

Republican leaders rolled over. They agreed that discussions about immigration, in a post-Prop. 187 world, were dangerous.

Republicans accepted the story that the state's growing Latino community was up for grabs politically, but then Republican Gov. Pete Wilson rode Prop. 187 to victory by exploiting anti-immigrant sentiment. (One pro-Prop. 187 ad, which showed illegal immigrants lining up at the border with the spoken words "They keep coming," has gone down in California political history the way George H.W. Bush's Willie Horton ads portraying Michael Dukakis as soft on crime have gone down in national political history.)

As a result, the theory goes, the Latino community—not just the new immigrants but the majority of voters of Latino descent—embraced the Democrats and Republican fortunes have declined ever since. To have success in the state, then, Republicans need to appeal (i.e., pander) to Latino voters by assuring them that they are not against legal immigration and will not be too critical of illegal immigration either.

There's no doubt that Republican political hopes have declined in recent years. Before Arnold Schwarzenegger scored an overwhelming gubernatorial recall victory, every state constitutional office was held by Democrats. In the legislature, Democrats are just shy of the crucial two-thirds majority in both houses.

The question is whether support for limiting illegal immigration caused the Republican Party to crumble. I'm skeptical. Prop. 187 energized some previously apathetic Latino voters, but Latinos leaned in the Democratic direction before Prop. 187. With the exception of South Florida and its Cuban population, the Latino population is overwhelmingly Democratic nationwide. Surely, that's not the result of Prop. 187.

There are signs that various radical Islamic terrorist groups that have previously pursued separate agendas might now cooperate on a local level to carry out attacks. The possibility is a nightmare scenario for security experts as it could mean that the single group al-Qaeda has morphed into an international terrorism Hydra. The bombings in Madrid may turn out to be one example of the new terrorism, locally planned and executed using various resources both from Spain and Morocco. Hamas, which has never targeted Westerners and has confined its terrorist actions to Israel and the occupied territories, may be planning similar actions. In the wake of the Yassin assassination, Hamas's new operational leader, Abdel Aziz Rantisi, promised retaliation against Israel and its supporters everywhere. He later retracted his statement and limited retaliation to Israel, but American counter-terrorism experts believe that there are specific indications that Hamas might by proxy strike against U.S. targets for the first time. Its support infrastructure in the U.S., which is not an operational one, could provide logistical assistance for a terrorist act in North America carried out by a cell from another group, possibly North African or Southeast Asian.



The comic opera Pakistani army offensive in South Waziristan, initiated to impress visiting U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, has failed to round up any significant members of al-Qaeda sheltering inside Pakistan. There was never any reliable information suggesting that Ayman al-Zawahiri or sizable numbers of al-Qaeda were located at the village of Kaloosha, though some Mujahedeen from the Afghan war with the Soviet Union did resettle in the area 15 years ago, married local women, and were adopted by the Yargul Khel tribe. The Pakistani military, after hyping to the world media the prospect that Zawahiri was trapped, has now admitted its failure and is facing a growing backlash from the well armed and vengeful tribesmen whose homes have been destroyed by helicopter gunships and artillery fire.



The Bush administration's unfounded pre-war claims of an Iraqi WMD program have come back to haunt the United States in its efforts to halt the Iranian nuclear program. Widespread skepticism in Europe of American claims regarding Iranian intentions has somewhat obscured the undeniable fact that Iran's WMD program and terrorist ties were always a much greater threat than Saddam Hussein. Iran supports terrorist organizations like Hezbollah, Hamas, and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, helping Hezbollah, for example, to carry out two major terrorist operations in Argentina. General antipathy towards the U.S. and fears that it is seeking a pretext for taking preemptive military action have up until now prevented sharper-edged declarations from the IAEA over the Iranian nuclear program. Iran has meanwhile been playing a clever game with IAEA members, alternately cajoling and threatening. The White House knows it does not have enough support within IAEA for sanctions, so it intends slowly to build a campaign of pressure against Tehran by selective disclosures of its nuclear programs using press leaks to "friendly" major American media outlets. ■

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A strong argument can be made that the California Republican Party's prospects have declined not just in relation to the growth of the Latino population but in relation to its refusal to take strong stands on immigration and other issues that appeal to the general electorate. As the Republicans have become squishy, they have given voters less reason to vote for them. By embracing the post-Prop. 187 mythology, Republicans unsuccessfully tried to lure new Latino voters even as they alienated the non-Latino voters at their core.

