

el Esalador

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Texas Tech University
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"El respeto al derecho
ajeno es la paz"
Lic. Benito Juarez

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Tribunal Supremo Estudia Constitucionalidad de Cupones Escolares

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EFE).-- El Tribunal Supremo de Estados Unidos comenzó ayer a analizar la constitucionalidad de los "cupones escolares" para niños con menos recursos, una alternativa a la educación pública que representa el conflicto más agudo sobre la separación entre Iglesia y Estado en los últimos años.

En el centro de la demanda sobre la que el Tribunal Supremo se pronunciará este verano, está el uso de subsidios gubernamentales para ayudar a que las familias de escasos recursos costeen la educación de sus hijos en instituciones religiosas o privadas.

Aunque el caso que estudia el máximo tribunal tiene que ver concretamente con un programa de cupones escolares de Cleveland (Ohio), la decisión que se tome finalmente tendrá amplias ramificaciones para el sistema escolar en este país.

El programa de Ohio, bastante similar al que defiende la Administración del presidente George W. Bush, ofrece hasta

2,250 dólares para la matrícula de cada niño en una institución privada.

Mientras el Tribunal Supremo comenzó a escuchar los argumentos del caso, grupos a favor y en contra de los cupones escolares acudieron a las puertas del edificio, con carteles y megáfonos, para expresar sus puntos de vista.

Quienes se oponen a ese programa, que Ohio puso en marcha hace seis años, alegan que los cupones para la instrucción religiosa violan la separación de Iglesia y Estado que impone la Constitución y pone en peligro el concepto pluralista de la educación pública en EU.

Agregan que el gobierno no debe permitir el uso de fondos de los contribuyentes para la compra de textos y demás materiales de instrucción religiosa.

La Constitución prohíbe que el Gobierno "establezca" o imponga religión alguna, lo que en la práctica significa que no puede promover ninguna política religiosa.

La Asociación Nacional de la Educación (NEA, en inglés), con 2.6 millones de miembros, y los sindicatos de maestros del país insisten en que, en vez de desviar fondos de la educación pública hacia colegios privados, el gobierno debe incrementarlos para corregir las desigualdades que han aquejado al sistema público en los últimos años.

Se calcula que cerca del 90% de los estudiantes de EU, o nueve de cada 10 niños, asisten a escuelas públicas, por lo que el sistema de educación pública cifra sus esperanzas en un fallo favorable por parte del Tribunal Supremo.

El sistema escolar público ha sido el blanco favorito de grupos conservadores que destacan las deficiencias de la educación pública, como el bajo rendimiento académico de sus estudiantes --particularmente en las pruebas nacionales de matemáticas y lectura--, y el alto índice de deserción escolar de estudiantes minoritarios.

Tony Sanchez Accepts Proposal for Spanish and English Debate

AUSTIN -- The Tony Sanchez for Governor campaign has accepted a proposal from the sponsors of the March 1st Texas Debate that will include a debate in Spanish and in English.



"From the very beginning we advocated that two debates -- one in Spanish and one in English -- would best serve voters. We were unable to get the Morales campaign to agree," said Glenn Smith, Sanchez's campaign manager.

"If the sponsors succeed in getting Mr. Morales to agree to debate in both languages, an agreement we could not get from him, we couldn't be happier. We are looking forward to March 1st," Smith said.

Smith further acknowledged that debate negotiations are often tough.

"We felt Mr. Morales was manipulating the negotiations. His campaign's public statements did not match what we were being told privately which is why we could no longer participate in discussions," Smith said.

"We'd like to thank the sponsors of the Texas Debate for persuading Mr. Morales. It's a victory for the people of Texas," said Smith.

Last week Sanchez won the endorsement of a key Hispanic group and a strong show of support from an influential black organization. But the Tejano Democrats were sharply split in the race for the Senate, dividing their votes among Victor Morales, Ron Kirk and Ken Bentsen. Mr. Kirk was the runaway favorite among the black group's members.

While not making a formal endorsement, the Texas Coalition of Black Democrats conducted a straw poll, and Mr. Sanchez won 97 percent of the members' vote. Ron Kirk, a black who recently stepped down as Dallas mayor, won 97 percent of the vote among the black Democratic group.

The endorsements by the Hispanic organization and the straw poll by the black coalition came after both organizations held an unprecedented joint convention Saturday. All major Democratic candidates sought support from the two groups, underscoring their importance in the March 12 primary. Analysts said the combined Hispanic and black vote could account for up to 50 percent of the total vote in the primary.

While Mr. Kirk was the overwhelming favorite among black delegates, he had to share the spotlight with two other rivals among Hispanic delegates. He received 788 votes, Mr. Bentsen, a congressman from Houston, received 666 votes, and Mr. Morales, the pickup-driving schoolteacher from Crandall, had 487 votes. Recent statewide surveys indicated that Mr. Morales had a slight advantage due, in part, to the name recognition he gained when he was the 1966 Democratic Senate nominee. After the voting, Mr. Kirk said he was honored to have strong support among both groups.

All four Democratic hopefuls who attended the event -- including Austin lawyer Ed Cunningham -- stressed improving education during speeches to the delegates Saturday. The fifth Democratic Senate contender, retired lawyer Gene Kelly of Universal City, was a no-show.

In the increasingly bitter battle for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination, the Tejano Democrats endorsed Mr. Sanchez by giving him 1,733 votes; former Attorney General Dan Morales received 208 votes.

Before the convention began, aides to Mr. Morales said they had

(Continued Page 3)

Bush No Piensa Invadir Corea Del Norte

El presidente George W. Bush dijo hoy en Seúl que ni su país ni Corea del Sur tienen la intención de invadir Corea del Norte, a cuyo líder calificó de "déspota".

Es más, el mandatario estadounidense no se opone a que continúen las negociaciones entre ambas partes coreanas para lograr la paz, dijo el presidente sudcoreano Kim Dae Jung.

En la rueda de prensa conjunta ofrecida en la Casa Azul presidencial de Seúl, Bush hizo referencia a su política de dureza hacia el régimen coreano, al que había acusado de formar un "eje del mal" junto con Irán e Irak y de fomentar el terrorismo, y afirmó que no ha cambiado de opinión.

"No tengo la intención de invadir Corea del Norte ni tampoco la tiene Corea del Sur. Nosotros estamos en la zona desmilitarizada con la misión de defender", subrayó Bush, quien añadió que era en interés de la nación mantener la paz en esta península.

Bush y Kim Dae Jung iniciaron sus reuniones para discutir el respaldo de Washington a los esfuerzos sureños en favor de la pacificación de esta península y las acusaciones estadounidenses al régimen norcoreano de colaborar con el terrorismo.

Bush, que en medio de fuertes medidas de seguridad llegó anoche a una base militar estadounidense de Seúl tras concluir su estancia en

Tokio, pasó revista a la guardia de honores sudcoreana junto al presidente Kim bajo un sol espléndido, pero con temperaturas invernales.

Ambos presidentes procedieron inmediatamente a la primera de sus dos reuniones previstas entre ambos en las que se espera discutan sobre la alianza de seguridad bilateral, por la que EU mantiene 38 mil soldados en Corea del Sur con la intención de disuadir al gobierno de Pyongyang (la capital de Corea del Norte) ante posibles ataques del país del norte.

Al igual que en los pasados días, organizaciones cívicas, sindicales, laborales y religiosas protagonizaron en varios puntos de esta capital al menos 60 actos tanto de protesta como de apoyo a la venida del mandatario estadounidense, quien al haber calificado a Corea del Norte como uno de los tres países del "eje del mal" promotores del terrorismo, ha desencadenado laberintos de pasiones de odio y simpatía.

Un político coreano dijo esta semana que el presidente norteamericano George W. Bush era "la encarnación del mal". Pero la alusión no provino de Corea del Norte, sino de un legislador del partido oficial de Corea del Sur, estrecho aliado de Washington.

Lea EL EDITOR



U.S. President George W. Bush gives the thumbs up before speaking to military personnel at the Osan Air Base before departing for China in Korea, February 21, 2002. President Bush will end his Asia tour in China before heading back to Washington at the end of the week. REUTERS/Larry Downing

Study Projects 'Long Recession' For Latinos

By Arlene Martinez

Despite optimism among some forecasters that the national recession may bottom out as soon as this summer, financial problems for Latinos could stretch long after the national economy recovers.

The grim outlook is outlined in "New Lows from New Highs: Latino Economic Losses in the Current Recession," a study released Jan. 24 by the Pew Hispanic Center, a nonpartisan research group. Data exclude Puerto Rico and do not separate undocumented workers.

Language barriers, low levels of education, lack of knowledge and experience with the labor market and lack of legal status all contribute to high rates of Latino unemployment when the economy tumbles, according to the study.

Hispanics are especially susceptible to prolonged economic effects because they are heavily concentrated into three industries: manufacturing, retail and construction. In manufacturing, for example, job losses accounted for 10 percent of the national unemployment, but double that for Latino unemployment. Together,

the three sectors add up to half of the total Latino unemployment, the report found.

Surprisingly, it noted, the hardest-hit group has been and will continue to be second-generation Hispanics. At present, Hispanic immigrants are enduring 8 percent unemployment vs. 9.6 percent for second-generation Latinos and 5.7 percent of all ethnic groups.

"They're not full participants of the immigrant community, and they're not fully integrated into more formal areas of work," Pew Hispanic Center Director Roberto Suro said. He added that while immigrants rely on informal community networks to secure employment through relatives, friends or by word-of-mouth, second-generation Latinos utilize more traditional methods: preparing résumés and filling out job applications.

To predict how Latinos would fare as a result of the current recession, economists Alan Krueger and Jonathan Orszag used 50 independent forecasts by private-sector economists, as reported by the Blue Chip Economic Indicators. On average, Hispanic



unemployment rates are projected to peak at 8.5 percent -- 0.6 percent higher than the December 2001 rates reported by the Department of Labor -- in the second quarter, then level out.

The 10 most pessimistic projections saw rates of 9.2 percent at the end of 2002, after peaking at 9.3 percent in the second quarter. The 10 most optimistic predictions saw Latino unemployment rise to 8 percent in the first quarter of this

year before dropping to 7.5 percent. If the current recession mirrors that of the 1970s, which officially lasted from November 1973 to March 1975, Latinos will not return to pre-recession growth rates until early 2007, the researchers predicted. If it mirrors that of the 1980s, Latinos will recover in third-quarter 2004.

But perhaps most comparable to today's recession -- for reasons of both proximity and makeup of

today's Hispanic population -- the recession that lasted from summer 1990 to March 1991, Latinos won't recover until March 2008, two years after the rest of the economy has rebounded.

