

Expectations Diminish For Bush-Fox Immigration "Solution"

LUBBOCK, TEXAS 79409

By Cynthia L. Orozco

Hopes for a quick solution to the U.S.-Mexico immigration crisis grow dimmer daily as Presidents George W. Bush and Vicente Fox prepare their final stances for a politically explosive binational immigration accord. The subject tops the agenda for their talks in Washington, D.C., this week.

That's the fear of Latino and immigrant advocacy groups alike as both administrations and a binational panel working on the issue signal that reform will be implemented piecemeal -- and may be delayed until after the 2002 mid-term U.S. elections.

Both presidents have backed off the rhetoric their administrations floated initially about an early and broad amnesty. It is becoming apparent that they are preparing their constituencies to accept a more vague, long-term prescription, rather than a quick cure, say the advocates.

"The process is going to take time to work through some very difficult issues," Brent Wilkes, executive director of the League

of United Latin American Citizens, acknowledged after a late August news conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. The National Hispanic Leadership Agenda used the event to announce principles it wants included in the binational discussions.

In July, details about a plan being developed by the Mexican Migration Working Group -- headed by U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, Attorney General John Ashcroft, Mexico's foreign minister, Jorge Castañeda, and Interior Minister Santiago Creel -- hinted at a possible amnesty for undocumented Mexican immigrants now living in the United States.

But after an Aug. 9 meeting, Powell said the group "is in no hurry," and Castañeda added that the goal is "to achieve a good agreement in whatever time frame is necessary."

Later, Bush stated he opposed blanket amnesty. He instead voiced support for a temporary guest-worker program, adding that he would consider all immigrant groups in any large-scale

reform. "Bush looks like he caved in to the anti-immigration forces from within his party," said Cecilia Muñoz, vice president for policy at the National Council of La Raza, told Hispanic Link. "There was a widespread sense that the president would do the right thing. He whetted appetites for real action."

The administration's recent retreat is seen by advocates as both disappointing and possibly damaging to Bush and his party's bid to court Latino voters.

"It is unfortunate that the White House is backing off when it has an opportunity to play a leading role in immigration reform," said Aisha Qaasim, legislative staff attorney in the Washington, D.C., office of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund. "It will be a political blow to the administration."

In response to Bush's proposals, a task force of House and Senate Democrats introduced on Aug. 2 a set of principles they want to see included in any reform legislation, similar to those

announced by NHLA. Among them are increasing the number of visas granted to reunify families, an earned legalization program, border safety, equal labor protections and addressing the interests of agricultural workers and agribusiness.

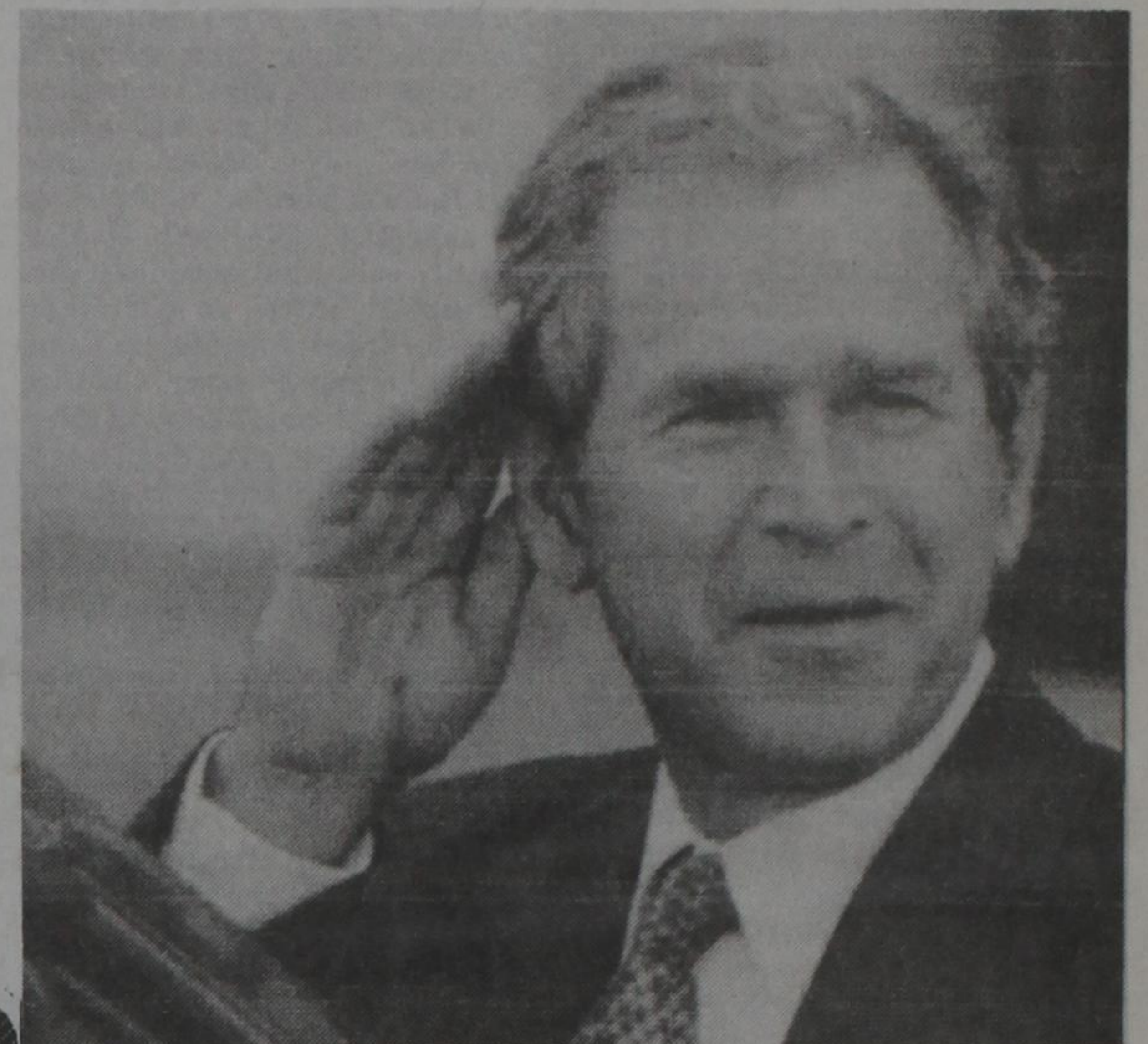
That same day, Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Rep. Howard Berman (D-Calif.) introduced identical legislation in their chambers that incorporates many of the Democratic principles.

United Farm Workers President Arturo Rodriguez suggested that while his union fully supports these measures, a plan for legalizing all undocumented immigrants is what advocates want to see brought to the table. "If the administration does not come forward with an announcement of bold action, Bush will fail in his attempt to gain credibility with the Latino community," Rodriguez told Hispanic Link.

"Immigration reform cannot be limited to a guest-worker program. The administration has to get out of the box on how it

looks at these policies," emphasized Gabriela Lemus, LULAC director of policy and legislation. Whatever the outcome of the Sept. 4-5 Bush-Fox meeting, advocates say they will continue

to pressure the administration and the Congress to introduce legislation sooner rather than later -- and they are determined to be very vocal about how it is crafted.



Bush Rules Out Blanket Amnesty for Illegal Immigrants

WASHINGTON, Aug. 23, 2001 (Xinhua via COMTEX) -- U.S. President George W. Bush Thursday ruled out any blanket amnesty for millions of illegal Mexican immigrants in the country, but promised to legalize their labor through a worker program.

"There's going to be no amnesty," Bush said as he visited an elementary school near his ranch in Texas where he is on vacation.

Bush is expected to announce proposed immigration changes when Mexican President Vicente Fox makes a state visit to the U.S. on September 5.

Earlier this month, U.S. Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, Attorney General John D. Ashcroft met with Mexican Foreign Minister Jorge Castañeda and Interior Minister Santiago

Creel in Washington and discussed an immigration reform plan. Mexico has been urging the U.S. to give legal status to the illegal Mexican immigrants in the U.S.

After the meeting, Powell and Ashcroft have recommended to grant guest-worker status and eventually legal residency to some of the 3 million illegal Mexican immigrants in the country.

Bush said that he is consulting with Mexican officials on a worker program "that will legalize the hard work that's taking place now in America."

"So long as there's somebody who wants to hire somebody and somebody willing to work, it seems like to me it's in our nation's interests to make sure the two go together," he said.

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"Respect for the Rights of Others is Peace."
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Se Disminuyen Expectativas de la "Solucion" Inmigrante de Bush y Fox

Por Cynthia L. Orozco

Se van apagando a diario las esperanzas de una solución rápida a la crisis de inmigración entre los Estados Unidos y México en la medida en que el presidente George W. Bush y su contraparte Vicente Fox preparan sus últimas posiciones en cuanto a un acuerdo binacional sobre la inmigración potencialmente explosivo. Es el tema prioritario para sus discusiones en Washington esta semana.

Así temen los grupos de apoyo latinos y de inmigrantes ya que señalan las dos administraciones y un panel binacional que trabajan el tema que la reforma será implementada de manera fragmentada -- y puede demorarse hasta pasadas las elecciones de término medio estadounidenses en el 2002.

Ambos presidentes han dado marcha atrás con la retórica inicialmente proferida por sus administraciones referente a una amnistía temprana y amplia. Se vuelve aparente que están preparando a sus ciudadanos a que acepten una prescripción más vaga, a largo plazo, en vez de una cura rápida, dicen los grupos de apoyo.

"El proceso va a necesitar de tiempo para trabajar algunos de los temas que son muy difíciles," admitió Brent Wilkes, director ejecutivo de la Liga de Ciudadanos Unidos Latinoamericanos en

una conferencia de prensa llevada a cabo a fines de agosto en el Club Nacional de Prensa, en Washington, D.C. La Agenda de Liderazgo Nacional Hispana aprovechó el evento para anunciar los principios que quiere que se incluyan en las discusiones binacionales.

En julio se vislumbraron detalles de un plan en vías de desarrollo por el Grupo de Trabajo sobre la Migración Mexicana -- encabezada por Secretario de Estado estadounidense Colin Powell, Fiscal General John Ashcroft, Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores de México, Jorge Castañeda y Ministro del Interior Santiago Creel -- de una posible amnistía para inmigrantes indocumentados mexicanos que actualmente residen en los Estados Unidos.

