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CCR

Committee on Chicano Rights, Inc

July 2, 1997

FOR IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE

REPUBLICAN CONGRESSMAN DENNOUNCHED AS "POLITICAL CHILD MOLESTER"

National City, CA...The Committee on Chicano Rights, (CCR) today, labeled Republican Congressman Brian Bilbray (Imperial Beach, CA) proposed legislation to deny automatic U.S. citizenship to the American-born children of "illegal" immigrants as "a sick, sick piece of legislation". Congressman Bilbray's legislation is not only a sick, sick piece of legislation, but according to CCR President Herman Baca, Bilbray is a "political child molester". In 30 years of dealing with the issue of immigration" said Baca " this is the lowest that I have seen a politican stoop, to get a vote".

"This type of legislation" stated Baca "would of fitted right in with biblical King Herod's order to slaughter all children under 2 years of age when Christ was born, or in Hilter's Nazi Germany". Baca accused Bilbray "of knowing full well that his legislation is unconstitutional, but due to the hysteria, racism, and nativism surrounding the so-called immigration issue, he is politically pandering to those elements to procure votes"

"If Bilbray's proposed legislation is supported by the Republican Party, they are going to pay a price for hurting our children." "If the Republicans think that they lost Chicano/Latino support with there support of Gov. Pete Wilson's Prop. 187, they ain't seen nothing if they choose to support Bilbray's anti-children proposal". "That support will insure that the Republican Party will ever receive any sizeable support from Chicano/Latino voters in the future".

In concluding Baca stated that "a government that can strip a child of its citizenship, is capable of anything".

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Press Release

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CONGRESSMAN BRIAN BILBRAY LABELED "POLITICAL CHILD MOLESTER"

NATIONAL CITY, CA. The Committee on Chicano Rights, (CCR) labeled Republican Congressman Brian Bilbray (R-49th dist.), a "political child molester". In the 30 years of dealing the issue of immigration, said Herman Baca Chairman of the CCR, "this is the lowest that I have seen a politician stoop to get votes."

Baca was referring to Bilbray's proposed legislation that would deny automatic U.S. citizenship to the American-born children of alleged "illegal" immigrants. "Congressman Bilbray legislation is the work of a sick, sick mind."

"This type of legislation, said Baca, would have fitted right in with King Herod, of biblical times, when he ordered the slaughter of all the Jewish first-born when Christ was born."

"Bilbray knows full well that his legislation is unconstitutional. He is playing up to the unfounded hysteria, racism and nativism of the Anglo public over the immigration issue. He is pandering to the worst elements in our society for pure political gain. If Right-Wing dominated Republican party supports this legislation there is going to be a heavy price to pay at the polls for attempting to hurt our children," stated Baca.

"If the Republicans think they lost support over Pete Wilson Prop 187, they haven't seen nothing yet. Their support will insure that Republican candidates throughout the state and nation will lose what ever support they ever had from the Chicano/Latino voters. A government that can strip a child of its citizenship is capable of anything ." concluded Herman Baca.



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Baca was referring to Bilbray's proposed legislation that would deny automatic U.S. citizenship to the American-born children of alleged "illegal" immigrants. Congressman Bilbray's proposed legislation is sick, sick legislation, and the work of a sick, sick mind."

"This type of legislation, said Baca "would of fitted right in with King Herod, of biblical times, when he ordered the slaughter of all Jewish children under 2 years of age when Christ was born."

"Bilbray knows full well that his legislation is unconstitutional, but he is playing politically to the unfounded hysteria, racism, and nativism of the Anglo public over immigration". "He is pandering to the worst elements in U.S. society for purely political gain." "If the Right Wing dominated Republican party support this legislation there is going to be a heavy price to pay at the polls for attempting to hurt our children," stated Baca.

"If the Republicans think they lost support over Gov. Pete Wilson Prop. 187, they haven't seen nothing yet. There support will insure that Republican candidates throughout the state and nation will lose what ever support they ever had from the Chicano Latino voters. A government that can strip a child of its citizenship, is capable of anything, concluded Baca.

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Wednesday

July 2, 1997

Union-Tribune.

Bilbray challenges birthright citizenship

By Dana Wilkie
COPLEY NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON — When Mavis Bilbray was two months pregnant with her third son, she boarded a plane at the American naval base on Guam and landed at San Diego's North Island Naval Air Station, insistent that her child be born on U.S. soil.

Though her newborn's nationality already was guaranteed — her husband was an American serviceman and she was a newly naturalized U.S. citizen — Mavis feared that Guam might someday be a foreign territory. An Australian native, Mavis Bilbray refused to take any chances.

