

Deceitful tactics used in effort to make Puerto Rico a state

by Phyllis_Schlafly

Even though Puerto Rico has three times voted against becoming a U.S. state, yet another effort is being made to persuade Puerto Ricans to change their mind.

Of course, the Democratic Party thinks making Puerto Rico our 51st state is a cool idea because that would give the Democrats two additional U.S. Senators and 6 to 8 additional Members of the House, more congressional representation than 25 of our 50 states.

Despite millions of dollars being spent to promote statehood, on Dec. 13, 1998, Puerto Ricans voted 46.5 percent for statehood, 2.5 percent for independence, and 50.5 percent for "none of the above," which must be seen as an endorsement of its present commonwealth status.

The Puerto Rican independence faction is small, but that doesn't mean its members would acquiesce to being outvoted in a democratic election. They are among the most militant groups in the world and are responsible for domestic terrorist incidents in the United States.

The 1998 percentage of Puerto Ricans favoring statehood was approximately the same as in the 1993 referendum. It is asking for big trouble to admit a state in which nearly half the people oppose the idea.

The most important issue about Puerto Rico statehood is that it would transform the United States overnight into a bilingual nation. Puerto Ricans speak Spanish and are antagonistic to the idea of learning English.

English is the language of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. It would be divisive and troublesome to admit a state whose people don't speak the language of our founding documents.

Puerto Rican statehood would cost the U.S. plenty in taxes. The average income of Puerto Ricans is less than half that of our poorest state, and infrastructure and the environment are far below U.S. standards, so statehood would bring immediate demands for massive federal funding.

The smoking gun proving that Puerto Rico statehood is designed to make us a bilingual nation is House Concurrent Resolution 11, or English Plus Resolution, introduced by Rep. Jose Serrano, D-N.Y.. Serrano is also the sponsor of HR 900, the Puerto Rico Democracy Act of 2007.

A concurrent resolution is a legislative proposal that must be passed by the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate but does not require the signature of the president and does not have the force of law. Concurrent resolutions are generally used to express the sentiment of Congress or to amend the internal rules of the House and Senate.

Serrano's resolution, introduced Jan. 4, levels a stinging attack on English as our national language and demands that the federal government "oppose" the many state laws and bills that designate English their official language.

The resolution demands that U.S. government provide services in languages other than English and even encourage all U.S. residents to learn languages other than English. The bill falsely asserts that our nation has "drawn strength from a diversity of languages." The truth is having English as our common language is a principal factor in "e pluribus unum," which is Latin for "out of many one," a U.S. motto.

Serrano's resolution is dishonestly entitled "English Plus Resolution" and is dressed up in flowery rhetoric to make it appear that its purpose is to protect American Indian languages. That ruse fools no one; it's obvious that the bill is just cover for the impudent demand that we accept Puerto Rico as a Spanish-language state.

Serrano's Puerto Rico Democracy Act of 2007, would set up two plebiscites that rig the process to deceive Puerto Ricans into voting for statehood. In the first plebiscite, scheduled for this year, Puerto Ricans would be given a choice of:

1. remaining as a U.S. territory;
2. or pursuing an (undefined) "constitutionally viable permanent non-territorial status."

If the majority chooses No. 1, Puerto Rico would be required to vote again at least every eight years (presumably until they are bamboozled into voting for statehood). If the majority chooses No. 2, a second plebiscite would be held at which Puerto Ricans could choose between "only" two "nonterritorial" options: statehood or independence.

Not only is the double-plebiscite procedure rigged to prevent a vote to continue the present commonwealth status, but the ballot propositions are written so that only a lawyer can figure out what they really mean.

A vote on Puerto Rico would have momentous effects on whether the United States of America remains "one nation, indivisible" or whether it starts down the road of countries that have fought bloody wars when minority populations tried to maintain a separate language and cultural identity within another nation, such as Quebec, Ireland, Bosnia and Iraq.

With a 92 percent turnout in the Oct. 30, 1995, referendum in Quebec, secession lost by only a razor-thin margin: 50.6 percent of Quebecers voted to keep Canada one nation, while 49.4 voted for Quebec to secede from Canada. The close vote adversely affected Quebec's financial markets and caused a flight of capital and people.

Puerto Rico is a vestige of 19th century colonialism; we got it as booty in the Spanish American War of 1898. In the 21st century, colonialism is so retro; we should give Puerto Rico its independence.

Tell your Representative to vote no on both Puerto Rico bills.

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