Sin embargo, después de una reunión el 9 de agosto, Powell dijo que el grupo "no tiene prisa", y añadió Castañeda que el objetivo es "lograr un buen acuerdo dentro del marco de tiempo que sea necesario".

Más adelante, Bush anunció que se opone a una amnistía general. Por otro lado, indicó apoyo por un programa temporal de trabajadores huéspedes, diciendo además que tendría en cuenta a todos los grupos inmigrantes en cualquier reforma de gran alcance.

"Parece que Bush se dejó lle-

var por las fuerzas en contra de la inmigración de entre las filas de su partido", le dijo a Hispanic Link Cecilia Muñoz, vice presidente de políticas del Consejo Nacional de La Raza. "Hubo un sentido generalizado que el presidente cumpliría con lo correcto. Afiló los apetitos para acciones de verdad".

Los grupos de apoyo a inmigrantes perciben la retirada reciente de la administración de Bush tanto como decepcionante como posiblemente perjudicial a Bush y al deseo de su partido de cortejar a los latinos.

"Resultado desafortunado que se retire del tema la Casa Blanca cuando tiene la oportunidad de jugar un papel primario en la reforma migratoria", dijo Aisha Qaasim, abogada legislativa de la oficina en Washington del Fondo de Defensa Legal y Educación Mexicano-Americano. "Será un golpe político contra la administración".

En respuesta a las propuestas de Bush, un grupo de trabajo comprendido por demócratas de ambas cámaras emitió el 2 de agosto una serie de principios que quieren ver incluidos en cualquier legislación de reforma que resulte, y son similares a los que anunció la Agenda de Liderazgo Nacional Hispana. Entre estos está el incrementar el número de visas que se otorguen

para reunificar a las familias, un programa de legalización ganada, la seguridad en la frontera, protecciones igualitarias en el trabajo y un enfoque a los intereses de los trabajadores agrícolas y el negocio de la agricultura.

Ese mismo día, el senador Edward Kennedy, demócrata de Massachusetts, y el representante Howard Berman, demócrata de California, presentaron legislación idéntica en sus cámaras que incorpora muchos de los principios demócratas.

Presidente de los Trabajadores Agrícolas Unidos, Arturo Rodriguez, sugirió que si bien su sindicato está completamente de acuerdo con estas medidas, lo que quieren ver puesto en la mesa los grupos de apoyo a los inmigrantes es un plan que legalice a todos los inmigrantes indocumentados.

"Si no se adelanta la administración anunciando acciones valientes, Bush fracasará en su afán de ganar credibilidad con la comunidad latina", le dijo Rodriguez a Hispanic Link.

Sea cual fuere el resultado de la reunión del 4 y el 5 de septiembre entre Bush y Fox, los grupos de apoyo dicen que continuarán presionando a la administración y al congreso para que presenten legislación antes que después -- y están determinados a ser muy vocales en cómo debe formularse.

Taxes & Fees

Editors Note:

The three main taxing entities are going to be setting the tax rates next month as they do every year. El Editor feels that citizens of Lubbock and surrounding areas should be aware of the taxing methods used to generate income for government functions. The following essay is furnished as a public service to those who might want our elected representatives to set taxes that are fair to everyone. In Lubbock, taxes are applied in a progressive manner on real property. Regressive taxes are those sometimes called fees as well as the sales tax. Examples are sewer and garbage fee in the city and the Road and Bridge fee in the county budget.

Progressive and Regressive Taxes Explained

Progressive & Regressive taxes describe the tax table, not a political opinion. It's like a mathematical function. Most often these are called progressive or regressive tax tables or taxes. In a progressive tax, the more you earn, the higher your tax rate. In a regressive tax, the less you earn, the higher your tax rate.

The Classical Regressive tax is the Sales Tax
The Classical Progressive tax is the Income Tax

But there are many taxes and fees that are more extreme of each kind. Combined with this tax theory and these examples, a great deal can be induced about economics and politics.

Because most people are involved in preparing their progressive federal income taxes it is fairly well understood. And because most people are not involved in calculating their regressive taxes, it is fairly poorly understood. So we will concentrate on explaining regressive taxes, and how the two combine to make up our system, and most systems of taxation.

All known functioning systems of taxation have a balance of progressive and regressive taxes. This idea is almost never debated, the debates are over where the balance point should be, how much burden should be on the "rich", and how much burden on the "middle" and "poor"? For simplicity we will combine "middle" and "poor" just say "rich" and "poor", and put that dividing line somewhere between \$50,000 and \$500,000, as you wish. But we could just as easily have selected (say) \$25,000 or \$750,000 for our dividing line between "rich" and "poor", the principles are the same.

In a progressive tax, the more you earn, the higher your tax rate.

In a regressive tax, the less you earn, the higher your tax rate. Progressive taxes soak the rich, regressive taxes soak the poor.

An example of why sales tax is regressive

If progressive taxes soak the rich, and regressive taxes soak the poor, why do we almost never hear the term, "soak the poor"? Perhaps that is a "loaded" question?

Let's imagine two frugal traveling salesmen. They each have to buy a new car every four years to (say) keep up appearances, and they need reliable transportation. (One guy makes 20K, the other 300K)

Run the numbers on a the RATE of total income each pays on 5% sales tax.

Poor Boy buys a \$20,000 car pays \$1000 or 5.0% of his income.

Rich Boy buys a \$60,000 car pays \$3000 or 1.0% of his income.

Poor Boy has 5 times the tax bite, or rate of tax on a car. Rich Boy hardly feels sales taxes. Then run the numbers on a \$30 pair of Levis, and the tax rate discrepancy triples.

Continued Page 2

Women, Minorities have most to lose if Social Security gets Privatized

Washington, DC - The National Urban League, the National Council of La Raza, and the National Women's Law Center today disputed claims by the Heritage Foundation that minorities and women would be better off if Social Security were privatized. All three groups noted that Heritage tried making similar claims several years ago, but their research and conclusions were roundly criticized and rejected by the Social Security actuaries and other leading experts. The three national groups also warned that diverting Social Security revenues into private accounts would threaten deep cuts in benefits that are especially important to women and racial and ethnic minorities.

Women and minority groups have the most to lose if Social Security is changed from a program that provides guaranteed, progressive benefits for workers and their families to a system of private retirement accounts. Women, African Americans, and Hispanic Americans earn less over their lifetimes and are less likely to have pensions. As a result, Social Security's progressive, lifetime-guaranteed benefits are crucial to their economic security in retirement. In addition, Social Security provides disability and survivor benefits and family protections that are especially important for African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and women.

"Heritage takes a couple of isolated facts, such as the fact that African American men have shorter lifespans, and then twists them, arguing that African Americans would do better with private accounts," said Dr. William Spriggs, Research and Public Policy Director of the National Urban League. "This conclusion is just flat wrong. They ignore the fact that higher rates of premature disability and death in our community mean that Social Security's

survivor and disability benefits are especially critical for African American families."

While African Americans are only 12 percent of the population, they make up 17 percent of Americans receiving Social Security disability benefits and 22 percent of all children receiving survivor benefits. Almost half of African American Social Security beneficiaries receive benefits through the disability insurance system, whereas about one-quarter of white beneficiaries receive such benefits. And elderly African Americans rely on Social Security retirement benefits more than white elders; 40 percent of elderly African Americans rely on Social Security for all of their income, compared to 16 percent of elderly whites.

"The truth is that the cost of privatizing Social Security would fall hardest on younger workers, who would be forced to keep paying to maintain the old system while funding a new system for themselves. Since the Hispanic population is disproportionately younger than other ethnic groups, our community would be especially burdened by privatization," said Raul Yzaguirre.

President, National Council of La Raza. "Hispanic Americans also are a rapidly growing proportion of the nation's elderly, and rely heavily on Social Security; their benefits could be threatened if we eliminated the 'social insurance' character of the system. Hispanic Americans of all generations have a stake in preserving Social Security's system of guaranteed benefits."

The median age of Hispanics is 27, compared to age 31 for African Americans and 39 for whites. If young workers bear the brunt of the costs of reforming the system, Hispanics will be disproportionately burdened. At the other end of the age spectrum, it is important to note that Hispanics tend to be long-lived.

the average Hispanic who reaches 65 lives an additional 20.5 years, while the average white will live an additional 17.8 years. Eroding the guaranteed, lifetime, inflation-adjusted features of the current system will disproportionately hurt Hispanics, who are also more reliant on Social Security. Social Security benefits are the sole source of income for almost 40 percent of Hispanic recipients, compared to 16 percent of white recipients.

"Social Security offers women advantages that cannot be matched by private accounts, such as secure benefits that can't be outlived, and inflation adjustments that protect their purchasing power over their longer lives," said Joan Entmacher, the National Women's Law Center's Vice President and Director of Family Economic Security. "Social Security's spousal benefits also provide many women who have spent years out of the labor force as homemakers, or in jobs that pay substantially less than their husband's jobs, with a way to get better benefits than they would receive on their own work record."

Guaranteed, lifetime, inflation-protected benefits are especially important for women because they live longer than men and have less non-Social Security income. A 65-year old woman who purchased an annuity with her private account would see the purchasing power of her monthly payment lose 40 percent of its value by the time she reached 85, with inflation at just 2.5 percent per year. Spousal benefits are available on a gender-neutral basis, but 99% of the retirees who collect higher benefits as spouses or surviving spouses are women. Although fewer women in the future will rely on spousal benefits, Social Security actuaries predict that in 2060, 40% of women still will receive benefits based on their husband's earning history.

Latino Youths Are More Likely to Report Depression, Anxiety & Suicidal Thoughts

There are "troubling disparities" in the mental health care that U.S. ethnic and racial minorities receive, according to a "broad and comprehensive" report released Aug. 26 by the surgeon general, the *New York Times* reports. The report, "Mental Health: Culture, Race and Ethnicity," used peer-reviewed research from such fields as mental health, history, sociology and anthropology to reach its conclusions and is a supplement to the 1999 "Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health" (Goode, *New York Times*, 8/27). The report found that African Americans with mental health problems are less likely than whites to be diagnosed and to receive proper care for those problems (Dunham, *Reuters/Philadelphia Inquirer*, 8/27). African Americans are also more likely than whites to be diagnosed "incorrectly"; for example, they are more likely to be diagnosed with schizophrenia than they are to be diagnosed with "less-severe mood disorder[s]." Compared with white young people, Latino youths are more likely to report depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts, the report finds (Feder, *San Jose Mercury News*, 8/27). Overall, the study found that Latinos and Asian Americans are no more likely than whites to have mental disorders. However, Latinos might suffer disproportionately from mental health problems because they are the group with the lowest rate of health insurance. About 40% of Latinos are uninsured. Asian Americans are the least likely of all groups studied to seek mental health treatment. The report notes that only 17%

of Asians with mental illnesses sought treatment. American Indians and Alaskan Natives are thought to have the "most limited" access to mental health care, the report says (Monmaney, *Los Angeles Times*, 8/27). Minorities are more likely than whites to "rely" on their primary care provider to detect mental health disorders, *USA Today* reports. But Ronald Kessler, health policy expert at Harvard Medical School, said that patients face "an uphill battle to get treatment for mental health problems under managed care," adding, "Doctors are not likely to diagnose a mental disorder in the eight minutes they're allowed with the patient" (Elias, *USA Today*, 8/27). Despite disparities in treatment and diagnosis, minorities generally respond to treatment similarly to whites when they receive proper diagnoses, the report finds (*Reuters/Philadelphia Inquirer*, 8/27).

