

# Run From the Border

HEEDING THE ADVICE of Gen. David Petraeus, Barack Obama has committed 17,000 more troops to Afghanistan and will keep 50,000 in Iraq after U.S. combat operations end in August 2010.

But are U.S. vital interests more threatened by what happens in Anbar or Helmand than in the war raging along our southern border?

Prediction: After all U.S. troops in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Korea have come home, there will be a U.S. army on the Mexican border. For this is where the fate of our Republic will be decided, as the fate of Europe will be decided by the millions streaming north from the Maghreb and Middle East, sub-Sahara and South Asia.

Last year, 6,000 Mexicans died in drug-related killings in a war where the tactics are massacre, murder, kidnapping, and beheading.

President Felipe Calderon has ordered another 5,000 troops and 1,000 police to the border. Primary target: Ciudad Juarez, across the Rio Grande from El Paso.

Some 2,500 federal troops are already in Juarez, where in 2008 there were 1,600 drug-related murders. Gun battles occur every day. Nationally, 45,000 army troops and police are committed to this war that Mexico is not winning. For, according to the March 3 *Washington Times*, the Pentagon now estimates the cartels field more than 100,000 foot soldiers.

The chief of police of Juarez just resigned after a cartel threatened to kill an officer every 48 hours if he did not. To prove its seriousness, the cartel murdered four cops, including the chief's deputy. Last year, 50 police officers in Juarez were murdered.

"The decision I am taking is one of life over death," said Chief Roberto Oduna. The chief would seem to have a point. In January, his predecessor's head was

found in an ice cooler outside a police station. The mayor keeps his family in El Paso, as they have been threatened with decapitation.

The State Department declared, "Corruption throughout Mexico's public institutions remains a key impediment to curbing the power of the drug cartels." Calderon retorts that, while the murders may be committed in Mexico, the cash and guns come from the United States.

Tourism has begun to die. Beheadings in and around Acapulco have not helped. Warnings have been issued to U.S. college kids to avoid Mexico on spring break, as kidnappings for ransom are rampant.

Restaurants and bars in Juarez that catered to folks from El Paso and soldiers from Fort Bliss are shutting down.

In February, in the resort town of Cancun, a retired army general sent to create an elite anti-crime unit was kidnapped, tortured, and shot. Mexican troops raided Cancun's police headquarters and arrested the chief and dozens of his officers in connection with the murder.

Add a collapsing global economy to a losing war with drug cartels, and Mexico is at grave risk of becoming a failed state, a narco-state with a 2,000-mile border with the United States.

How does one win a drug war when millions of Americans who use recreational drugs are financing the cartels' bribing, murdering, and beheading to keep self-indulgent Americans supplied with drugs?

There are two sure ways to end this war swiftly: Milton's way and Mao's way. Mao Zedong's communists killed users and suppliers alike, as social parasites. Milton Friedman's way is to decriminalize drugs and call off the war.

When Richard Nixon declared the War on Drugs in 1972, Milton, writing in *Newsweek*, objected on ethical grounds:

On ethical grounds, do we have the right to use the machinery of government to prevent an individual from becoming an alcoholic or a drug addict? For children, almost everyone would answer at least a qualified yes. But for responsible adults, I, for one, would answer no. Reason with the potential addict, yes. Tell him the consequences, yes. Pray for and with him, yes. But I believe that we have no right to use force, directly or indirectly, to prevent a fellow man from committing suicide, let alone from drinking alcohol or taking drugs.

"Am I my brother's keeper?" asked Milton, answering, "No."

Americans are never going to adopt the Maoist solution. For the users of drugs are all too often classmates, colleagues, friends, even family. Indeed, our last three presidents did not deny using drugs.

Once, a Christian America outlawed and punished homosexuality, abortion, alcohol, loan-sharking, and gambling, all as criminal vice. Now, homosexuality and abortion are constitutional rights. Gambling and booze are a rich source of government revenue. And loan-sharking is done by credit-card companies, and not just the Corleones.

Will we raise the white flag in the drug war as well?

Which is the greater evil? Legalized narcotics for America's young or a failed state of 110 million on our southern border?

Some choice. Some country we've become. ■

# English Lessons

The hard-fought battle against bilingual education has paid dividends for assimilation.

By Steve Sailer

I WAS VISITING a typical southern California public high school, one in which the student body is close to three-fourths Latino, when it dawned on me that virtually all the kids' hallway conversations with friends were conducted in English. Indeed, most of the students spoke without an accent. Well, to be pedantic, they had teen accents—it's practically impossible for a high-school girl to roll her eyes and exclaim "That is *so gay*" without sounding a little like Moon Unit Zappa in "Valley Girl"—but only a minority of the Hispanic students had Spanish accents.

Nor, I recalled, had I heard teachers lecturing in anything but English. I found out later that a couple of percent of the classes are conducted in Spanish for the children of parents who request it, but few do.

I realized then that in the past half decade I had barely heard any public discussion about the once contentious topic of bilingual education. It had been promoted adamantly by America's educational and political establishment from 1968, when Congress passed the first of five bilingual education acts, through to the 1990s.

I went home and read up on bilingual education. I quickly discovered the topic of teaching "Limited English Proficient" (LEP) students is buried under a bureaucratic jargon that appears to consist of literal translations from some distant language unknown to earthlings. For example, when a LEP child masters

English, he becomes a Reclassified-Fluent English Proficient (R-FEP). His R-FEP status is tabulated at the federal Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited-English-Proficient Students (OELALEAALEPS).

Eventually, I discovered that bilingual education is by no means dead. But it has clearly lost the momentum and sense of inevitability it long enjoyed. America may have dodged a bullet, a long-term threat to our national unity, because nothing divides a country more than multiple languages. In contrast, a shared language enables shared sentiments.

In the three decades when America's great and good actively promoted Spanish in the public schools, giving official blessing to a second language, it seemed plausible that our country was inflicting upon itself something that could turn into another Quebec a generation or two down the road. Or worse, a Kosovo, which was plunged into war in the 1990s by decades of unassimilated illegal immigration from Albania into a Serbian part of the republic formerly known as Yugoslavia.

And it struck me that the man who did so much to head off the dangers posed by bilingual education is a friend of mine. In fact, he's my boss: *The American Conservative's* publisher Ron Unz.

I'm admittedly biased. But a decade after the 61-39 landslide victory of Ron's initiative, Proposition 227, put bilingual education on the ropes in California,

America's forerunner state, it's time to review how the seemingly predestined triumph of bilingualism was knocked off track.

The history of educational plans in America is notoriously littered with broken dreams. Unintended consequences predominate because the reigning dogma of the education industry—the intellectual equality of all students—is wrong. This obdurate refusal on the part of everybody who is anybody in the education business to admit publicly the manifold implications of some kids being smarter than others makes it difficult to get anything done in the real world.

Thus, George W. Bush and Ted Kennedy got together in 2001 to pass the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law, which mandates that by the 2013-14 school year, every student in America's public schools score on reading and math tests at the "proficient" level (roughly, a B+). This won't happen.

Yet the terrible irony about the decades wasted pushing bilingual education is that the conventional wisdom that no child need be left behind is much truer for young children learning English than for anything else in American education. That's why the otherwise zany NCLB has helped consolidate the progress initiated by Unz's pro-English initiatives.

The most popular public rationale for bilingual education—that the children of immigrants need to be taught in their