse, parents who want their children to have this advantage should have the opportunity, and the support, to reach that goal. This is another reason I oppose Proposition 227-it would substitute centralized control for decisions that should be made by individual families and local boards of education. I have asked Secretary of Education Riley to review our programs to insure coordination of federal resources to maximize the support provided to reading, literacy, and biliteracy programs for all our students.

I hope these suggestions are helpful to you. Please feel free to call upon me if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Rosa Castro Feinberg, Ph.D.



[002]

CC: Secretary of Education Richard Riley

Fax: 202 401 0596

Michael Cohen, Special Assistant to the President

Fax: 202 456 5581

Attachment:

<http://www.herald.com/dade/digdocs/035577.htm>

Published Tuesday, March 31, 1998, in the Miami Herald
Experts: Bilingualism vital to economy

By JACK WHEAT
Herald Staff Writer

Advocates of a bilingual work force usually cite its importance to regional economic development. But a University of Miami professor said linguistic skill is already a major factor in the financial health of families all over Miami-Dade County.

A Hispanic family of four whose members speak Spanish at home and have good English skills earns almost three times as much as a family whose members speak no English, Professor Thomas Boswell reported Monday at a symposium on creating a multilingual work force at the James L. Knight Center.

In the 1990 Census, Hispanics who spoke Spanish at home and function very well in English had an average per capita income of \$12,594, or \$50,376 for a family of four, said Boswell, a geographer who analyzes demographic trends.

Hispanic families whose four members spoke only English had an average income of \$32,800,

Boswell told about 300 business leaders and educators at the daylong conference.

Lowest of all, the per-capita income for those who spoke Spanish and no English was \$4,560, or \$18,240 for a family of four, Boswell said.

In the intervening eight years, he said, economic trends, especially higher pay for those better educated, have likely widened the gaps.

Sponsored by UM, the University of Florida, The Herald / El Nuevo Herald, Heinle and

Heinle publishers and the state Department of Education, the conference was free and open to the public.

The data show that concern that the preponderance of Hispanics in Dade discourages immigrants from learning English is unfounded, he said.

"They're learning English because there are powerful incentives," he said.
"Being bilingual
means you're less likely to be in poverty."

Dade is getting the message that bilingualism translates into money,
speakers said, pointing
to the School Board's endorsement earlier this month of a plan to provide
bilingual education
for all public school students.

Some were concerned that the board is waiting to see how much money
the county will get
from the state next year before deciding whether to fund the bilingualism
program.

"No dough, no bread," said Joel Gomez, director of the National
Clearinghouse for Bilingual
Education in Washington.

As large immigrant enclaves develop in other regions of Florida, bilingual
education is
becoming a pressing issue statewide. And despite an anti-bilingualism
movement in
California, Gomez said, Texas, New York City and other regions are
joining Florida with
strong movements to educate their students in more than one language.

Miami has always been the U.S. city with the great geographic advantage
in the competition
to be the main staging ground for trade with Latin America, Boswell said.
Most of South
America is southeast of Miami -- putting it much closer to Miami than to
Los Angeles,
Houston and New Orleans.

"Most people don't realize the large South American city most directly
south of Florida is
Guayaquil, Ecuador, which is located on the Pacific coast of South
America," Boswell said.

In 1960, only 2 percent of Florida's population was Hispanic. Massive
immigration following
Castro's takeover in Cuba, coupled with the exiles' linguistic capabilities,
were key to the

county developing its \$37-billion-a-year Latin American trade, Boswell said.

Frank Nero, president of The Beacon Council, said Hispanic immigration has been the most prevalent, but it hasn't been the only immigration essential to the Dade economy.

The county has 350 multinational corporations, 53 foreign consulates and 23 foreign trade offices. But to maintain its edge, the county needs more workers fluent and literate not just in English and Spanish, but capable of conducting business in languages like German, Japanese and French -- as well as Haitian-Creole, he said.

As Dade's older Hispanic workers have begun retiring, their bilingual skills are leaving with them. Nero noted the county's unemployment rate is double the state average, yet companies needing multilingual workers often must bring them in from Latin America or elsewhere.

Boswell said the prevalence of Latin American immigrants has obscured significant immigration from other places. The 1990 Census showed a quarter of the state's immigrants had come from Europe or Asia.