Pinpointing the Reasons
According to the report, the disparities are due in part to the "fragmented, costly and inadequate mental health services" available to minorities, as well as to the high number of minorities who lack insurance. In addition, mental health problems among minorities are related to "cultural differences that created barriers to treatment," the report says. For instance, mental health providers are often unaware of their patients' cultural values and backgrounds, including their healing traditions and the "meaning of illness within their cultures," the *New York Times* reports. The report also notes that disparities in mental health care for minorities can be related to language differences, racism and discrimination, and to the stigma that some cultures ascribe to mental illness (*New York Times*, 8/27). Surgeon General David Satcher said, "While mental health disorders may touch all Americans either directly or indirectly, all do not have equal access to treatment and services. The revolution in science that has led to effective treatments for mental illness needs to benefit every American of every race, ethnicity and culture" (*Reuters/Philadelphia Inquirer*, 8/27). He added, "We have got to find a way to bridge the gap between the need and the access to services."

More Research, Tailor Services
Satcher called for additional research on minorities and mental health, noting that there is a "dearth of research" on the efficacy of various treatments in different minority groups. He added that "little was known" about mental illnesses in smaller racial and ethnic groups such as Asians, Pacific Islanders, American Indians and Alaska Natives. Satcher also recommended that mental health services be tailored to minorities and that the number of minority mental health care providers be increased (*New York Times*, 8/27). The federal government did not announce new programs or funding after the release of the study, which reports that care providers and state and local governments will be responsible for solving the problem. Still, Satcher said that he hoped NIH and other federal agencies would devise and fund initiatives for minority mental health. He added, "This is one of the best investments we can make" (*Los Angeles Times*, 8/27). The report is available [online](#).

Taxes And Fees From Page One

Sales tax is NOT a flat tax.

Other examples of regressive taxes and fees.

Most per-unit taxes are regressive. For example, in real estate, a \$1,000/yr per lot assessment fee is not uncommon in some areas. (for things like fire and sewer, etc) That's a fair chunk for a \$200,000 home, hardly nothing for a \$2,000,000 home in the same assessment district.

Here is an example of a per-unit tax also of the "sin tax" variety, combining two of the most regressive of all taxes. In California, a (say) \$1/gallon of alcoholic beverage tax was enacted, then quickly repealed. The reason was, this was a major tax bite on a six-pack of beer, and almost nothing on a \$150 bottle of champagne, or a \$60 bottle of scotch or wine. Often sin-taxes are easy for politicians, not this time. There was a similar per-unit "snack tax" that met a similar fate because of potato chips v. caviar and such. These amplifications of the tax rate discrepancy work in conjunction with the normal regressive sales tax functions. That outlines the basic ideas and theory of regressive taxation.

Complications.

These have a moral or arguable aspect. Groceries, drugs and some necessities are rarely taxed for moral reasons because of a compounding problem found with the truly poor that has to do with disposable income. That is, a family that earns less than say, \$25,000 has almost none. They

may be forced to spend say, 25% of their income on groceries, no choice. A family earning \$100K hardly feels the grocery bill in comparison.

This is because even a family that earns say \$50,000 has potentially \$25,000 disposable if they chose to live as cheaply as the \$25k family. This could be funnelled into tax shelters. And Rich Boy often chooses to spend most of his money in ways that avoid sales taxes, such as his gardener, nanny, pool cleaner, chauffeur, accountant, lawyer, and other labor-based services, as well as his European vacation and any investments. Poor Boy has no such choice, his income must go to taxable consumer goods. These complications amplify the "pure" qualities of regressive taxation theory.

Follow the Money

Why should the rich pay more? Some say, for the same reason reason John Dillinger robbed banks: because that's where the money is. There is some logic to that, the richest 2% control in the ballpark of 40% of the private wealth in the USA. Others say; "Because they can afford it." Others who complain about progressive taxes say it's because people want "revenge on the rich", or it's "class envy". Or they say, "Why should the successful people be penalized?" That is an interesting take on reality.

But there is one argument that is not often seen, the "follow the money", or follow the tax money argument. Simply put, it says you get what you pay for. It says that if you eat a gourmet meal, you have purchased an entire different meal (not just more of it) than for a McDonald's Happy Meal. We claim that progressive taxes buys Rich Boy toys, regressive taxes buy Poor Boy toys. We say fair is fair. To test this idea, we follow the tax money.

Progressive taxes (such as income taxes) pay mostly for **Rich Boy Toys**: Desert Storm, Cold War, gunboat diplomacy, the Fed's infinite labor pool (WANTED: unemployment) and any related poverty, NAFTA, GATT, free trade agreements, interstate freeways, National Parks, FBI, CIA, a hot-shot standing military, etc. And regressive taxes: (mostly local sales taxes and fees) go for **Poor Boy Toys**: local roads, hospitals, schools, local parks, libraries, cops, city/county councils, fire fighting, etc. If "toys" sounds too flippant, feel free to swap with a term that rings true for you, such as "tools of the trade", or "economic infrastructures."

To oversimplify a bit, a carpenter does not require the Rich Boy toys, and the CEO of GM does not require the Poor Boy toys. And progressive (mostly federal income) taxes soak the rich, regressive (mostly local sales) taxes soak the poor. So each Boy is largely paying for his own meal.

Libertarians often argue: TAX IS THEFT!
It's human nature to overestimate one's own powers and to undervalue the help we have received. The toys. Perhaps taxes are like any other transaction. A bundled transaction. When you buy a set of tires or a meal at a restaurant, you are paying for employee theft, drunk employees,

security, air conditioning, accountants, and stupid business moves, etc. that you may disapprove of, bundled into the cost of doing business and it's not on your invoice. Bottom line: nobody is forcing you to buy the tires or the meal.

Your choice. You can live like a hermit in a shack, eating roots. If you do not consume the toys, likely you will be poor and owe no taxes. But once you have eaten and grown fat you are now in debt. There is no free lunch. Some say that the American meal is the best meal in the world. If you have eaten of it, pay your debts, and don't try and sneak out the back door.

The tricky balance of money and power.

Taxes are also used to tune the economy.

One of the main functions of taxation is to balance the flow of money between the employer and the employee. This keeps the money from accumulating on one end or the other and crashing the economy or altering the basic structure of democratic capitalism as we know it.

For example, many people argue that in the late 1970's the employees had too much power and money. Their wages were outpacing inflation and they were paying off their debt with little dollars. And that now in the 1990's via the great redistribution of wealth caused by cutting taxes for the wealthiest in half, and "firing the unions", some argue that the employers have too much power and money. History will tell.

What is tricky in this balance is that the power follows the money and the money follows the power. So when the economic scale starts to tip, it tends to accelerate. It's very touchy.

Taxes are also used in other ways to direct the economy. For example, if the government feels that a certain direction is in the national interest, tax shelters may be opened in that direction. This could be of benefit to compensate for the market's well known shortsightedness and directionlessness caused by its preoccupation with short-term gains. (Ten years is not a long time.)

Beware of the so-called tax cut.

The tax cut is a funny way of managing a household. It's like deciding that you are spending too much money, so you ask your boss for a wage cut.

Perhaps the best way to stop spending too much money is to stop spending too much money. What an idea! Fix or cut the wasteful programs.

Sometimes a tax cut is not really a tax cut. That's because there is no free lunch. If a needed program is blindly defunded, then the money has to come from somewhere. Often if it's a federal program that is defunded, the slack is taken up by local (largely regressive) taxes. What we have is not a tax cut, but a Tax shift, from the Rich Boys debt onto the Poor Boy's shoulders.

In 1996 a federal across-the-board "tax cut" was popular in certain circles. Here is how cutting progressive (income) taxes might have effected you: If you made 36K, Dole's 15%

Are We Regressing or Progressing?

The Implementation of Regressive Taxes in Lubbock

By Eliseo Solis

The use of the word "taxes" conjures up sudden negative thoughts for many people, particularly politicians. There are two things we can not escape: death and taxes, as the saying goes. People pay income taxes, property taxes, sales taxes, etc. and our ever vigilant elected representatives trample over themselves about how they are protecting the public's money. The venerated and conservative former county commissioner, Alton Brazzell would rail about us liberal dogooders. He proudly boasted about how he would never even throw away paper clips and how the budget for the General Assistance Department was bloated because of them welfare cheats. He voted automatically for any and all increases in taxes and most budget items requiring increases, except for the 22% pay increase for commissioners in the late 1970s, of course. (are we experiencing déjà vu all over again? or what). Anyone receiving public funds was suspect...! Well, it turns out that, after being on the public teat from 1958 to 1996, Mr. Brazzell, while receiving his retirement from public funds, conveniently talked our present commissioners into providing him a truck, gas, maintenance and who knows what else with public funds. His vital mission is to go around the countryside looking for old tractors and farm implements. Hmmm, I wonder how we ever failed to see the importance of such a department in the past. Thank goodness we now have such a visionary commissioners court.

Mr. Brazzell though, vigorously supported the introduction of the sales tax into our budget when the issue came up. As one can tell from the front page article explaining the difference between regressive and progressive taxes, we now know who Brazzell represented.

Sales taxes are considered regressive and as the article states, "If progressive taxes soak the rich, regressive taxes soak the poor". It also stated about how we never hear the term "soak the poor", only the mistreated rich are soaked. In the example provided, the poor boy pays 5% of his income for sales taxes on car, while the rich boy pays 1% of his income on sales tax obligations. I remember opposing the adoption of the sales tax when the issue came up and without having checked the minutes, I sure hope I voted against it.

