

immigration as he became a symbol of Latino identity politics.

Chavez's ambivalence about immigration is also widespread among the Latino-American electorate. A 2002 survey by the Pew Hispanic Center found that 48 percent of Latino registered voters felt there were "too many" immigrants in the U.S. today, while only 7 percent thought there were "too few." This shouldn't be startling since Hispanics suffer mass immigration's most direct consequences: lowered wages, stressed schools, and that annoying third cousin from Hermosillo who shows up uninvited and wants to sleep on the couch until he gets himself established in a few years.

Yet when the Pew interviewers immediately rephrased the question in ethnocentric terms to read, "Thinking about *Latin American* immigrants who come to work in the United States," suddenly only 21 percent of Latino voters wanted to "reduce the number" and 36 percent wished to "allow more." Thus, Hispanic activists can easily arouse for their own profit understandable but irrational racial chauvinism.

The emergence of a truly *Latino-American* leader like the young Chavez, one more interested in the economic advancement of his own American ethnic group than in identity politics, would be good for American Hispanics, good for other Americans, and good for Mexico as well. As former Mexican Foreign Minister Jorge G. Castaneda has admitted, the mostly unfenced border allows Mexico's largely white ruling class to bleed off the discontented poor rather than make the fundamental reforms necessary to fix that dysfunctional country. Yet any of that is unlikely as long as the truth about Chavez is so little known. ■

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Britain, which is already the most photographed country in the world due to an extensive system of security cameras, is about to go one step farther.

The proposed Automatic Number Plate Recognition system will rely on the numerous cameras that are already in place on Britain's roadways supplemented by new ones where coverage is considered to be inadequate. The objective is to record all cars on all roads, amounting to 50 million transits per day, reading the license plates and storing the information for two years. As the plates are read, they will automatically be checked against a central database for possible criminal or terrorist connections. Some see the move as particularly Orwellian, but Prime Minister Tony Blair describes it as an essential tool to combat terrorism. Blair is also attempting to introduce biometric ID cards for the British public, a move that is being strongly resisted in the House of Lords.



Is there a new water-gate brewing? The CIA has initiated an internal investigation of the agency's third-ranking official, Executive Director Kyle Dustin Foggo, known as Dusty, over charges that he had business connections to corrupt former California Congressman Randy "Duke" Cunningham. Investigators are looking into allegations that Foggo, who was an administrative officer involved in procurement, may have given contracts to suppliers with whom he and his political cronies had financial or personal interests. It is reported that he recently gave the lucrative contract to supply water to CIA facilities in Iraq to businessman Brent Wilkes, a conspirator associate of Cunningham. It is also alleged that Foggo obtained his position in the first place through the urging of Cunningham, who is a close friend of CIA Director Porter Goss. Wilkes and Foggo are former college roommates who are so close that they have named their sons after each other. Foggo has worked at the CIA since 1982. During his time in the agency, he was responsible for the awarding of numerous no-bid noncompetitive contracts for supplies and services.



An Italian judge has formally asked the United States to permit questioning of 22 named CIA officers

who are wanted in connection with the kidnapping and rendition of the Egyptian cleric Abu Omar from a Milan street in February 2003, but the government of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi is unlikely to support the request. The CIA operation, which is particularly embarrassing to all parties involved because it was run with the connivance of the Italian intelligence service SISMI, was poorly managed and marked by incompetence. Most of the CIA officers were carrying passports with false names, but at least four have been identified by their true names through phone records because they could not resist the urge to call their families. In one case, a female officer who was traveling on a false passport produced a frequent flyer card in her true name at her hotel so that she could receive mileage credit. Abu Omar was rendered to Egypt where he was allegedly tortured. The CIA chief from Milan reportedly flew to Cairo to assist in the interrogation.

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Report Card

Kinder, gentler education bureaucrats, but where are the results?

By W. James Antle III

FOUR YEARS AFTER the Bush administration's signature education reform became law, you might think that there would be some consensus as to whether No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is passing or failing. You would be wrong. There are almost as many competing assessments of the program's impact—and how its flaws should be fixed, if they can be at all—as there are public schools.

Depending on who is asked, NCLB is either wildly expensive or woefully underfunded, a massive encroachment on state and local prerogatives or an overly loose patchwork of varying state standards, unrealistically draconian or ineffectually lax. And that's just among experts in the education field. So what should laymen make of this curious policy?

NCLB encapsulates the quirks of the Bush administration's domestic policy-making. Its architects borrowed liberally from the ideas of centrist new Democrats about how to mend federal education meddling, not end it. It wedded liberal spending programs to conservative goals of standards, accountability, and transparency (less so the goal of parental choice). And the legislation showcased President Bush as a uniter, not a divider, partnering him with Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-Mass.) and passing with strong support from Democrats and Republicans alike.

While the compassionate conservative also claims to be a reformer with results, Bush marked NCLB's anniversary by praising how much it cost. Speaking in Maryland, he noted that since 2001, Title I education spending is up 45 percent, the elementary and

secondary education program has increased by 41 percent, and spending on Reading First has quadrupled. The Democrats who worked with Bush on NCLB say the funding is inadequate, but it sounds like compassionate enough conservatism.

What about the reformer with results? The administration emphasizes recent rises in national test scores, especially for blacks and Hispanics. Neal McCluskey, education policy analyst for the Cato Institute, notes that the National Assessment of Educational Progress paints a murkier picture. Since NCLB's passage, math scores have risen for everyone except 17-year-olds while reading scores are stagnant or falling for everyone except fourth-graders. "The bottom line is that there's little evidence students are learning more as a result of NCLB," says McCluskey.

Criticism of the act is bipartisan. Utah's Republican legislature and governor, now in negotiations with the Department of Education, have revolted against NCLB. Connecticut's GOP Gov. Jodi Rell is backing a lawsuit by her state to challenge the law's testing requirements. To many conservatives in state legislatures, the problem isn't underfunding but overreach. They have found unlikely allies in traditionally Democratic teachers' unions, particularly the National Education Association, whose leaders have an aversion to accountability schemes that emphasize high-stakes testing.

The debate reflects the inherent difficulties of having the federal government, which supplies less than 10 percent of

national education funding, influence schools throughout the country. NCLB requires public schools to measure student performance, based on testing at specified intervals, and meet certain goals along the way to proficiency for all students by 2014. To prevent educators from focusing on aggregate test scores while ignoring disadvantaged children, the law recognizes sub-groups of poor, minority, and handicapped students who also must show improvement. Persistently failing schools are subject to gradually stronger penalties, but many of the intended beneficiaries find the testing requirements onerous.

"In the 1990s, a lot of education money was going to states with no strings attached," says Dan Lips, an education policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation. "NCLB added a few too many strings." Now even many liberal education professionals are singing the praises of local control.

The Bush administration has recognized that NCLB is becoming a political liability and is starting to modify its sales pitch. Flexibility has become an Education Department buzzword alongside accountability and transparency. Education Secretary Margaret Spellings is leading the charge. She helped design the law while working in the White House domestic-policy shop and upon moving to Education was among its fiercest defenders, often offending critics with her strong rhetoric. Now *Forbes* and the *Washington Post* have run stories about a kinder, gentler Spellings.

Spellings has been granting waivers to some states that have chafed at NCLB