UM education Professor Sandra Fradd, an expert in bilingual education who organized the symposium, said traditional English instruction for immigrant children will not develop a bilingual work force.

Programs in which fully bi-literate teachers guide students from both language backgrounds are the best bet for producing a bilingual work force, she said. Students in those programs match up well with students in English-oriented instruction, Fradd said.

"Children learn language quickly. They also forget language quickly," she said. "When English proficiency is the only goal, they dissociate themselves from their native language. their parents and their culture."

Rosa Sugrancs, chairwoman of the Hispanic Business Group of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce and a native of Spain, said her father advised her: "If you want to buy something you can speak in any language you want. But if you want to sell something, you'd better know English."

In Miami, the same is now true of Spanish, she said.

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Dow Jones News/Retrieval®***A Bilingual Bill at Last***

DOCUMENT 2 OF 193

LATM9811200217

Metro; Editorial Writers Desk

* A Bilingual Bill at Last

400 Words

2948 Characters

04/22/98

Los Angeles Times

Home Edition

B-6

Editorial

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The members of the California Legislature are masters of too little too late. With an English-only ballot initiative just weeks from a public vote, * lawmakers who had dithered about bilingual education for a decade finally approved a moderate reform measure. There is little chance that the ballot * measure, which would in effect do away with bilingual education, will be affected by the measure passed Monday by the Legislature. Despite all that, the bill, by state Sen. Dede Alpert (D-Coronado), deserves the governor's signature.

Alpert's SB 6 would set a realistic target of moving children into regular English-only classes within three years. Gov. Pete Wilson should sign this bill even though he has been justifiably impatient with the Legislature's political foot-dragging on this emotional issue. Also impatient are parents of the many limited-English children who have attended California's public schools for years without learning to read and write in English.

- * Bilingual reform passed this time around with the help of new Assembly Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa (D-Los Angeles), who pushed the bill forward in his first months in the post. His predecessor, Cruz Bustamante, stalled the bill last year under pressure from the legislative Latino
- * Caucus, which feared the political risks of change even as anti-bilingual forces gathered steam for their ballot proposition. The political climate has changed sharply since then with the surging campaign for Proposition 227, which would require almost all public school instruction to be in English.

The Alpert bill would encourage flexibility and experimentation and require testing and reporting of results in two years. If students failed to make progress in English proficiency and core academic subjects,

- * school districts would be required to revise their bilingual instruction.
- * Laggard districts might look to Calexico's successful bilingual program or to Westminster and some other Orange County districts, which will be

Source: Los Angeles Times, April 22, 1998

Dow Jones News/Retrieval®

experimenting with new systems as long as testing shows students are not falling behind. The state board no longer requires waivers to try something new, but under SB6 continued failure would trigger intervention, including expert help, by the State Board of Education.

A key provision of the bill would require daily English instruction by credentialed teachers and, when possible, support from a trained aide who speaks the student's primary language.

- * The Alpert bill would improve bilingual education for the nearly 25% of California public school students who need help learning English. The bill is mild, educationally sound and long overdue.

10607 * End of document.

Dow Jones News/Retrieval****California and the West Assembly Tries to Beat ...***

DOCUMENT 3 OF 193

LATM9811101216

Metro Desk

California and the West

Assembly Tries to Beat Prop. 227 to the Punch

Education: Legislators approve milder version of the ballot measure that

* would effectively ban bilingual education in the state. Polls say voters may not be so easily appeased.

MAX VANZI; ERIC BAILEY

TIMES STAFF WRITERS

513 Words

4086 Characters

04/21/98

Los Angeles Times

Home Edition

A-3

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SACRAMENTO -- In a desperate attempt to head off a June ballot

* initiative that would end most bilingual instruction for non-English-speaking schoolchildren, the state Assembly on Monday tried to sell the public on a less harsh approach.

Concluding a heated lower house debate, legislators easily passed a

* bill designed to allow local control and flexibility in bilingual teaching, in contrast to the more stringent ballot measure. The vote was 50 to 27.

The bill by state Sen. Dede Alpert (D-Coronado) was hastily sent to the Senate for a final legislative vote before being sent to Gov. Pete Wilson for his signature.