In October 2000, just months before the dot-com crash, Latinos were enjoying a near-record low unemployment rate of 5 percent, with 778,000 out of work. Just over one year later, Latinos were facing a 7.9 percent rate, with 1,260,000 unemployed.

Other findings: -- Workers of Mexican descent now have a 7.9 percent unemployment rate, contrasted with 7.3 percent for all other Hispanic groups. For Mexican women, the figure jumps to 8.9 percent.

-- In New York City, Hispanic unemployment could reach between 12.8 percent and 15.2 percent. Latinos there benefited very little from the healthy economy of the late '90s and there was a heavy influx of immigrants in the last decade.

-- Hispanic poverty is expected to increase to 23.2 percent in 2002, from 21.2 percent in 2000. Hispanics average \$1,200 in

financial assets (\$600 of which is liquid); whites average \$17,320. Based on median Hispanic household income, that would sustain a family for a week and a half.

Because Hispanics entered this recession in better economic shape than in previous recessions, it's possible (though unlikely), the effects might not be as severe as in previous years. Latino family incomes rose by 27 percent from 1995 to 2000 while for all other groups it rose by 11 percent. The families with the lowest incomes (bottom 20 percent in annual earnings) experienced the biggest gains, 32 percent; incomes for higher-earning Hispanics rose by 15 percent.

"Even as the population here adjusts to economic circumstances, there's a constant addition of newcomers," Suro said.

The young make-up of the Latino population (average age 25.7), coupled with high immigration rates, keeps the Latino population continuously vulnerable even as gains in income and employment status are made, the report concluded.

Una Heroína Cuyo Nombre No Se Conoció

Por Zita Arocha

Ya a la edad de once años, Josefina (Pipina) Salas-Porras, líder pionera de la comunidad, activista, empresaria y maestra de El Paso, Texas, iba camino a romper barreras y abrir paso para las mujeres y los hispanos.

Empeñada en ser maestra aquel verano de 1937, reclutó a tres muchachos de la colindante Ciudad Juárez, y, con la ayuda de una amiga, les enseñó inglés desde el columpio delante de su casa. Dos años después, la 'escuela' -- para entonces equiparada de pupitres, sillas y libros prestados -- tenía más de veinte estudiantes y se había transferido al sótano de la casa de su familia en el centro de El Paso.

Al ser diagnosticada con cáncer, la valiente, exigente abuela mexicano-americana de 76 años se jubiló en diciembre, después de 22 años como miembro de la junta administrativa del Freedom Forum, con sede en Arlington, Virginia, dejando atrás un largo camino de logros que llevan la huella de su empeño a nivel nacional.

Durante los años de la escuela secundaria, Pipina, como prefiere que la llamen, convivió a su padre, comprador de un almacén, que le permitiera dar clases en una escuela de lenguas local. Sabía que el verse tan joven podría perjudicar sus posibilidades, entonces reemplazó los calcetines blancos por un vestido negro y medias de nilón.

"Siempre sentí pasión por la enseñanza", admitió.

Pipina se graduó de la escuela secundaria de El Paso a los 15 años y de la College of Mines (hoy la Universidad de Texas en El Paso) a los 19. Después llegaron una multitud de nombramientos a

juntas directivas corporativas y de fundaciones, más de doce durante los últimos 26 años. Fue la única latina miembro de la junta administrativa de la fundación para los medios de comunicación, The Freedom Forum, y la primera latina en ser nombrada a cuerpos administrativos similares de compañías de teléfonos y utilidades locales; la primera en ser nombrada a la junta del afiliado en El Paso del Banco de Reserva Federal de Dallas.

Como recuerda su mejor amiga y compañera de escuela Isabel Gómez Fuhille, "Pipina también será la primera en decirte que no es tan bonito ser hispana y mujer. Cumple con dos posiciones, pero ocupas una sola silla".

Se había planeado una celebración en homenaje a su espíritu pionero en la Universidad de Texas en El Paso hace apenas unas semanas, pero se canceló el evento al decaer la salud de Salas-Porras, imposibilitando su presencia.

"Gracias a ella, la Universidad de Texas en El Paso fue conocida en ámbitos en los que ella tenía contactos y conexiones que no teníamos nosotros", dice presidenta de la universidad, Diana Natalicio. "Es un misterio porqué no se conoce mejor a Salas-Porras a nivel nacional o en su misma comunidad", añade.

El reconocimiento público que merece está muy atrasado, dicen los que la conocen. La elegante, a veces mordaz promotora ha sido tan importante para lo multicultural en la educación y la diversidad en los medios de comunicación como César Chávez y Antonia Hernández han sido para la organización de trabajadores agrícolas latinos y los

derechos civiles.

Aunque los mexicano-americanos que se criaron en el suroeste de los Estados Unidos durante las décadas de los treinta, cuarenta y cincuenta fueron muchas veces blancos de discriminación, dice ella que personalmente, "Nunca me sentí así en El Paso", donde se casó con su novio de la universidad, Francisco "Pancho" Salas-Porras.

Durante su vida no ha variado su compromiso con su causa. "Los que están delante con los carteles son los que salen en los titulares, pero alguien tiene ir a la sala de juntas y asegurar que funcione todo", dice Félix Gutiérrez, que fue vice presidente ejecutivo de The Freedom Forum antes de jubilarse en Oakland, California este invierno con la idea de escribir. "Es allí donde ella tuvo mayor éxito".

En los años que pasó con The Freedom Forum, Pipina promulgó el programa de la fundación, que incluye uno de los programas de periodismo para universitarios de color de mayor historia y éxito en todo el país. También fue clave en promover las libertades de prensa por toda América Latina y el mundo.

Al Neuharth, fundador del Forum dice que Salas-Porras es la conciencia de la fundación en cuanto a temas de diversidad. "Dejaba saber lo que sentía con vehemencia. Tuvo mucha influencia".

Al huir de la revolución mexicana en furgones, su familia se estableció en el pueblo fronterizo de El Paso a comienzos del siglo pasado.

Pipina ha sido promotora de los esfuerzos orientados a proveer mayores oportunidades de

educación y becas a los estudiantes de México tanto como los de los Estados Unidos que son hispanos. Hace poco publicó su primer libro, "El ratoncito pequeño", un poema que recuerda de su niñez.

A nivel estatal y nacional, Salas-Porras, con sus muchas conexiones ha luchado sin cesar para que más dinero del gobierno y de organizaciones filantrópicas se destine a su comunidad fronteriza, muchas veces olvidada, predominantemente latina, una de las más pobres en todo el país.

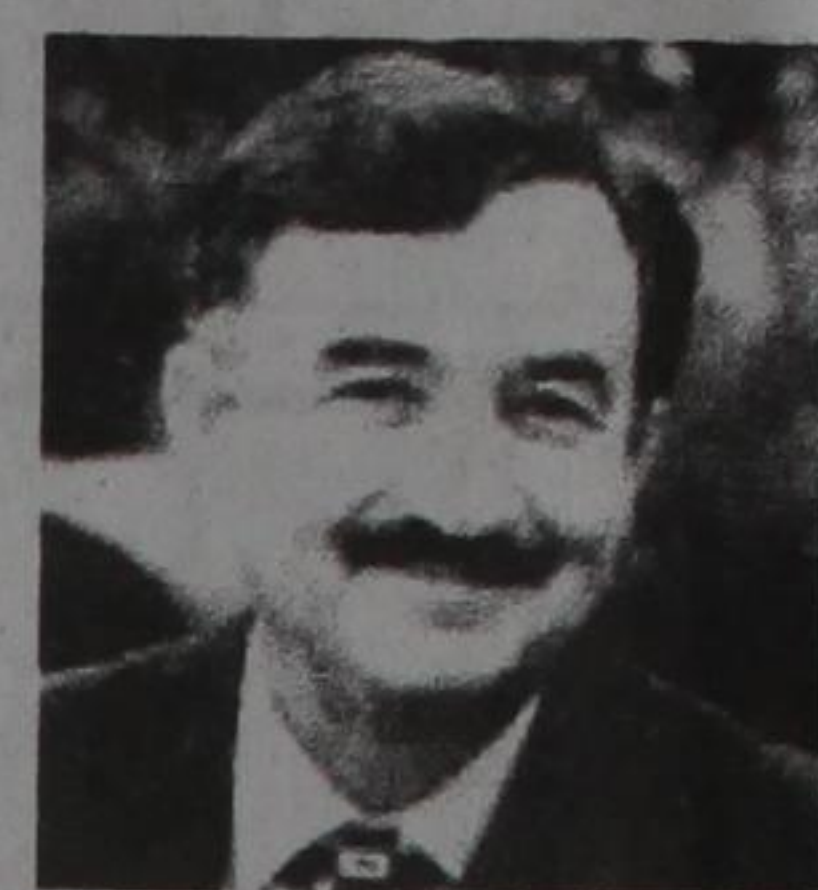
A nivel personal, ha sido pionera y un modelo para jóvenes latinas, incluyendo a sus tres hijas, ya mayores. Su hija, Marta, directora de creatividad para una compañía de comunicaciones globales en San Francisco, dice de su madre, "Nos enseñó que no se trata de ser un estudiante con las mejores notas sino que se trata de tener pasión por lo que quieres hacer con tu vida y tu carrera".

Pipina guiaba tanto como ejemplo como con las palabras. En 1970, mientras criaba a seis hijos, fue co-fundadora de una escuela internacional de lenguas que llegó a ser una empresa exitosa con oficinas en El Paso, la Ciudad de México, California y Nicaragua. "Llamé por teléfono a todos los presidentes de bancos en El Paso y les dije que dictaba una clase el lunes a las siete y que estuvieran allí", cuenta.

Su lista interminable de logros se acumuló sin llamar la atención. "Ojalá hubiera hecho más", es todo lo que dice.

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We have waited long enough to help workers in need



By Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez

Washington, D.C. - A perverse double standard is at work in Washington these days. While help to corporate America and our country's wealthiest individuals have been given priority, we are still waiting for assistance to the tens of thousands of American workers who have lost jobs because of the ongoing recession, corporate failures and the aftermath of the September 11 tragedies.

Last fall, as Congress debated relief packages in response to the September 11 tragedy and the worsening economy, the House leadership promised that we would quickly consider legislation to help those who have lost jobs and will soon run out of unemployment insurance compensation and health care coverage.

We are still waiting, and waiting, and waiting. Last year, more than 2 million people lost their jobs brining the unemployment rate to its highest in years. In the midst of a declining economy, the best that the Administration and House Republican Leadership can do is offer huge tax cuts for corporations. They may call it "economic stimulus," but economists agree that these efforts won't turn the economy around anytime soon.

Despite the Administration's passionate support for tax breaks for the fortunate few, it has remained stubbornly reluctant to assist average working men and women. The President's new budget proposes a dramatic reduction in federal support for the unemployment insurance system -- a 25 percent cut in 2003, and 75 percent by 2007. Federal taxes have traditionally supported federal and state unemployment administration and retraining services.

