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hastened by the knowledge on the part of immigrants that a command of English is necessary for success in school and career.

The last two articles focus on the issue of language in the workplace. William E. Lissy, writing in Supervision, describes several recent court rulings in support of Equal Opportunity Commission guidelines that make it illegal to prohibit employees from speaking a language other than English. The second article, from CQ Researcher, describes programs instituted by companies to help non-English speaking employees integrate into the workplace and ensure their success.

THE BATTLE OVER PRESERVING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The constitution of Spain has a majestic provision: "Castilian is the official Spanish language of the state. All Spaniards have the duty to know it and the right to use it." It is a provision worth examining in the light of the current debate in the U.S. over both bilingual education and the proposed English Language Amendment to the Constitution.

On first reading, "the right to use it" does not appear to grant anything very significant. After all, a language is a difficult thing to prescribe or to restrict. A language is available to anyone who expends the effort to learn it. Does this clause, then, grant anything? Is granting the right to speak a language any more significant than granting the right to breathe air? This clause recognizes something not generally acknowledged—that the language of the nation is the most valuable gift the state has to bestow on its citizens. It is the ability to communicate with one's fellows. It is the key to belonging, to becoming a full member of the polity.

However, it is the first part of the provision that would cause the most controversy in the U.S.: "the duty to know it." In past years, there would have been no doubt about this duty. It was unquestioned that both citizens of the U.S. and those who migrated to this country would learn English and use it in their public lives. Yet, in the past few years, both this duty and the desirability of English-language unity have been sharply questioned and even denied by many ethnic spokesmen and politicians.

The American Constitution currently has no provision that gives English the status of an official language equivalent to Castilian in Spain. A constitutional English Language Amendment (ELA) to make English the official language of the U.S. was originally introduced in the Senate in April, 1981, by former Sen. S. I. Hayakawa (R-Calif.) and is currently sponsored by Sen. Steve Symms (R-Idaho). It is rather less sweeping than the Spanish provision, since it would impose no duty on the people to learn English and would not infringe upon anyone's right to use other languages. In one sense, therefore, it would make no practical changes. As Sen. Quentin Burdick (D-N. Dak.), a co-sponsor of the amendment, has said:

The English Language Amendment will alter very little in the lives of most Americans. Elegant French restaurants will continue to print French menus; seminarians will continue their Latin studies; Jewish youngsters will continue to attend Hebrew school; opera lovers will continue to hear their favorite works in Italian, German, or French; as before, immigrant families will meet and greet each other in their native tongue... Our precious First Amendment will continue to protect free speech, as it always has and always must.

In another sense, the ELA completely would shift the direction of governmental action. Over the past two decades, responding to the heightened ethnic assertiveness of the new immigrant communities, the Federal government has promoted bilingual ballots and bilingual education, encouraged the preservation of ethnic separatism, and downplayed the importance of learning English either for full participation in the political life of the U.S. or for economic and social success here. This governmental attitude came at a time both when immigration was at a historic high and when, for the first time in American history, a majority of immigrants spoke one language other than English—Spanish.

The Government's Role

The ELA, by restating the importance of English for the unity of the U.S., would reinstate this important assumption: the government's role in the interaction of ethnic and racial groups is to assist in their integration and assimilation into public life—not to preserve and accentuate their differences. There are two key
phrases in this assumption—"the government's role" and "into public life." A distinction must be made between the role of the family and voluntary organizations and the role of the government.

Just as it is not the government's role to promote or preserve any religion through public education, it is not the government's role to promote or preserve ethnic or racial distinctions or traditions. The government, through its public schools, has no business telling the descendents of Mexicans that they must learn to speak Spanish and like mariachi music, any more than it should tell the children of Italians they must speak Italian and appreciate opera, or tell the children of Jews they must learn to speak Hebrew or Yiddish and observe the holy days. If the children's parents want to preserve the languages or traditions of their homelands or people, they may do so through the family and through private schools.

Government's sphere is public life; the preservation of cultural traditions through private associations is none of its concern. Cultural, ethnic, and religious groups have no claim on the common government that would require it to assume the role of defender of their faiths or of their languages. It is this redirection, especially the possibility that the government would reverse its policy of the past two decades and begin actively to encourage the use of English in education and voting, that has aroused an active opposition to the ELA.

The rhetoric of the opponents of the English Language Amendment, especially at the local community level, is extreme both in its positive and negative claims. Robert H. Cordova, a professor of Hispanic studies at the University of Northern Colorado, in the Houston Chronicle (March 11, 1985), made the extravagant claim that "the present monolingual, monocultural, Anglocentric public education system must be replaced by a multilingual, multicultural, pluralistic one..." because the U.S. "is expected to be bilingual—Spanish and English—by the turn of the century..."

If Americans still have some irrational attachment to their native language, Herman Sillas, in an article for the Hispanic Link News Service in February, 1985, assured us that "English Is Just Another Language." He wrote that, "If we as a nation want to lead the world in the future, we must recognize language for what it really is: a skill. Nothing more. . . We need to move from the mentality of tying language to loyalty. The two are separate things."

In opposition to the ELA, Tony Salazar, a community activist in Kansas City, Mo., said in March, 1985, "I think it's wrong. I think it's racist. I think it's anti-immigration." Helen Gonzales, of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, has said that, "It just plays into the old, anti-alien hysteria." The chairman and the executive director of the Maryland Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs signed a mailgram, opposing two state English-language bills, which insisted that "Underlying the motives for these bills is a preponderance of prejudice and racism that is completely against the tenets of the constitution of Maryland and all laws of justice and fair play." Rick Mendoza, a spokesman for the Inland Empire Hispanic Association, called a Washington State English-language bill "clearly an act of language discrimination on equal par with racial discrimination and in direct line with Aryan Nations philosophy of one race, one religion, one language."