It is unclear whether Wilson will sign Alpert's bill. The governor has not taken a stance on the June ballot initiative, but he held discussions with Democratic leaders last year asking them to send him a bill

* reforming bilingual education. He also warned lawmakers that if they didn't act soon, voters would do the job for them.

Voters may well act in any case by passing Proposition 227 in June: Opinion polls show overwhelming support for the measure, sponsored by conservative businessman Ron Unz.

"This is exactly the sort of parliamentary gamesmanship that gives California state government a bad reputation," Unz said. "This bill would

* have virtually no impact on the problems with bilingual education facing our state. It simply represents a fig leaf for lawmakers trying to justify their inflated salaries."

With six weeks to go before the June 2 primary election, backers of

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the Alpert bill said there is still time to swing voters away from the ballot measure.

"I'm not at all sure that Proposition 227 will prevail," said Assemblywoman Kerry Mazzoni (D-San Rafael), who led the fight for passage on the Assembly floor. Despite polls showing that three-quarters of California voters approve of the Unz initiative, "public support has been losing ground" recently, she said.

A "reasonable legislative alternative," Mazzoni said, would show that "we've already addressed the problem of English learners."

Republican opponents ridiculed the notion that there is a realistic chance of changing public opinion at this late date.

Assemblyman Curt Pringle (R-Garden Grove), for example, asked majority Democrats to explain, "Where were you on Sept. 9," at the end of last year's legislative session. If enacted then, "bill could have taken effect on Jan. 1, 1998, and given a chance . . . to show the people that * we can act" to reform the bilingual system.

In contrast to the Unz approach, which would immerse non-English-speaking children in English-language instruction in the early years, the Alpert bill would give school districts a freer hand to shape whatever approach they believe works best. That might include instruction in a student's native language, immersion in classrooms dominated by English or some other approach. It also would hold districts accountable for producing positive results.

Assembly insiders said Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa (D-Los Angeles) had worked to persuade fellow Democratic Latino members that the Alpert bill was their best hope to hold off an Unz victory at the polls.

Nine Republicans joined the majority Democrats in voting for the bill.

I0607 * End of document.

Dow Jones News/Retrieval****Democrats' bilingual bill an attempt to save face***

DOCUMENT 5 OF 193

FBEE9811200183

TELEGRAPH

DAN WALTERS

* Democrats' bilingual bill an attempt to save face

Dan Walters

554 Words

3838 Characters

04/21/98

The Fresno Bee

HOME

A3

(Copyright 1998)

Last year, legislation to overhaul the state's massive,

* expensive and widely criticized system of bilingual education cleared the state Senate with a strong bipartisan majority and began moving through the Assembly.

But when the bill reached the Assembly Appropriations Committee, it was placed in the legislative freezer by then-Speaker Cruz

Bustamante, acting at the behest of the Assembly's Latino caucus and

* bilingual education teachers.

Late in the year, Republicans moved to withdraw the measure from committee and force a full Assembly vote. But Democrats voted almost unanimously to stall action, and the Legislature adjourned for the year without doing anything.

What a difference a year makes. In the aftermath of the

* Legislature's inaction, a measure to virtually abolish bilingual education was qualified for the June primary ballot by Silicon Valley
* millionaire Ron Unz. And a judge ruled that the state's bilingual education requirement expired more than a decade ago.

On Monday, six weeks before voters will decide the fate of the Unz initiative, Democrats brought a mildly altered version of the long-stalled legislation to the Assembly floor and passed it. The vote was 50-27, with a handful of Republicans backing the measure.

Why the change of heart by Democrats? Despite the rationalizations offered by Democratic leaders, it clearly was because polls show that the Unz initiative is enjoying strong voter support. Thus, reforms that Latino leaders and other advocates of
* bilingual education found distasteful last year appear much more palatable this year.

The legislation would give local school districts wide discretion in designing programs for the estimated 1.4 million children -- a quarter of all public school students -- who have limited or no English proficiency. The Unz measure, meanwhile, would put those

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students into "sheltered" English immersion instruction.

The issue itself is highly emotional, the latest in a series of racially tinged political clashes in the state and one that colors this year's campaigns. But it has other ramifications, both political and philosophical.

Democrats needed political cover, having killed the bipartisan reform bill last year. Monday's vote gives them something to take back to their voters this year, especially if they publicly oppose the Unz measure.