The other form of regressive taxes are fees imposed on services. For some reason or other, there doesn't seem to be much outcry about fees.

In the proposed budget presented to the City Council and scheduled for approval in September, fees for services such as garbage disposal and sewer will go up again this year, as they have for the last few years. Now 2% or whatever it is, doesn't sound like much of an increase but last months bill was \$23 and the increases have taken place almost annually. It was also announced that the increase was going to be earmarked for improvements in southwest Lubbock. Now I don't have anything against folks from southwest Lubbock, in fact, some of my best friends are from that area. But it seems somewhat ironic that people in north and east Lubbock (statistically, bearing a large portion of poor people) are being hit with a regressive tax that takes more of their income proportionally while receiving little or no benefit. I guess it can be said that we of this side can reap the benefits when we travel to that area for necessities not offered in the barrio or ghetto.

Let's look at another example. The fee for the road and bridge fund which provides funding for precinct operations is a regressive tax. Once again, it turns out that Pct. 3, represented by Commissioner Gilbert Flores, happens to be the traditional poorer precinct, therefore his constituents are being disproportionately taxed, again. Well if that wasn't enough, the commish up and voted to let some of Pct. 3's money go to expand 82nd street from Frankford to the Brownfield Highway near Wolfarth. This was a few years ago around 1994. When I said some money, I meant in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. He was reported to have stated that we were not to worry because he was "going to get his share". In the first place, why would anyone turn over money from the most needy quadrant to a fund that would require the vote of the court as a whole to allocate. Secondly, if you have seen the roads in Precinct 3 that need attention, it makes you wonder, what kind of fool would allow his budget to be raided for the benefit of the well off. In fact, when Flores tried to bring up the subject this past year about his "share", he was soundly chastised in public by the eminent Kenny Maines and then promptly outvoted. Not to worry though, Gilbert recently told me that he is being offered high paying jobs that are getting hard to turn down and since he is vested, he is thinking of not running in '04. (Vested means his retirement is in place and he and his wife will not have to deal with "those people" any more.

Now, back to the city fees. In discussing the fee increase with T.J. Patterson, his response was that they were basically the same. And about the increase being mostly for the benefit of southwest Lubbock, he matter-of-factly said something like "that's just the way things are or there's not much we can do about it". In other words, he will vote for the increase in regressive taxes which adversely affect his constituents. I love T.J. and his marches. My heart goes out to Bobby with her sickness; may she get well. It's just that somehow we have all missed the boat about the original purpose of the activism of the 60s and 70s, the aspirations in pursuing the long fought litigation for single-member districts and the sacrifices of our leaders like Martin Luther King and Willie Velasquez.

I don't know how Victor Hernandez will vote or if he may make a statement about the inequality of our local taxing system. He seems to be somewhat stifled of late. I wonder if it has anything to do with a report I heard in a meeting last year about how the Montford machine paid for Hernandez' campaign debt. Quien sabe? At any rate, more talk needs to be made about the damaging way that Fees and other local services hurt the poor and should be limited too!

"cut" takes \$320/year less from you. But if local sales taxes edge up 1% to make up, you just lost money. Beware of the free lunch. While most Rich Boys don't want the Poor Boys to shoulder their debts, keep in mind that for many of the very Rich Boys, that's part of their job. That's just simple economics.

Income group	Taxes as a % of income on:				Ratio of taxes paid by			
	Poorest 20%	Middle 60%	Top 1%	Top 1%	Poor/Top	Middle/Top	Top 1%	Top 1%
Washington	17.10%	10.50%	3.90%	4.35%	4.35%	2.67%	1.10%	1.10%
Florida	14.00%	7.70%	3.60%	3.90%	3.90%	2.16%	2.16%	2.16%
Texas	13.80%	8.50%	4.40%	3.14%	3.14%	1.94%	1.94%	1.94%
South Dakota	11.70%	7.70%	2.90%	4.08%	4.08%	2.09%	2.09%	2.09%
Tennessee	12.30%	7.50%	3.80%	3.40%	3.40%	2.09%	2.09%	2.09%
Louisiana	13.40%	9.90%	6.00%	2.24%	2.24%	1.67%	1.67%	1.67%
Pennsylvania	13.30%	10.20%	6.10%	2.20%	2.20%	1.68%	1.68%	1.68%
Illinois	13.60%	9.80%	6.10%	2.23%	2.23%	1.60%	1.60%	1.60%
Alabama	11.80%	9.00%	4.80%	2.42%	2.42%	1.57%	1.57%	1.57%
Michigan	13.30%	10.80%	6.90%	1.93%	1.93%	1.54%	1.54%	1.54%

Average Income in Group	\$15,600	\$33,200	\$47,400	\$68,700	\$98,300	\$181,000	\$301,000
Sales & Excise Taxes	6.70%	5.20%	4.20%	3.50%	2.80%	1.80%	1.10%
General Sales—Individuals	3.50%	2.80%	2.40%	2.00%	1.50%	1.10%	0.70%
Other Sales & Excise—Ind.	1.50%	1.00%	0.80%	0.80%	0.60%	0.30%	0.10%
Sales & Excise on Business	1.70%	1.30%	1.00%	0.90%	0.80%	0.40%	0.20%
Property Taxes	4.80%	2.90%	2.80%	2.80%	2.80%	2.80%	1.80%
Property Taxes on Families	4.10%	2.70%	2.60%	2.50%	2.50%	2.00%	0.80%
Other Property Taxes	0.40%	0.30%	0.25%	0.30%	0.30%	0.50%	1.00%
Income Taxes	1.30%	2.30%	2.80%	3.20%	3.60%	3.90%	4.80%
Personal Income Tax	1.20%	2.20%	2.80%	3.10%	3.50%	4.10%	5.00%
Corporate Income Tax	0.10%	0.10%	0.05%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.20%
TOTAL TAXES	12.50%	10.50%	9.80%	9.50%	8.00%	6.40%	7.80%

Letter to the Editor

For some reason we Indigenous people get studied alot. Of course, it is just another study. But I do have some insight to this study.

We must ask ourselves, does this bring up a good point for evidence of racism in this country? But do we need a study to prove that racism is alive in the U.S.? Look how the issue with Native American Casinos are dealt with, or even the "illegal alien" issue.

There was a time that we as native indigenous people were seen as "drunken indians", now it is the "Casino-interested indians". The other one that I don't understand, is "illegal alien". Except for us Native Americans what does that make everybody else.

Setup the borders you setup racism. And why does the laws of INS apply only more to people south of the border?

Or how about the haters writing a hate crime bill? You know the same guys and gals that support Mascot derogatory names.

Anyway, just an insight on my part.

Juan Macias

Tertulia y Comentario

By Eliseo Solis

The establishment media doesn't get the point. Notwithstanding the city council members' vote, the stage has been set for a payoff to Chief Walker. Their vote to rubberstamp the decision of the City Manager is just a matter of procedure. That is the way the city charter is set up, with the weak Mayor form of government that rules Lubbock. That is also why Mayor Sitton was quoted in a televised broadcast that she was not even aware of what the administration was discussing. The power structure knows what it is doing. So let's don't get too excited unless citizens are willing to seek fundamental change through organizing. If this is the case, ask your church to join the WTOS. If your church is already a member, then get involved. This organization will **teach** you how to get power, not lead you. This way you don't ask your elected officials about what's going on, you tell them what you want.

As I said, the establishment media doesn't get it. They're all fired up about their rights under the Open Records Act. They're running around all offended and hurt. I even read where one of the top dogs in the "big" paper used the word "hell". Dios Mio! Talk about anger. Estand todos alborotados!... Lo que necesitan tomar en cuenta es el ligero modo en que aquellos del poder nos estan convirtiendo la policia civil en un organismo militar (SWAT Team) en el cual fijan la plebe como enemigos, no alguien quien deben proteger. Me recuerda de la guardia nacional en El Salvador, Centro America que equivilva la policia en este pais.

Me platico un amigo que con todo el borrote de los policias muertos o asesinados y con el primer siendo el Sr Julian Herrera;... cuando fue a buscar el lugar en donde esta sepultado Sr. Herrera, no lo encontro. Se supone que lo cubrieron a el y otros para hacer mas espacio o algo por ese estilo.... Buen modo de honrar los caidos que defendieron nuestras leyes. ---Ahh, pero era Mejicano.

It's incredible how people so craftily switch the issue of race to put the blame on victims of racism. The ultra-conservative Time Magazine headlines an article on tennis featuring Venus and Serena Williams, with the following quote by Martina Hingis "Many times (the Williams sisters) get sponsors because they are Black. And they had a lot of advantages because they can always say 'it's racism'".

Isn't it amazing how ingenuous folks can get things turned around. People who have never experiences the ugliness of racism find it so easy and convenient to "play the race card".