**The Bilingual Education Argument**

The intertwined anti-ELA and pro-bilingual education movements are not always, of course, straightforward about the purpose of their cause. There is also an educational aspect of the movement which insists that bilingual education is simply a tool for better education, that children whose initial language is not English learn more easily—even learn English more easily—if they are taught in their first language. The aim of bilingual education, some insist, is transition—better, fuller, speedier integration of the students into American society—not maintenance of their home countries' cultures.

There are two problems with this argument. First, there is no proof of the effectiveness of bilingual education. Impartial surveys of effectiveness studies of bilingual programs have shown that evidence for the superiority of bilingual methods is inconclusive: some bilingual programs work well for some students, some immersion or Berlitz programs work well for some students, and some English as a Second Language programs work well for some students—and some of all of them are failures. As Colorado Gov. Richard Lamm and Gary Imhoff wrote in *The Immigration Time Bomb: The Fragmenting of America*, bilingual programs have held sway for political, not educational, reasons. Bilingual education gives jobs and local power to members of the non-English-speaking community who work in the schools. It reinforces chil-
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dren's identification with members of their own ethnic group. And it preserves the distinguishing characteristics of those ethnic groups, which gives a power base to those who identify themselves as leaders of those splinter groups.

The second problem with the argument for bilingual education is that bilingual programs, represented to the public as transitional, rarely make English facility their primary objective. The political forces behind bilingual education are those which promote cultural separatism, and bilingual programs tend to become maintenance programs. Pamela S. Saur inadvertently exposed this argument in her "Winning the Debate on Bilingual Education":

Many advocates of bilingual education are repelled by the theory behind transitional bilingual education. They object to the negative psychological and cultural effects of a program which aims to do away with a child's own language as soon as possible, to stamp it out and replace it with English.

I personally favor maintenance and enrichment bilingual programs, continued research and continued debate on all aspects of the issue. However, I believe that, given the current conservative, budget-cutting, and xenophobic climate in this country, it is likely that all bilingual education will continue to be threatened. In such a situation, I believe that the cause of winning public acceptance for bilingual education will be advanced by spreading the information that most programs are transitional and temporary.

The emotional strength of the bilingual movement, for all its excesses, lies in the sympathy it expresses with immigrants' emotional resentment against the process of assimilation. Migrants' assimilation to their new culture is a difficult and bittersweet struggle. Much of their past will be lost for the future they will gain, and they regret the loss. Those who assist in the assimilation process, those who may force it along when migrants rather would rest in an untenable position halfway between cultures, sometimes may be appreciated, but they rarely will be loved.

The people who advocate and run Americanization movements, after all, can be intolerable in their sense of superiority. They—we—are not cultural relativists. We tell immigrants that American culture and its roots in the English culture may not be better than the cultures of their own countries. But, that, in the U.S., they are preferable. We assert that it is better, in this country, to adopt American customs than to persist in the customs of their childhoods and to speak English, rather than the immigrants' native languages.
grant group and the general society are able to convince large numbers of the new immigrants that those who wish to integrate and assimilate them within the society are their enemies. In this sense, the battle between opponents and supporters of the ELA is a contest of appearances and reputations, a fight for the high ground. Sen. Symms, the chief sponsor of the ELA, summed it up in "The Nation's Language: English," The Washington Post, March 9, 1985:

Unfortunately, our lavishly funded "maintenance" style bilingual education program holds students prisoners in their native language. It also ensures students a prolonged "second-class" citizenship status in America's economic mainstream.

The ELA would be subject to the Bill of Rights and the First Amendment; it could not be used to discourage the use of foreign languages by individuals. Nor is it my intention to designate English or the Anglo-American culture as superior to any other language or culture. We merely believe that, for the American melting pot to work, it has to have a common, unifying element.

So, who is really xenophobic, racist, and ethnocentric? The one who, for whatever reason and ghastly rhetoric, promotes and encourages a linguistic ghetto? Or those of us who want "mainstream" non-English-speakers as soon as possible so they can enjoy the American dream?

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ENGLISH IN A MULTICULTURAL AMERICA

The protection of the Constitution extends to all--to those who speak other languages as well as to those born with English on the tongue. Perhaps it would be highly advantageous if all had ready understanding of our ordinary speech, but this cannot be coerced by methods which conflict with the Constitution—a desirable end cannot be promoted by prohibited means.

--Associate Supreme Court Justice
James Clark Reynolds
Mayo v. Nebraska, 1929

In the United States today there is a growing fear that the English language may be on its way out as the American lan-

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English: Our Official Language?

As early as the 18th century, British colonists in Pennsylvania, remarking that as many as one-third of the area's residents spoke German, attacked Germans in terms strikingly similar to those heard nowadays against newer immigrants. Benjamin Franklin considered the Pennsylvania Germans to be a "swarthy" racial group distinct from the English majority in the colony. In 1751 he complained:

Why should the Palatine Boors be suffered to swarm into our Settlements, and by herding together establish their Language and Manners to the exclusion of ours? Why should Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a Colony of Aliens, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of our Anglifying them, and will never adopt our Language or Customs, any more than they can acquire our Complexion?

The Germans were accused by other 18th-century Anglo-Saxons of laziness, illiteracy, clannishness, a reluctance to assimilate, excessive fertility, and Catholicism (although a significant number of them were Protestant). In some instances they were even blamed for the severe Pennsylvania winters.

Resistance to German, long the major minority language in the country, continued throughout the 19th century, although it