



**THE AMERICAN
ETHNIC COALITION**

P.O. Box 3812
Bryan, Texas 77805
(409) 846-2035

Founder & Chairman
Lou Zaeske
Bryan, Texas

Executive Vice Chairman
R. Ontiveros
Dallas, Texas

Vice Chairman
Bill Toney
Nacogdoches, Texas

Chairman Emeritus
Fred E. Gray
Pasadena, Texas

July 25, 1988

1

SPECIAL HANDLIN

JUL 27 1988

Comptroller of Public Accounts
Revenue Processing

Bob Bullock
Comptroller of Public Accounts
Lyndon B. Johnson State Office Building
Austin, Texas 78774

Dear Mr. Bullock:

It has come to the attention of THE AMERICAN ETHNIC COALITION that numerous state agencies in Texas, including your agency, The Office of Comptroller of Public Accounts, are promulgating forms and literature in the Spanish language in addition to their customary English language forms and literature.

We are sending this certified letter to inquire as to how many state agencies are engaging in such bilingual operation and what the expense to taxpayers is agency by agency for such bilingual operation.

We are also inquiring by what authority, to what degree, and at what expense to taxpayers has the Office of Comptroller of Public Accounts embarked upon bilingual operation; and by what authority was the Spanish language selected as the second language to be used?

If such bilingual operation was initiated administratively, please advise us as to when and by whom such decision was rendered. If such bilingual operation was mandated by The Texas Legislature, please advise us of the specific legislative act by name and number which mandated such bilingual operation.

We await your prompt response in this regard.

Yours very truly,

THE AMERICAN ETHNIC COALITION

Lou Zaeske, Chairman

LZ/ja

100 JUN 27 1988



512-463-4000

L B J
State Office
Building

Bob Bullock
Comptroller of Public Accounts

Austin, Texas 78774

August 1, 1988

Mr. Lou Zaeske
Chairman
The American Ethnic Coalition
Post Office Box 3812
Bryan, Texas 77805

Dear Lou:

I got your letter dated July 25, but before I did, I had already had calls from several reporters. Now that I've actually received your letter, here are the answers to your questions.

You have asked by what authority, to what degree, and at what expense to taxpayers has the Comptroller's Office used multi-lingual forms and literature in the performance of our duties.

The Comptroller's authority to promulgate rules is found in Section 111.002(a), Title 2, Texas Tax Code, which reads: "(a) The comptroller may adopt rules that do not conflict with the laws of this state or the constitution of this state or the United States for the enforcement of the provisions of this title and the collection of taxes and revenues under this title."

Forms are necessary instruments used by the Comptroller's Office to implement the rules required to perform our duties under the state's tax laws. Our specific authority to prescribe forms can be found in Section 403.011(5), Texas Government Code, which reads, "The comptroller shall:...(5) prescribe and furnish the form or electronic format to be used in the collection of public revenue." In addition, Government Code Section 403.011(3) reads, "The comptroller shall:...(3) supervise, as the sole accounting officer for the state, the state's fiscal concerns and manage those concerns as required by law."

The literature we print is directly related to and necessary for the implementation of our rulemaking authority. Our literature that is not related to tax collection is directly related to my duties as the state's chief fiscal officer. Our use of languages other than English in performing our duties under the Tax and Government Codes does not conflict with any applicable law.

In fact, the General Appropriations Act, 70th Legislature, Article V, Section 60, reads:

"Sec. 60. PUBLICATIONS AND SALE OF PRINTED MATTER OR RECORDS. Any moneys appropriated by this Act within the discretion of the head of each department or agency may be used for the publication and distribution of any notice, pamphlet, booklet, rules, regulations, and other matters of public interest, including agency records, the subject matter of which is directly related to the statutory responsibilities of the respective department or agency."

Mr. Lou Zaeske
August 1, 1988
Page 2

3

To summarize, there is no question that this agency and most other state agencies have the authority to print and distribute materials in languages other than English at our discretion.

As to what degree we use languages other than English, we use other languages to the degree we find it helpful to taxpayers and to the performance of our duties. For example, at various times we found some taxpayers needed information in Vietnamese and Chinese, and we provided them the necessary translations.

Our decision to use Spanish as the predominant non-English language (unless you count the several computer languages we use extensively) was made under the authority conferred by common sense. There are 2.79 million people of Hispanic origin in Texas, many of them Spanish-speaking. All of them are taxpayers of one kind or another and all of them have a vital interest in the affairs and future of the State of Texas.

You have also asked who made the decision to use languages other than English and when that decision was made. The decision was made soon after I took office in 1975. I made the decision, and I stand by it as the right thing to do.

Finally, there's your question of expense. Lou, through the years we have found that there are a whole lot of taxpayers who don't speak English. If these people don't fully understand their responsibilities under the tax laws, the state loses revenue.

Printing forms and literature in languages other than English keeps taxpayers like you from paying more taxes than you would otherwise. Without voluntary compliance with the law on the part of most taxpayers, there's no telling how much more it would cost us to collect taxes. So, we take great pains to make sure people understand the tax laws, and that they can as conveniently as possible give us the information we need to do our jobs.

ALL of the people of this state have a stake in its fiscal and economic future, and we're proud to bring them the information they need to wisely and efficiently govern their affairs. In short, our use of languages other than English is not a cost to taxpayers, it is a service to taxpayers and saves them money.

