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Estimado Dr. Larcia.

I thought you
might be interested
in the English only
campaign.

R. Romo

Guy Wright / *U.S. English*



At last we have a national organization to combat the mis-named bilingual movement.

U.S. English, nonprofit and tax-deductible, has opened shop at 1424 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C., 20036, and welcomes to membership "all who agree that English is and must remain the only official language of the people of the United States."

Or, to put it another way, it will try to speak for those who don't want to see this English-speaking nation turned into a poly-lingual babel.

Former Sen. S.I. Hayakawa, who fought this battle almost alone while in Congress, is honorary chairman of U.S. English.

Chairman is Dr. John H. Tanton, a Michigan physician whose years of concern about population trends and immigration — he founded the Federation for American Immigration Reform — led him to embrace this kindred cause.

"With an organizational struc-

ture in place, we may at last be able to gain some ground," he said.

It is none too soon. Although there is virtually no public support for the proposition that this country should conduct its affairs in foreign languages for the convenience of those who don't want to learn English, the ethnic leaders pressing that demand are highly organized and single-minded, and they have won every skirmish so far against the disorganized opposition of a general public with many other worries.

Until a few years ago there was no problem. It was taken for granted that anyone who wanted to share in the benefits of American citizenship should learn English. Even today most immigrants realize the value of knowing English and are eager to learn — witness the packed newcomer classes.

The resistance comes from leaders of ethnic blocs, mostly Hispanic, who reject the melting-pot concept, resist assimilation as a betrayal of their ancestral culture and demand government funding to maintain their ethnic institutions.

We have seen the fruits of their victories. Laws now require multilingual ballots and voting aids, and tax money pays for voter registration campaigns aimed solely at those who will vote in a foreign language.

As for bilingual education, it has fallen into the hands of people less interested in building a bridge to help immigrant children learn English than in building a bridge-

head within the school system for foreign language pressure groups.

This anti-assimilation movement (a more accurate name than bilingualism) comes at a time when the United States is receiving the largest wave of immigration in its history. This influx strains our facilities for assimilation and provides fertile ground for those who would like to turn language minorities into permanent power blocs.

To combat those forces, U.S. English offers this program:

- Adopt a constitutional amendment to establish English as the official language of the United States.
- Repeal laws mandating multilingual ballots and voting materials.
- Restrict government funding for bilingual education to short-term transitional programs only.
- Control immigration so that it does not reinforce trends toward language segregation.

U.S. English is no refuge for red-necked chauvinists. Among its guiding principles it says:

"The study of foreign languages should be encouraged" and "the rights of individuals and groups to use other languages must be respected."

But it also says: "In a pluralistic nation such as ours, government should foster the similarities that unite us, rather than the differences that separate us."

Amen.

For the public response to this article, see the other side.