Newly installed Assembly Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa needed a win, having stumbled badly on two earlier issues, school bonds and assault weapons control, and having been privately criticized by fellow Democrats for the failures. The speaker conducted an hours-long, closed-door Democratic caucus to carefully count his votes before risking the public roll call on such a high-profile issue.

Finally, the Legislature as a whole needed to demonstrate that it can act on a highly contentious issue -- even if that action may have occurred too late to affect the outcome of the vote on the Unz measure, Proposition 227. Ever since Proposition 13 passed in 1978, the Legislature has ceded policy action to the initiative process and reacted to major issues, if at all, after the fact.

"The Legislature has dithered and the people have gone to the initiative system," Assemblyman Howard Wayne, D-San Diego, said during the floor debate. Added Villaraigosa: "Let the world know the Legislature is willing to act."

Had Bustamante, Villaraigosa's predecessor, not held up the reform measure last year, however, it would have been in place before Unz began gathering signatures. Acting now is more a symbolic gesture than meaningful and responsive legislation.

I0607 * End of document.

Dow Jones News/Retrieval®**FOES CLASH ON BILINGUAL EDUCATION CITY...**

DOCUMENT 9 OF 193

SBEE9811200124

METRO

*** FOES CLASH ON BILINGUAL EDUCATION CITY SCHOOLS PROGRAM IS
PRAISED, CRITICIZED**

Edgar Sanchez Bee Staff Writer

431 Words

3099 Characters

04/21/98

The Sacramento Bee

METRO FINAL

B1

(Copyright 1998)

- * To its students and teachers, bilingual immersion is an example of what's right with education in the Sacramento City Unified School District -- a program that teaches Spanish-speaking students how to read and write.

But to the Sacramento City Taxpayers' Rights League and its leader, accountant Mark Whisler, the program is "holding students back" by its approach.

The two sides met head-on Monday night at the school board, where

- * participants in bilingual education came to demonstrate their progress and Whisler called for the program's elimination.
- * Throughout California, the issue of bilingual education is a hot one and voters will cast ballots in June on Proposition 227, which
- * would largely eliminate bilingual education in public schools statewide.

Monday's Sacramento City controversy stems primarily from the program's approach to reading instruction, which has Spanish-speaking students learning first in their native language before learning in English.

The program, launched four years ago, now serves about 300 students at Fruitridge, Edward Kemble and Bowling Green elementary schools. Participation is voluntary and requires parental permission.

- * The goal is to make students bilingual and biliterate in Spanish and in English, said Linda Ventriglia, director of the district's Center for Research and Teaching Excellence.

"Students only learn to read once," Ventriglia said in a written report to district officials. "Research indicates that it is best for students to be instructed to read first in the language they speak."

Test results suggest the immersion program is working, Ventriglia said.

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But Whisler, whose group last year led opposition to a \$225 million Sacramento City school bond measure, contends that teaching kids initially in Spanish dooms them to failure. "I'm not against a program that teaches English in the morning and Spanish in the afternoon," he said before Monday's meeting. "But not to teach kids English at the earliest possible moment is wrong."

The best time for children to learn a second language is between infancy and 5 years old, Whisler said, citing a recent news report.

"So every day that you don't teach a kid English, you put them at a disadvantage," he said. "Every day that they don't learn, it's harder for them to learn."

Superintendent Jim Sweeney, interviewed before Monday's meeting, said he was "surprised and disappointed" by Whisler's statements.

* He also questioned Whisler's knowledge of the bilingual program, noting that Whisler's letter to the district noted a "proposed plan" when none is anticipated.

"If Prop. 227 is approved, and if it holds up in the courts, the (immersion) program will be discontinued," Sweeney said. "(But) we won't be asking someone from the Taxpayers' Rights League for advice."

I0607 * End of document.

Dow Jones News/Retrieval®***Assembly OKs bilingual education bill***

DOCUMENT 15 OF 193

SDU9811200435

NEWS

* Assembly OKs bilingual education bill

Ed Mendel

STAFF WRITER

629 Words

4511 Characters

04/21/98

The San Diego Union-Tribune

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

A-3

(Copyright 1998)

SACRAMENTO -- With an eye toward an initiative on the June ballot, the Assembly yesterday approved a long-stalled bill that would authorize local school districts to decide whether or not to use

* bilingual education.

