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"El respeto al derecho ajeno es la paz"

Lic. Benito Juarez

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México Vuelve a 'Ocupar' a Texas

Según cifras oficiales, alrededor de 23 millones de la actual población de EE.UU. es de origen mexicano, lo que representa un 8.2 por ciento de los 279 millones de ciudadanos estadounidenses. De esta cifra, 14 millones corresponden a norteamericanos descendientes de mexicanos, mientras que otros 8.3 millones son ciudadanos mexicanos radicados en esa nación, incluyendo a unos 3 millones de indocumentados, según el informe "Migración México-EE.UU. 2001" del Consejo Nacional de Población (Conapo).

La mayoría se concentra en los estados fronterizos, como California, Texas, Arizona y Nuevo México, los mismos que perdió este país latinoamericano cuando el presidente Antonio López de Santa Ana firmó el acuerdo que puso fin a la invasión y la guerra, en 1848, y

México - Poco más de un siglo y medio después de la invasión de México por Estados Unidos, que culminó con la anexión de Texas, los mexicanos están pagando con la misma moneda y han vuelto a "ocupar", aunque con métodos menos violentos y otras motivaciones, los territorios que antes les pertenecían.

mediante el cual cedió 2.5 millones de kilómetros cuadrados del territorio nacional.

De hecho, casi el 90 por ciento de los mexicanos que vive en EE.UU. lo hace en estos estados, donde junto con el resto de los hispanos constituyen cerca de un tercio de la población total. La "recuperación" de los territorios perdidos ha sido lenta pero segura y el número de emigrantes crece cada año. En la década de los sesenta, se

afincaron en la "tierra de las oportunidades" unos 290,000 mexicanos, mientras que en los noventa esta cifra se multiplicó por diez, alcanzando los tres millones.

Sólo durante el sexenio del presidente Vicente Fox (2000-2006) se prevé que unos dos millones de mexicanos se trasladarán a EE.UU., a razón de unos 380,000 por año. Las proyecciones más conservadoras permiten vislumbrar que en sólo 13 años más la población de origen mexicano en Estados

Unidos alcanzará los 27 millones, mientras que para 2030 podría llegar a cerca de 33 millones. "El fenómeno de la migración mexicana, por sus propias características, ha adquirido un poderoso momento que lo hace muy difícil de detener", afirma el estudio de Conapo. La mayoría son hombres jóvenes y adultos de entre 15 y 44 años, casados, con al menos tres hijos y escasa educación.

El flujo migratorio comenzó como una búsqueda de mejores expectativas económicas en un país más desarrollado, lo que llevó a los mexicanos a ofrecerse como mano de obra barata principalmente en trabajos del campo, los servicios o la industria (obreros). Sin embargo, en los últimos años esta situación ha cambiado y cada vez son más los profesionales que escapan

hacia el país del norte en busca de mejores oportunidades. "Existe un tipo de desplazamiento casi invisible y del cual se sabe muy poco: es el de los mexicanos residentes en Estados Unidos que cuentan con niveles de escolaridad equivalentes a licenciatura o posgrado, quienes suman 255,000 personas", afirma el documento de Conapo.

Esta cifra representa a uno de cada 25 inmigrantes mexicanos de más de 20 años en ese país y refleja una creciente "fuga de cerebros" debido a las

"bajas remuneraciones y las oportunidades laborales insuficientes en la nación". El informe de Conapo destaca que la población de origen mexicano en el país del norte se ha convertido en una pieza clave de su desarrollo económico: constituyen una mano de obra más barata que los estadounidenses, no los desplazan de sus trabajos y, además, pagan impuestos.

Asimismo, se han transformado en una fuerza política con una creciente

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Texas Mural Depicts Mexican American Life

More than a century after the U.S. invasion of Mexico that resulted in the annexation of Texas, Mexicans are "reoccupying" the territory, but through less violent means and for different reasons.

According to official figures, 23 million people currently residing in the United States are of Mexican ancestry, representing 8.2 percent of the country's population.

Some 14 million of these people are U.S. citizens of Mexican descent and another 8.3 million are Mexican citizens residing in the United States, including three million undocumented immigrants, according to a report by Mexico's National Council on Population (Conapo).

Most of these immigrants live in border states like California, Texas, Arizona and New Mexico, the same ones Mexico lost when President Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna signed an agreement to end the U.S. invasion in 1848 by ceding 2.5 million square kilometers of Mexican territory to the United States.

Nearly 90 percent of Mexicans residing in the United States live in those states, where - together with other Hispanics - they make up nearly one-third of the total population.

The "reoccupation" of this territory has been slow but steady, and the number of immigrants is growing every year.

Some 290,000 Mexicans came to "the land of opportunity" during the 1960s, and that number increased tenfold during the 1990s, totaling three million.

It is predicted that during

President Vicente Fox's six years in office (2000-2006), two million Mexicans will enter the United States at the rate of approximately 380,000 per year.

The most conservative estimates indicate that in 13 years, the number of people of Mexican ancestry residing in the United States will total 27 million, while the figure might reach nearly 33 million by 2030.

In the words of the Conapo study, the "phenomenon of Mexican immigration has gathered a momentum that makes it very difficult to stop."

The majority of Mexican immigrants are men between the ages of 15 and 44, married - with at least three children - and having little education.

The flood of immigrants began as a search for better economic opportunities, which led Mexicans to accept low-paying jobs in the agricultural, service and industrial sectors. But this situation has changed over the past few years, and more Mexican professionals are moving north in search of better opportunities.

"There is an almost invisible movement about which very little is known, that of the 255,000 Mexicans residing in the United States who have bachelor's and graduate degrees," Conapo added.

That represents one of every 25 Mexican immigrants over the age of 20 living in the United States and reflects a growing "brain drain" caused by "low salaries and insufficient employment opportunities in Mexico," the report said.

Will Bush Appoint First Hispanic Supreme Court Judge

When Texas State Sen. David Sibley was curious about the thinking inside then-Gov. George W. Bush's administration a few years ago, he would try to corner Alberto Gonzales, the governor's lawyer.

"We good ol' boys 'ping' for information," says Sibley, a Republican from Waco, comparing his pursuit to using sonar. When a "ping" hits a target, it returns an echo - or in Sibley's case, a clue as to which way the political winds are blowing.

"But with Al, you'd ping and nothing would come back," Sibley says. "I'd say, 'Wow, Bush was really mad at that guy.' Al would say, 'Oh.' Or I'd say, 'I'm thinking of adding this to a bill,' and he'd say, 'Ah.'"

For Gonzales, now the White House counsel, the road to Washington was paved with discretion and loyalty to the man who would be president. As counsel to the governor, as Texas secretary of state and as a Texas Supreme Court justice - jobs given to him by Bush - Gonzales was cautious and had a knack for avoiding partisan conflicts. Those traits, along with his ties to Bush, helped land him on an informal GOP list of potential U.S.

Supreme Court nominees even before he got here last year.

Now, White House sources and legal analysts say, Gonzales has emerged as a front-runner for a future Supreme Court nomination in an administration that is interested in appointing the nation's first Hispanic justice.

Gonzales' stock is up, the sources say, because in defending White House policies he has become an increasingly bold political player, impressing many influential Republicans who had questioned his conservative credentials.

"A lot of people thought, 'Who is this Gonzales guy? He's going to come to Washington and Washington will chew him up,'" says Charles Cooper, an assistant attorney general under President Reagan. "But he has done a great job with Bush's very conservative outlook."

But Gonzales' actions also have led him into conflicts with Senate Democrats who oversee judicial nominations - and who could play key roles in any confirmation for a Supreme Court nominee. It's all added a new plot line to the never-ending speculation here about when there might be an opening on the court and how Bush might change the court.



If given a chance, would President Bush nominate Alberto Gonzales as the first Latino to sit on the Supreme Court? He well might, but would he be confirmed?

Bush's voice on the law Since becoming White House counsel last year, Gonzales:

* Has annoyed Senate Democrats, who say he has given little ground in the White House's campaign to stock federal appeals and trial courts with conservatives who could influence the law for years to come. He also ended a half-century White House tradition of using the American Bar Association to screen nominees. (Republicans had long accused the ABA of being too liberal.)

* Has been a key promoter of Bush's anti-terrorism agenda, staunchly defending plans to use military tribunals to try foreign terrorism suspects. He crafted the legal rationale limiting the rights of al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters held in Cuba by classifying them as battlefield detainees, rather than prisoners of war.

* Became the point man for the administration's vigorous efforts to keep information secret and preserve presidential prerogatives.

That has included backing Vice President Cheney in his clash with the General Accounting Office. Cheney has refused to turn over records of meetings from a task force that devised national energy policy. At issue is the extent to which the policy was shaped by energy executives, among them some from troubled Enron Corp.

Gonzales also has surrounded himself with ideologically conservative lawyers who have been active in GOP causes. Among them: deputy counsel Timothy Flanigan, who clerked for former U.S. chief justice Warren Burger and was an assistant attorney general in the first Bush administration.

Such moves have won Gonzales

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Mexicans in U.S. Push Fox for Vote

A delegation of Mexicans living in the United States is in Mexico City this week pressing for the right of as many as 8 million Mexicans to vote from abroad in upcoming elections in their native country.

Should they gain that right, there would be profound political consequences in Mexico and the United States, analysts say.