By lowering the rate, the Administration has unwisely shifted most of the burden to the states, which themselves face difficult budgetary restraints. The losers will be the workers who have lost jobs and their families who depend upon them.

More importantly, federal unemployment taxes provide loans to states that are unable to pay benefits because they have run out of funds.

Texas, which in the 1990's reduced its unemployment payroll tax benefits, plans to request nearly \$1 billion in loans from the federal government.

As the state faces budget deficits for the first time in many years, it will be unable to provide temporary financial support to Texans that unexpectedly find themselves out of work. It is irresponsible for the federal government to walk away, especially as hard times take their toll on growing numbers of Americans.

Already a large number of unemployed workers have exhausted their unemployment insurance benefits. In the past three months, approximately 768,000 U.S. workers collected all of their eligible unemployment benefits and 69 percent of Texans receiving benefits during the last few months of 2001 have already run out.

And things won't get better anytime soon. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and the Congressional Budget Office, two million unemployed workers are likely to collect all of their regular weeks of unemployment insurance benefits by June of this year. This estimate represents a sharp increase over the number of workers who exhausted benefits the first half of last year.

In each of the last five recessions, federally funded weeks of additional benefits have been made available to workers who are facing the end of their benefit eligibility for regular unemployment insurance benefits. Even former President George H. W. Bush supported legislation in late 1991 that provided 13 to 20 additional weeks of benefits to workers who exhausted their regular benefits. But because the federal government has not provided additional weeks in this recession, many workers, who are unable to find new jobs or return to their former employment, will receive no unemployment benefits to replace their lost wages.

We must take a close look at our values. We should take pride in the safety nets we provide for those who find themselves unemployed. The relief package we seek represents the best of our humanity and compassion. I cannot understand why those in power continue to delay while our fellow Americans live in deepening anxiety.

After a decade of unprecedented prosperity, we now face a recession and the economic repercussions of terrorism. Rather than step up to the plate and provide extended benefits, the Administration and House Leadership have been unwilling to give additional relief to the unemployed. Subsequently, the Administration submitted sweeping changes in its annual budget proposal, which not only cuts job training and dislocated worker programs, but also undermines the future solvency of unemployment insurance. It is now up to Congress to fulfill the pledge to working families. One thing is clear: They have waited long enough.

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The Bilingual Schooling Battle Flares Anew

Nearly four years after voters overwhelmingly approved an initiative to effectively end bilingual education in California, forces on both sides of the issue are at war with the state over how the law should be applied in classrooms.

Ron Unz, author of Proposition 227, accuses the State Board of Education of trying to nullify his initiative. The board is weighing new regulations that Unz claims would funnel hundreds of thousands of immigrant children back into bilingual classes.

Bilingual advocates, meanwhile, charge that those same regulations do not go far enough to protect the rights of immigrant parents who want schools to make exceptions for their children. The pro-bilingual forces have taken their case to the state's most powerful Latino legislators, one of whom is preparing a bill that would protect parents' ability to choose bilingual education. These programs have been largely dismantled but still exist on a small scale.

Unz, a Silicon Valley entrepreneur, has mounted a one-man media blitz, issuing news releases and calling reporters coast to coast to get his point across.

Proposition 227 opponents are trying to "completely restore the system of bilingual education in California," said Unz, who backed a similar measure that passed in Arizona nearly 18 months ago and is now mounting campaigns in Massachusetts and Colorado.

Proposition 227 was supposed to settle the bilingual issue in California once and for all. But the rancor that has simmered for years flared in recent months. It is expected to rise again today at a state Assembly hearing on bilingual education.

"It's a very emotional issue," said John Mockler, executive director of the State Board of Education. "Our job is make sure the law works as it is written. It's been difficult because people have strong feelings."

The renewed debate could spell political peril for Gov. Gray Davis

as he seeks reelection. Davis opposed Proposition 227 but has vowed to enforce it. The leading Republican challenger, former Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan, endorsed the initiative and contributed money to the Proposition 227 campaign.

Riordan has not yet made an issue of the bilingual controversy. But Unz and others are publicly questioning whether Davis' appointees on the State Board of Education are trying to unravel the law at the governor's behest--an accusation strongly denied by the Davis administration.

"The governor is certainly not trying to undermine the spirit of 227," said spokeswoman Hilary McLean.

In broad terms, Proposition 227 requires all California schoolchildren to be taught in English. The measure also makes bilingual programs available if parents apply for waivers, or exceptions to the law, at their children's schools. Most parents have opted for English instruction: just 12% of the state's 1.5-million students remain in bilingual programs.

Many say the current debate stems from vague language in the law. Like many laws, it requires clarification through elaborate regulations. An initial set of rules was adopted after the law passed; now those rules are being revised and consolidated with other rules relating to immigrant students.

Unz and bilingual advocates agree on one thing: the new regulations are wrongheaded. Both sides fear the rules would inappropriately give teachers and administrators the authority to decide who receives bilingual education.

From there, they part ways. Unz says Proposition 227 clearly gives the final say to parents. But the regulations, as written, would allow school officials to subvert the initiative by giving them the authority to refer large numbers of students into bilingual classes, he says.

Bilingual advocates have the

opposite concern--that school officials will use the regulations to block children's access to bilingual classes. They want the rules revised to enhance parents' choices of bilingual programs, customized to their children's needs.

The advocates have long contended that schools either ignore parents' wishes or fail to adequately inform them of their options--a contention that was supported by a recent independent analysis by the American Institutes for Research in Palo Alto.

The report, ordered by state law, found that parents were often unaware of their right to choose bilingual programs and that their options were often unclear.

"Our fear is that these regulations will be used by districts to deny parents the right to place their child in an alternative program," said Mary Hernandez, a staff attorney with the group Multicultural Education, Training and Advocacy, which has helped organize parent protests at state school board meetings.

State Board Is Caught in Middle Privately, state officials criticize the advocates' demands, saying bilingual programs customized to individual students would bankrupt school districts.

"There's no way we are going to allow that," said one state board member, who asked not to be named for fear of reprisals. "It would break the system."

Assailed from both sides, members of the California school board say they are merely trying to clarify the law and ensure parents' rights are protected. "I'm confident that the regulations are legal and appropriate under Proposition 227," board President Reed Hastings said.

Disputes have broken out on other fronts as well--over everything from the types of books to the tests that should be used for these students.

Both sides in the debate say their positions have been vindicated by the experience of the last four years. Although the state has yet to



El Obispo Placido Rodriguez celebró una misa el día de ceniza en la cárcel del condado de Lubbock. Participantes en la misa fueron Jesse Guerrero, deacono de la Iglesia Nuestra Señora de la Gracia y Simon Rodriguez, deacono de Cristo Rey. photo por John P. Cervantez - 744-1954



Latinos Leap Into Housing Market - As Buyers & Agents

By Arlene Martinez

Latinos are plunging into the real estate market as sales agents, appraisers, lenders and, in record numbers, as homebuyers.

They purchased more homes in the final quarter of 2001 than in any quarter in the past five years, the U.S. Census Bureau reported Jan. 25. Hispanics recorded a 48.8% homeownership rate -- measured by household units -- at the end of the year. In real numbers, that's 5.2 million homes they own.

Nearly 72 percent of white households are homeowners

The downturn of the economy, which led to low interest rates, also helped Latinos, 80 percent of whom were first-time homebuyers, purchase homes in 2001, says Ernie Reyes, chairman and co-founder of National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals.

Diversity training of realtors, as well as intensive recruiting of Spanish-speaking real estate agents, has been a priority in recent years, Reyes says. A survey by NAHREP counted some 50,000 Latino agents nationwide and another 20,000 in the profession -- mortgage lenders, insurance companies, appraisers, for example.

"What's phenomenal is that it's been simultaneous with dramatic increases in population," says Gary Acosta, NAHREP's chief executive officer. "We're not just selling more homes, we're raising the percentage rate."

Acosta and Reyes attribute the increase -- up from 42.6% in the first quarter of 1997 -- to a concerted effort by organizations such as theirs to educate the Latino community about the process, which they see as the single largest barrier to home purchase. In its survey, the association found that 60 percent of Latinos don't trust lenders or banks. In large part, this is because of the corrupt, unstable nature of some banks and lenders in Latin America, Reyes says.

NAHREP has been working closely with Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, two of the nation's largest mortgage lenders.

Freddie Mac, in cooperation with the National Council of La Raza, is providing \$2 million over three years to create Web-based technology geared to increase home ownership counseling and outreach programs to Hispanic communities.

In 2001, Fannie Mae financed more than \$87 billion in loans to 676,000 families of color. Just over half of the year's business, 51.5 percent, went to low- and moderate-income households.

Fannie Mae created "The American Dream Commitment," a 10-year, \$2 trillion program that includes a "National Minority Homeownership Initiative," which works to fight mortgage discrimination, and the "Opportunity for All Strategy," in which the unique needs of immigrants, women-headed households and young people are addressed.

Former White House economic adviser Todd Buchholz (1989-1992), author of "Safe at Home: The New Role of Housing in the U.S. Economy," comments in the report that earlier glum homeownership forecasts did not take into account "how minority families would burst into the home-buying scene." Many immigrant families are on the "tipping point" of being able to afford to buy a home, he adds.

Hispanics bought 39 percent more homes in 2000 than in 1996, the highest percentage increase of any group, according to Buchholz.

Marta Valldejuli, a real estate agent for the last 10 years, serves a clientele in Virginia that is roughly 97 percent Hispanic, many of them Central American immigrants. Discrimination, she points out, remains a factor in the home-buying process. "I have to fight hard," she says. "If you come in with a large down payment, no one cares what your surname is. But if two families are competing for a house and the down payments are the same, the Latino family will lose. I've seen it happen many times."

The rapid increase in the number of Hispanic agents, such as Valldejuli, has served as a powerful tool toward increasing homeownership.

"Latino consumers have different needs. They require unique products and services," NAHREP's Acosta says. "An agent fluent in the culture and the language is a

much more effective advocate for those consumers."

NAHREP works actively to recruit Latinos into real estate, an industry that requires little formal education but can generate high incomes. Currently, it is working to secure grants and scholarships for Latinos who want to enter the profession.

The growth of Latino homeownership rates has not been reflected in real estate advertising to the Hispanic community, a random sampling of a handful of large lending and real estate agencies by NAHREP has found. Some of the nation's largest sales firms had less than 1% of the total marketing budget geared to Hispanic advertising.

Fernando Jiménez, classified advertising manager of L.A.-based La Opinión -- the highest circulation Spanish-language daily in the United States -- has seen no incremental increase in real estate advertising revenue. The paper publishes a weekly section, "Tu Casa," geared toward informing readers about all areas of real estate.

