Deceitful Tactics Used To Make Puerto Rico A State

by Phyllis Schlafly March 28, 2007

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Even though Puerto Rico has three times voted against becoming a U.S. state, yet another effort is being made to persuade Puerto Rico to change its 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 December 13, 1998, Puerto Ricans voted only 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 the status quo, the present commonwealth status.

The Puerto Rican independence faction is small, but that doesn't mean its members would acquiesce in 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 new 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 don't speak English, don't intend to learn it, and are even antagonistic to the whole idea of learning English.

English is the language of our Declaration of Independence and our United States 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 rest of us 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 American 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 H.Con.Res.11 introduced by Rep. Jose Serrano (D-NY), who is also the sponsor of H.R.900, the Puerto Rico statehood bill. H.Con.Res.11 levels a stinging attack on English as our national language and demands that the Federal Government "oppose" our many state laws and bills that designate English as our official language.

H.Con.Res.11 demands that our 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," whereas the truth is that having English as our common language is a principal factor in making us "e pluribus unum."

H.Con.Res.11 is dishonestly entitled "English Plus Resolution" and is all dressed up in flowery rhetoric to make it appear that its purpose is to protect Native American Indian languages. That ruse doesn't fool anyone; 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 statehood bill, H.R.900, 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 (a) remaining as a U.S. territory or (b) pursuing an (undefined) "constitutionally viable permanent non-territorial status."

If the majority chooses (a), 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 (b), 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 America remains "one nation, indivisible" or whether we start 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 October 30, 1995 referendum in Quebec, secession lost by only a razor-thin margin: 50.6 percent of Quebeckers 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 the 19th century era of 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.