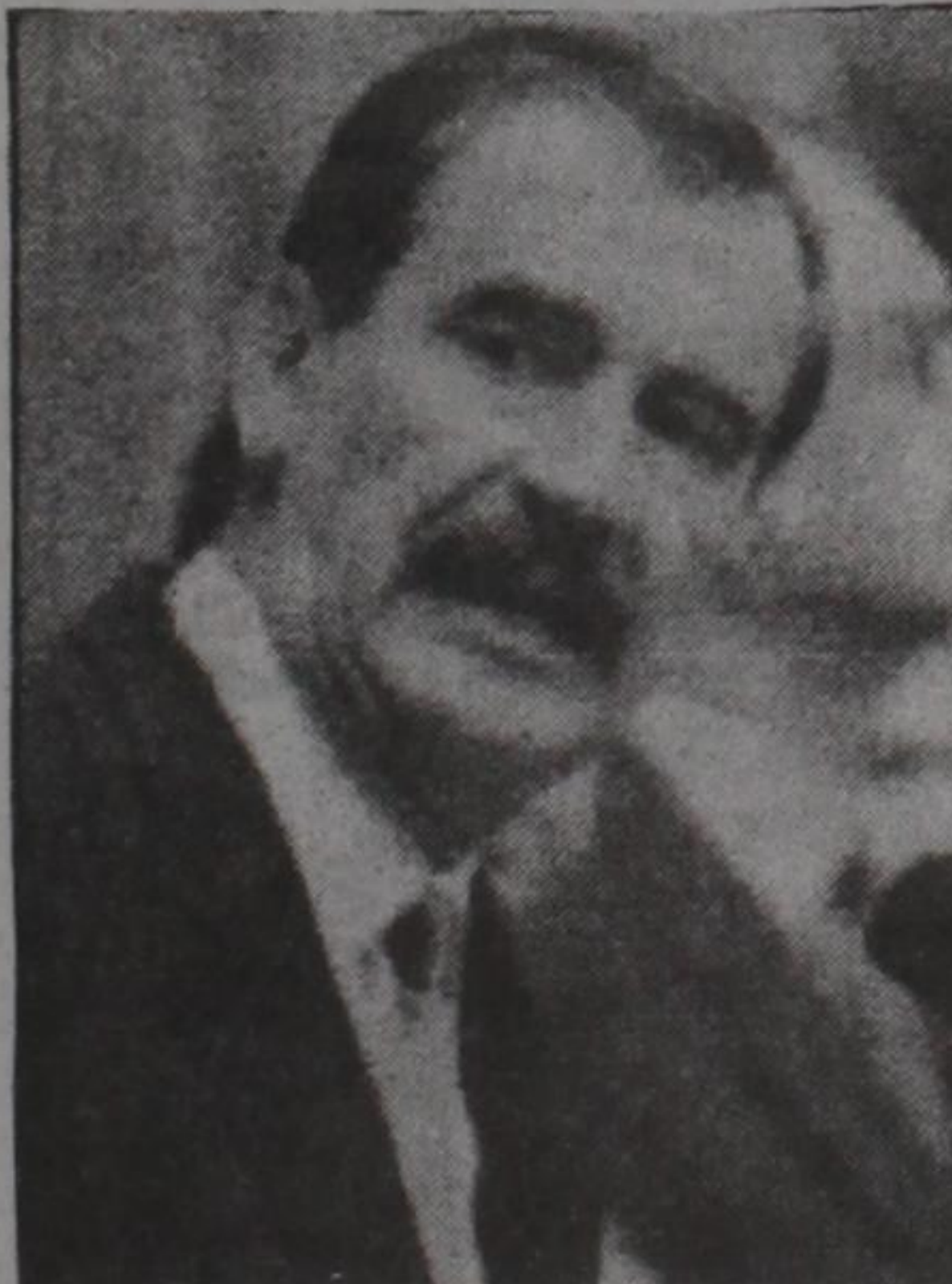
During their visit, which began Wednesday and ends Friday, representatives of Dallas-based political and social organizations are expected to use their growing political muscle to press Mexican President Vicente Fox, the Mexican Congress and federal elections officials for a green light.

Trip organizers timed the visit to coincide with the Mexican Congress' spring session, which begins this week.

The unprecedented lobbying trip highlights a decades-long effort. The campaign has often pitted the interests of recent Mexican immigrants in the United States against those of long-established Mexican-Americans. It's also raised the ire of anti-immigrant groups, who question the "conflicted loyalties" of immigrants.

But for immigrants such as Luis de la Garza of Dallas, the right to vote has little to do with "conflicted loyalties."

Rather, he said, voting in Mexican elections reflects the political maturity and economic



clout of immigrants, who annually send home nearly \$10 billion in remittances. Many immigrants own property and businesses and retain deep ties to relatives in Mexico, even as they live and work in the United States.

The United States and Mexico are like estranged parents, said Mr. de la Garza, and Mexican immigrants are their children.

"We are the children of divorced parents, Mexico and the United States. Who are we more loyal to? Who do we love more? We love them both," said Mr. de la Garza. "We are committed to both. These two countries represent our parents." Mr. de la Garza is part of the pro-vote delegation.

Ninety-three countries grant their citizens the right to vote from abroad. An estimated 20 million

immigrants living in the United States are eligible for dual citizenship, which often includes the right to vote in presidential and congressional elections.

Last weekend, for example, thousands of the 2 million Colombians who live in Florida, New York and Maryland thronged to 11 consulates in the United States to vote in legislative elections back home.

PR I opposition Until recently, the biggest obstacle to immigrant voting was the Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI. Members of the party, which ruled Mexico for more than 70 years, generally believed that anyone who left Mexico probably would vote for the opposition.

But that position has eroded over the years. Today, the three main political parties in Mexico and the country's election officials do not oppose the vote from abroad. But none of the parties has taken the lead in granting immigrants the right to vote.

Now that Mr. Fox is Mexico's first president elected from an opposition party in seven decades, there are some migrant-vote supporters who question his desire to allow immediate balloting for immigrants, allowing them to vote in next year's Mexican congressional elections.

"Allowing the vote now could backfire for Mr. Fox and his party,"

said Juan Manuel Sandoval, a Chicano studies professor at the Autonomous National University of Mexico. "I can understand. [Mr. Fox] already faces an opposition majority in Congress, and he would not want to allow migrants abroad to vote for even more opposition members."

But by timing a vote by Mexicans abroad for the next presidential election, in 2006, Mr. Fox could claim credit for expanded voter rolls and thus help his party's candidate, Mr. Sandoval said.

The Fox administration denies any such political manipulation. One official said Mr. Fox has long supported the vote and even made it a campaign issue.

The trouble, Mexican officials say, is figuring out how to collect ballots from the millions of immigrants who would qualify to vote. They fear that the election would turn into a logistical nightmare for U.S. and Mexican officials.

The Washington-based Center for Immigration Studies recently noted that 17 Latin American nations allow dual citizenship, compared with four in 1990. Mexicans make up more than one-fourth of foreign-born U.S. residents, according to the Census Bureau.

Moreover, anti-immigrant groups have traditionally singled out Latino immigrants as reluctant to assimilate. Allowing immigrants to

vote in elections back home would make them even less inclined to assimilate, leaders say.

An even tougher issue is the view among established Hispanics that splitting the loyalties of Mexican immigrants is a threat to their growing political clout in the United States.

At a time when Hispanic voter turnout is rising, encouraging immigrants to vote for candidates in another country "dilutes our political power and raises questions of loyalties," says Maria Echaveste, former deputy chief of staff in the Clinton White House.

"Patriotism is the missing link, the 800-pound gorilla, in discussions of American national identity and integration," said Stanley Renshon, a professor of political science at the City University of New York. "No country, and especially no democracy, can afford to have large numbers of citizens with shallow civic and national attachments."

Keeping passports But Peter Spiro, a professor of law at Hofstra University, countered that dual citizenship actually encourages naturalization. Immigrants are more likely to become U.S. citizens if they can keep their old passports.

"We would all abhor a rule under which we were not allowed to join other civic forms of association," Mr. Spiro said. "A rule against dual citizenship is that kind of

rule." Pro-vote immigrants say globalization has sparked a boom in dual nationalities. Unlike their predecessors from European countries, Mexican immigrants don't have oceans that separate them. Rather, they contend with a border blurred by airplanes, cellphones and the Internet.

Tereso Ortiz, president of Casa Guanajuato in Dallas, an association of immigrants, said that two years ago his lobbying among his compatriots in his tiny hometown of Ocampo, Guanajuato, garnered more than 50 voters for Mr. Fox in his bid for the presidency.

"Am I for the right to vote? One hundred percent," he said. "We have a responsibility not just to help this country with our work and sweat, but also our old country by helping influence and guide its future there."

Have a Safe and Happy Easter

Hispanic Judges Still in Short Supply

By Arlene Martinez

Latino judges remain, badly underrepresented at the state, and federal levels, with New York among the worst offenders, a report released March 18 by the Puerto Rico Legal Defense and Education Fund has found.

Based on data from the year 2000, Hispanics hold 3.7 percent of judgeships at the federal level and 3.8 percent at the state level, according to "Opening the Courthouse Doors: The Need for More Hispanic Judges."

But, the report states, it is not solely increased numbers of Latino judges that count. They need to have an understanding of the culture and be involved with the community, too. "Besides being qualified -- having experience, ethics, temperament -- if someone is going to appoint someone who is the first Latino, whether at the Supreme Court level or at the state level, that person should have a real connection with the Hispanic community," says Angelo Falcón, senior policy executive for PRLDEF. Membership in Latino-based organizations or community involvement is key, he adds.

Hispanics and blacks are forced to deal with the justice system more often than individuals of other groups, both as suspects and victims of crime. Hispanics were

victims at a rate of 35.3 per 1,000 citizens, compared to a 32.7 victim rate for whites. There were 310,400 Hispanics incarcerated in 2000, according to the Justice Department. That's 16 percent of the total prison population. Latinos constitute 11 percent of the U.S. adult population.

"We want our federal judiciary to look like our country," Hispanic National Bar Association President Angel Gómez says. "It's necessary for confidence in our judicial system to have peers on the bench, on juries. We need a diverse pool of judges so they can address a wide array of issues."

There were 665 Latino federal and state judges in 1990. A decade later, that number had risen substantially to 1,029. But still, Latinos held only 31 life-tenured federal posts, 3.7 percent of the total 835 authorized full-time active federal judges in 2000.

Thirty-seven states and seven of 11 circuits have no Hispanic federal judge. Texas leads the country with 10 Latino federal judges, having added two from 1990 to 2000. In contrast, five of California's 69 federal judges are Latino, despite the fact that a third of its population is Hispanic.

Latinos held 998 of 26,196 state judgeships in 2000, a boost from

644 in 1990. More than 90 percent were in the lower-level trial courts.

New Mexico Attorney General Patricia Madrid became that state's first female judge elected to the district court in 1978.

"Judicial positions are very powerful in this country," she says, noting, "You can't exclude Hispanics from the panels that select (judicial) candidates for appointments."

Under both Republican and Democratic rule at the federal level, gains have been made. Democrats appointed Latino judges at a higher rate over the last 20 years (6.2 percent under President Jimmy Carter to 6.3 percent under Bill Clinton), but Republicans made more substantial gains (from 0.9 percent under President Richard Nixon to 4.2 percent under George Bush).

The report makes the point that service in the federal judiciary can be a pipeline into the U.S. Supreme Court. Of the nine current Supreme Court justices, seven served in federal circuit positions. No members are Hispanic.

With the possibility of a Supreme Court seat opening up during George W. Bush's presidency, the HNBA has developed a list of 60 qualified candidates for the White House to consider. "There are more

than 35,000 Latino attorneys," Gómez says. "The list is to counter the argument that there aren't qualified Latino judges."

Of states with the highest Latino populations, New York has the worst Latino appointment record. Of 3,505 state judges, 56 (1.6 percent) are Latino. In Brooklyn, with a 19.8 percent Latino population, two of 28 civil court judges are Latino.

Sergio Gutiérrez, appointed in January to the Idaho Court of Appeals, the state's second-highest court, says the process to involve more Latinos in judgeships needs to start with recruitment into law school. Working with young Latino attorneys to develop plans and strategies if they are interested in becoming judges is important.

Judicial appointments, Falcón notes, are largely a political process, and Latinos haven't been able to translate numbers into political representation.