Supporters said the bill is an attempt to find the "middle ground" in the heated debate over whether the 1.4 million California children who speak limited English should be taught in their native language or learn English quickly.

The author of the bill, Sen. Dede Alpert, D-Coronado, said that the

* sponsor of an initiative that would eliminate most bilingual education programs, Ron Unz, complained that the Legislature has not acted.

"It's taken us awhile, but now we have something," said Alpert. "If the governor signs this into law, I think we will have something to point to for reasons for not supporting the Unz initiative."

* Proposition 227, which has a commanding lead in statewide polls, would eliminate most of the bilingual education programs that teach children in their native language for up to seven years. The initiative would impose sheltered English immersion programs lasting about a year.

Unz said the Assembly action, coming six weeks before the election, reverses previous opposition to the Alpert bill in the lower house and is a "transparent attempt" to weaken support for the initiative.

"It's exactly the kind of parliamentary games that gives the Legislature a bad reputation with the public," said Unz.

The bill was approved on a 50-27 vote with support from eight Republicans and all but two Democrats. All San Diego-area Democrats supported the bill, while Republican members of the local delegation voted against it.

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The bill goes back to the Senate for approval of minor amendments made in the Assembly. Gov. Pete Wilson has not yet taken a position on Proposition 227 or Alpert's bill.

- * A court ruled earlier this year that the state bilingual education law expired in 1987, prompting the state Board of Education to adopt tentative guidelines allowing local districts to make their own
- * decisions about bilingual education.

Alpert said legislation is needed to put the new policy into law. Her bill also requires annual testing to make sure that English learners are making progress.

- For three years, Alpert and Assemblyman Brooks Firestone, R-Santa
- * Barbara, tried to work out a reform of the troubled bilingual
 - * education program, repeatedly running into roadblocks from bilingual educators and Latino educators.

- * Opponents say bilingual education is a failure because only 5 to 10 percent of the students transfer to mainstream English classes each
- * year. They also say that bilingual education contributes to a high dropout rate among Latino students.
- * But bilingual education advocates, who acknowledge that some programs are poorly run, say that teaching children in their native language keeps them from falling behind and can improve academic achievement.

Alpert's bill cleared the Senate on a strong bipartisan vote last year and was also approved by the Assembly Education Committee. But then Latino Assembly leaders bottled up the bill in the Assembly Appropriations Committee until earlier this month.

In the floor debate yesterday, Assemblyman Jan Goldsmith, R-Poway, said that Democrats blocked an attempt by Republicans to pull the bill out of committee last Sept. 9, which might have forestalled the initiative.

But Unz said yesterday that he began gathering signatures for his initiative in early July of last year, eventually turning in about 800,000, and would not have been stopped by passage of Alpert's bill.

- Unz said Alpert's bill would only "ratify the status quo" because the school boards of most large school districts are firmly committed to
- * bilingual education.

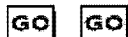
The lone Republican Latino legislator, Rod Pacheco of Riverside, accused Democrats of backing the Alpert bill because they want to be

Source: San Diego Union-Tribune, April 21, 1998

Dow Jones News/Retrieval*

* able to say they voted for reform if bilingual education becomes an issue in elections.

I0607 * End of document.



Los Angeles Times

FRONT PAGE

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Monday, April 27, 1998

White House to Announce Opposition to Prop. 227

■ Policy: The Clinton administration, after much debate, is expected to repudiate popular California initiative to ban bilingual education. Ballot measure is called 'an extreme approach.'

By JONATHAN PETERSON, Times Staff Writer

WASHINGTON--The Clinton administration, after months of spirited internal debate, has decided to formally oppose California's Proposition 227, which would ban bilingual education, according to officials in the White House and the Department of Education.

Education Secretary Richard W. Riley is expected to announce the White House decision as early as today. He also is expected to point out that the administration is considering moving toward a goal of limiting participation in bilingual programs to three years.

"The overriding goal here is to make sure kids learn English," said one well-placed administration official. "As we looked into this, we became convinced that [Proposition 227] was not the right way to do that. That kind of extreme approach is likely to result in fewer kids learning English and fewer kids doing well in other academic subjects."