Jiménez says, "It's assumed Latinos don't have money for the down payment and household incomes are low. But a lot of Latino families come together to buy a home. We don't mind living with our relatives."

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Sanchez-Morales

from Page 1

not expected the endorsement of either group. And the former attorney general noted that Mr. Sanchez already had lined up the backing of most of the "Democratic establishment" in the state before Mr. Morales' surprise entry into the race the day of the filing deadline.

Mr. Morales appeared before the tow group's candidate screening committee, but he did not address the entire convention because of a scheduling conflict. He did conduct a series of roving news conferences outside the convention hall where he continued to aim sharp barbs at Mr. Sanchez.

He questioned Mr. Sanchez's business dealings as a banker in Laredo, repeated that his rival was "insulting" voters by not agreeing to a series of debates, and again said that Mr. Sanchez was trying to "buy" the governor's office.

Mr. Sanchez has put an estimated \$6 million of his personal fortune into the race. Mr. Morales said he does not believe Mr. Sanchez, a political newcomer, is qualified to serve as the state's top elected official.

"My opponent never served a day in his life as a public official or an elected official, and this exactly the wrong time in our state's political history to put a rookie in the governor's job," said Mr. Morales, stressing his experience as a prosecutor, state representa-

tive and two-term attorney general.

Mr. Sanchez dismissed his opponent's charges.

"These are desperate acts of a very desperate person," Mr. Sanchez said. "His political life is crumbling around him, and he's very worried about it."

As for Mr. Morales' questioning his credentials to be governor, Mr. Sanchez said, "Dan Morales is a professional politician. That's all he's been all his life. I'm a business person."

"We need a new approach to solving our state's problems, and that new approach must come from someone who has been on the outside world with real jobs and real problems to solve," he said.

"Between he and Rick Perry, they are professional politicians. They say they are good leaders and proven leaders. If they are, why do we have so many problems in our state," Mr. Sanchez said.

Mr. Perry, the governor, is unopposed in the GOP primary. Two other Democratic gubernatorial hopefuls, Houston lawyer John WorldPeace and Waxahachie businessman Bill Lyon, also sought support from the black and Hispanic organizations.

EL EDITOR Los Mejor En Noticias!

Los Latinos Se Lanzan Al Mercado De Viviendas Como Compradores y Corredores

Por Arlene Martinez

Los latinos se están tirando de cabeza al mercado de bienes raíces en capacidad corredores de venta, tasadores, prestamistas y, batiendo marcas, como compradores.

Han comprado más casas en el último cuarto de año del 2001 que en cualquier otro cuarto en los últimos cinco años, informó el U.S. Census Bureau (agencia del censo federal) el 25 de enero. Los hispanos registraron un índice de propietarios de vivienda de 48.8 por ciento ("medido en unidades de casas") al final del año. O sea, los latinos poseen 5.2 millones de hogares.

Casi el 72 por ciento de las familias blancas son propietarias de vivienda.

La baja en la economía, que redujo los intereses, ayudó a los latinos -- entre los cuales el 80 por ciento era comprador por primera vez -- a comprar casa en el 2001, dice Ernie Reyes, presidente y cofundador de la National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals (la asociación nacional de profesionales hispanos de bienes raíces).

El adiestramiento en diversidad de corredores de bienes raíces, así como el reclutamiento intensivo de corredores hispano-parlantes, ha sido una prioridad en los últimos años, dice Reyes. Un estudio de la NAHREP identificó a alrededor de 50,000 agentes latinos en toda la nación y a otros 20,000 en este campo profesional --prestamistas hipotecarios, agencias de seguros y tasadores, por ejemplo.

Lo excepcional es que los latinos han aumentado su por ciento con vivienda propia mientras también ha crecido su población, dice el ejecutivo en jefe de la NAHREP, Gary Acosta. No sólo estamos vendiendo más casas, sino que estamos subiendo nuestro porcentaje.

Acosta y Reyes atribuyen el aumento -- de 42.6 por ciento en el primer cuarto del 1997 -- a esfuerzos coordinados de organizaciones como la de ellos para compensar, en la comunidad latina, por la ausencia de conocimiento sobre el proceso de compra -- según ellos, el obstáculo discreto más importante en la compra de casas en la comunidad. En su estudio, la asociación descubrió que el 60 por ciento de los latinos no confía en prestamistas o en bancos. Esto se debe, en gran medida, a la naturaleza corrupta e inestable de algunos bancos y prestamistas en América Latina, dice Reyes.

La NAHREP ha estado trabajando con Fannie Mae y Freddie Mac (dos de las organizaciones prestatarias más grandes de la nación).

Con la ayuda del National Council of La Raza (el consejo nacional de la raza), Freddie Mac proveerá más de \$2 millones por tres años para establecer tecnología basada en la Red cibernética dirigida a aumentar la asesoría respecto a ser propietario de vivienda y hacia los programas de alcance a comunidades hispanas.

En el 2001, Fannie Mae financió más de \$87 mil millones en préstamos para 676,000 familias de color. Poco más de la mitad de las ventas del año, 51.1 por ciento, estuvo dirigido a familias de ingresos bajos o moderados.

Fannie Mae estableció el "American Dream Commitment" (el compromiso al sueño americano), un programa de 10 años de \$2,000,000 millones, que incluye la "National Minority Homeownership Initiative" (iniciativa nacional de vivienda propia de minorías), que lucha contra la discriminación en el ofrecimiento de hipotecas, y la "Opportunity for All Strategy"

(estrategia de oportunidad para todos), donde se atienden las necesidades específicas de familias de inmigrantes, de mujeres jefas de familia y de personas jóvenes.

El antiguo asesor económico de la Casa Blanca, Todd Buchholz (1989-1992), autor de "Safe at Home: The New Role of Housing in the U.S. Economy" (A salvo en casa, el nuevo papel de la vivienda en la economía americana), comenta en el informe que los vaticinios anteriores de índices sombríos para la vivienda propia de las minorías no tomaron en cuenta "cómo surgirían en el mercado de compra de casas las familias minoritarias". Muchas familias de inmigrantes están al borde de poder comprar una casa, añade.

Los hispanos compraron 39 por ciento más casas en el 2000 que en el 1996, el aumento porcentual más alto de cualquier grupo, según Buchholz.

Marta Valldejuli, corredora de bienes raíces por los últimos 10 años, atiende a clientela casi 97 por ciento hispana en Virginia, compuesta en buena parte por inmigrantes centro americanos. La discriminación, señala, sigue siendo un factor en el proceso de compra de vivienda. "Tengo que pelear mucho", dice, "Si vienes con un pronto alto, a nadie le importa cuál sea tu apellido. Pero si dos familias compiten por una casa y las cuotas iniciales son iguales, la familia latina va a perder. Lo he visto muchas veces."

El rápido aumento en el número de corredores latinos, como Valldejuli, ha funcionado como una herramienta poderosa para aumentar el número de propietarios de casas.

"Los consumidores latinos tienen necesidades distintas. Requieren productos y servicios particulares," dice Acosta. "Un agente que domina la cultura y la lengua es un defensor mucho más eficaz para esos consumidores".

La NAHREP se esfuerza en reclutar latinos al campo de las bienes raíces, una industria que requiere poca educación formal mientras puede generar ingresos

elevados. Actualmente, busca obtener subvenciones y becas para latinos que quieran entrar a la profesión.

El crecimiento en el índice de propietarios de vivienda latinos no se ha reflejado en la publicidad de bienes raíces para la comunidad hispana, según una muestra al azar de un puñado de agencias prestatarias y de bienes raíces, tomada por la NAHREP. Algunas de las compañías de venta más grandes de la nación tenían menos de 1 por ciento del total de su presupuesto de mercadeo dirigido a publicidad hacia hispanos.

Fernando Jiménez, gerente de anuncios clasificados del periódico de Los ADngeles La Opinión -- el diario en español de mayor

continúa en la pagina 6



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Despite Millions of Fans, Regional Mexican Music Struggles to Gain Attention

In neighborhoods across Southern California, regional Mexican music is often heard blaring from boom boxes.

And they're not just listening to Vicente Fernandez - the crowned king of ranchera music - whose sentimental songs about his love for Mexico drew scores of people to the Universal Amphitheatre for three shows last November. They're listening to locally produced corridos - Mexican ballads about the issues or events of the day - by home-grown artists such as Jenni Rivera.

The 32-year-old Long Beach native, known in regional Mexican

circles as the First Lady of Corrido, was selling her cassettes at swap meets and mom-and-pop stores before she started to get booked at clubs. Today she is among the freshest young voices in regional Mexican music, which, despite its huge popularity and sales, often goes unrecognized in the musical establishment.

"I've been through a whole lot in my life," Rivera says. She was wed and a mother by the time she finished high school. Her husband was opposed to her going to college and working, which she did anyway, earning a certificate to practice real estate.

When Rivera's marriage fell apart, she was 8 months pregnant with her second child. Both she and her 4-year-old daughter were living in a garage at the time when Rivera began to write corridos about strong women.

"I think that really shocks people because nobody sings about things like that," Rivera says. "Female artists in our culture tend to sing love ballads, but I wanted to bust that stigma. I wanted to be real."

The favorite Rivera's accurate and convincing stories of the street have grown in popularity among fans of regional Mexican, hands down the best-selling Latin music genre in the United States.

The latest figures from the Recording Industry Association of America show that in the year 2000 regional Mexican accounted for 51 percent of all Latin music sold in the United States - a sum totaling more than \$600 million. Its more fashionable cousins, Spanish-language pop, which includes rock, captured 33 percent of the market, and tropical, 16 percent.

Yet like many artists who compose and perform this music, including her brothers Juan and Lupillo, Rivera has been unsuccessful at bolstering interest from those outside her niche, with some exceptions. In 1999, President Bill Clinton honored Tex-Mex originator Lydia Mendoza with the National Medal of Arts. The following year the Recording Academy established the Latin Grammys to recognize such genres as regional Mexican. However, that particular music ended up getting very little recognition during the broadcast except from performers in support of the Van Nuys-based Fonovisa label and its artists, who boycotted in protest.

Jorge Hernandez was among the no shows, but says he holds no grudge against the industry. Why should he? His San Jose-based norteno group Los Tigres del Norte are hugely popular.

They sell millions of records, write chart-busters and packs arenas all over the United States and Mexico.

"If I don't hear from the mayor or the governor or the Grammys," Hernandez laughs, "it doesn't matter. What makes our group feel successful is when people applaud us after a show. The rest is just politics."