"Pressure has to be put on presidents, governors, senators. If you're courting the Latino vote, how are you going to deliver? One way is by doing concrete things, like appointing Latinos," he concludes.

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In Texas Politics, "Familia" Doesn't Count

By Marisa Treviño

It's a concept long synonymous with Latinos. From the time we are born, the importance of familia is drilled into us until it becomes second nature to feel that unspoken bond with not just our brothers, sisters, cousins, aunts and uncles, but also our friends, neighbors and anyone we meet who shares the Latino birthright.

The bond among Latinos is as strong as the Marines' motto "Semper Fidelis."

Or it used to be. Nowadays, as we gain more clout and move into mainstream society, some Latino political leaders are redefining what familia means. The most notable example here in Texas is the endorsement by almost every high-profile Latino politician of Democratic Senate hopeful Ron Kirk over Victor Morales in the state's April 9 primary runoff.

Those individuals include former San Antonio mayor and HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros, as well as Silvestre Reyes, chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. All five of the state's Democratic Latino incumbents in Congress lined up publicly in support of Kirk immediately after the state's March primary, in which Kirk and Morales finished in a virtual dead heat. Each drew a third of the vote.

It would be easy to justify their action if Morales was an undesirable candidate. But he's not. A maverick, yes. Undesirable, no. Six years ago, running against the wishes of his party, he upset its candidate of choice in the primary, conducting a statewide campaign from the back of his pickup against well-financed, 12-year Republican incumbent Phil Gramm. With no serious support from his own party, Morales drew a startling 44 percent of the vote. In this year's primary, Morales' campaign was more of the same. Fighting the Democratic establishment every mile of the way, this Latino version of "Mr. Smith" crisscrossed the vast state in his little white truck, trying to convince voters that they should send him to Washington.

What Victor Morales lacks in political polish and campaign funds, he more than makes up for with his ganas. During the week he lives the "common citizen" kind of life, teaching world geography to high school students in the north Texas town of Kemp. He has to limit his campaigning to weekends. Although the endorsement carries no great political weight, 95 percent of his students list him as one of the people they most admire, according to a Teen Leadership instructor there.

Even U.S. Rep. Charlie González of San Antonio, whose father, former congressman Henry B., was one of the first Latinos to challenge the system, admits that he is a "great admirer" of what Morales has done. A populist who first ran for state office in 1960, Henry B. wore the "maverick" label with pride. Like Morales, he was a teacher before plunging into politics. He taught citizenship and English in San Antonio night school.

Charlie González and the others say their decision to back Kirk translates into a dream Democratic ticket. Kirk, the first African American-elected mayor of a major Texas city, served two terms in Dallas's City Hall and a stint in Austin as secretary of state. Add gubernatorial candidate Tony Sánchez of Laredo, who lacks political experience but is a multimillionaire, and moderate white John Sharp for lieutenant governor, a position he almost won six years ago -- and Lone Star Democratic strategists feel they have a perfect slate for a sweep. At present, all three offices are held by Republicans.

Would Morales' candidacy hurt Sánchez's shot at the governor's mansion? Would white voters in the still-conservative state be disinclined to place X's next to the names of two Latinos? Respecting the familia tradition could be political suicide, some Latino powers fear.

So it's a poor man out. In truth, either Morales or Kirk would likely represent all the people of Texas very well. But for a state -- now one-third Latino -- that has long given short shrift to the health, educational and other basic needs of poor Latinos, is it too much to ask to have two Latinos at the top of the ticket in November? Our own Latin political leaders say yes, it is. At present, not one Latino serves in the 100-member United States Senate.

Should Texas' Latino leaders gang up on one of their own people and deny, for reasons of political expediency, a state constituency of 10 million Hispanics and a national population of 40 million Hispanics the hope of breaking into that club? Having a Latino running for the U.S. Senate speaks beyond finding the "most electable" Democratic ticket.

It speaks to the common belief all generations in our Latino communities hold on to -- empowerment, to move beyond a lengthy legacy of discrimination, exclusion and, too often, outright oppression. Inspired by the late farm labor leader César Chávez, Latinos still share the belief that Sí, Se Puede.

If we don't have faith in one another, who will have faith in us?

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Faltan Todavía Jueces Hispanos

Por Arlene Martinez

A nivel estatal y federal están muy mal representados aún los jueces hispanos, y entre los más culpables está Nueva York, encontró un informe emitido el 18 de marzo por el Fondo Puertorriqueño de Defensa Legal y Educación.

En base a datos recopilados en el año 2000, los hispanos tienen 3.7 por ciento de la judicatura a nivel federal y 3.8 por ciento a nivel estatal, según el documento "Opening the Courthouse Doors: The Need for More Hispanic Judges".

Con todo, declara el informe, no sólo hace falta incrementar el número de jueces latinos. Deben además tener conocimiento de la cultura y estar involucrados con la comunidad.

"Además de tener las calificaciones -- la experiencia, la ética, el temperamento -- si se nominara al que fuera el primer latino, sea a nivel de la corte suprema o al nivel del estado, la persona tendría que tener una verdadera conexión con la comunidad hispana", dice Angelo Falcón, ejecutivo principal para políticas del Fondo Puertorriqueño. Ser miembro de organizaciones fundamentalmente latinas o estar involucrado con la comunidad es clave, añade.

Los hispanos y los negros se ven forzados a lidiar con el sistema judicial con mayor frecuencia que individuos de otros grupos, tanto como acusados como víctimas de crímenes. Los hispanos fueron víctimas a un nivel de 353 por 1,000 ciudadanos, en comparación con la tasa de víctimas de 32.7 para los blancos. Fueron encarcelados 310,400 hispanos en el 2000, según informa el Departamento de Justicia. La cifra comprende un 16 por ciento del total de la población encarcelada.

Los latinos comprenden 11 por ciento del total de la población adulta estadounidense. "Queremos que el sistema judicial refleje el país", dice Angel Gómez, presidente de la asociación nacional del colegio de abogados hispanos. "Para tener confianza en el sistema judicial, es necesario que tengamos a nuestros pares como jueces, como el jurado. Nos hace falta un grupo diverso de jueces que se dirija a una amplia variedad de asuntos."

En 1990 hubo 665 jueces latinos federales y estatales. Después de una década, el número había incrementado bastante, a 1,029. Aún así, los latinos sólo contaban con 31 puestos federales vitalicios, 3.7 por ciento del total de 835 jueces federales autorizados activos a tiempo completo en el 2000.

Treinta y siete estados y siete de 11 tribunales de circuito carecen de un juez federal hispano. De los estados con más jueces latinos, Texas es el primero del país, con 10 jueces federales latinos, ya que añadió a dos entre 1990 y 2000. Como contraste, cinco de los 69

jueces federales de California son latinos, a pesar del hecho de que un tercio de su población es latino.

Los latinos tuvieron 998 de 26,196 judicaturas estatales en 2000, un aumento de 644 en 1990. Más del 90 por ciento estuvo en tribunales menores de litigación. Fiscal estatal de Nuevo México, Patricia Madrid fue la primera mujer en ser juez elegida al tribunal municipal en 1978.

"Los puestos judiciales son muy poderosos en este país", dice, al notar que "No se puede excluir a los hispanos de las listas para seleccionar candidatos (judiciales) para los nombramientos".

Se ha avanzado bajo los regimenes tanto republicano como demócrata a nivel federal. Los demócratas nombraron a más jueces latinos durante los últimos veinte años (6.2 por ciento con el presidente Jimmy Carter a 6.3 por ciento con Bill Clinton), pero los republicanos han avanzado más (de 0.9 por ciento con el presidente Richard Nixon a 4.2 por ciento con George Bush).

El informe señala que servir en el sistema judicial federal puede llevar a la corte suprema estadounidense. De los nueve jueces actuales de la corte suprema, siete han servido en puestos de tribunales de circuito federales. Ninguno es hispano.

Dada la posibilidad de aparecer una posición en la corte suprema durante la presidencia de George W. Bush, el colegio de abogados hispanos ha recopilado una lista de 60 candidatos calificados para la consideración de la Casa Blanca.

"Hay más de 35,000 abogados latinos", dice Gómez. "La lista sirve para contrarrestar el argumento que postula que no hay jueces latinos calificados".

De los estados de mayor población latina, Nueva York es el peor en hacer nombramientos de latinos. De 3,505 jueces estatales, 56 (1.6 por ciento) son latinos. En Brooklyn con una población latina del 19.8 por ciento, dos de los 28 jueces del tribunal civil son latinos. Sergio Gutiérrez, nombrado en enero a la corte de apelación de Idaho, segunda en todo el estado, dice que el proceso para hacer que más latinos participen en la judicatura debe comenzar con el reclutamiento desde la escuela de derecho. Es importante trabajar con abogados jóvenes latinos para desarrollar planes y estrategias si están interesados en ser jueces.

Los nombramientos judiciales, señala Falcón, son un proceso mayormente político, y los latinos no han podido convertir los números en representación política. "Hay que presionar a los presidentes, gobernadores, senadores. Si cortejan el voto latino, ¿qué vamos a recibir a cambio? Una posibilidad es hacer algo concreto, como nombrar a latinos", concluye.

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Para la Política en Texas, La Familia no Cuenta

Por Marisa Treviño

Es un concepto hace mucho tiempo asociado con los latinos. Desde que nacemos, se nos inculca la importancia de la familia hasta volverse segunda naturaleza sentir tácitamente la unión no sólo con nuestros hermanos, primos, y tíos, sino también con nuestros amigos, vecinos y quiénes separamos comparten el derecho de llamarse latino.

El vínculo entre latinos es tan fuerte como el lema de la infantería de marina "Semper fidelis". O lo era.

Hoy en día, al adquirir mayor influencia y entrar en el ámbito general de la sociedad, algunos líderes políticos latinos quieren redefinir lo que significa la familia.

El ejemplo más notable aquí en Texas es el apoyo brindado por casi cada uno de los políticos latinos de alto perfil, a Ron Kirk y no a Victor Morales, los dos lanzándose al escaño de senador demócrata en la segunda vuelta electoral demócrata del estado el 9 de abril.

Los que apoyan a Kirk incluyen el antiguo alcalde de San Antonio y secretario del Departamento de Vivienda Henry Cisneros y Silvestre Reyes, jefe del Grupo de Congresistas Hispanos. Los cinco demócratas latinos de Texas actualmente en el congreso se aliaron públicamente para apoyar a Kirk inmediatamente después de la primaria electoral de Texas en marzo, en la que Kirk y Morales acabaron prácticamente empatados. Cada uno recibió un tercio del voto.

Sería fácil justificar su apoyo si Morales fuera un candidato indeseable. Pero no lo es. Será inconformista, pero no es indeseable. Hace seis años, en oposición a los deseos de su partido, ganó por mucho al candidato preferido en la primaria electoral, al hacer campaña por todo el estado desde su camioneta pick-up contra el candidato establecido desde hace 12 años, bien financiado, Phil Gramm. Sin ningún apoyo importante de su propio partido, Morales sorprendió a todos saliendo con 44 por ciento del voto.