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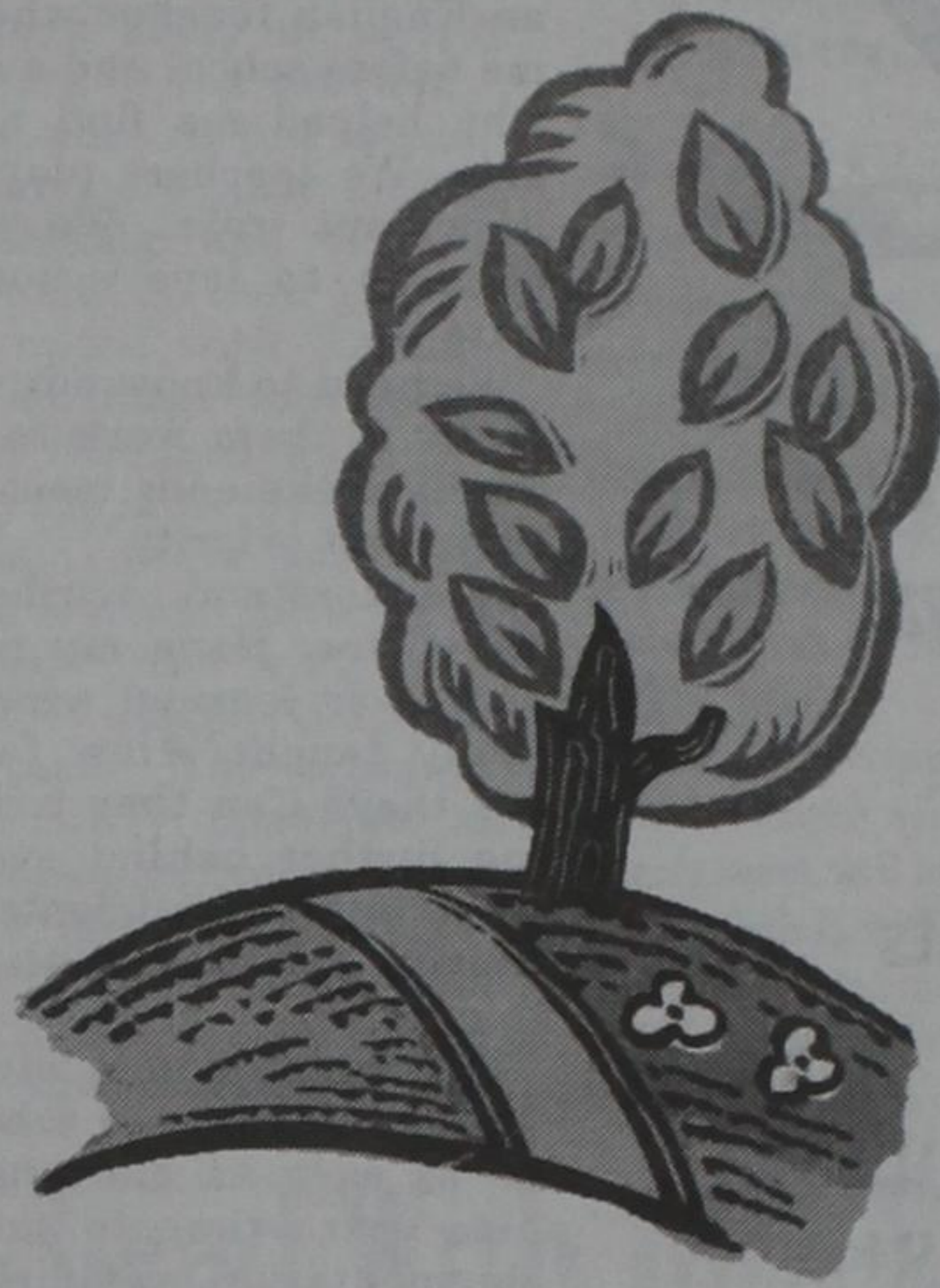
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For Migrant Children, a Field Trip to Failure

By Rosa María Rodríguez

First days of school always intimidated me because I knew the teacher would make us write about our summer vacation. What summer vacation? Getting up at 5 a.m. to help my mother make tortillas? Working in the fields 10 hours a day? That is summer vacation for many migrant students. I was in the third grade the first time my family took me north from Weslaco, Texas. The pattern was repeated for years. Starting in March, I would plant, prune, tie tomatoes and complete my school year in Virginia. In June, we would migrate to Michigan, where I would pick cucumbers, tomatoes, strawberries and eventually

start school again. In October, I would return to Weslaco for the winter term, my only chance to focus on my studies. I received an education in the fields. As a child, I became the family translator. I learned how to add up the money I earned each day, and how many buckets of tomatoes we picked. I also learned about injustice -- picking tomatoes while crop dusters flew over me spreading pesticides, wondering helplessly why I got 25 cents for a bucket of tomatoes filled above the rim. The same tomatoes sold at the grocery store at five for a dollar. Injustices like these helped me realize the importance of education. One early morning, after the first freeze, I shivered as I

began to pick the first tomato. I vividly remember crying, wishing I was home with a warm blanket.

"I will go to college," I declared on the spot, "and get a better life." College was a luxury my parents could not possibly afford, but a high school counselor convinced me I had many opportunities. My senior year, my parents agreed to leave me behind to graduate with my class. I did it without my family there to cheer for me.

I remember taking days to open a package from St. Edwards University, afraid of finding rejection inside. Instead, there was a scholarship offer for the first year. I now teach second grade in an air-conditioned room, away from the sun and torturous field work. I look back and wonder why I realized my dream while some of my friends still toil for minimum wage. One answer is that I had compassionate, caring teachers who saw my potential and kept encouraging me. I had an English teacher who tutored me before school and a counselor who helped me find a scholarship. We teachers play such an important role. We influence children to love school, or to hate it.

We need to know our students. Many of them work to help the family make ends meet. Work is their first priority. I understand teachers' concerns, too. Have my new students ever learned what I've already taught? How far behind are they? Can they write? Falling further behind every year, some migrant students are just waiting for their 16th birthday to quit.

The motivation a student requires to remain in school might be as easy as allowing her, or him, extra time to turn in assignments, or providing one-on-one tutoring before school and during lunch.

Many migrant parents have little or no education. Many don't speak English. To survive, many continue to take their children out of school when harvest season starts. And migrant children still fail far too often.

I've listened to teachers blame parents. I've heard parents blame the teachers who as professionals have a responsibility to educate their children. I heard both blame a system which denies farm workers a living wage. It doesn't matter who's to blame. The result is the same. And we all are the losers. (c)2001, Hispanic Link News Service. Distributed by Los Angeles Times

Just a Click Away



A few years ago in Chicago, computer programming student José Herrera created a modest Web site showing photos of his hometown: Las Palmas, in Durango, Mexico. Herrera, 26, soon noticed people were searching the site for information about other towns in Durango. So he added a message board. Today that site, www.iit.edu/~herrjos, has swelled beyond recognition, with message boards and photos for 51 towns and villages.

"Now the purpose of the site is to display pictures and messages about Durango and to allow people from all the local towns to pass messages and maybe get in touch with old friends scattered around the U.S.," says Herrera, an Internet-technology consultant for Accenture in Chicago. "Seems like a lot of people like the idea."

Herrera's site receives 3,000 visitors a month and he needs 10 hours a week to keep up with its demands. He is not alone. Dozens of Web sites for Mexican pueblos have popped up in the last two years, serving as forums for immigrants scattered across the continent.

These sites usually begin as a hobby. The site www.eltianquis.com, for example, allows you to click on "Visit Huan-dacareo" to connect to a page dedicated to Huandacareo, Michoacan. But the site traffic exists solely within the United States. There is no Internet service in Huandacareo.

Due to the informal nature of the sites, there's no way to know how many exist: at least dozens, probably hundreds, say those who run them. They exist so immigrants can send greetings from Colorado Springs, to tell Mexican parents that a son in Van Nuys is doing well or so someone in Dallas can tap into a fiesta back home in Duarte. Some sites offer ad space for businesses both in Mexico and the United States while others list real estate for sale. If there's a local beauty queen, she's usually on the site's first page.

The Rev. Antonio Basurto recently went on Zacupumich.com.mx, the site for Zacapu, Michoacan, to ask migrants for donations to help repair the roof to the town church.

A Web site for Atolinga, Zacatecas--Atolinga.com--receives 2,500 visitors a month, many more than the village itself. When Chicago-area restaurateur Raúl Briseño, from Atolinga, was fatally shot by robbers in March, his family posted the news and reward information on Atolinga.com. In May, when four people were arrested for the murder, that news, too, went online.

"I guess I just like the fact that people are coming and seeing and talking to other people," says Israel Yáñez, who runs Atolinga.com and works at a chemical plant near Houston. The site offers pictures of the town, information on the annual fiesta in August and free e-mail to anyone from Atolinga.

Yáñez's brother, Gregorio, started Tlaltenango.com for the nearby town of Tlaltenango. Another brother, Amador, runs Zacatecanos.com, for all immigrants from the state of Zacatecas.

Staying connected. "We feel we're together, those of us here in Mexico with those in the United States," explains Ricardo Santoyo, a dentist who runs Jerez.com.mx from his hometown, Jerez, Zacatecas. "We're

closer than ever before." Santoyo says Jerez.com has seen 9 million clicks since it began two years ago. Dozens of companies advertising on its pages give Santoyo a commission on each sale, but that amounts to a pittance since Mexican immigrants have yet to make a habit of online shopping. When the Jerez city government declined to get involved with the project, Santoyo posted his own tourism page with hotel and restaurant listings.

"I offered [the Jerez city government] a municipal section. They weren't interested," Santoyo says. "I think the people in city hall are really backward when it comes to technology."

The immigrant Web sites, firmly a grassroots activity, are not only keeping people connected, they're also opening the eyes of those who build and surf them. "I think it has changed my views of Mexico," says Herrera. "I feel so proud to share with the rest of the world pictures of the ranchería in Durango."

Para Los Niños Migrantes, Un Paseo Al Fracaso

Por Rosa María Rodríguez

Los primeros días de la escuela siempre me intimidaban porque sabía que la maestra nos haría escribir sobre las vacaciones de verano.

¿Qué vacaciones de verano? ¿Levantarme a las 5 a.m. para ayudar a mi mamá a hacer tortillas? ¿Trabajar los campos 10 horas diarias? Esas son las vacaciones de verano de muchos niños migrantes.

Yo estaba en el tercer grado la primera vez que mi familia me llevó de Weslaco, Texas, al norte. Se repitió el trayecto durante años.

Empezando en marzo, cultivaría, podaría, amarraría tomates, y completaría mi año escolar en Virginia. En junio, migraríamos a Michigan, donde cosecharía pepinillos, tomates, fresas y eventualmente, volvería a ir a la escuela. En octubre, regresaría a Weslaco para el semestre de invierno, única oportunidad que tenía para concentrarme en los estudios.

Mi educación la recibí en los campos. De niña me convertí en la traductora de la familia. Aprendí a sumar el dinero que ganaba cada día y cuántos baldes de tomates habíamos cosechado.

También aprendí de la injusticia -- cosechar tomates mientras que encima mío las avionetas fumigaban los campos, preguntándose sin esperanza por qué recibía 25 centavos por un balde rebosante con tomates, cuando en la tienda los mismos tomates costaban cinco por un dólar.

Las injusticias como ésta me llevaron a entender la importan-

cia de la educación. Una mañana, después de la primera helada, me estremecí de frío al recoger el primer tomate. Recuerdo nitidamente llorando, deseando estar en casa, bajo una cobija caliente.

"Iré a la universidad", declaré ese instante, "y tendré una mejor vida".

Mandarme a la universidad era un lujo imposible para mis padres, pero un consejero de la escuela secundaria me convenció que tenía muchas oportunidades. Durante mi último año, mis padres aceptaron dejarme atrás para graduarme con mi clase. Me gradué sola, sin que mi familia pudiera verme.

Recuerdo haber demorado días en abrir un paquete que me mandó la universidad de St. Edwards, temiendo el rechazo. Al contrario, me ofrecieron una beca para el primer año.