But change is in the air. The first real shift in the debate over immigration came during the recall election. The Latino caucus overreached and pushed ahead SB 60, which granted drivers' licenses to illegal immigrants. It infuriated people for obvious reasons. Once "undocumented" workers have this valuable document, they have *de facto* legal status.

The budget crisis, the electricity crisis, Governor-reject Gray Davis's dour approach to governance, and Schwarzenegger's personal popularity had much to do with the success of the recall. But so did the license bill and Schwarzenegger's vow to repeal it—a promise he quickly made good on after his inauguration.

The second shift came in the March 2 primary election. This was the first election following the announcement of Bush's amnesty plan. Immigration was not the key point of debate, nor did the most vociferously anti-immigration candidates win the Republican primary races. But it was rare to find a candidate who backed the Bush plan. Even the moderate/liberal wing of the party stood against it.

Bill Jones, the former secretary of state who won the primary race to challenge liberal Bay Area Democrat Barbara Boxer for the U.S. Senate, is a moderate-conservative Republican who backs the president in almost every way. But he was painfully careful about the president's guest-worker proposal. He

refused to support the Bush plan, although he did not want to alienate the White House either. He weaseled around the problem by saying that he cannot support or oppose the plan until he sees specifics. He said he would oppose any plan that created amnesty. Jones won against the more fervently anti-immigration Howard Kaloogian, who didn't have much money and never had more than a prayer.

But Jones also beat Rosario Marin, the former U.S. Treasurer and new-style candidate that is supposed to be able to beat Democrats. She is a Latina, pro-choice, and moderate on most issues. She talked incessantly about her rags-to-riches immigrant story. During a debate between several leading candidates running for the Senate seat, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that they all backed

This phenomenon was evident at all levels. In the 70th Assembly District in coastal Orange County, the more liberal candidate Cristi Cristich tried to ring the president's immigration plan around the neck of the conservative candidate, Chuck DeVore. DeVore is generally pro-Bush, but he distanced himself from the Bush plan and won easily, especially after he publicized Cristich's past activities on behalf of President Bill Clinton. But Cristich's attempt to portray DeVore as pro-amnesty hurt him. "That was the one line of attack from my opponent that was most effective, albeit one based on a false premise," DeVore told me following his victory. "I had more people calling me threatening to drop me like a hot potato." This point is crucial: most candidates viewed support for the president's plan as lethal.

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Bush policies on every issue except immigration. Marin was the only one to support Bush on his plan, and this early favorite lost to Jones by 24 percentage points.

In the bizarre race pitting former congressman Bob Dornan against incumbent congressman Dana Rohrabacher for the 46th congressional district seat, seven weeks before the election the *OC Weekly* predicted that Rohrabacher would be the winner after he supported HR 3722, which requires hospitals to report illegal immigrants to the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The *Weekly* made a useful point: it's beneficial to come out against illegal immigration, at least in a heavily Republican congressional district. (For a variety of reasons, Rohrabacher stomped Dornan by 66 percentage points.)

"What a disaster," said Shawn Steel, immediate past president of the California Republican Party, in describing the Bush immigration plan. "I assume it's a trial balloon. Well, it dropped like a rock." He agrees that the specter of Prop. 187 has worn off. "People have gotten out of their manholes. They no longer are saying, 'They're here. We better make nice or they will vote against us.'" Now, he said, Republicans are voicing their immigration concerns. They know their own constituents are unhappy. "Now it's a matter of tone."