Debate over relevance This is a sentiment shared by many in the regional Mexican community, especially by those who perform the least recognized music of the bunch: The corrido. Guillermo E. Hernandez, director of UCLA's Chicano Studies Research Center and a Spanish professor, believes many people consider the corrido to be in poor taste and insignificant to everyday life, which is far from reality.

Proof can be found in the Chicano Studies Research Center partnership with the Smithsonian Institution, which led to the exhibition "Corridos sin Fronteras:

A New World Ballad Tradition," traveling across America through 2005. On May 18, it opens at the Mexican Heritage Plaza in San Jose, where it will run through Aug. 11. A date for Los Angeles has not been set.

"The corrido has all the qualities of aesthetics and history," says Hernandez. "It's a multidisciplinary expression where sociologists, literary critics, historians, ethnomusicologists and so on and so on and then in the arts, humanities, social sciences can gain a lot of knowledge from the corrido."

Traditionally, the corrido has immortalized heroes of the Mexican Revolution, the founder of the farm workers movement, Cesar Chavez, and victims of police aggression. A famous corrido is 1929's "The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez," a song based on the 1901 case in which a Mexican ranch hand shot and killed a sheriff in self-defense. As the story goes, Cortez was being questioned about the theft of a horse when an argument broke out.

Deputies opened fire on the ranch, wounding Cortez's brother. In retaliation, Cortez fatally shot the sheriff and then fled the scene. Texas Rangers carried out an all-out man hunt for Cortez, capturing him 10 days later in south Texas.

A jury of white Texans convicted and sentenced Cortez to jail although he was later pardoned.

With attitude While "The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez" continues to be performed today, new corridos originate in the streets, where artists such as Rivera attract followers with their stories - sometimes true, sometimes made up - about women of cunning like "La Chacalosa" or "Jackal Woman."

Her adventurous tale of a drug lord's daughter on the run from the law is what Rivera calls a narcocorrido. A narcocorrido can be likened to gangster rap.

"It's like honoring the bad guys, which is not the best thing to sing about, but it's a reality for a lot of people out there that live this way," Rivera says. "So why not sing about it and make a lot of money while you're at it?"

Because of the subject matter, corridos have been banned from many radio stations' playlists. One exception is the Burbank-based Que Buena (KBUA 94.3/105.5 FM).

The station is one of the biggest promoters of regional Mexican, recognizing the most popular artists at its annual Premios Que Buena. Late last year, the sold-out event filled the Universal Amphitheatre. KBUA program director Pepe Garza says the acclaimed corridos artists probably never will make it to the nomination phase of the Latin Grammys.

"But lucky for us we can still have our night where the whole world arrives in their minks and limos and Rolls Royce because nobody else is looking this way," Garza says. "And thank God so we can live happily ever after in our own little world."

Speedskating Rodriguez Taking Change In Stride



Jennifer Rodriguez, who was raised in Miami as an in-line skater, relocated to frigid Milwaukee in a quest to become a world-class speedskater. She is a medal contender in four events.

Jennifer Rodriguez is not what you would expect of a former Miamian who happens to be a Cuban-American. For one, she does not speak Spanish; when she was a child, her Cuban-born father did not teach her his native language. ("I could kill him for it!" she says now.) She also is conspicuously pale - this is not a woman who spends much time in the sun.

Most unusually, perhaps, she is a Winter Olympian in speedskating -- and the U.S. team's leading medal hope.

A convert from in-line skating, Rodriguez, 25, has taken an improbable path from balmy Miami to often snow-blanketed Park City, Utah, where she resides full-time. A medal hope in four events, including today's 1,000 meters at the Utah Olympic Oval in Kearns, Rodriguez consistently was the U.S. team's top performer during the fall World Cup season.

Only four years ago, Rodriguez was a rookie member of the U.S. team, considered little more than a curiosity. She seemed better known for her South Florida origin and relationship with boyfriend KC Boutiette, an established competitor performing in his second Olympics.

Rodriguez, though, produced a chin-dropping result: Hoping for a

top-10 finish in the women's 3,000, she wound up with a fourth place. (Boutiette, now her fiance, will join her in Salt Lake City. He was one of the last three skaters added to this year's Olympic team.) Four years later, if Rodriguez fails to win several medals, she will be disappointed.

Not that the last four years have been smooth. She called 1999-2000 the most disappointing of her career, blaming poor results on overtraining. But under new coach Tom Cushman, Rodriguez has excelled.

"At the last Games, I was just thrown into the mix," Rodriguez said. "Four years have gone by, and I've definitely had my ups and downs since then. I'm definitely on my way back up [now]. Now, instead of just going out to see what I can do, I definitely want to medal."

Growing up in Miami, Rodriguez played sports of all sorts but was especially engaged by roller skating, which led to in-line skating. She met Boutiette, also a converted in-line skater, when she was 19, and he convinced her to try speedskating. In the fall of 1996, she traveled to Milwaukee to train seriously, moving in with Boutiette.

To her surprise, her parents supported the long-distance relocation.

"All I said was, 'I might have a chance to make the Olympic Games,'" Rodriguez said. "They said, 'Go!'"

Para Establece Récord Olímpico Y Mundial

El californiano Derek Parra, de origen mexicano, no sólo rompió ayer el récord mundial de 1,500 metros en patinaje de velocidad, sino que se convirtió en el único competidor de Estados Unidos en ganar dos medallas en los Juegos Olímpicos de Invierno Salt Lake City 2002.

Todo ocurrió en familia, pues su esposa, su niña, su padre y un hermano estuvieron entre los asistentes. La esposa, Tiffany, vestía una camiseta que decía "Te amo", mientras que el papá y un

hermano portaban otras con el lema "Parra Team".

"Lo sabía", dijo su hermano Gilbert Parra, quien lo animó desde las gradas. "Está en su punto, nada puede pararlo ahora".

Parra, de 1.64 metros de estatura, 31 años de edad y trabajador de una tienda de materiales de construcción Home Depot en el estado de Florida, hizo vibrar el Ovalo Olímpico de Utah, al terminar la carrera con un tiempo de 1:43.95 minutos.

continua en la pagina 5

Christina's Stylist Admits: She's Made Mistakes

Saucy popstress CHRISTINA AGUILERA has been criticised for her bizarre dress sense - and even her stylist admits she often "makes mistakes".

Stylist TRISH SOMERVILLE says the GENIE IN A BOTTLE babe just follows her instinct when it comes to clothing, and the public's mockery hurts her feelings.

Trish explains, "Christina is independent and she is an artist - for good or for bad, she experiments. I don't want to work with boring, conventional people, but I do admit she has made mistakes."

"On one level the criticism really affects Christina. She is just like everyone else - no-one wants to hear negative stuff."

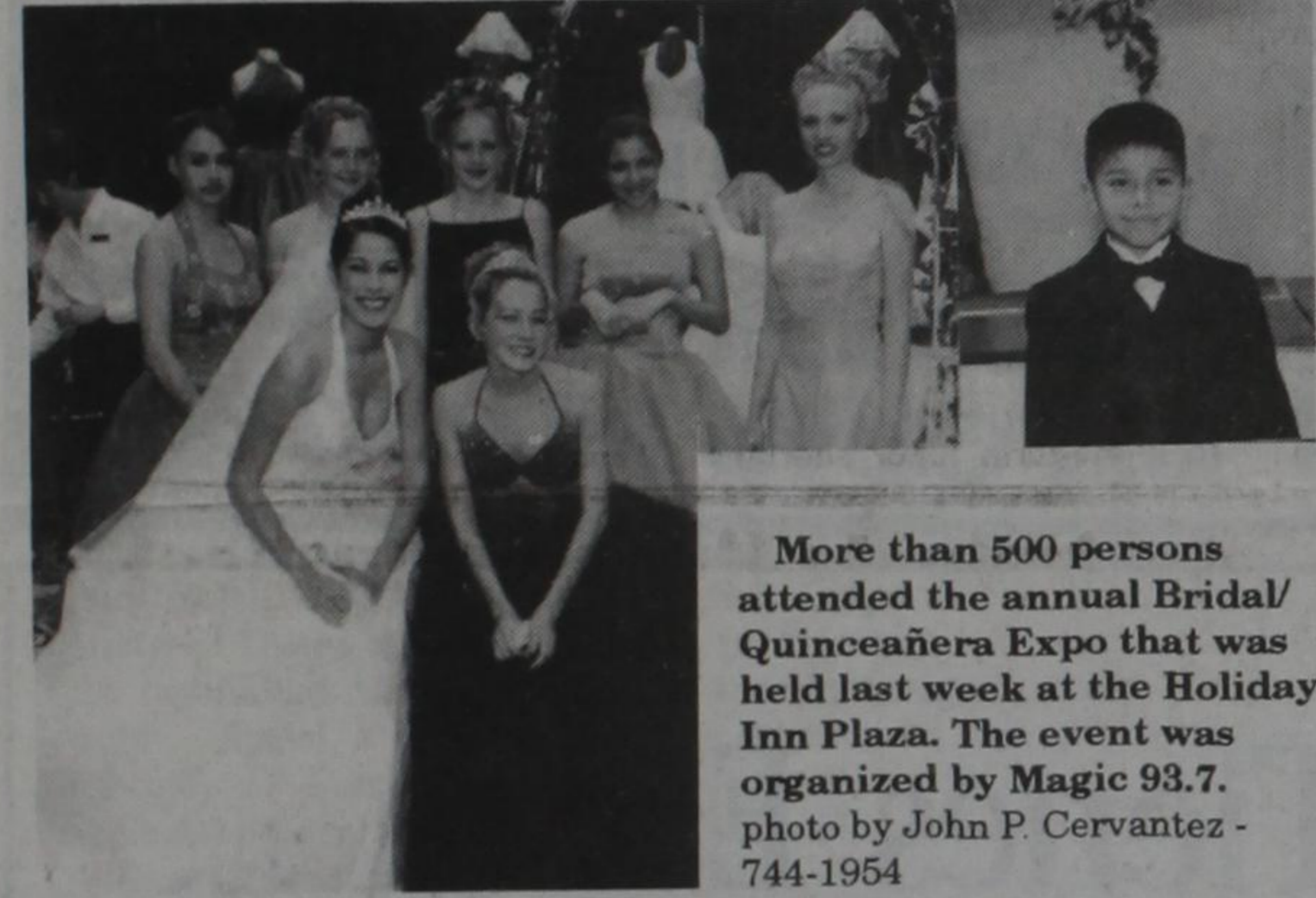
"She doesn't understand why people slam her for what she is wearing because, at the end of the day, she is an entertainer and she is playing a part. It hurts her when people criticise her like that - it really upsets her."

But there's one critic Christina and Trish aren't bothered about - noted fashion pundit MR BLACKWELL, who put the singer at number six on his worst-dressed



list this year (02).