En la primaria electoral este año, la campaña de Morales no ha variado mucho. Luchando contra el establecimiento demócrata a diestra y siniestra, esta versión latina de "Mr. Smith (Goes to Washington)" cubrió el estado en su pequeña camioneta blanca, tratando de convencer a los electores que lo manden a él a Washington.

Lo que le falta a Victor Morales en brillo político y fondos para la campaña lo compensan tremendamente sus ganas. Durante la semana vive la vida del ciudadano de a pie, dictando cursos de geografía universal a estudiantes de secundaria en el pueblo de Kemp, al norte de Texas. Se ha visto obligado a limitar su campaña a los fines de semana. Aunque no valga nada políticamente, cuenta con el apoyo de 95 por ciento de sus estudiantes, que lo categorizan como una de las personas que más admiran, según un instructor de liderazgo adolescente en Crandall.

Incluso el representante Charlie González, de San Antonio, cuyo padre, antiguo congresista Henry B. González, fue uno de los primeros en retar al sistema, admite que admira mucho lo que ha hecho Morales. Henry B. González fue populista, lanzándose a un escaño estatal en 1960, y llevaba la etiqueta de "inconformista" con orgullo. Como Morales, fue maestro antes de entregarse a la política. Daba clases de oficia e inglés en una escuela nocturna de San Antonio.

Charlie González y otros dicen que su decisión de apoyar a Kirk convierte la lista de candidatos demócratas en un sueño realizado. Kirk, el primer africano-americano elegido a la alcaldía de una gran ciudad texana, completó dos términos en la municipalidad de Dallas y otro en Austin como secretaria de estado. Al añadir al candidato a gobernador, Tony Sánchez de Laredo, sin experiencia política pero multimillonario, y el moderado John Sharp, un blanco, como gobernador diputado, posición que casi ganó hace seis años -- los estrategas demócratas del estado creen que podrán barrer con la elección. Actualmente los tres puestos los ocupan republicanos.

¿Perjudicaría la candidatura de Morales las posibilidades de Sánchez? ¿Sentirían recelo los electores blancos del estado todavía conservador de marcar la tarjeta electoral junto a los nombres de dos latinos? El respetar la tradición de familia podría ser suicida políticamente, temen algunos poderes latinos. Que se quite el más pobre.

En realidad, tanto Morales como Kirk representaría muy bien todo Texas. Pero, ¿será demasiado pedir que el estado -- ahora un tercio latino -- y que hace mucho ha hecho caso omiso de la salud, la educación y otras necesidades básicas de la población pobre latina, tenga dos candidatos a puestos políticos importantes en noviembre?

Los mismos líderes latinos dicen que sí. Hoy no hay ni un representante latino en el senado de los Estados Unidos. ¿Es necesario que los líderes latinos de Texas se unan contra uno de los suyos y les nieguen, por razones de conveniencia, al electorado estatal de 10 millones de hispanos y a una población nacional de 40 millones de hispanos, la esperanza de ser miembros de ese club?

Que un latino se lance como candidato al senado de los Estados Unidos va más allá de formular la lista de candidatos con mayores posibilidades para los demócratas. Va hacia lo que todas las generaciones de nuestras comunidades latinas creemos -- fortalecernos, y prescindir de una larga historia de discriminación, exclusión, y con demasiada frecuencia, opresión abietta.

Inspirados por el difunto líder laboral César Chávez, los latinos creen todavía que sí, se puede. Si no creemos en nosotros mismos, ¿quién va a creer en nosotros? (c) 2002, Hispanic Link News Service. Distribuido por Los Angeles Times Syndicate International, una división de Tribune Media Services.

Will PRI Stand In the Way of Mexican's Living Abroad

The Mexican government on Thursday launched a new Binational Commission on Voting Abroad, reiterating its commitment to give the vote to Mexican expatriates by the 2006 presidential election.

Juan Hernandez, director of President Vicente Fox's Office of Mexicans Abroad, said his department will establish a task force of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans to put together a proposal for a foreign voting system.

"We need to find a way for Mexicans abroad to vote. They have the right to it," Hernandez said. "They're providing billions of dollars to this country, and they want to participate in their homeland."

The details for such a voting mechanism abroad still need to be

worked out, and they also would have to be approved by the Mexican Congress.

In 1996, Congress approved a law giving Mexicans living abroad the right to vote, but failed to create a system to carry out such voting.

The task force will consider options including a traditional balloting system administered by Mexican consulates, electronic voting booths, and voting by email, Hernandez said.

The 1996 law also is murky about who is eligible to vote. For example, it's unclear whether Mexicans who become foreign citizens may still cast ballots.

"Congress will have to decide," Hernandez said. "There are differences of opinion." Mexican activists in the United States hailed the administration's effort Thursday as a strong first step.

"We have a lot of Mexicans living abroad who are worried about their political participation, and the representation of immigrants in the government. We want a rapid solution to this," said Luis de la Garza, president of the Dallas-based National Council of Mexican Professionals and Businessmen.

The activists were in Mexico City for a three-day conference on the rights of Mexicans living abroad.

When Fox won the 2000 presidential election, ending 71 years of rule by the Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, he pledged to make voting rights for Mexicans living abroad a top priority.

Many PRI officials had been reluctant to see Mexicans abroad voting because the expatriates tended to overwhelmingly support

other parties.

But now, Hernandez said, all of Mexico's major political parties have expressed interest in setting up a voting system abroad.

About 10 million Mexicans live in other countries - 8 million in the United States alone - and constitute about 14% of all Mexicans of voting age, according to the independent Federal Electoral Institute. Only about 1.5 million of them are registered voters.

But when the foreign voting system is put in place, it will not be difficult to get more Mexicans living abroad to register, Fernandez said.

"As soon as this is passed, everyone will know about it very quickly because of the great interest."

SPC Job Fair Set for April 2

South Plains College current and former students and businesses from throughout the South Plains area will be at SPC April 2 for an annual Job Fair on the Levelland campus.

The Job Fair is scheduled 10 a.m.-3 p.m. in the Sundown Room of the Student Center and is open to any current or former SPC student.

Companies and businesses representing the medical, law enforcement and other areas will be

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on hand to provide information about prospective employment with their firms, said Maria Lopez-Strong, SPC technical counselor who is coordinating the job fair.

Area residents who have attended any of SPC's locations are welcome to drop by and find out more information on employment available on the South Plains."

For more information, contact Lopez-Strong at 806-894-9611, ext. 2562.

Texas De La Pagina 1

influencia en tiempos en que el bipartidismo se traduce en resultados cada vez más estrechos. La migración es uno de los temas más importantes de la relación bilateral México-EE.UU. y fue abordado en la entrevista de los presidentes Vicente Fox y George W. Bush en el marco de la Conferencia sobre Financiación para el Desarrollo que se realizó la semana pasada en Monterrey (México), cerca de la frontera común.

Bush Faces Obstacles in Free-Trade

Full of free-trade promises overseas, President Bush (news - web sites) faces stubborn obstacles to keeping those pledges. Washington, he lamented to his Latin American friends, is a place where "people cannot get rid of old habits."

If his trade agenda remains an elusive goal, Bush did appear to succeed — over four grueling days in Mexico, Peru and El Salvador (news - web sites) — in assuring hemispheric allies that they have not been relegated to the back burner while he goes after al-Qaida terrorists.

Each president to share a stage with Bush testified that he heard him commit to tackling problems beyond terrorism.

Peru's Alejandro Toledo saluted his partnership with Bush in fighting drugs.

Vicente Fox (news - web sites) of Mexico celebrated that, on immigration, he and the president had "found an honest language which is also affectionate and respectful."

The message that Bush's agenda runs deeper than destroying the terrorist network behind the Sept. 11 attacks especially resonated in his participation in the U.N. poverty summit in Monterey, Mexico, Secretary of State Colin

Powell (news - web sites) said.

"We demonstrated to all of the attendees that America is committed not only to the campaign against terrorism in a military sense, but the campaign against poverty, the campaign against illiteracy and ignorance and the other problems that we have in the world," Powell said while returning to Washington aboard Air Force One on Sunday.

The president came into office last year declaring the Western Hemisphere his top foreign policy priority. Promises of special new immigration rules for Mexicans and progress on free trade, however, fell by the wayside after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon (news - web sites).

Even as he has systematically reclaimed his domestic agenda, Bush has been unable to muscle through the Senate the trade and immigration legislation he wants.

"Sometimes in Washington, D.C., people cannot get rid of old habits, which is petty politics ...," Bush told Flores. "But that's just what happens."

Democrats cited these failures over the weekend and said they prove that Bush's Latin American trip was nothing more than pandering to Latino voters at home.

In the weekly Democratic radio

address Saturday, Antonio Villaraigosa, speaker emeritus of the California State Assembly, faulted Bush for giving only "vague assurances" on the immigration issues that many Latinos care about. "Our community knows the difference between rhetoric and results. They know the difference between pandering and producing," he said.

White House press secretary Ari Fleischer (news - web sites) denounced those charges and said it's the Democratic-controlled Senate that has blocked results on immigration and trade. The Republican majority in the House has already approved Bush's

Andean trade preferences and legislation making it easier for illegal Mexican immigrants to get legal status.

But the enhanced negotiating authority Bush needs to make global trade deals squeaked through the House by only one vote, proving that Democrats aren't the sole obstacle his trade agenda confronts.

Flores, after waving goodbye to Air Force One, defended Bush and the lack of tangible results on the Central American free trade zone he's so far only talked about.

