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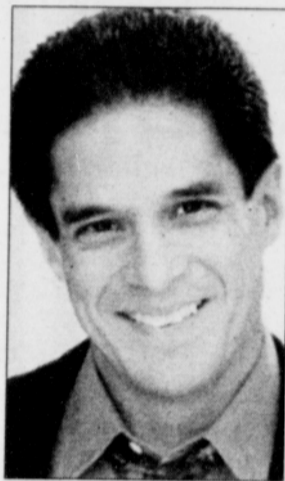
OPINION

America the Beautiful for the 21st Century

Coca-Cola's inclusive Super Bowl commercial

BY RAUL A. REYES

During this year's Super Bowl, Coca-Cola debuted a 60-second commercial paying tribute to the diversity of our nation. Coke's "It's Beautiful" ad featured expansive scenes of the country and shots of a wide variety of real people.



Some of them were enjoying a Coke.

It was set to "America the Beautiful" — as sung in seven different languages, including English, Spanish, Tagalog, and Hindi.

This commercial generated a profoundly negative response among conservative commentators. They reacted with hostility, fear, and even bigotry. To their discredit, these commentators revealed not only their ignorance — but also a willful refusal to accept

the reality of America in the 21st century.

On his radio show, Glenn Beck termed the ad "in your face," and an attempt to "divide people." This is quite ironic, considering that only weeks ago Beck admitted that his Fox News program was itself divisive.

"I think I played a role, unfortunately, in helping tear the country apart," he said. He's right about that. His conspiracy theories, "birther" comments, and demagoguery were a far more corrosive influence on American society than any commercial ever could be.

Former Rep. Allen West also took offense at the Coke commercial.

"If we cannot be proud enough as a country to sing "American the Beautiful" [sic] in English in a commercial during the Super Bowl, by a company as American as they come — doggone we are on the road to perdition," the Florida Republican wrote on his website.

Even though West gets the name of the song wrong, that does not stop the tea-partying politician from calling the spot "truly disturbing." As a self-styled "Guardian of the Republic," West might be surprised to know that our country doesn't have an official language and that the Census Bureau

reports that 381 languages are commonly spoken within our borders.

Then there's Todd Starnes, who tweeted "Couldn't make out that song they were singing. I only speak English." The Fox Radio host went on to wonder, "So was Coca-Cola saying America is beautiful because new immigrants don't learn to speak English?"

Apparently these conservatives need a decoder for this commercial. "With 'It's Beautiful,' we are simply showing that America is beautiful and Coke is for everyone," explained Katie Bayne, President of North American Brands for Coca-Cola in a statement.

By the way, new immigrants do learn English. Consider a 2012 study by the Pew Research Hispanic Trends Project that looked at language use among Latino immigrants.

While the first generation is usually only proficient in Spanish, by the second generation, the use of Spanish falls as the use of English rises. By the third generation, English is the dominant language. A separate study last year by University of Wisconsin researchers found that Latino immigrants are learning English faster than previous groups

of immigrants.

It's sad that Beck, West, Starnes and other conservative commentators don't appreciate the richness of our multicultural society.

The fact is that our country has always been multilingual. There are 169 Native North American languages that are still spoken today, linguist Nataly Kelly notes at The Huffington Post, and several of the Founding Fathers spoke languages besides English, including John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and James Monroe.

Today, 60 million Americans speak a language other than English at home. This year, for the first time, the Super Bowl was also televised in Spanish. So Coke's commercial truly reflects our nation's past, present, and future. What's wrong with that?

Coca-Cola deserves praise for its inclusive Super Bowl commercial. And critics of the ad ought to think about the motto on the Great Seal of the United States: E pluribus unum. It means "Out of many, one" — and it's in Latin.

Raul A. Reyes is an attorney and columnist in New York City. Distributed via OtherWords (OtherWords.org).

New York to End Stop-and-Frisk As We Know It

It's about safety, justice and fairness for all

BY MARC H. MORIAL

Elections have consequences. Never has that been more clearly demonstrated than last month when New York's new mayor, Bill



de Blasio, announced an agreement to reform the stop-and-frisk practice of the city's police department, tactics which have disproportionately targeted African American and Latino young men for years.

At the Brownsville Recreation Center in Brooklyn, a community burdened with more police stops than any other in the city, the mayor fulfilled a campaign promise and announced that his administration would drop an appeal of a ruling by Judge Shira Scheindlin, who found the policy unconstitutional and an example of "indirect racial profiling."

Mayor de Blasio made stop-and-frisk reform a major issue in his 2013 campaign, and the agreement he

announced represents a dramatic reversal of the previous administration's staunch defense of the policy.

The agreement calls for the commencement of a dialogue between police and community leaders to ensure that policies driving the police and community apart are cooperatively addressed. Furthermore, for the next three years, a court-appointed monitor will oversee the NYPD's

Let me be clear. As the former mayor of New Orleans, I fully understand that the first obligation of government is to protect its citizens, and I believe in community policing — done intelligently.

But New York's stop-and-frisk policy was counterproductive and violated basic constitutional principles. According to statistics compiled by the New York Civil Liberties Union, "From 2002 to 2011, Black and Latino residents made up close

brunt... This, on its face, is discriminatory."

The city's new police commissioner, Bill Bratton, underscored the mayor's commitment to reform, noting that instead of securing confidence, legitimacy and justice, in recent years the city's stop-and-frisk practices have "raised doubts and concerns about the police force in this city." He added, "We will not break the law to enforce the law."

The National Urban League has been among those calling for stop-and-frisk reform in New York City. This new agreement essentially marks the beginning of the end of

this discriminatory practice as we know it.

We applaud Mayor de Blasio, Commissioner Bratton and especially the people of New York who voted for change and got it. By paving the way to a reduction in racial profiling, a greater guarantee of equal treatment under the law, and better relations between police and the community, this move offers a guide to other cities across the nation committed to ensuring safety, justice and fairness for all citizens.

Marc H. Morial is president and chief executive officer of the National Urban League.

From 2002 to 2011, Black and Latino residents made up close to 90 percent of people stopped, and about 88 percent of stops — more than 3.8 million — were of innocent New Yorkers.

compliance with constitutional law. The mayor explained that once the resolution is confirmed by the Federal District Court, New York City will officially drop the appeal that was put in motion by the Bloomberg administration.

to 90 percent of people stopped, and about 88 percent of stops — more than 3.8 million — were of innocent New Yorkers. Even in neighborhoods that are predominantly white, Black and Latino New Yorkers face the disproportionate

THE LAW OFFICES OF Patrick John Sweeney, P.C.

Patrick John Sweeney
Attorney at Law

1549 SE Ladd
Portland, Oregon

Portland: (503) 244-2080
Hillsboro: (503) 244-2081
Facsimile: (503) 244-2084
Email: Sweeney@PDXLawyer.com

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