Trish laughs, "Oh, we just love it when Christina is on the worst-dressed list. I mean, I do respect Mr Blackwell, but let's face it, the guy is over 60, what does he really know?"



More than 500 persons attended the annual Bridal/Quinceañera Expo that was held last week at the Holiday Inn Plaza. The event was organized by Magic 93.7. photo by John P. Cervantez - 744-1954

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Para-Olímpico y Mundial de la pagina 4



"Increíble, increíble", dijo Parra tras ganar la medalla de oro y ver que el óvalo olímpico se transformaba en un manicomio con ensordecedores gritos.

"Los oí gritar al máximo... oí a los aficionados gritar y eso me empujó a dar más cuando faltaban unos 10 pies para finalizar", agregó el ganador de la vigésima medalla de Estados Unidos, meta fijada por este país para el 2002.

El tiempo de Parra, que nació en San Bernardino y que no conoció la nieve hasta los 18 años de edad, cuando viajó al este de Estados Unidos para competir en una carrera de patinaje sobre ruedas, pulverizó la marca mundial y olímpica que ostentaba el sudcoreano Lee Kyu Hyuk (1:45.20).

Cuento de hadas "Esto es un 'cuento de hadas hecho realidad", dijo Parra, quien en la inauguración fue uno de los portadores de la bandera de la Zona Cero encontrada en las Torres Gemelas de Nueva York. "Tengo un corazón grande y eso es".

Al cruzar la meta, decenas de banderas de Estados Unidos comenzaron a ondear y los gritos de "¡USA, USA, USA!" se escucharon más fuertes que nunca, todo ello ante la presencia del secretario de Defensa, Donald Rumsfeld, y su esposa.

Hacia apenas 10 días, el 9 de febrero, en el mismo escenario,

Parra rompió el récord mundial de los cinco mil metros con 6:17.98, pero tuvo que conformarse con la medalla de plata cuando minutos después el holandés Jochem Uytdehaage le arrebató la marca y la presea de oro con un tiempo de 6:14.66.

Ese día, cuando Parra sorprendió con la plata -pues su especialidad son los 1,500 metros-, su esposa no estaba en la arena, sino en su hogar, con su hija de dos meses Mia Elizabeth.

Ayer, el holandés Uytdehaage no pudo hacer nada por quitarle el oro y la marca a Parra y se tuvo que consolar con la plata, con un tiempo de 1:44.57, mientras que el noruego Adne Sondral, se llevó el bronce con registro de 1:45.26.

Sondral no pudo defender la medalla de oro que ganó en Nagano 98, donde Parra estuvo "de turista", ya que su tiempo de clasificación de 41 en el mundo le impidió competir.

Tras subir al podio para recibir su medalla de oro, todavía en sus patines, bajó y abrazó a su esposa por casi un minuto.

"Uno va siempre tratando de mejorar, esperando un momento como éste, y sucede", comentó Parra, con una voz entrecortada y unos ojos llorosos por la emoción.

"Estar en el podio es increíble. Es un sueño", agregó Parra.

Latinos Lag In Business-Related Careers

By Cynthia L. Orocco

The lack of awareness of resources and role models and perceived lack of prestige associated with business-related careers are central reasons why more Latinos do not pursue careers in the field, according to John Honaman, executive director of the National Society of Hispanic MBAs.

Honaman and other members of the Diversity Pipeline Alliance unveiled a survey, The Pipeline Report - which highlights a downward trend for students of color in business education matriculation -- at a Feb. 5 news conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.

The alliance is a coalition of 11 national business and education groups with a common goal of increasing the participation of Latinos, African Americans and Native Americans in business careers.

While the Latino population continues to grow exponentially, its rates of participation in and graduation from college and business degree programs have not.

In 1989, according to the U.S. Department of Education figures cited in the report, Latinos represented only 2.9 percent of all students who received bachelor's degrees. That figure rose by less than three points, to 5.6 percent, by 1998. That same year, an identical 5.6 percent of all undergraduates who received business degrees were Latino.

Also, the report found that during the 1990s fewer students of color who were pursuing bachelor's degrees chose business majors.

"The fact that we are in a recession does not reduce the urgency of this issue," says Nicole Chestang, executive vice president and secretary of the Graduate Management Admission Council, a lead alliance sponsor. "We have to assure that when corporations are ready to hire, there is a pool of diversified talent available and prepared for those positions."

Corporate America made large financial investments with nonprofits to attract, develop and supply more businesspeople of color during the last decade, according to the report. This must continue and expand if corporations expect to have viable candidates to meet the long-term labor shortage

of some 19 million people by 2028 projected by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

"We also need to increase the awareness among Latinos about programs designed to help them pursue business careers," Honaman says.

As the Hispanic population and its purchasing power continue to grow, "We are going to need talented Latinos to assume the highest levels of leadership in Corporate America," he adds.

To this end, NSHMBA is initiating partnerships with the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities and the National Hispanic Business Association to encourage more Latino students -- beginning at the middle and even elementary school level -- to pursue business careers.

It has also strengthened its linkage with the Hispanic Scholarship Fund, jointly awarding \$671,500 in scholarships last year to students pursuing masters of business administration degrees.

A large part of the alliance's goal is to foster the pipeline for students of color by:

- developing educational and marketing programs to provide information on business careers.
- identifying and stimulating potentially interested students earlier in their academic development.
- sharing resources among organizations.

Another new NSHMBA initiative that attempts to meet these goals is a partnership with the New America Alliance. Its members will serve as visible Latino role models in Corporate America.

"Many young Latinos have no idea who Carlos Gutiérrez or Linda Alvarado or Roberto Goizueta are," Honaman says. Gutiérrez is CEO of Kellogg Company; Alvarado, who owns a major construction company in Denver, is also part-owner of the Denver Rockies baseball team, and the late Roberto Goizueta build Coca-Cola into an international corporate giant as its CEO.

"They need to see there are others like themselves who have set the example and know these careers are viable and attainable."

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Los Latinos Están A La Zaga En Las Carreras Empresariales

Por Cynthia L. Orocco

La ausencia de conocimiento de los recursos disponibles y ejemplos a seguir, así como la falta de prestigio asociada con carreras empresariales constituyen las razones básicas por las que más latinos no siguen carreras en ese campo, según John Honaman, director ejecutivo de la National Society of Hispanic MBAs (la sociedad nacional de hispanos con maestría en administración de empresas).

Honaman y otros miembros de la Diversity Pipeline Alliance (alianza proyectada a la diversidad) presentó los resultados de una encuesta, The Pipeline Report (el informe vía a la diversidad) -- que muestran una tendencia negativa en la matrícula de estudiantes de color en programas de negocios -- en una conferencia de prensa en el National Press Club (el club de la prensa nacional), en Washington, D.C.

La alianza es una coalición de once organizaciones nacionales educativas y comerciales, que tienen como meta común aumentar la participación de latinos, afroamericano-americanos, y norteamericanos indígenas en carreras de negocios.

Mientras la población latina continúa creciendo exponencialmente, ni sus índices de participación en programas de administración de empresas ni los de su egreso de la universidad han

aumentado. En 1989, según cifras del Departamento de Educación federal citadas en el informe, los latinos constituyeron sólo el 2.9 por ciento de los estudiantes que se recibieron de instituciones de cuatro años. Esa cifra subió por menos de tres puntos, a 5.6 por ciento, para 1998. Ese mismo año, la proporción latina de todos los subgraduados que recibieron grados en administración de empresas era idéntica, de 5.6 por ciento.

"El informe también descubrió que durante la década de 1990 menos estudiantes de color matriculados en las universidades optaron por el curso de estudios en administración de empresas.

"El hecho de que estemos en una recesión no atenúa la urgencia de este asunto", dice Nicole Chestang, vice-presidenta ejecutiva y secretaria del Graduate Management Admission Council (consejo de admisiones graduadas a programas de administración), un auspiciador líder de la alianza. "Tenemos que garantizar que cuando las corporaciones estén preparadas a contratar, exista una reserva de talento diverso preparada a ocupar esas plazas".

La América corporativa hizo inversiones económicas amplias a través de organizaciones sin fines de lucro para fomentar el desarrollo

y la contratación de más empresarios de color durante la última década, según el informe. Este compromiso debe continuar y expandirse si las corporaciones esperan tener candidatos viables para satisfacer a largo plazo la escasez laboral que se proyecta en 19 millones de personas para el 2028, según el U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (oficina de estadísticas laborales federal).

"También necesitamos expandir la consciencia entre los latinos sobre programas diseñados para ayudarlos a seguir carreras de negocios", dice Honaman.

A medida que la población hispana y su poder de consumo crezca, "vamos a necesitar latinos talentosos para que asuman los niveles más altos de liderazgo en la América corporativa", añade.

Para lograr esto, la NSHMBA iniciará acuerdos con la Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (asociación hispana de universidades) y la National Hispanic Business Association (asociación hispana nacional de empresas) para motivar a más estudiantes latinos -- desde la escuela intermedia y aun primaria -- a seguir carreras de negocios.

También ha fortalecido su conexión con el Hispanic Scholarship Fund (fondo hispano de becas), otorgando conjuntamente \$671,500 en becas el año pasado a estudiantes que siguen maestrías en administración de empresas.

Una gran parte de la meta de la alianza es fortalecer el conducto de ingreso a estos programas para estudiantes de color mediante: el desarrollo de programas educativos y de mercadeo para proveer información sobre carreras empresariales. La identificación y el estímulo de estudiantes potencialmente interesados más temprano en su desarrollo académico el intercambio de recursos entre organizaciones.

Otra iniciativa nueva de la NSHMBA para alcanzar estas metas es un convenio con la New America Alliance (alianza América nueva). Sus miembros sirven de ejemplos visibles de latinos en la América corporativa.

"Muchos latinos jóvenes no tienen ni idea de quiénes son Carlos Gutiérrez o Linda Alvarado o Roberto Goizueta", dice Honaman. Gutiérrez es el ejecutivo jefe de la Compañía Kellogg, Alvarado, dueña de una compañía de construcción en Denver, es también co-dueña del equipo de béisbol Denver Rockies, y Roberto Goizueta ayudó a convertir a Coca-Cola en el gigante corporativo internacional que es hoy como su ejecutivo jefe.

"Necesitan ver que hay otros como ellos mismos que han dado el ejemplo y saber que estas carreras son viables y alcanzables".