Ahora soy maestra de segundo grado en un salón de clase con aire acondicionado, lejos del sol y la tortura del trabajo en el campo. Pienso en el pasado y me pregunto por qué pude realizar mi sueño mientras que algunos de mis amigos todavía laboran por el sueldo mínimo.

Una razón es que tuve maestros con compasión, a quienes les importaba ayudarme y quienes continuamente me alentaban. Tuve un maestro de inglés que me daba clases privadas antes de comenzar el día y un consejero que me ayudó a encontrar una beca.

Como maestros, tenemos un rol muy importante. Por nuestra influencia los niños aprenden a amar la escuela, o a odiarla. Debemos conocer bien a nuestros estudiantes. Muchos de ellos trabajan para ayudar a sostener la familia. El trabajo es su prioridad.

Comprendo las preocupaciones de los maestros, también: ¿Han aprendido alguna vez los nuevos estudiantes lo que he enseñado ya? ¿Qué tan atrasados están? ¿Saben escribir? Al irse quedando atrás cada año, algunos alumnos migrantes sólo esperan cumplir los 16 años para poder abandonar la escuela. La motivación que requiere un estudiante para seguir en la escuela puede ser tan fácil como permitirle tiempo extra para entregar las tareas, o darle clases privadas antes de comenzar el día o durante la hora de refrigerio.

Muchos de los padres migrantes no tienen educación, o tienen muy poca. Muchos no hablan inglés. Para poder sobrevivir, muchos continúan sacando a sus hijos de la escuela al empezar la cosecha.

Y muchos de los niños migrantes todavía suspenden los cursos con demasiada frecuencia. He oído a maestros culpar a los padres. He oído a padres culpar a los maestros, quienes como profesionales tienen la responsabilidad de educar a sus hijos. He oído a los dos grupos culpar al sistema que le niega a los trabajadores del campo sueldo suficiente para vivir.

No tiene importancia quién tiene la culpa. El resultado es igual. Y todos perdemos.

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Find Out About Nuestra Cultura Checkout the PICTURES!!! Email your comments ... & much, much more!!!!

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Hola mi linda gente! I'm Jennifer "La Chismosa" from Magic 93.7 with your Tejano Chisme. If you missed out on the Chisme, then not to worry, I got it for you right here!!!

* Don't forget to catch Michael Salgado live this Sunday, Sept. 2, at Cancun Saloon in the Depot District 19th & Ave. G ... listen to Magic 93.7 to win your exclusive tickets to this great show!!!

* The 5th Annual Palomino Fest will be Sept. 9th at the Uvalde Fair Grounds in Uvalde ... scheduled to perform is Jaime y Los Chamacos, Solido, Marcos Orozco and Los Palominos ... all the money raised will benefit the Los Palominos Scholarship Fund

* Michael Salgado has signed a recording contract worth a reported \$1 Million. According to Sony discos Chairman Oscar Llord ... the deal is in the seven figures and it's a multiyear and multialbum contract ... in a recent interview with the San Antonio Express-News Salgado said, "I am very excited to be with Sony ... it took months to bring negotiations to an end ... but I think Sony has a lot more resources and it will help me mostly with distribution" ... Michael's first album under Sony is half done and is scheduled to be released in November.

Hasta la proxima have a Safe Tejano Day I'm Jennifer "La Chismosa" from Magic 93.7 with your Tejano Chisme!!!

* * * * * **MAGIC 93.7 TOP 10** * * * * *

T/W	TITLE	ARTIST
1	Ya Despues	Costumbre
2	No Eres Para Mi	Elida y Avante
3	Tres Amigos	Roberto Pulido
4	Pobre Corazon	Jay Perez
5	Mi Obsesion	Los Palominos
6	Un Ratito	Stefani
7	No te Olvidare	Intocable
8	Corazonada	Los Desperadoz
9	Cumbia Del Sol	Control
10	Dime Porque	Kumbia Kings

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DJ Lopez from 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm

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Jennifer "La Chismosa" from 7:00 pm - Midnite

Hola mi linda gente this is Jennifer "La Chismosa" bringing you the Tejano Hit Rumble ... the Top 9 @ 9 ... The Magic Love Lines ... and can't forget about your Tejano Chisme on Magic 93.7!! porque Las Mujeres Mandan!

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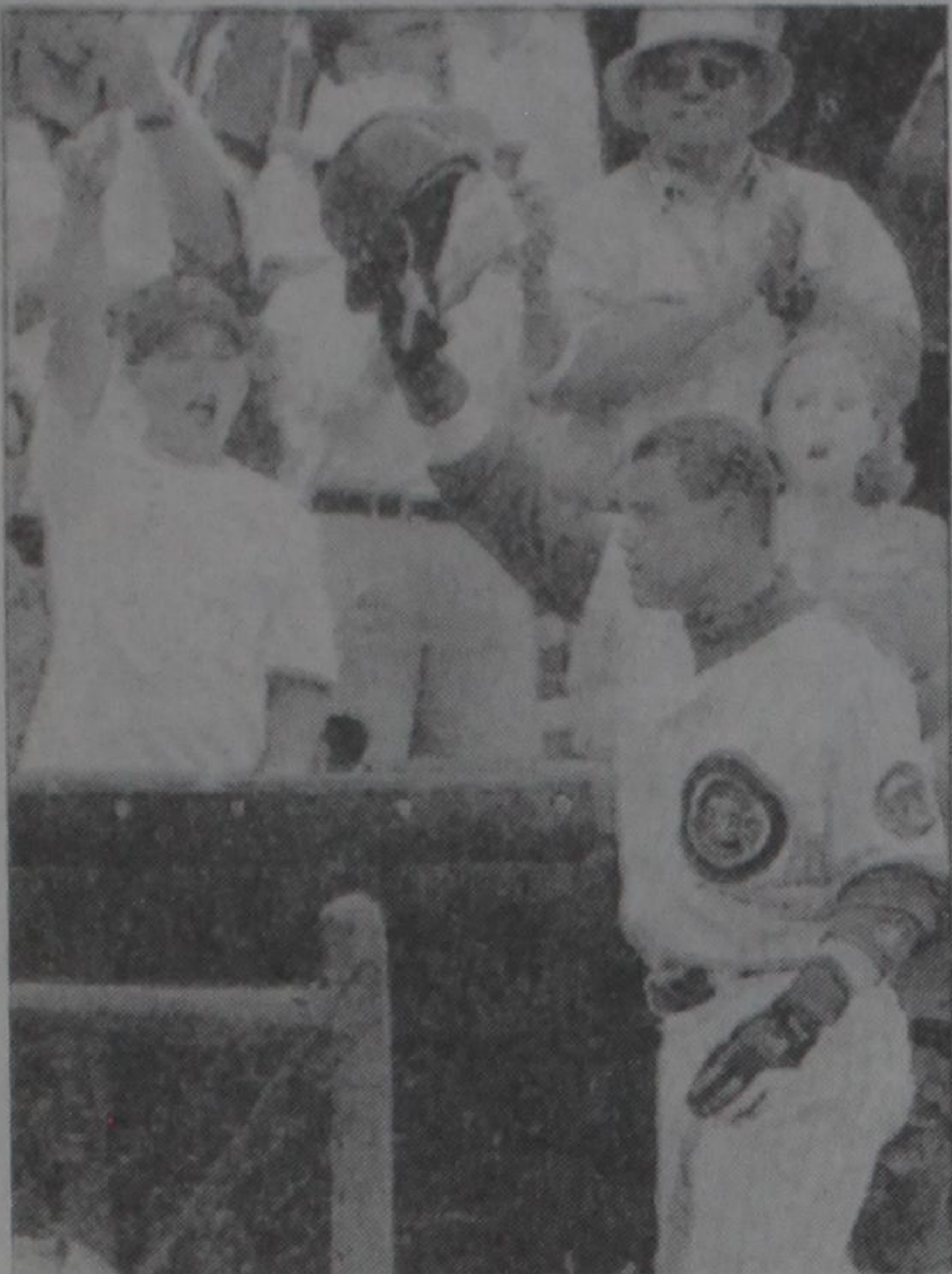
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Sosa Hits No. 52 To Tie NL Record

The Chicago Cubs clubhouse was completely silent after the game. No music blaring, no chatter from the TVs. Anyone who spoke did it in a whisper.

That brought up Castillo, who singled for a 4-3 lead. The Marlins loaded the bases, but Mike Lowell struck out looking to end the inning.



"A game that goes on this long, ... you could go around the room and everybody could kick themselves and say, 'I had a chance to do something,'" Kevin Tapani said after a disheartening 4-3 loss to the Florida Marlins on Tuesday night.

Jeff Fassero (4-4) gave up one unearned run and two hits in one inning.

Vladimir Nunez (4-4) pitched the last two innings. He retired Sosa on a groundout to end the game.

It was the longest game of the season, in innings, for both teams.

"We were wondering if the (Little League) re-entry rule was allowed," Dempster said. "It seemed to go on forever."

Preston Wilson homered, and Cliff Floyd and Alex Gonzalez also had RBI for the Marlins, who broke a six-game road losing streak.

Trailing 3-2, the Cubs rallied in the eighth. Fred McGriff led off with a double, and pinch-runner Augie Ojeda took third on Michael Tucker's sacrifice.

With the infield playing in, Gutierrez singled to tie it at 3.

The Cubs threatened in the 10th as Tucker drew a leadoff walk from Ricky Bones and took third on Gutierrez's single. But Tucker was out on a fielder's choice. DeShields then flied out to left in what turned out to be an inning-ending double play.

"I don't have a contact play with nobody out," Baylor said of Tucker's out. "I think he just reacted."

The Marlins had a chance in the 13th. With two outs, Lowell singled and took second on Andy Fox's walk. Charles Johnson singled to left, and Lowell went for home.

DeShields rifled the ball in, but it was up the first-base line. Machado grabbed the ball, turned and put a sweeping tag on Lowell, who never got his hand on the plate.

"You've got to move on," Tapani said. "If you let something like this set you back or get you down, then it really hurts you."

"When he first hit it, I didn't think I was going to have a chance at it," DeShields said. "I should have caught it. It wasn't as easy as I made it look, but still, we had our chances to win."

Eric Owens then sacrificed, and catcher Robert Machado was quick to field the ball. He made a strong throw to third, but shortstop Ricky Gutierrez was never in position to make the tag as Berg was safe.