El Editor

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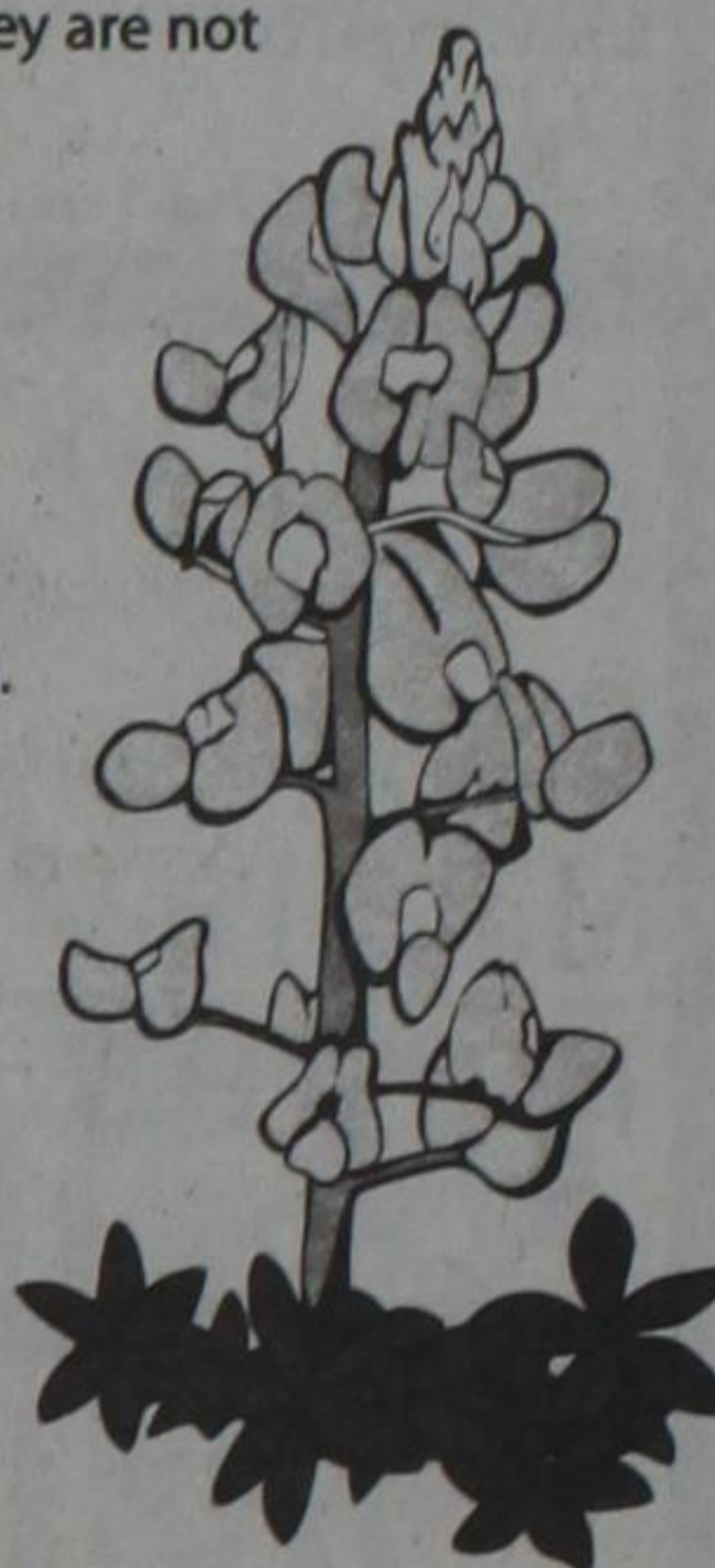
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Keeping an Eye on Texas

It's almost bluebonnet season

The first day of Spring is March 20. And if they are not doing so already, bluebonnets will soon be blooming all across Texas.

- "Bluebonnet" encompasses all six of the *Lupinus* species native to Texas and is the state flower.
- Depending on the weather, bluebonnets can bloom from late March through April.
- Although most bluebonnets are blue, other varieties exist in nature, such as maroon, white, lavender and pink.
- According to legend, pink bluebonnets were stained by the blood of Texas' defenders at the Alamo.
- Texas A&M researchers confirm that the only place in the state where the original wild pink bluebonnets were found was along side the road, just south of The Alamo in downtown San Antonio.



SOURCES: Carole Keeton Rylander, Texas Comptroller, and Texas A&M University. <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/plantanswers/flowers/blubonnet.html>

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Black Actors Reigned at Oscars, but will it have lasting impact on Hollywood?

Denzel Washington and Halle Berry made history with their Academy Award wins, but minority groups say diversity must extend beyond Hollywood's glamour night — and include other groups such as Asians, Hispanics and American Indians.

"What's historic about equality? Historic for me will be when all people of color are represented and are capable of garnering these awards," said Sonny Skyhawk, president of the advocacy group American Indians in Film.

Skyhawk, an actor who's appeared in "Young Guns II" and "Geronimo: An American Legend," joined other show-business minority leaders Monday in saying

the Oscars (news - web sites) and entertainment industry in general was overdue for broader racial representation.

Felix Sanchez, president of the National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts, was optimistic about the significance of the black victories for others.

"This is the new dynamic," he said. "I think we are going to see more and more success stories for minorities ... I hope this means (studios) are going to tap more writers with diverse stories and cast more actors that represent the true face of American diversity."

Some minority Oscar winners include Japanese-born Miyoshi Umeki for her supporting role in

1957's "Sayonara" and Cambodian native Haing S. Ngor in 1984's "The Killing Fields." Meanwhile, American Indian actor Graham Greene was nominated for his supporting role in 1990's "Dances With Wolves."

Chris Wang, an agent with Toronto-based Asian Action Talents management company, said he wants more producers to keep an open mind about casting Asians in roles they might otherwise give to whites.

"It's going to take a long time for Asian actors to get those roles. It's not going to change overnight," he said. "But we've seen a lot of changes, and it's getting a lot better for good performers in general."

behind the scenes as directors, writers and producers.

Washington, who received a supporting award for 1989's "Glory," won this year's Oscar for playing the flamboyantly corrupt cop in "Training Day," becoming the first black to named best actor since Sidney Poitier for 1963's "Lilies of the Field." Now that a trail has been blazed for blacks, he suggested, other minority actors now must struggle for more significant roles.

"I don't recall seeing any Asian Americans, women or men, being recognized and not too many Latin Americans," Washington said on NBC's "Today" show. "So there is still lot of work (to be done)."

Washington and Berry became the first black duo to take the top-acting honors, and Berry's win for "Monster's Ball" made her the first black woman in history to claim the best actress award.

Kweisi Mfume, president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (news - web sites), praised the Academy Awards but said more must be done to promote Hollywood diversity.

"If this is a sign that Hollywood is finally ready to give opportunity and judge performance based on skill and not on skin color, then it is a good thing," Mfume said. "However, if this proves to be a momentary flash in a long history of neglect, then Hollywood has failed to learn the real meaning of equality."

Other black actors predicted Berry's and Washington's wins could signal that studios are more comfortable giving prestige roles to minorities.

"It's one step at a time," said former "L.A. Law" co-star Blair Underwood. "There's no way that you can go back from the progress made tonight. That window has been opened."



The Academy Awards (news - web sites) have honored Hispanics several times, with Mexican-born Anthony Quinn winning two supporting actor prizes in the 1950s for "Viva Zapata!" and "Lust for Life."

Last year, Puerto Rican Benicio Del Toro took home the supporting actor trophy for "Traffic," and Rita Moreno, also Puerto Rican, received the supporting actress award in 1962 for "West Side Story."

This year, however, the Hispanic community lost a chance for an Oscar when Jennifer Connelly claimed the supporting actress award for playing Alicia Nash, the

wife of delusional mathematician John Nash in best-picture winner "A Beautiful Mind."

The real woman she portrayed was born in El Salvador (news - web sites), while Connelly was not.

"It's unfortunate they portray a real person and the ethnicity is not included," said Manny Alfaro, a New York stage performer and executive director of the Hispanic Organization of Latin Actors. "It hurts us who are working, coming up the pipeline."

Some organizations say minorities will have power in front of the camera only when there is more minority representation

EL EDITOR Los Mejor En Noticias!

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Intocable:

Norteña Bien Educada y De Vanguardia

El grupo Intocable se considera una de las agrupaciones más innovadoras dentro de la música regional norteña.

"No más canciones cantineras, al menos por parte nuestra", afirmó Ricardo "Ricky" Muñoz, director, cantante y acordeonista de la agrupación.

"Tradicionalmente, la música norteña ha utilizado mucho expresiones como: 'Me voy a emborrachar', y se enfoca insistentemente en quienes buscan olvidar sus penas de amor en los bares. Muchos artistas no se han esmerado en la buena calidad de las letras, ni en lo musical, y en Intocable no sucede eso. Nosotros tenemos como tema básico el amor, y seleccionamos con mucho cuidado lo que decimos en los discos", recalca.

"Por eso", afirma, "de alguna manera hemos contribuido a revolucionar el género musical norteño con nuestras propias propuestas".

Intocable, conjunto que ha obtenido durante dos años consecutivos el premio Lo Nuestro, está integrado por jóvenes de entre 26 y 29 años de edad, quienes se proclaman fanáticos del institucional Ramón Ayala, ganador el mes pasado de un codiciado premio Grammy.

"Al formarse Intocable, hace ocho años, en Zapata, Texas, lo teníamos y lo seguimos teniendo a él [Ayala], con su grupo Bravos del Norte, como ejemplo a seguir", señaló "Ricky" Muñoz. "A él le debo indirectamente que yo me haya convertido en acordeonista, y en lo personal le tengo una especial admiración a su forma de tocar ese instrumento".

El resto de Intocable, René Martínez, baterista; Sergio Serna, tumbas; Daniel Sánchez, segunda voz y bajo sexto; Félix Salinas, bajo eléctrico, y Juan Hernández,



que tiene su cargo las percusiones, concuerdan con Muñoz en cuanto a la admiración por Ayala.

En México

En estos momentos, el grupo se encuentra en México, con el doble objetivo de cumplir compromisos de trabajo y darle promoción a su nuevo disco sencillo con el tema El poder de tus manos, que según informaron "está en primer lugar de difusión en radios de éste género en ciudad de México".

Esa canción, precisamente, toca ampliamente el tema del amor: "Hay un raro poder que me cambia la vida/ cuando va todo mal y no encuentro salida./ Si me tocan tus manos me siento distinto,/me rescatas a diario si me siento perdido".

Evidentemente, esa buena repercusión que están teniendo en México demuestra que su propuesta le gusta al público...

Así lo estamos considerando. Es muy notable que, a pocos días de haber salido al mercado, el tema ya aparezca en el número uno en cuanto a difusión radial.

La canción forma parte del álbum Sueños, cuyo lanzamiento será el 9 de abril y que cuenta con 15 temas,

entre los cuales se anota Estás que te pelas, que en Estados Unidos se mantiene firme en los diversos listados de popularidad.

Se ha comentado que Intocable ha revolucionado en alguna forma la música norteña, ¿qué es lo que aporta el grupo que sea diferente de los demás?

Somos un conjunto de música fresca, novedosa, que le aplica un toque modernista al género norteño. Si bien la ofrecemos con la misma fórmula instrumental de todos los grupos de esa especialidad, como son: acordeón, bajo sexto, bajo eléctrico y la batería, creo que hemos aportado varios cambios en esa música, especialmente en los ritmos y en el contenido de las letras de las canciones de nuestro repertorio.

En cuanto a popularidad, ¿en qué sitio se considera Intocable, en comparación con los grupos competidores del momento?

Nosotros grabamos los temas y éstos van al público. La gente es la que pone a cada cual en el sitio que le corresponde. Podemos decir que se nos ha colocado en un buen lugar y estamos muy satisfechos y agradecidos con nuestros

seguidores. Gracias a ese apoyo hemos vendido más de un millón de unidades del disco Contigo, y con el siguiente, que fue Es para ti, ya vamos cerca de esa cifra en ventas. En general, hemos recibido varios Discos de Platino.