I hope I have been responsive to your questions, and I look forward to hearing from you in the future.

Sincerely,



BOB BULLOCK
Comptroller of Public Accounts

BB:sbb

English-only group hits Democrats Use of Spanish at Texas rally criticized

By Fred Bonavita
POST AUSTIN BUREAU

AUSTIN — A group pushing for official use of English only charged on Tuesday that the Democrats' national ticket of Gov. Michael Dukakis and Sen. Lloyd Bentsen was "pandering to and patronizing certain ethnic groups" by addressing a South Texas political rally in Spanish last week.

Lou Zaeske of Bryan, chairman of the American Ethnic Coalition, also predicted **DECISION '88** Vice President George Bush,

the expected Republican presidential nominee, would change his mind and support the so-called "Official English" movement once his Texas advisers talk with him about it.

Citing what he said is overwhelming support in Texas for declaring English as the official language and ending bilingualism, Zaeske said, "It is extremely unwise for any statewide candidate who wants to win in Texas to openly oppose Official English."

He made the comments as he released copies of a letter to state Comptroller Bob Bullock demanding to know how much Bullock's office spends printing forms and literature in Spanish as well as in English.

The letter, which went to other state agencies as well as to the offices of Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby and House Speaker Gib Lewis, also asks under what legislative authority bilingual material is printed.

One of the targeted agencies is the Texas Department of Public Safety, which prints study manuals for the driver's license examination in nine languages, including Vietnamese.

"The government should not be underwriting a form of separatism in this country or be encouraging factions in this country to practice self-imposed cultural segregation," Zaeske said in an interview.

But Tony Proffitt, press spokesman for Bullock, said the comptroller's office prints tax material in many languages "because it's the right thing to do."

As to whether there is an addi-

tional cost to the state, Proffitt said there is none once the material is translated.

"The waste of money would be to print (tax-collecting material) up in English and send it to an area that is predominantly Spanish-speaking and have them look at it and ask, 'I wonder what this means?'" Proffitt explained.

Dukakis and the leadership of the Democratic Party "made a foolish mistake in so blatantly opposing" the group's drive for English only, Zaeske said.

"He (Dukakis) is making a mistake because he's sending an improper message to the citizens of this state," Zaeske said. "He is making one minority group more important than the others."

Asked about Bush's opposition to requiring governmental forms and information to be printed in English only, Zaeske told reporters: "I'll bet you that George Bush, before it is all over, will re-think his position on this."

"His message should be an American message, as is our message. This whole Hispanic mentality that is promulgated here in Texas is nothing but promoting a form of divisiveness."

Zaeske said the American Ethnic Coalition has formed a political action committee and has identified more than 45 legislative candidates willing to sponsor measures at the state and federal levels. The fund will support those candidates in the fall, he said.

¿Habla inglés?

Bullock's language: common sense

Advocates of the silly campaign to make English the state's "official language," who apparently settled on their task out of frustration over being unable to find anything serious to worry about, may have met their match in State Comptroller Bob Bullock.

The American Ethnic Coalition sent Bullock a letter asking:

- What is the cost of printing state forms in Spanish, in addition to English?

- By what authority bilingual printing is done?

- How many state agencies "are engaging in such bilingual operations?"

The answers may not have been what the coalition wanted to hear. Tony Proffitt, a spokesman for Bullock, said that he does not know how many agencies print

in languages other than English or exactly what the cost is. But whatever it is, he says, it is "minimal."

It is also worth it.

As Proffitt said, the comptroller's office prints forms in English and Spanish "to collect what's due to the state and to make it easier on the taxpayer." To Bullock's way of thinking, the spokesman said, "his job is to collect taxes, and if it takes printing it in Swahili, we'll do that."

He then pointed out something that the English-only people have perhaps been too busy tilting at windmills to consider: It would *really* be a waste of tax money to print material in English only and then send it to people who do not speak English.

¿Comprende?

'English only' will be issue, backer says

By Fred Bonavita
THE HOUSTON POST

AUSTIN — A group backing the "English only" movement said Tuesday the national Democratic ticket of Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis and Texas Sen. Lloyd Bentsen was "pandering to and patronizing certain ethnic groups" by addressing a South Texas political rally in Spanish last week.

Lou Zaeske of Bryan, chairman of the American Ethnic Coalition, also predicted Vice President George Bush, the expected Republican presidential nominee, would change his mind and support the so-called "Official English" movement once his Texas advisers talk with him about it.

Citing what he said is overwhelming support in Texas for declaring English the official language and

ending bilingualism, Zaeske said, "It is extremely unwise for any statewide candidate who wants to win in Texas to openly oppose Official English."

Zaeske also used an Austin news conference to release copies of a letter to state Comptroller Bob Bullock demanding to know how much his office spends printing forms and literature in Spanish as well as in English.

Among the targeted agencies is the Department of Public Safety which prints study manuals for the driver's license examination in nine languages.

"The government should not be underwriting a form of separatism in this country or be encouraging factions in this country to practice self-imposed cultural segregation," Zaeske said.

Tony Proffitt, press spokesman for Bullock, said the comptroller's office prints tax material in many languages, "because it's the right thing to do."

"The waste of money would be to print (tax-collecting material) up in English and send it to an area that is predominantly Spanish-speaking and have them look at it and ask, 'I wonder what this means?'" Proffitt said.