Proposition 227 would replace today's patchwork of bilingual programs, some of which can last for years, with a one-year immersion in English instruction for those with limited proficiency. The overwhelming majority of students then would be shifted into English-speaking classrooms.

So popular is the measure with the public--it enjoys a support level of about 70% in a recent poll--that Clinton's opposition would have to influence a huge slice of the electorate before it could affect the outcome of the June 2 vote.

Although many Latinos are among those supporting Proposition 227, some activists have assailed it as educationally destructive and the latest in a string of California ballot initiatives tinged with racism. Latino activists had urged the White House to weigh in on the statewide debate.

"We welcome the White House coming out against Proposition 227," said Ambrosio Rodriguez, an attorney in Washington for the Mexican American Legal Defense and

Educational Fund.

These activists, however, oppose arbitrary limits, such as the three-year period under consideration by the White House, on participation in bilingual programs by individual students. "We know that bilingual education works best without a time limit," Rodriguez said.

Advocates of the ballot measure, whose author is conservative entrepreneur Ron K. Unz, disapproved of the administration's new stance and are not appeased by White House consideration of a three-year goal for participation in bilingual programs.

"I think President Clinton has become the most misinformed citizen in the United States," said Fernando Vega, a former school board member in Redwood City and a regional honorary chairman of the movement for Proposition 227. "We are losing generations and generations of Latino kids to this program called bilingual education."

Clinton, he maintained, "is listening to groups that have an interest in the funding of bilingual education--money that is badly spent."

The administration finds itself caught in the cross-fire. White House officials have had difficulty crafting a politically acceptable retort to Proposition 227 without appearing to endorse the wide variations in the quality of bilingual education programs, many of whose students never make the transition to English-based classrooms.

* * *

An administration source explained that policymakers sought a formula for opposing Proposition 227 without appearing to support the status quo. "You can't defend the status quo," the source said.

The administration concluded that the California proposition would impose an overly rigid time frame on students and remove the flexibility of schools and teachers to design the most appropriate programs for local needs.

To many, the highly charged controversy over bilingual education is linked to deeply held opinions about the role of schools. Those who would defend or build upon the current system cite research that continued instruction in a person's native language, along with English, can help in the transition to mainstream U.S. classrooms.

But the system's many critics retort that bilingual education too often puts students in a backwater from which they can never get to the mainstream.

The California flap is stirring a national debate. House Majority Whip Tom DeLay (R-Texas), for example, plans to introduce a bill this week to eliminate the Education Department's office of bilingual education and shift its entire \$200-million budget to other activities in the department.

"The point of the bill is that bilingual education fails the

kids it's supposed to be serving," said a spokesman for DeLay.

With the June 2 vote on the proposition approaching, White House aides earlier this month presented Clinton with a nine-page memo proposing that he formally oppose it. The internal memo also set forth principles that officials maintain would make bilingual programs more effective. Clinton signaled his approval of the document last week.

One conclusion shared inside the White House is that the inadequacies of bilingual education often reflect broader problems of public education, such as overpopulated classrooms and shortages of adequately trained teachers. Clinton's proposals for adopting national academic standards, hiring 100,000 teachers and providing new financial incentives to modernize schools have encountered stiff resistance in Congress.

* * *

In their memo to the president, White House officials contrast the rigid mandates of Proposition 227 with their own "goal" of moving students out of bilingual education after three years.

On the similarly inflammatory issue of accountability, White House officials are leaving certain details murky. But making the schools accountable for their results is fundamental to Clinton's approach toward improving education, and it appears that the administration is moving toward tougher federal monitoring of bilingual programs.

The federal effort in bilingual education is scheduled for a thorough review next year in Congress, and the recent White House discussion begins to clarify the set of principles that will guide the administration when the policy is formally modified next year.

"In general, what this [accountability] has to mean is measuring student and school progress--and when there's not adequate progress, some action has to be taken," one administration official said.

This is not the first time Clinton has weighed in on a California ballot issue. The president also came out against Proposition 209, the 1996 proposal to slash affirmative action. Some opponents of that measure, which prevailed among the voters, were disappointed that Clinton did not oppose it more forcefully.

Two years before that, Clinton also opposed Proposition 187, which would bar illegal immigrants from getting most state benefits. Even though it passed in 1994, legal challenges have kept most of its provisions from being implemented.

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