Ahora viene Sueños, octavo en nuestra discografía. Parece que será muy exitoso. Por nuestra parte, le estamos dando ya todo el apoyo para que se programe en la radio y se venda lo más que sea posible.

¿Intocable ya tiene su estilo definitivo o está aún en proceso de definirlo?

Lo importante para nosotros es que, al escucharse al grupo a través de la radio, la audiencia identifique desde las primeras notas musicales que se trata de Intocable. La verdad, considero que eso ya lo hemos logrado.

Ustedes han sufrido decesos de algunos compañeros, ¿qué efecto les ha causado eso en su música?

Dos elementos del conjunto fallecieron y también quien fungía como nuestro representante. Desde luego, eso fue algo que nos afectó sentimentalmente. Pero en lo que toca a los integrantes musicales, conseguimos a otros músicos también excelentes como ellos. Estamos siguiendo la misma línea anterior de Intocable.

Ustedes, que ya han saboreado triunfos discográficos, ¿a qué más aspiran como grupo musical?

Aspiramos a proseguir en el gusto del público, a seguir grabando discos y buscar algo que perdure, que deje huella dentro de la música popular.

Que cuando Intocable se acabe, y esperamos que dure muchos años más, haya podido dejar una importante página escrita en la historia de la música regional norteña, que sea imborrable.

La banda se presentará en Los Angeles el 10 de abril, en El Rodeo de Pico Rivera.

Lubbock Resident Named to Aerospace Scholars Program

Amanda Hinojosa, 20, from Lubbock is among 10 South Plains College students who have been named to the Community College Aerospace Scholars Program. Three hundred students will from community colleges statewide will participate in the project.

The sophomore math major will tour NASA's Johnson Space Center Sunday through Tuesday (March 24-26) in Houston and help design a robotic vehicle for potential use on Mars. The undertaking is sponsored by the Johnson Space Center and the state of Texas to spotlight math and engineering careers and introduce students to NASA.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime experience, one that can not be obtained in the classroom," said Jay Driver, associate professor of mathematics at SPC. "The SPC students applied and were selected for the project by our faculty," he added. "They must be interested in computer science, engineering, math or science and be willing to commit to a one-semester relationship with the Johnson Space Center."

"I was very excited about the possibility of going to NASA and was very pleased when I was informed I had been chosen," explained Hinojosa.

Her parents are Amado and Maricela Hinojosa from Anton. They will be divided into 10 teams. Each team will establish a

fictional company interested in Mars exploration; companies will prepare a line drawing and mock-up of a Mars rover, build a stand-alone rover and be responsible for the company's infrastructure, including budget, communications and final presentation.

They will learn more about careers in science and engineering as they interact with one another, said Driver.

The trip could be an eye-opener for Hinojosa. "I have had a great love for learning math and I am currently majoring in math and computer science. But I have been debating as to whether I should change my major from math to some type of engineering. I think this program will give me an opportunity to make that decision," she noted.

She is a dual student at both SPC and Texas Tech University, plans to earn a master's degree and teach at the community college level or find a place in industry where her skills can be put to use.

Other students from SPC who have been selected are Miguel Salazar from Sundown, Lubbock residents Christina Cook, Charles Couch, Andy Couch, Erika Nordstrom and Robert Nolen, Kyle Sisson from Plains, Jeana Booker from Higgins and Jeff Harlow from Levelland, formerly from San Antonio.

Serena Beats Hingis To Set Up Sibling Match vs. Venus

Serena Williams advanced to another sibling showdown by beating Martina Hingis 6-4, 6-0 Wednesday in the quarterfinals at the Nasdaq-100 Open.

Williams' opponent in the semifinals Thursday will be her older sister, second-seeded Venus Williams, who notched her 22nd consecutive victory at Key Biscayne on Tuesday, beating Elena Dementieva 5-7, 6-3, 6-2. Top-seeded Jennifer Capriati also



advanced Wednesday, beating Tatiana Panova 6-2, 6-0.

Venus has won five of the six previous matches against Serena. They'll meet for the first time since Venus beat Serena in last year's U.S. Open final.

"Tomorrow should be a great match," Serena said. "I'm looking forward to playing well, and I'm sure Venus is too."

Serena, seeded eighth, overpowered the No. 3-seeded

Hingis to take a 7-6 edge in their rivalry. Williams won the final seven games, losing only two points during one four-game stretch.

In men's play, top-seeded Lleyton Hewitt needed only 10 minutes to finish a rain-interrupted victory over American James Blake, 6-4, 6-1.

Hewitt led 3-1 in the second set Tuesday when the match was continued on page 6

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EMERGENCY PLANNING

FOR YOUR FAMILY

March is Project Impact S.A.F.E. at Home month. There are many ways to plan for your family's safety during an emergency, and the following fast facts are easy to clip and refer to as you make sure your family is safe.



TORNADOS

- Prepare a Family Emergency Kit and keep it handy.
- Know the difference between a WATCH and a WARNING.
- If a tornado warning is issued, take cover in the center part of the house in a small room such as a closet or bathroom.
- If you live in a mobile home, evacuate the structure even if it has a tie-down system.
- If you're caught in your car, leave it and seek shelter in a nearby substantial building or lie flat in a close ditch or ravine. Never try to outrun a tornado in your car.
- Purchase a NOAA weather radio if possible.

LIGHTNING STORMS

- If you're indoors during a lightning storm, don't handle electrical equipment or phones because lightning can follow the wires. Television sets are particularly dangerous at this time.
- Avoid the bathtub, water faucets and sinks because metal pipes can transmit electricity.
- Try to get into a building or a vehicle if you're outdoors.
- If no structure is available, get to an open space and squat as low to the ground as possible.
- Never stand underneath a single large tree in the open.
- If you feel your hair stand on end (an indication that lightning is about to strike) bend forward, putting your hands on your knees. Don't lie flat on the ground.
- Stay away from tall structures such as towers, trees, fences, phone lines or power lines.
- Stay away from natural lightning rods such as golf clubs, tractors, fishing rods, bicycles, metal bats or camping equipment.
- Avoid rivers, lakes or other bodies of water.

The interior of a car, truck or bus is relatively safe from lightning as long as you don't touch any metal on the inside.

FLOODS AND HIGH WATER

- As little as six inches of fast-moving water can knock you off your feet, and a small car can float in just one foot of water.
- Once a car is drowned out, you can be trapped inside if your electric windows and door locks short out when water reaches them.
- Never drive into rising water even if you think you know how deep it is.
- Never drive around a barrier—it's there to protect you. If your car stalls in rapidly rising water, abandon it immediately and move to higher ground.
- If you are home when a flash flood threatens, move your important papers and mementos to the highest point in the house.
- Turn off the power to the house and be prepared to ride out the storm with the items in your Family Emergency Kit.
- Find out if your home is in a Special Flood Hazard Area by calling your insurance agent or the City of Lubbock, 775-2331.
- If you live in a Special Flood Hazard Area, purchase flood insurance and flood-proof your home.
- Seek out ways to flood-proof your home if you live in a flood plain, and plan ahead by buying flood insurance.

IN YOUR HOME

- Make your street address or house numbers easy to see so emergency personnel can find your home quickly.
- Use outdoor lighting at night to make your home visible.
- Prepare a Family Emergency Kit and keep it handy. Stock it with food and water, first aid, emergency tools, personal hygiene items, prescription medicines and eyewear, flashlights, batteries and a battery powered radio.

Learn how to shut off utilities such as natural gas, electricity and water.

- If you lose power, your garage door opener must be operated manually. Be sure all the adults in the family know how to disengage the opener and get the door up or down.
- Develop a home evacuation plan and practice it. Every member of the family should know how to get out of the house from every room in your home.
- Agree on a meeting place to account for family members after an evacuation.
- If you must leave town, drive carefully and follow the directions you receive from emergency personnel.
- Plan how to take care of pets. If you have to evacuate your home and go to a public shelter, your pets will probably not be allowed in the shelter.
- If you must leave town, drive carefully and follow the directions you receive from emergency personnel.

IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

- Neighborhood safety begins with making sure your area is well lighted. If you find a street light that is malfunctioning or is not working at all, call Lubbock Power & Light, 775-2555.
- Next, get together with your neighbors and identify those who need additional help during an emergency such as young children, seniors and those with disabilities. Develop a plan for assisting these families. Practice evacuating your home and your neighborhood.
- Prepare a list of emergency phone numbers and keep it by every phone. Carry the same list with you in case you need to use your cell phone. Be sure to include contact numbers for all members of your family. One of the first things you'll want to do in an emergency is locate all of your family members.

IN YOUR WORKPLACE

- Learn about your company's emergency plans. Ask your safety coordinator to arrange a meeting to brief you and your department.
- Practice evacuating your workplace from your area as well as from other work areas. If you're in a meeting in the conference room on the second floor, do you know how to evacuate from there?
- Know the exit routes from the building. Be able to escape in the dark by counting the desks or cubicles between your workstation and the nearest exits.
- Don't forget about the restrooms and break areas. Know the exit routes from these rooms as well.
- Have a designated post-evacuation meeting location where appropriate personnel can take a head count and identify missing workers. Every employee should be aware of this location.
- Make special emergency plans for co-workers who are disabled or may require special assistance during an emergency.
- Know the location of fire extinguishers and first aid kits. Check to see that they are up to date.
- Keep a stash of personal emergency supplies in a desk drawer, including a flashlight, walking shoes, bottled water and nonperishable food.
- If you must evacuate a building with multiple floors, go to the nearest fire- and smoke-free stairwell. Never use an elevator.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.ci.lubbock.tx.us

Latin Jazz Beat Goes On - In Books

When Luc Delannoy first heard Chico O'Farrill's Latin rhythms while listening to one of his jazz albums, it changed his life forever. Delannoy, who began investigating Latin jazz and its creators more than 30 years ago, has written nine books on the subject.

Thursday night, he was at Cafe Nostalgia, 432 41st St. in Miami Beach, talking about his latest work -- ¡Caliente! Una Historia del Jazz Latino -- as part of the Miami Book Fair International.

"This is just one history of Latin

evening. "There's not many books written on this issue."

Chediak's book, *Diccionario de Jazz Latino*, is considered the first piece ever written on the topic.

As Chediak introduced Delannoy and his work to the eager mojito-sipping crowd, he quoted Charles Dickens, saying that right now is "the best of times and the worst of times" for Latin jazz.

The worst because some of the great Latin jazz musicians, like O'Farrill, have died. The best because authors like Delannoy are writing about the music genre.



jazz," he's quick to point out. "This is a Latin jazz history based on my investigations."

A performance by legendary Cuban saxophone player Paquito D'Rivera followed the book's discussion with former Herald music critic Fernando Gonzalez, D'Rivera, Delannoy and fellow Latin jazz writer Nat Chediak.