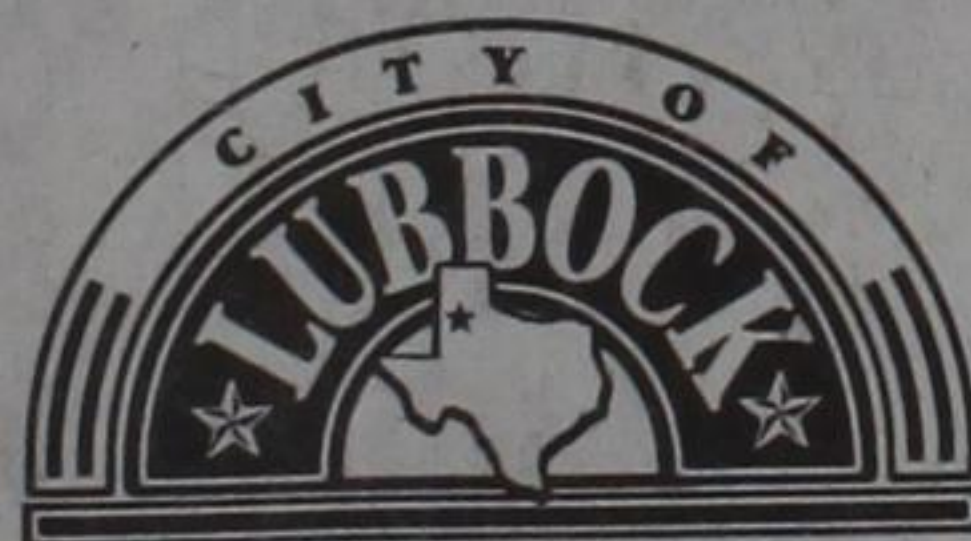
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Notice of Proposed DBE Goal for Lubbock International Airport

Pursuant to 49 CFR 26, Lubbock International Airport proposes a goal of 9% DBE participation on DOT-assisted contracts for the fiscal year 2001-2002.

Lubbock International Airport's DBE plan and rationale for DBE participation is available for public inspection at <http://purchasing.ci.lubbock.tx.us> or at the Office of the City Purchasing manager, 1625 13th Street, Lubbock, Texas, during normal business hours until March 23rd. Public comment will be received until April 7th at vkilman@mail.ci.lubbock.tx.us or addressed to:

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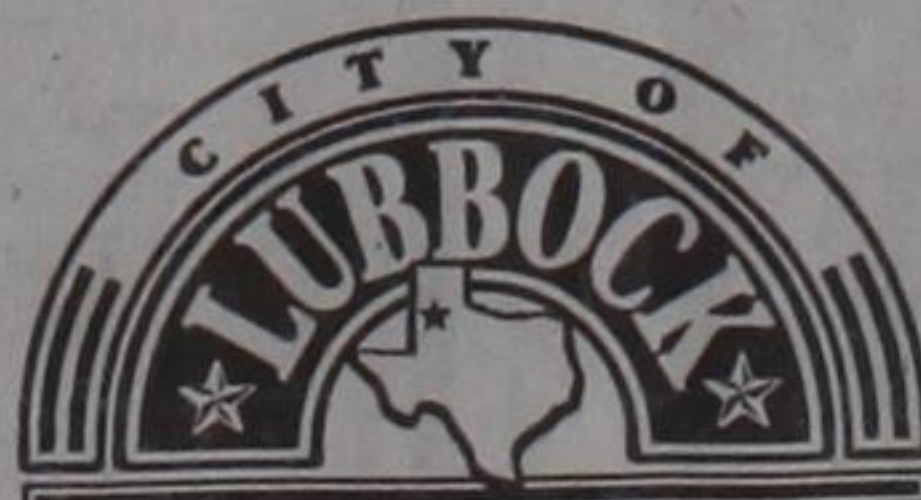
The City of Lubbock will hold a public hearing Thursday February 28, 2002 at 11:15 a.m. at City Hall 1625 13th Street in the Council Chambers. This hearing will allow for citizen comments on the following items:

Reallocation of: \$75,000 in Community Development Block Grant Funds

On February 13, 2002 the Community Development Services Board approved the following recommendation for the City Council to consider:

1. Parkway Guadalupe Neighborhood Centers renovation project. \$10,000
2. North University Facade \$35,000
3. Community recreation survey \$30,000

For further information you may contact the Community Development Department at 775-2301. This hearing is open to all persons regardless of disability. If you require special assistance please contact the Community Development Department at 775-2301, or write to Community Development P.O. Box 2000, Lubbock, TX 79457, at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting.



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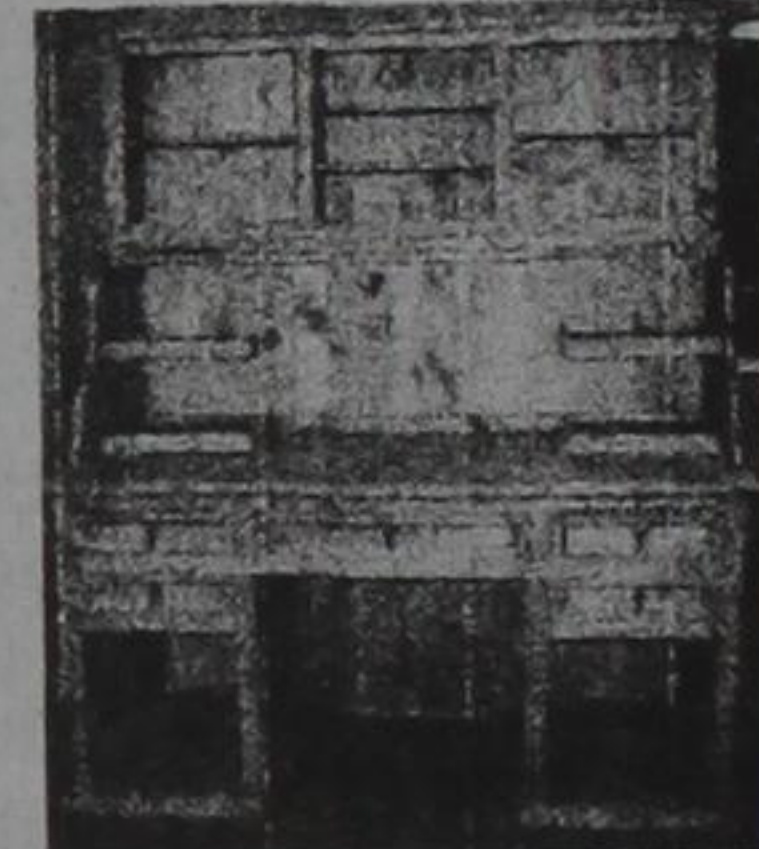
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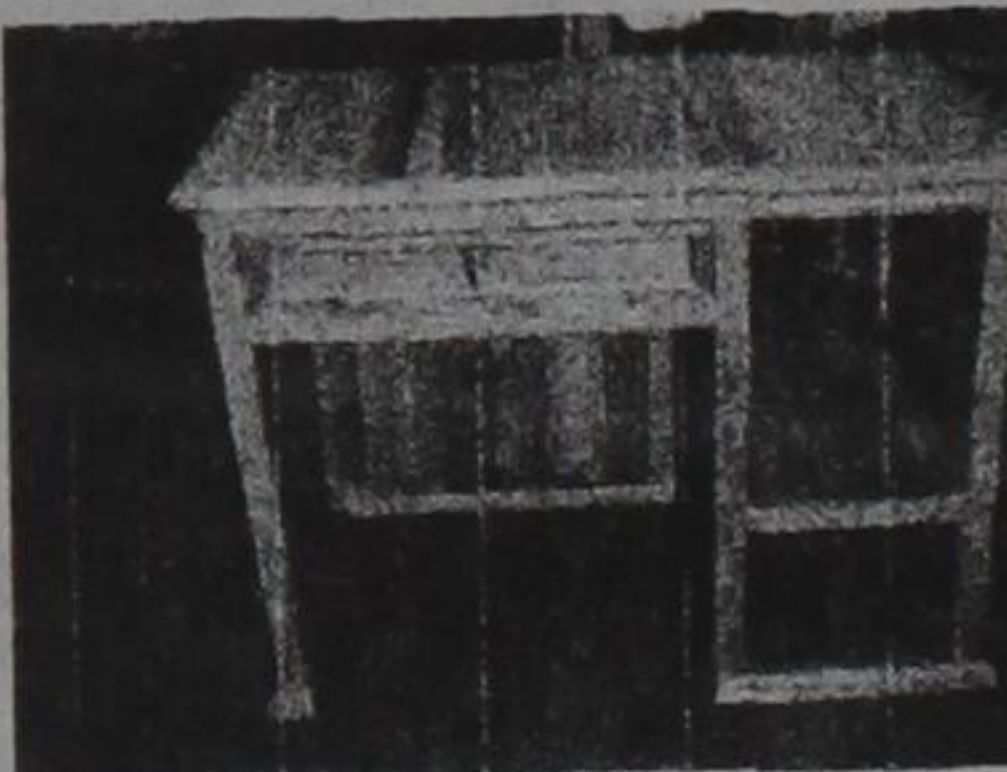
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Other side of the coin:

Mexico's Complicated Taxes Cause Lots of Uncertainty

By **BRENDAN M. CASE**

MEXICO CITY — In Mexico, Coca-Cola is a basic necessity, while caviar counts as a luxury good. But both will get the same treatment from the taxman.

Mexican caviar lovers must pay a new luxury levy of 20 percent, according to recent changes to the nation's tax code.

Soft drink consumers face sales taxes that can run just as high — even though millions of poor people rely on Coke and Pepsi for a good share of their daily calories.

"Now the rich will still be rich, and us poor people will get poorer," said Juan Luis Martínez, 39, a housepainter and father of four in Mexico City.

President Vicente Fox's plans to revamp the nation's tax code died in the Mexican Congress in late December. Instead, lawmakers slapped new taxes on everything from mobile telephone service to restaurants serving liquor to soft drinks made with corn syrup.

The new rules have quickly become a major source of uncertainty in Mexico's financial future. The question: Can a motley array of new levies substitute for broad reform in a nation plagued by tax evasion?

Moody's Investors Service awarded Mexico a coveted investment grade rating nearly two years ago, and Fitch Inc. did so this week. But economists are waiting to see whether Standard & Poor's, the Wall Street ratings leader, will follow suit.

Economically, such a rating from Standard & Poor's would boost investment and symbolize Mexico's ascent to a crisis-prone basket case to a North American partner of the United States and Canada. Politically, it would reward the democratic transition under Mr. Fox.

Graciela del Castillo, the lead analyst for Mexico at Standard & Poor's, has said she is "studying" the recent tax changes to decide whether they will shore up the government's finances.

Over the last seven years, oil has accounted for between a fifth and a third of public income. Last year, the Finance Ministry had to cut spending several times to make up for falling oil prices.

As for millions of Mexicans like Mr. Martínez, they have concluded that the new taxes will cost them money without solving the government's chronic financial problems.

"The objective was to simplify the tax code and reduce the government's dependence on oil revenue," said Jonathan Heath, an economist at LatinSource in Mexico City. "Did they achieve those objectives? No."