'Tortilla Soup' Goes Down Easy

Hector Elizondo has been a reliable, reassuring screen presence ever since his film debut in 1970 in the late Hal Ashby's "The Landlord," but most of his roles have been supporting -- and decidedly unromantic -- ones.

If you need proof of exactly how good he is, just check out Elizondo's performance as Julie Andrews' security man-chauffeur in Garry Marshall's current "The Princess Diaries," in which the actor brings a commanding though quiet strength and unexpected warmth to a nothing role.

He's been long overdue for a lead role -- for a movie to call his own -- and, at long last, he gets one in the charming "Tortilla Soup," Maria Ripoll's seamless remake of Ang Lee's 1994 Taiwanese movie, "Eat Drink Man Woman." Elizondo takes on the role of an aging chef with three grown, unmarried daughters -- and no life of his own to speak of -- and it's just about a perfect fit for his unique screen persona.

"Tortilla Soup" and "Eat Drink Man Woman" are both, in a way, descendants of "King Lear," only much lighter. The setting for this latest variation on the relationships between a man and his daughters is Southern California -- specifically, Latino Los Angeles.

When producer Samuel Goldwyn Jr. purchased the American distribution rights to Lee's foreign-language movie, the deal also included the rights to remake the film in English. It would have been easy for Gold-

wyn to go the Disney/Miramax route and rethink the material for well-known Anglo actors, but instead, with Lee's reported support, he decided to give the story a Latino twist. The result is a familiar domestic comedy-drama, but with details from another culture.

In its day, "Eat Drink Man Woman" was the rage as the "food film" of the moment, what with all the attention paid to the preparation of exotic Taiwanese dishes. "Tortilla Soup" is also attentive to food -- which is crucial to the plot -- but we get fewer scenes here of slicing, dicing, broiling and larding as some kind of familial ritual. But the point of the material remains the same.

This is the story of a widowed dad who cooks such luscious feasts that his kids haven't been able to leave the house, let alone the table. When we pick up their story, everyone is only vaguely aware of the problem -- to the point that no one is really eating anymore, just picking and complaining and pushing the food around on their plates.

The film opens with Elizondo cooking -- an image that recurs sporadically throughout the film -- but everyone is in too much of a funk to enjoy it. As for Elizondo's Martin Naranjo, he's an acclaimed master chef who, in an ironic twist, is quickly losing his sense of taste. The message, which his family members all eventually come to grasp, is that it's time to move on -- and to move away from Dad's traditional sit-down meals.

Martin's three daughters --

each of whom gets her own back story -- are Leticia (Elizabeth Peña), the eldest, who is a schoolteacher and the one most caught up in filial loyalty, the more rebellious middle daughter, Carmen (Jacqueline Obradors), a career woman whose chance to break out and move to Barcelona for her job discombobulates the clan, and Maribel (Tamara Mello), the youngest and most American of the women.

Each woman has a problem, with Leticia being sexually repressed (until she's set up by her students with a character played by comedian Paul Rodriguez); Carmen being a control freak, much like her father, and Maribel caught up in her first real relationship (with Nikolai Kinski, who is the half-brother of Natassja and son of Klaus Kinski). Meanwhile, Martin himself is being bulldozed by a vivacious divorcee (played to the hilt by Raquel Welch) who has a

grown daughter of her own (Constance Marie) and a granddaughter.

Director Ripoll faithfully recreates sequences from Lee's film -- such as Martin being dependent on a longtime colleague (nicely played by Julio Oscar Mechoso) to do all his tasting for him, and the memorable moment from Lee's film when the veteran chef is summoned to a hotel to correct a culinary crisis -- where he works wonders, of course.

Mary Sue Milliken and Susan Feniger receive special credit for the "food and menu designs" in the movie, and Mariana Sanchez de Antunano is listed as "food cinematographer." But despite their colorful contributions, nothing overshadows the heartfelt work of Hector Elizondo, a fine actor who cooks here according to his own personal recipes.

West Texas Championships Softball Tournament

West Texas' top Softball teams will take to the field on September 6-9 for prizes and the right to say they're the best. The sanctioned tournament will take place in Levelland, TX and will be hosted by El Editor, Los Yaguais and Matadors Softball Clubs. Teams will play in a high and low classification with the tournament directors making sure that all teams are playing in their respective level of playing. The high category will be limited to 3 homeruns and the low category will be limited to no homeruns. Players will be ejected in the low category for hitting homeruns and homeruns over 3 in the high category will be outs.

Teams will compete for Dudley Bat Bags to be given to each first place winner. Prizes will also be given to teams finishing in the top 4 places. Every team will be eligible for a raffle among them to receive 15 tickets to the Texas Tech Homecoming football game on Sept. 6th. The two teams that are first eliminated from the tournament will receive SuperCup T-Shirts.

The tournament is limited to the first 50 teams entering. For information an entry call Bidal at 806-763-3841.

Big Unit Ties for NL Lead With 18th Victory; Gonzo Hits 49th

The big names came through in one of the biggest games of the season for the Arizona Diamondbacks.

Luis Gonzalez hit his 49th home run and Randy Johnson earned his 18th victory as the Diamondbacks beat the San Francisco Giants 4-1 in the opener of a critical three-game NL West series.

Randy Johnson beats the Giants for the first time in four tries this season (AP).

Johnson, who tied teammate Curt Schilling for the most victories in the majors, struck out nine and allowed one run and six hits in eight innings.

Johnson (18-6), who threw 128 pitches, walked three, including Barry Bonds twice. Bonds was 0-for-2.

Reggie Sanders homered for the fifth time in five games as the Diamondbacks won their eighth home game in a row to boost their division lead to 3 1/2 games over San Francisco. The Giants lost for the fourth time in five games.

"Reggie is red-hot right now. It doesn't matter if it's a righty or a lefty, he's seeing the ball real well and putting a good swing on it," Arizona manager Bob Brenly said. "He hit it to the biggest part of the ballpark but he's got that kind of pop. We've seen it all year, and Gonzo continues to just be Gonzo."

The game was the first of six between Arizona and San Fran-

cisco over a 10-day span.

"I don't think anybody needed to say how big this game was, how big this series is, how big the remainder of the games are that we have," Johnson said. "Reggie comes in and puts a few runs on the board early, then Gonzo does the same thing. You need to make those runs hold up."

Johnson improved to 9-1 over his last 12 starts and beat the Giants for the first time in four tries this season.

Byung-Hyun Kim pitched the ninth for his 14th save in 16 chances.

The Giants gave home-plate umpire Laz Diaz an assist.

"Bad umpiring calls behind the plate helped Randy out quite a bit," said Jeff Kent, who struck out three times.

Kent said Diaz was giving Johnson another three or four inches inside the plate.

"It's frustrating for us because we're still scratching and trying to claw and trying to play the game, but there's room for improvement behind the plate, that's for sure."

Sanders and Gonzalez each hit two-run homers off Livan Hernandez (11-13) to give Johnson an early 4-0 lead. Sanders' home run was his career-high 30th.

As Hernandez left the mound with one out in the sixth, he argued vehemently with Diaz, who heard loud complaints from both sides all night. Hernandez

continued to snipe at Diaz from the dugout and was tossed from the game, even though the pitcher already was through for the night.

"I threw a lot of strikes tonight that weren't called a strike," Hernandez said. "I've never complained like that before."

Hernandez allowed four runs and eight hits in 5 1/3 innings. He struck out three and walked four.

"He had pretty good stuff," manager Dusty Baker said. "He had two two-run homers off of him and that was the whole game."

Mark Grace led off the second with a double, then Sanders, after unexpectedly attempting a bunt and fouling it off, hit Hernandez's 2-2 pitch 418 feet to center field to put Arizona up 2-0.

The Diamondbacks made it 4-0 in the third when Craig Counsell led off with a line drive sin-

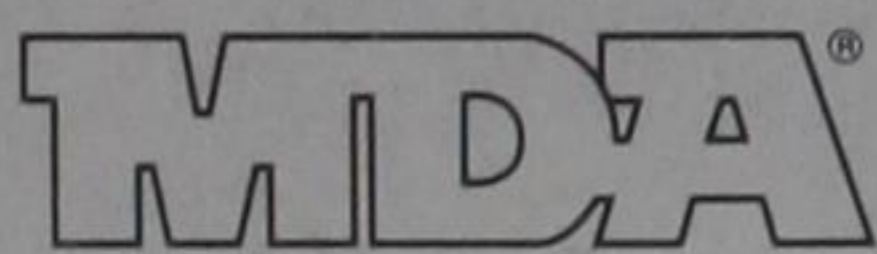
gle off third baseman Pedro Feliz's glove. Gonzalez ran the count to 3-2, then hit one 412 feet over the swimming pool beyond the right-field fence.

San Francisco scored in the fifth when Benito Santiago singled. Hernandez, after fouling off a bunt attempt, swung away and singled over charging third baseman Matt Williams to put runners at first and third with no outs. Santiago scored when Calvin Murray grounded into a fielder's choice.

The Giants threatened to do further damage in the inning when Bonds walked with two outs to put runners at first and second, but Johnson struck out Kent to end the inning.

Shawon Dunston singled twice off Johnson and reached base a third time on an error.

Tony Womack was thrown out at home in the first inning on a close play by Murray while trying to score on Williams' short fly ball to center in the first.