"This is really important," said Alejandro Rios, who hosted the

"After my investigations, I learned that a rhythm defines a culture," Delannoy said. "You can learn about various cultures through their rhythms."

And most of the crowd at Cafe Nostalgia was there to do just that - learn about their culture.

Said listener Alexander Dominguez: "Nostalgia -- that's what this is for Cubans."

Ordonez: AL's Secret Superstar

Over the last few years, Magglio Ordonez has evolved from secret weapon to perennial All-Star.

Last season he became a \$10 million-a-year man and the first player in American League history to hit at least .300 with 40 doubles, 30 homers, 100 RBIs and 25 steals in one season.

Ordonez's name is well known in baseball circles, he's paid handsomely and has become one of the most popular players in Chicago. But he never has come close to the top of the list of AL outfielders in the annual fan voting for the All-Star Game.

Why? Is it simply a matter of marketing? Does Ordonez have to spice up his home run trot to get some national attention? Or will he always be a guy who produces like a superstar yet remains as anonymous as a middle reliever?

"It doesn't really bother me," Ordonez said. "The only thing I want is for the players to respect me and the fans from Chicago to like me. They do like me, so that's all I care about. If the [voters] don't recognize me for what I do, that's OK. Nothing you can do about it."

If the Sox draw better, Ordonez was told, perhaps he finally would get some recognition in the balloting.

"No," he replied. "I think we just need to win. Everyone knows all the Yankees because they're always winning. No one is going to vote for players from a team that's not winning. We need to win."

The Sox started out too slowly last year for Ordonez to get much attention, but Yankees manager Joe Torre selected him as an All-Star reserve for the third straight season. Ordonez stepped to the forefront at the Midsummer Classic in Seattle, going 2-for-3, including a home run off the Cubs' Jon Lieber.

When Frank Thomas was lost for the year in late April, it was Ordonez's chance to prove he can be "the man" in the Sox lineup. He helped lead an offensive turnaround that had the Sox on the edge of contention in August. Now that Thomas is back and Ordonez is sandwiched between the Big Hurt and Paul Konerko, the possibilities are seemingly endless.

So far the new-look offense has been nearly unstoppable. Ordonez is hitting .444 this spring and the

Sox's offense is averaging nearly eight runs a game. Much of the credit, Ordonez said, belongs to new leadoff man Kenny Lofton, who has improved both the team chemistry and run production.

"Everyone is getting along now," he said. "Sometimes you need a guy like Kenny, he's always real happy, a good veteran to play with. He's one of the best leadoff hitters in the game too. Last year we started slow, got people hurt. Sometimes you have to have a year like that to fight back."

"Things aren't always going to go easy for you in this game. We got a lot of experience, fighting off adversity, all the talk about contracts, losing players with injuries. It was a hard year, but we came back and did everything we could."

After receiving a three-year contract extension last year worth \$29.5 million, making him the team's second-highest-paid player behind Thomas, Ordonez said he feels relaxed and secure. Will success spoil him as it has so many other young stars?

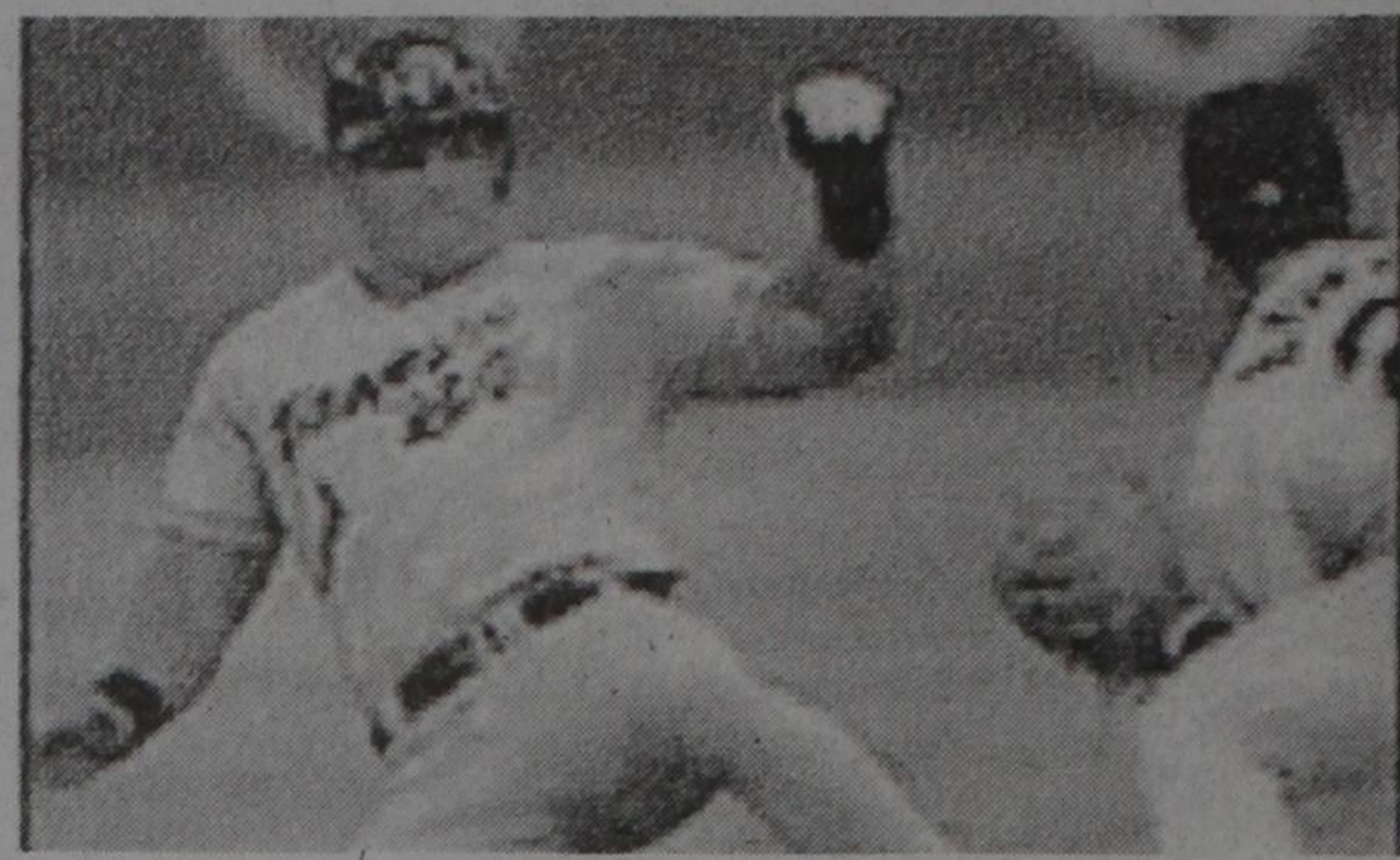
"Money can buy you a lot of things, but it can't make you happy," he said. "I'm the same guy who came here from Venezuela with nothing in my pockets. I don't forget about my people in Venezuela. I don't forget my friends. I don't think money will change me at all."

Ordonez bought a home in Miami last year and spent most of the off-season living in Florida with his wife Dagly and their two children, Magglio Jr. and Maggiana.

"When you have money [in Venezuela], where there are a lot of poor people, you can be in danger," he said. "I decided to move here so my kids can be safer. I still go there every year. People don't bother me there. They know who you are and respect you. There are so many problems in our culture, the only positive things they see in the newspapers is what the big-leaguers are doing in the game."

Ordonez is providing his fans back home with a positive role model and giving the Sox some much-needed inroads in Chicago's Hispanic community. Now all he needs is some Chicago-style ballot-box stuffing this summer to compete for a starting spot on the All-Star team.

Expos Release Canseco After Weak Spring



Jose Canseco will not reach his goal of 500 home runs with the Montreal Expos.

Canseco was given his release by the Expos on Wednesday after being told he would not be an everyday player.

Canseco, 37, hit .200 with three home runs and five RBI in 14 spring training games.

The former AL MVP has 462 home runs, putting him 22nd on the career list. But Expos manager Frank Robinson plans to use other young players in the outfield.

"We had sat down together last week -- Jose and I -- and he had shared with me his feelings about what he felt like he could do for this ballclub, and under what conditions he could do that," Robinson said.

"I told Jose today that he would not be an everyday player here. And he had indicated that he didn't think he could be as productive for us," he said.

Robinson said the Expos offered to let him play as a regular at Triple-A, but Canseco declined.

"He took it very well, and he took it like a real pro. He

understood and certainly made it a little easier for me," Robinson said.

"When you're dealing with the veteran players, it may be the end of their careers, you never know, when they don't make it," he said.

Canseco signed a minor league contract with Montreal last month, and new Expos general manager Omar Minaya hoped he'd found a power hitter for the middle of the lineup.

At the time, Canseco said he felt healthy enough to play a full season in the outfield. An AL player his entire career, he has been in the field only 13 times in the last three years.

As a DH last year, he hit .258 with 16 homers and 49 RBI in 256 at-bats for the Chicago White Sox.

Canseco was the AL Rookie of the Year in 1986 with Oakland. He also has played for Texas, Boston, Toronto, Tampa Bay and the New York Yankees.

Canseco is a six-time All-Star. He won the MVP award in 1988, the year he became the first player in major league history to hit 40 home runs and steal 40 bases in the same season.

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Serena From Page 5

suspended. He broke Blake's serve six times, including twice Wednesday to complete the fourth-round victory.

Hewitt, seeking his third title this month, extended his winning streak to 14 matches. He earlier won at Scottsdale and Indian Wells and has won 21 consecutive matches on U.S. hard courts dating back to his title run at the U.S. Open last year.

The Australian's opponent in the quarterfinals Thursday will be the winner of Wednesday's match

between No. 6-seeded Marat Safin and qualifier Fernando Gonzalez, who upset Pete Sampras in the third round.

Serena Williams has very little trouble with third-seeded Martina Hingis on Wednesday.

On Tuesday, No. 9-seeded Andre Agassi moved one win closer to his fifth Key Biscayne title and second in a row, beating No. 8 Thomas Johansson 7-5, 6-2.