That baby today is Rep. Brian Bilbray, and he tells his mother's story as he promotes a bill that would end one of this country's most

sacred and long-held practices — that of granting instant citizenship to those born on American soil.

"There are thousands of other Mavises all over the world who are playing by the rules," says Bilbray, an Imperial Beach Republican who wants to deny automatic U.S. citizenship to the American-born children of illegal immigrants. "To reward people for breaking the law is a slap in the face to everyone, and it's an embarrassment to the American process of fairness."

The plan is not a new one; the congressman failed to get lawmakers to vote on a similar bill he wrote two years ago. It is not a popular one; a poll last August found that 41 percent of registered voters across the country disliked the idea of withholding citizenship from

the children of illegal immigrants, while 38 percent supported it. President Clinton's Justice Department opposes it, and Clinton would almost certainly veto the bill should it get to his desk.

But it is a provocative one. The plan has generated more interest this year from Republicans, who control Congress, and it intrigues border towns such as San Diego, whose citizens pay the hospital, school and welfare bills of the children of illegal immigrants.

"We in San Diego County have been exposed . . . to scenes of expectant mothers in labor, circling hospital parking lots in their cars, waiting until the last possible minute to



Rep. Brian Bilbray: "To reward people for breaking the law is a slap in the face to everyone . . ."

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Bilbray

He again challenges birthright citizenship

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enter the hospital," said San Diego County Supervisor Pam Slater, who spoke last week during a hearing on Bilbray's plan before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims.

The San Diego County Board of Supervisors, a panel Bilbray once sat on, unanimously supported the congressman's legislation last April. But to the north, Orange County supervisors last month refused to vote on a resolution that would have endorsed the Bilbray plan after one key supervisor decided the idea was unconstitutional.

And although the Republican Party adopted a platform calling for

an end to birthright citizenship, some prominent Republicans have joined immigrant advocates in disagreeing with the party's position. They insist the Bilbray plan would create a new underclass of children in America who won't get the services and education they need to become productive members of society.

"There are many reasons to reduce illegal immigration, and there are many ways to achieve that objective," said Jack Kemp, former Republican vice presidential candidate and now a chairman of the Alexis de Tocqueville Institution, a conservative think tank.

"Violating a constitutional right is not one of those means."

But for more than a century, the nation's leaders have debated whether the U.S. Constitution instantly conferred citizenship on all who were American-born. When the U.S. Supreme Court in 1857

handed down its infamous Dred Scott decision — holding that blacks imported into the country and sold as slaves could not become citizens, nor could their descendants — Congress replied with the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. It says: "All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States."

Bilbray and others say that Congress could not have meant the 14th Amendment to apply to the children of illegal immigrants, partly because at the time, there was no such thing as an "illegal" immigrant. Immigration to this country was wide open.

The congressman also argues that:

■ Of 14 major nations reviewed by the immigration subcommittee, only four — Argentina, Canada, Mexico and the United States — automatically give citizenship to the children of illegal immigrants. The remainder — including Australia, France, Germany and Italy — do not.

■ Congress has tailored the requirements of the 14th Amendment for other groups, so it should be able to do the same for illegal immigrants. Before 1924, for instance, Congress withheld citizenship from some American Indians. Further, the American-born children of foreign diplomats are not automatic citizens. The logic is that diplomats owe loyalty to other nations and American Indians owed allegiance to their tribes.

■ If parents must demonstrate an "obligation of loyalty" to this country to entitle their U.S.-born children to citizenship, as some courts have ruled, then parents who break the laws to enter the country have not demonstrated that loyalty.

Many argue that denying citizenship to the U.S.-born children of illegal immigrants requires an amendment to the Constitution, but Bilbray argues that it can also be done legislatively, an assertion that opponents of his bill challenge.

"Throughout this country's history, the fundamental legal principle governing citizenship has been that birth within the territorial limits of the United States confers United States citizenship," said Dawn Johnsen, an attorney with the U.S. Department of Justice. "Any proposed provision of law . . . that purports to deny citizenship by birth . . . would be unconstitutional on its face."

This year, the chairmen of two key committees that must review the bill — the immigration subcommittee and the House Judiciary Committee — are intrigued by the idea, an indication that the legislation may move somewhat farther in Congress than it did last time.

There is no guarantee that Bilbray's plan will even come to a vote in the immigration subcommittee, which is led by Rep. Lamar Smith, R-Texas. But, says a Smith spokesman, "The fact that (Smith) held a hearing and supports the bill says he's interested, and it's something he wants to pursue."

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