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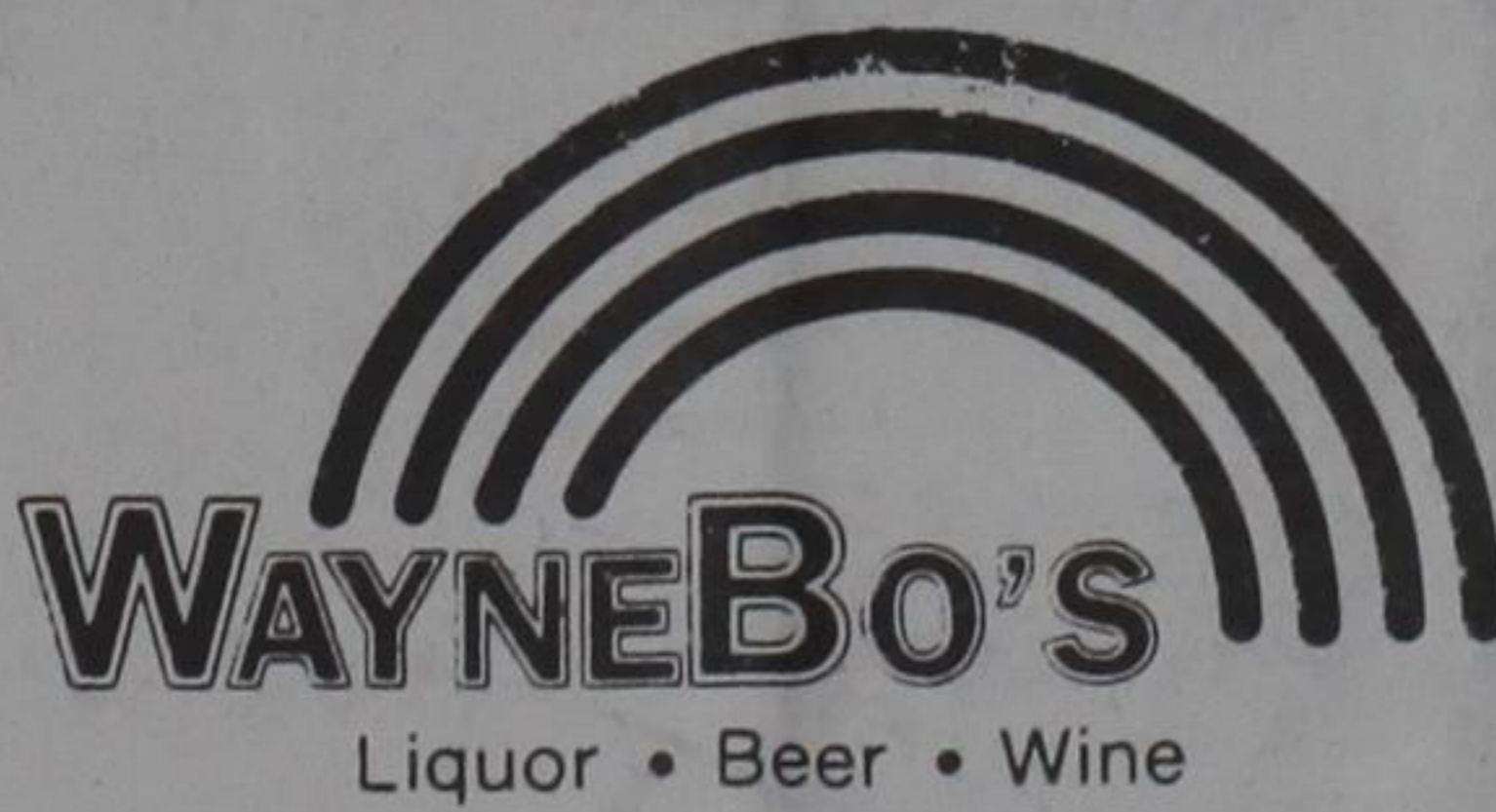
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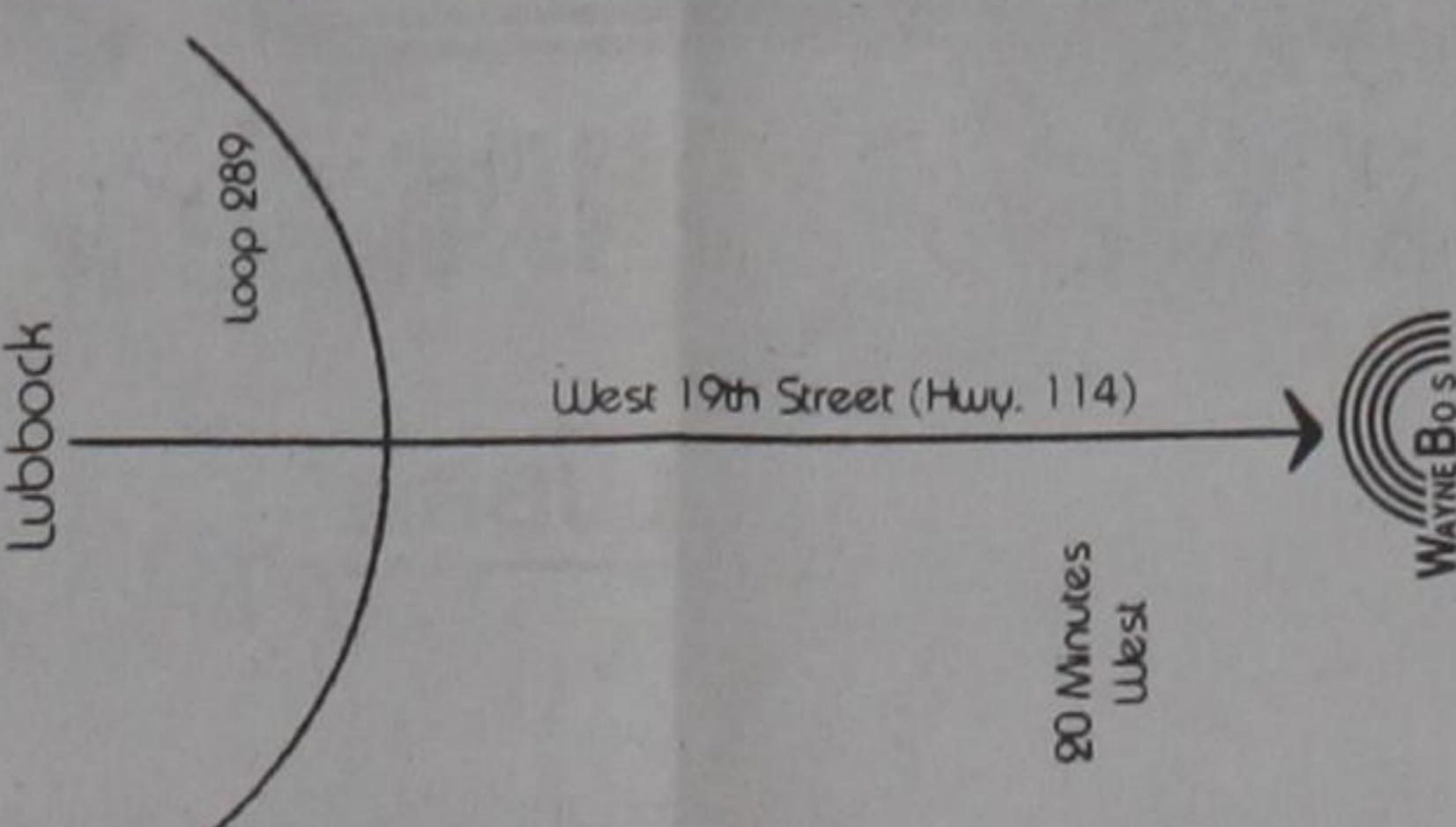
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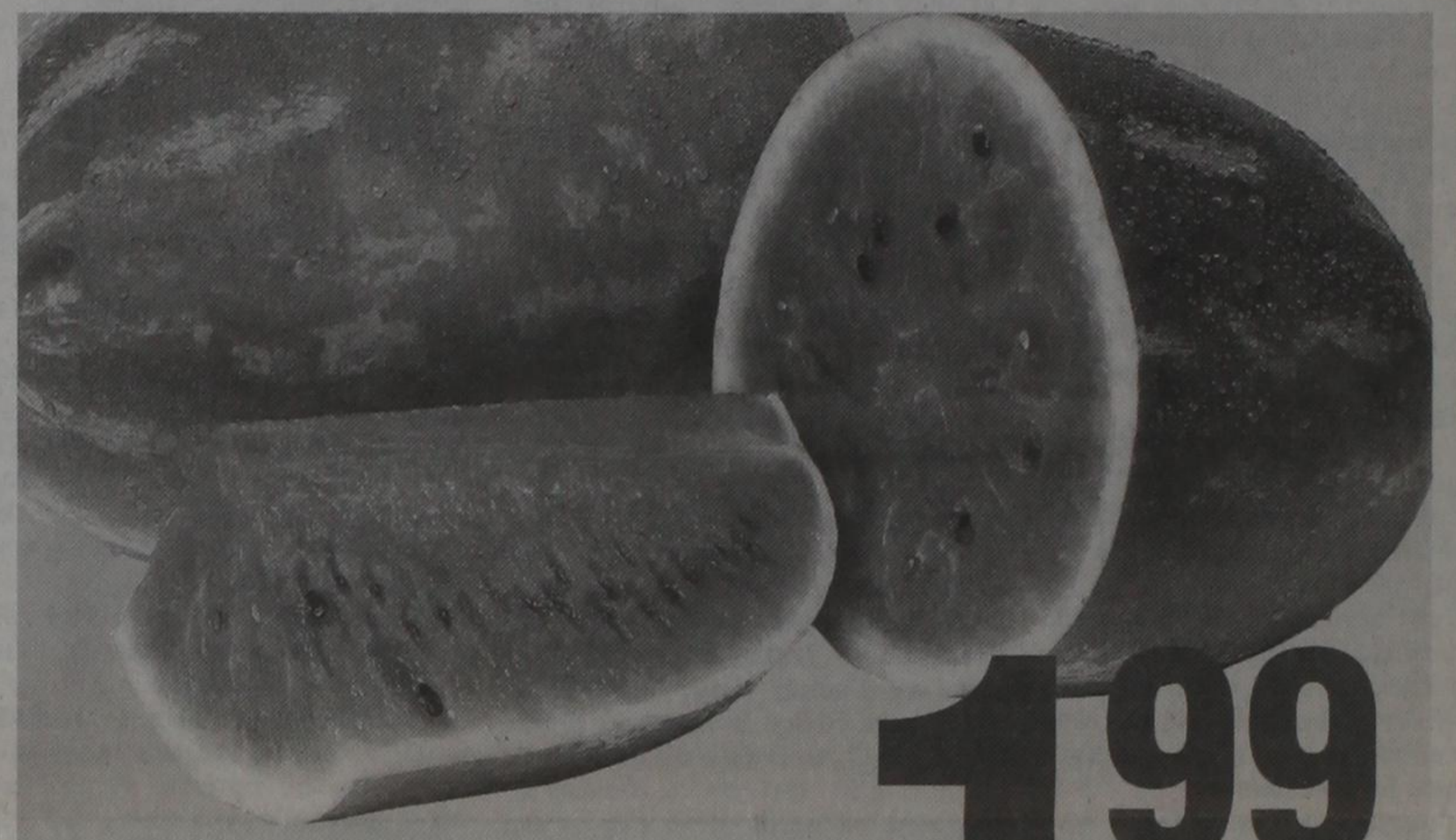
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