Tax evasion ranks among Mexico's favorite pastimes.

Because of all the fiscal leakage from the huge informal economy — not to mention an upper class with lots of clever accountants — Mexico collects taxes worth only 11.2 percent of its gross domestic product. Countries such as Brazil and Chile collect more than 15 percent, and the United States takes even more.

Mexico's feeble tax take leads to an over-reliance on oil revenue. At the same time, financing costs from

a huge bank bailout, which largely benefited wealthier people, are increasing pressure on the public till.

That's enough to worry financial analysts.

"An increase to investment grade in Mexico's foreign currency ratings will depend on an improvement in public finances," said a recent Standard & Poor's report, largely authored by Ms. del Castillo.

To solve the problem, Mr. Fox proposed a far-reaching tax reform last year to raise \$13 billion, or nearly 10 percent of total revenue. But his plan would have applied the 15 percent sales tax to food and medicine, which were exempt.

That sparked outrage among millions of average Mexicans, knocking down Mr. Fox's approval rating to about 50 percent from a high of 80 percent, pollsters say. Lawmakers hammered out the new levies on Dec. 31, 2001.

The new taxes could generate up to \$8 billion. But they could face a series of legal challenges since critics allege that lawmakers broke several procedural rules in their rush to pass something before January.

"There are some good things, but there are other things that were just rushed — and that could create some problems," said Manuel Rajunov, the director of Latin American business services at the Dallas office of Grant Thornton LLP, the accounting firm.

Supporting the taxes

Certainly, the new taxes have a few defenders.

Finance Minister Francisco Gil Díaz acknowledged he didn't get all the changes he wanted, but he called the new rules a good start.

"I think we took enough of a step forward that the ratings agencies can give the country a better rating," said Mr. Gil Díaz, who boosted tax revenue by \$3.3 billion in 2001 by targeting tax cheats.

Lawmakers also adopted some far-sighted measures that could help fuel the economy. One reform will allow homeowners to deduct a portion of their mortgage payments from their tax bill, much as U.S. homeowners do.

Some businessmen even play down the trouble from a 5 percent surcharge that diners must pay at restaurants serving liquor. After all, another provision allows taxpayers to deduct part of what they spend at restaurants.

"What seems at first like harmful new rules might actually benefit us," said Jaime Estrada Sámano, the finance director at Herring Impulsora SA, a venture that operates a number of Tony Roma restaurants.

Congressional tax reform includes:

- A decrease to 35 percent from 40 percent in the top personal income tax bracket. Lower rates should reduce the cost of complying with the law.
- Higher taxes on tobacco and on

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coverages that contain more than 20 percent alcohol.

- A 10 percent tax on cellphone service contracts and some other telecommunications services.
- A luxury tax of 20 percent.

Lawmakers praised this move as a way to squeeze more money out of the rich, but critics say expensive items are often bought in the United States where prices are lower. And, the list of luxury goods does not include such products as Louis Vuitton handbags and Mont Blanc fountain pens.

- A 5 percent tax on soft drinks made with high-fructose corn syrup — in addition to the 15 percent sales tax such beverages already carry.

Mexican officials have been trying to block imports of U.S. corn syrup for years in a bid to support struggling sugar mills. A new tax on corn syrup will encourage soft drink makers to use Mexican sugar.

Resistance from U.S. U.S. companies cried foul, and officials from both countries are expected to meet this week to prevent a trade row.

Mexico is the second-largest market for Coca-Cola Co. after the United States, and a huge market for PepsiCo Inc. And corn syrup is cheaper in soft-drink production, according to many bottlers.

Meanwhile, millions of Mexicans are hoping this measure won't further increase the cost of their beloved soft drinks.

"I'll keep buying soft drinks, but we'll drink less because we'll be paying as much in taxes as we would on alcohol," said Silvia Román Hernández, 42, who grows flowers for sale in Mexico City.

De la pagina 3

circulación de los Estados Unidos - no ha visto ningún aumento en sus ventas por anuncios de bienes raíces. El diario publica una sección semanal, Tu Casa, dirigida a informar a sus lectores sobre todos los aspectos de las bienes raíces.

Jiménez dice, "Se presume que los latinos no tienen dinero para la cuota inicial y que los ingresos familiares son bajos. Pero en muchas familias latinas, se unen varias familias para comprar un hogar. A nosotros no nos molesta vivir con familiares."

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Las Deudas Con La Pas En El Salvador

El gobierno del entonces presidente Alfredo Cristiani y la guerrilla del Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) firmaron hace 10 años el histórico Acuerdo de Chapultepec en la ciudad de México, con el que concluyeron 12 largos y trágicos años de guerra civil. A una década de distancia del acontecimiento, sus protagonistas principales coinciden que "aún quedan muchas cosas por hacer".

El propósito de las negociaciones auspiciadas por la Organización de Naciones Unidas (ONU) era sobre todo poner fin de manera urgente al enfrentamiento armado. Además, debía iniciarse un proceso de democratización, llegar a un respeto irrestricto de los derechos humanos y reconciliar consigo misma a la sociedad salvadoreña, martirizada con 75 mil muertos, ocho mil desaparecidos y decenas de miles de liados, tanto soldados como guerrilleros y población civil.

"Si hacemos una evaluación de los acuerdos podemos decir que en la terminación del enfrentamiento armado no hubo ningún problema. En cuanto a la democratización, tampoco hay dificultades, sin dejar de reconocer que la democracia es un proceso", explica el general retirado Mauricio Vargas, uno de los principales protagonistas de las negociaciones pacificadoras.

El militar, dedicado ahora a actividades empresariales, asegura también que se respetaron los derechos humanos, pero han quedado deudas con la reconciliación de la sociedad.

"Todavía existe una deuda con personas que desaparecieron, sean de un bando o de otro, de las que no se sabe dónde están enterradas. Tampoco hay reconocimiento de parte de los protagonistas de alguno de los hechos dramáticos", asevera Vargas.

El alto oficial fue encargado de negociar con la guerrilla la reforma del Ejército, que se centró en depurar al oficialismo violatorio de los derechos humanos, así como en reducir el número de tropas.

En su parte medular, el Ejército dejó de ser un ente político. Sin embargo, los organismos defensores de los derechos humanos estiman que en El Salvador impera la impunidad, ya que el Estado ha protegido a militares que ordenaron masacres, desapariciones y torturas, así como asesinatos que conmocionaron al mundo, como los de monseñor Oscar Arnulfo Romero y el de seis sacerdotes jesuitas, en 1980 y 1989, respectivamente.

No más dictadura. El ex comandante guerrillero Raúl Mijango, otrora uno de los más destacados jefes de campo de la insurgencia en la zona oriental salvadoreña, reconoce que el

Acuerdo de Chapultepec "rompió con el pasado histórico de la dictadura militar, que fue contra lo que nos alzamos en armas".

"La represión de los militares fue lo que nos forzó a la guerra. No había libertad para hablar de nuestros derechos ni para protestar. Cualquier manifestación era reprimida a balazos. Eso fue lo que provocó el alzamiento de todos nosotros, en su mayoría muy jóvenes", apunta el ex guerrillero, con su cabello ya surcado por las canas.

Mijango ha experimentado en sí mismo un cambio radical: en 12 años creó una de las más impresionantes fuerzas guerrilleras que luego de la firma de la paz tuvo que desmovilizar, además de destruir el armamento.

"Fue éste quizás el momento más difícil de nuestra lucha, pero tampoco era nuestra aspiración ser militares de por vida", dice Mijango de aquel "trago amargo".

"Después fui diputado del Parlamento durante tres años. Hoy estoy en un esfuerzo de renovación de la izquierda partidista y también he hecho lo que todos los salvadoreños honestos hacen para sobrevivir: he trabajado en múltiples cosas, como en una agencia de seguridad que fracasó", acepta sonriente.

Rebeldes y soldados. Ambos ex jefes militares, Vargas y Mijango, se han dado la mano en múltiples proyectos nacionales después de la paz. La creación de la nueva fuerza policial requirió en un principio de ex soldados y ex guerrilleros. Los proyectos de inserción económica y social para los desmovilizados de ambas fuerzas también les "significaron no pocos dolores de cabeza".

"A soldados y guerrilleros nos tocó participar en el desmido de nuestros campos. Compartimos

vicisitudes y riesgos; viajamos en los mismos helicópteros que anteriormente nos habían ametrallado, pero también tenemos en la conciencia que aquel pasado no debe regresar jamás a El Salvador", afirma Mijango.

Por otra parte, a la altura de los 10 años de pacificación, el sector de los desmovilizados, incluidos los liados de guerra tanto del Ejército como del FMLN, reclama todavía sus derechos a una buena atención médica y programas de reinserción a la vida civil y productiva.

Constantes son las manifestaciones que se tornan violentas de ex patrulleros (ex paramilitares) que reclaman indemnizaciones, mientras los liados claman por seguro médico negado.

"Antes éramos los héroes, hoy estamos abandonados en la sociedad", reconoce Jesús Avalos, el líder de una asociación de liados de la ex guerrilla.

No es poco lo que falta por hacer en esta nación centroamericana de 6.3 millones de habitantes, que ha expulsado a un cuarto de su población hacia el exterior en busca de trabajo y esperanzas.

La tasa enorme de pobreza de más de la mitad de la población, los altos índices de inequidad y de la delincuencia han convencido tanto a los ex jefes guerrilleros como a los del Ejército de que, "si se fue capaz de reformar el sistema político, también habría que refundar el sistema económico, a través de la incorporación de toda la sociedad al proceso reconstructor".

Respecto de los festejos por los 10 años de la firma de la paz en el país, el gobierno del actual presidente Francisco Flores ha decidido diferirlos para el mes de marzo debido a contingencias económicas que lo impiden por el momento.

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The City of Lubbock, TX (population 199,000) will be accepting applications for Police Officer positions on February 11, 2002 through April 5, 2002 from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Applications may be picked up at two locations: the Human Resources Department at 1825-13th Street, in Room 104, Monday - Friday. Or, at the front desk of the Lubbock Police Department, 1015 9th Street, Monday - Friday after 5:00 PM, and all day weekends. Applicants must be 21 years of age; and not have reached his/her 38th birthday at the time of entrance into the Police Academy, unless the applicant has five (5) years prior police or military experience, in which case the applicant must not have reached his/her 45th birthday at the time of entrance into the Police Academy. The Police Entrance Exam will be given on Friday, April 12, 2002 at the Lubbock Police Academy, Reese Technology Center at 508 Davis Drive at 8:00 AM. All applicants should plan to arrive at 7:30 AM. For more information please call 775-3073 or 1-800-621-0793. **The City of Lubbock is an Equal Opportunity Employer.**

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EL EDITOR