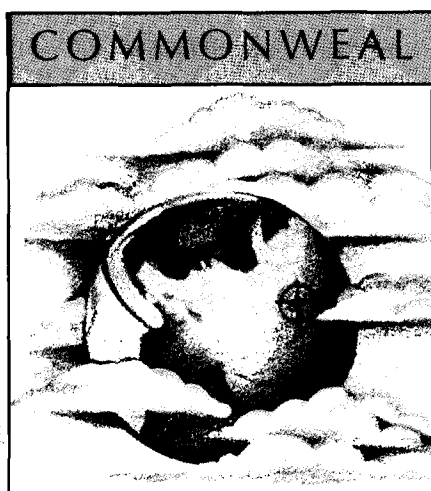


Anna Mveck-Wodecki



Citizenship and Immigration

by Governor Pete Wilson

Every evening, thousands of people line up just south of California's border with Mexico. They wait for darkness to fall so they can slip across the border and illegally enter our country. The Border Patrol succeeds in catching as many as half of these people, but thousands more still succeed at illegally entering our country each and every day.

I don't fault people trying to find a better life in our nation. In fact, it's hard not to admire their courage and determination. America is a nation of immigrants—three of my own grandparents were immigrants to America. They came for the same reason anyone comes—to build a better future. They brought their hopes and dreams, and the nation benefited from them and millions like them. But there's a limit to how many immigrants we can assimilate at once.

During just the past four years, enough people to fill a city the size of Oakland have illegally crossed the border into California. In Los Angeles alone, illegal aliens and their children total nearly a million people—that's a city of illegal immigrants the size of San Diego living in our midst. If we ignore this

flood of illegal immigration, we'll erode the quality of life for all those who live here legally. And make no mistake, our quality of life is threatened by this tidal wave of illegal immigrants.

Our classrooms are already bursting, but by federal law they're open to anyone who can clandestinely slip across America's 2,000-mile border. Our public health care facilities are swamped, but two-thirds of all babies born in L.A. public hospitals are born to parents who have illegally entered the United States. And the budgets for our parks, beaches, libraries, and public safety will continue to suffer while California spends billions to incarcerate enough illegal aliens to fill eight state prisons.

It's hardworking recent legal immigrants who suffer the most from our failure to deal with illegal immigration. Legal immigrants suffer lower wages and lost jobs when illegal immigration grows. And it's legal immigrants who bear the brunt of the backlash that comes when a nation can't control its borders. That's why we must return reason and fairness to America's immigration laws. The solution to the problem lies not on our border but in policies devised 3,000 miles to the east in our nation's capital. The federal government has failed miserably at controlling the border. Crossing America's Southern border is easier than crossing most streets in L.A. Millions have done it, and millions more will if we don't take action.

First, I've urged President Clinton to seek assistance from the Mexican government to help stop the flood of illegal immigrants on the Mexican side of our border. The ratification of NAFTA is a golden opportunity to secure the cooperation of the Mexican government in our shared responsibility to prevent illegal immigration. But controlling the border alone isn't enough. In fact, there's little point in even having a Border Patrol if we're going to continue to reward those who successfully violate U.S. law and enter our country illegally.

Today, the federal government forces the states to give health care, education, and other benefits to illegal aliens. These mandated services cost California taxpayers nearly \$3 billion a year. That's \$3 billion we must cut from the services

we provide legal residents of California. Saving just the \$1 billion we spend educating illegal immigrants in California schools would allow us to put a new computer on every fifth grader's school desk; provide preschool services to an additional 67,000 four-year-olds; expand Healthy Start Centers to an additional 750 sites; and provide 12.5 million tutorial and mentoring hours to at-risk youth.

Because depriving legal California residents of these services is wrong, I'm also urging Congress to repeal the federal mandates that require states to provide health care, education, and other benefits to illegal immigrants. The President and Congress should pay for these mandates as long as they require the states to provide them. But what they should really do is repeal them, or they will simply encourage and reward continued illegal immigration. Congress should create a tamper-proof legal resident eligibility card and require it of everyone seeking government benefits.

Finally, we must fundamentally rethink the very foundation of our immigration laws. The 14th Amendment to the Constitution has been interpreted as granting citizenship to every child born on American soil, even to children whose parents are illegal aliens. Some illegals come to our country simply to have a child born on American soil who can then gain American citizenship and a host of public benefits. Just since 1988, the number of children of illegal aliens on our state's welfare rolls has grown more than fourfold.

Of course, the clear purpose of the 14th Amendment when it was adopted three years after the Civil War was to validate the citizenship rights of former slaves and their children. It was never intended to be a reward for illegal immigration. It's time to amend the Constitution so that citizenship belongs only to the children of legal residents of the United States.

President Clinton did not create the grave problem of illegal immigration; he inherited it. But this exclusively federal responsibility now belongs to him and to Congress. They must move without delay to enact these critical reforms to our nation's immigration laws. There is no time to waste, because the problem

grows every day, swelled by the thousands of illegal aliens who slip across the border every night. We need immigration reform, and we need it now.