More than 26 percent of California's population is foreign born, according to the 2000 census. The number is 36.2 percent in Los Angeles County. There simply is nothing to be gained by ranting against immigration in a way that is

perceived as hostile to immigrants. But that doesn't mean Californians must ignore the immigration issue.

Many of my immigrant neighbors and friends agree with me on the matter. Many immigrants who came to this country the legal way are unhappy about granting special status to those who break the nation's immigration laws. Many immigrants, legal and illegal, are starting to understand how uncontrolled immigration depresses their incomes by boosting the supply of low-wage workers. And Prop. 187 is not necessarily the kiss of political death, even among Latino voters. (In overwhelmingly Latino Santa Ana, voters recalled a Latino rabble-rouser from the school board and replaced him with a Republican who had supported Prop. 187.)

The Southern California Association of Governments recently released a report showing that the Greater Los Angeles area has lost ground in comparison to other major metropolitan areas in terms of income, housing affordability, congestion, pollution, and other quality-of-life issues. A key reason is mass immigration. As the report's executive summary gently explained, "Southern California experienced a 1.5-million net domestic out-migration during the last decade, the largest in our region's history. During the same period, the region added 1.5 million foreign immigrants. When compared with the domestic out-migrants and the general population, recent immigrants are, on average, less educated, earn lower incomes, live in larger households and rely significantly on rental housing."

Thanks in large part to the president, California Republicans no longer have to be fearful about making similar points. ■

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From A Dead Racist

What if America had wanted to reinforce inequality?

By Fred Reed

The following is a letter recently found in the attic of a building that once served as headquarters of the American Nazi Party. The author, though unknown to me, is clearly a racist of the vilest sort. We may profit by understanding the mind of such a man.

From: George Rockwell

Date: May 6, 1955

To: James Braswell, Grand Klagon,
Knights of the Invisible Empire,
Ku Klux Klan

Dear Klagon Braswell,

In answer to your concern about preventing the rise of the Negro race after the disastrous Supreme Court decision of last year, I am somewhat more optimistic than you. I believe that, by judicious policy, we can, if not eliminate the problem of Negroes, at least control it.

We cannot place hope in extermination or deportation of Negroes *en masse*, nor is there real hope of the reinstitution of slavery. The public mood will not now countenance such measures. We need rather a means of subjugating the Negro race while appearing to have other ends in mind. Fortunately, I believe that it can be done. Permit me to suggest a plan.

First, the thorough demoralization of Negroes is essential. They must be made dependent on Whites, and then persuaded that they cannot achieve anything of worth on their own.

I believe this end may best be accomplished by instituting an all-encompassing system of public welfare. As you know, many Negroes now live in a state

of poverty. We must argue in Congress that decency requires the provision of federal payments to allow Negroes to live at a fit standard. The economy is growing at such a rate that the country can carry the burden without undue difficulty. We should stress the benefits for the children, as this invariably evokes a favorable response.

Once welfare has been instituted, I believe that it will come to be accepted as normal by Whites, and then forgotten. After Negroes have been for several generations dependent on the largesse of Whites, they will, having had no experience of self-sufficiency, lose all initiative.

However, welfare alone will prove ineffective. The next step will be to destroy all social structure among Negroes. The most we could hope for—dare we dream?—would be to frame the welfare laws in such a way that married Negro women could not receive aid. The result, if luck held, would be a sharp rise in illegitimacy. The women would not be able to raise their offspring well, and these in turn would produce further young out of wedlock.

We must strive to make universal illegitimacy seem a natural condition. Crime and further demoralization will assuredly follow.

The third essential step will be to ensure that Negroes receive as little education as possible, though of course we cannot phrase our intentions this way. Fortunately Negroes now have little tradition of academic endeavor. It may be hoped, and even expected, that if we