Pete Wilson is the governor of California.

In Praise of Tyranny *by Theodore Pappas*

Nationalism and the Language Wars

I'm always sorry when any language is lost," Samuel Johnson told Boswell during their tour of the Hebrides in September 1773, "because languages are the pedigree of nations." Linguistic pride is not a dead artifact of Romantic nationalism. It is alive and well today, among the Quebecois and among the supporters of a constitutional amendment to make English the official language of the United States, and it is flourishing in particular among the partisans of the little-noticed language wars now raging across Europe.

Take France, for example. No Western European country has striven more systematically to suppress regional speech in the name of national unity. With French history virtually synonymous with regional strife and cultural conflict (Charles de Gaulle fondly asked, "How can you make a country that has 215 varieties of cheeses behave as one?") the Parisian policy for four centuries has been to condemn provincial tongues as vulgar and divisive and to impose a standardized French—the French of the north-central region—nationwide. The Revolution regarded linguistic diversity an "enemy of the people," an enemy of egalitarianism, and France officially banned regional languages in 1886.

This governmental assault on regional dialect may finally have come to an end. According to a plan announced earlier this year, the French government has ordered public schools and teachers in regions with indigenous languages to prepare for bilingual education. To a certain extent, the Parisian establishment has merely acknowledged a *fait accompli*.

As Marlise Simons recently reported in the *New York Times*, private schools in Béziers and Nîmes have long taught Provençal, the language of the troubadours of the Middle Ages. Radio stations in Toulouse and Marseilles have without official sanction broadcast news programs in Occitan, the family of dialects to which Provençal belongs. In the foothills of the Pyrenees, radio stations regularly offer children's stories in Basque, and dictionaries in the Celtic language Breton are widely available to the residents of Brittany. Urging the rest of Europe to take heed and follow France's lead, linguist Claude Hagege declared this summer that "European governments have an obligation to promote local languages and traditions because they are in danger of being forgotten and because the 'Americanization' of Europe has to be contained."

Of course, not all Gauls are fervent Francophiles. The long-standing linguistic rivalry between French and Flemish in Belgium, for example, has heated up once again. This summer the executive government of Flanders banned the cable-distribution company Coditel from airing Tele-Bruxelles, a local French-language station, in two Flemish-speaking regions outside of Brussels, which is officially bilingual. The act was reminiscent of one taken last year by Belgium's communications minister Paula D'hondt, who withdrew a French-speaking telephone directory service from the same area. The some 200,000 French-speakers of the two districts have angrily denounced the moves as "attacks on our basic freedom of expression."

Overijse, the principally Dutch-speaking greenbelt outside of Brussels, has taken the war against French one step further. Overijse's town council proposed this August to allow communes in Brabant to refuse residency to anyone without ties to the Flemish community and who cannot speak Dutch. The measure is aimed not only at the French-speaking community, but also at the incessant waves of Eurocrats now flooding this beautiful area around the E.C. capital of Brussels. A British woman and her Armenian husband who were denied residency in Overijse complained that their "basic human rights" had been violated. "Every E.C. citizen has the right to live where they like in Europe," they argued. Apparently no one told this to the bumpkins of Overijse, who still stubbornly cling to the quaint notion of local

sovereignty.

Similar battles are raging through Scandinavia. Finland's days as a bilingual country, in fact, may be numbered. Schoolchildren are currently taught both Swedish and Finnish, the country's two official languages, for at least three out of the nine years of mandatory education. In primary schools along the coast, where the 6 percent Swedish-speaking minority principally lives, Swedish is taught for as many as seven years. What Finland's education minister, Riita Uosukainen, recently proposed is to make Swedish-language instruction voluntary, thus placating the Finnish majority that resents being forced to study Swedish. The latter, reports Karin Sundstrom in the *European*, believes "Swedish-speaking people in Finland should not be entitled to rights that the Finnish-speaking people in Sweden do not have."

Nor is all quiet on Norway's linguistic front, where a language controversy has delayed the country's application to the E.C. Norwegian, of course, is the official language of Norway, but there are two accepted forms of it. They are separate and equal in status and are both used in public documents. This is not a problem for Norwegians but for the E.C., which refuses to approve two official languages for a member country. The E.C. already complains about the growing number of languages it must accommodate even without the membership of the so-called FANS, the current acronym for Finland, Austria, Norway, and Sweden. When the FANS become members, the number of language combinations that E.C. interpreters will have to contend with will rise from 72 to 132. Some Eurocrats worry that the number of translators will eventually surpass the number of E.C. policymakers; there are currently 1,600 of the former and 3,900 of the latter.

Language controversies of graver consequence embroil the Slavic populations of the Baltics. Tensions remain high over the language requirements set by both Estonia and Latvia as conditions of citizenship for ethnic Russians, most of whom arrived after the Soviet invasion of the area in 1940. It was relatively easy to grant everyone citizenship in Lithuania, where only 20 percent of the population is non-Lithuanian. But, in Latvia, Russians comprise almost half the population and are the clear majority in the capital of Riga. Russians also constitute about 40 percent of the population in