A wrist injury kept Agassi from bidding for his third consecutive

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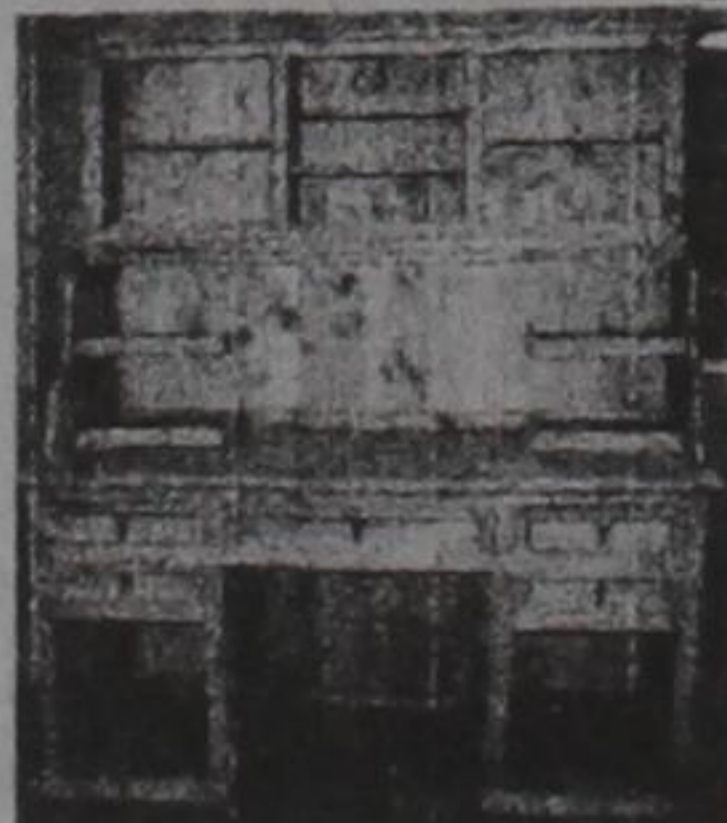
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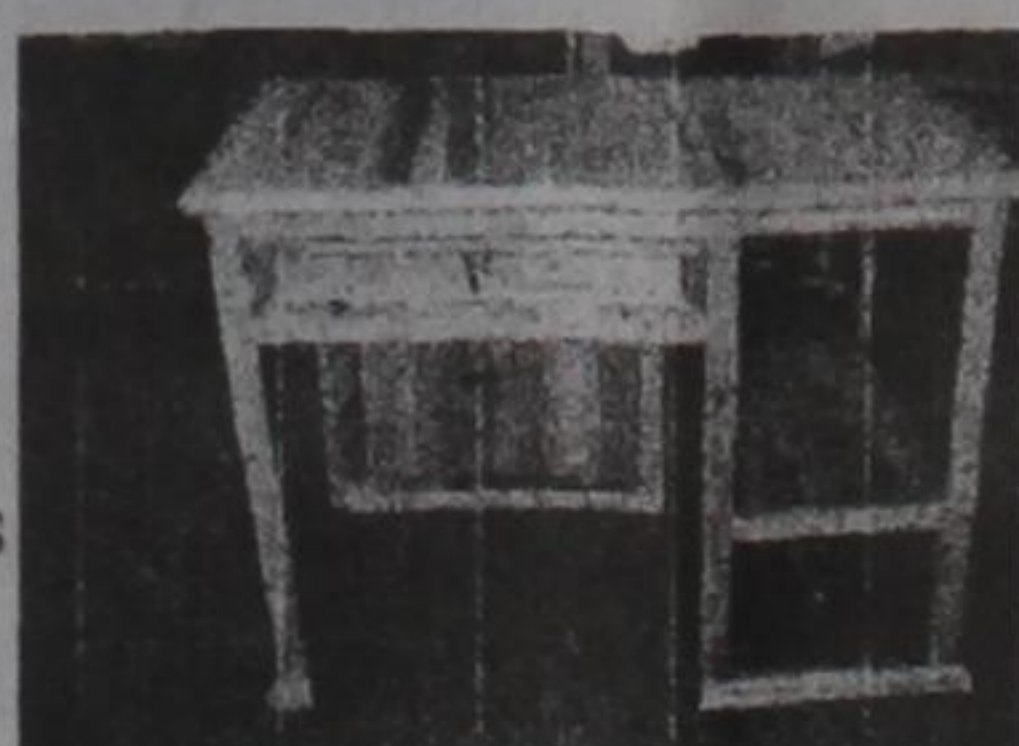
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Tourney Talk:

Some IU Fans Slow to Warm Up to Davis

For Jack Aikin and the many (sort of) Indiana basketball fans like him, it has been a few weeks of conflicting emotions. The 47-year-old Indianapolis businessman grew

up on IU hoops, Bob Knight's IU hoops, and even if he didn't attend the school the Hoosiers represent a significant part of his life.

He was drawn to Knight not just because of the personality and the success, but because as a student of the game he appreciated the genius of the coach. "The absolute brilliant way he did things," said Aikin. He's held IU season tickets for years.

Indiana president Myles Brand is public enemy No. 1 among Bob Knight loyalists.

After each Hoosiers game he writes insightful game reports that he emails out to a list over 1,000 strong. But although he attends the games, he hasn't rooted for Indiana in 18 months. That includes the thrilling victory over Duke last Friday and the Elite Eight win over Kent State that propelled IU to its first Final Four in a decade.

For a man whose vanity license plate reads "RMKFan 1", the pain from Knight's firing 18 months ago is still intense. Aikin is one of 46 people involved in a class-action lawsuit against Indiana University citing a violation of open-door meeting laws when the school dismissed Knight. He calls this IU run of success "bittersweet."

"I'm happy for the players, happy for the kids who came to be a part of the Indiana tradition of gong to Final Fours and competing for the national championship," Aikin said Tuesday. "I'm bitter because Coach Knight and his legacy is being swept aside and people are acting like the last 29 years didn't happen and he had no part in this."

Aikin is hardly alone. From Evansville to East Chicago, pro-Knight Hoosiers are dealing with a dilemma: can you root for Indiana, in good conscience, post-Knight? Can you support the uniform but not Mike Davis? Can you stand to watch university president Myles Brand portrayed as a genius for running off the General?

"No," said Gojko Kasich, 42, a public defender in Lake County, Ind., and Gary resident. "Especially when Davis gave the (Kent State) game ball to that (S.O.B.) Brand. If we can get rid of Brand, maybe."

This is the Indiana Mike Davis took over. A fan base once unified behind the program, its colorful coach and a steady collection of "our boys" now doesn't know what to do with itself. Most IU fans are back firmly on the bandwagon, even the ones who swore off the Hoosiers after Knight was dismissed in September 2000. Others returned because of the

continued on page 7

HAPPY EASTER
FROM YOUR
FRIENDS AT
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NEWSPAPERS

From Page 6

firing. There are, however, holdouts.

Mike Pegram, who runs the popular IU fan site peegs.com, estimates that support for Davis has risen from 60 percent to 90 percent in just the past three months among the site's nearly 200,000 regular users. He credits IU's strong Big Ten season and Final Four run.

"I think a lot of people were finally won over after Duke," said Pegram, who says his site, which once set up a pro-Knight rally, is receiving 20 percent more traffic now than even in the month Knight was fired. "But I think opinion started to change when we got off to the great start in the Big Ten."

But it isn't 100 percent, something Davis has long acknowledged and claims doesn't matter.

"I don't worry about who likes me or who doesn't like me," Davis said last fall. "If I don't like a person, then I have a problem. I'm trying to move past that. It doesn't matter who backs me up."

And now that the fans are flocking to the red-hot crimson and cream?

"I coach Indiana," Davis said Tuesday. "When you win, they are happy to hold you. When you don't, they'll take you down. It's all part of it."

But not everyone.

"The people who liked coach Davis before like him more now, and the people who hated him before still hate him," said sophomore Jared Jeffries, a Bloomington native who signed with Knight but fully supports Davis. "A couple wins aren't going to change everyone's mind."

Jeffries is correct. While many who have lost enthusiasm for the program say it is nothing personal with Davis, others don't like his personality or coaching style.

"I don't like how when he took the job he immediately declared 'I'm going to change everything about the program,'" said Kasich, the son of an immigrant steelworker who earned both an undergraduate (1981) and law degree ('84) from IU. "Saying that after 29 years of pretty good seasons strikes me as bizarre."

Kasich says fans are confusing winning with great coaching and doesn't see much of the latter from Davis who, he notes, still has mainly Knight recruits, including Jeffries.

"Maybe we were spoiled, but for 29 years we had a guy on the bench who would do something innovative almost every night that made you say, 'That's why he is in the Hall of Fame,'" said Kasich. "Where is this great coaching job? I've seen high school coaches in Indiana who can do a better job. (The media) says Davis has done a better job with this team than Knight would have. How do they know?"

Aikin and Kasich are still significantly troubled by how Knight was dismissed, from the famous "zero tolerance" policy to the minutia of how the decision

was reached and whether it violated state laws. They are pushing on with the class-action suit not because they want Knight back ("Bob Knight is happy where he is," said Kasich) but because, they say, governments shouldn't be able to skirt the law, especially an open-meeting law.

"For me it's never been about Davis," said Aikin adamantly. "When it comes down to it we had a Hall of Fame coach, arguably one of the two or three greatest of all time, and he was fired. They could have brought Christ in and I would have looked upon it with suspicion and been bitter."

"Many people think they jobbed (Knight)," Aikin continued. "They undermined him the last six months and put him in an untenable position. Then they made things up and spun the truth to justify firing him. If you are going to fire him, fire him. Stand up and do it like a man. No one is arguing that the university doesn't have the right to fire its coach."

"But if they had had enough, then they should have said it. Don't come in with phony baloney stuff and have the spin doctors in the press defend you."

The spin fans like these hate the most is the perception that they are ignorant yahoos, even racists. Their life stories tell you they are successful, intelligent people.

"The school wants to paint us shoeless, mindless Knight fans," Aikin said. "That's not it. It's about whether the university followed the law and whether they are accountable. Bandwagon fans want to believe everything is great. The people in the lawsuit are standup people who have priorities."

Said Kasich, "I'm a public defender, I defend death row inmates, 80 percent of my clients are black, how can you call me a racist?"

To his credit, Davis has not changed his style to win over fans. He understands the slightly modified uniforms rankle some hard-liners. He's heard complaints about the more predictable offense, how he praises the players too much, how he displays too much emotion on the bench and in postgame celebrations. Then there was the handing of the game ball to Brand that nearly made some fans puke.

"He doesn't do things based on what fans think, though," said Aikin. "He's like Knight in that manner."

For Davis, who no longer speaks with Knight, his former boss of three years, that is high praise. Especially this week, when the debate over whether to support Davis or not, support the team or not, has reached a boiling point.

Even Aikin has swung.

By Saturday he'll be rolling the "RMKFan 1" plates into Georgia. "What the heck," said Aikin. "I guess there are some things worth compromising about and this is one of them. In the end IU in the Final Four is what it is all about for me. I look at it like my kids. I didn't like everything they did either, I didn't like everything Coach Knight did, but I support them."

Taco Bell Site of Farm Protest:

Tomato Pickers March Seeking Better Pay

Florida farm worker Julia Gabriel sat on the red bucket she uses to hold the tomatoes she plucks from the vines.

She hasn't been in the field for 12 days.

Monday she and about 1,500 other tomato pickers and their supporters marched on Taco Bell headquarters in Irvine, the biggest stop on a 17-day journey across the country. Their message: Boycott Taco Bell, one of the biggest buyers of the tomatoes they harvest.

The group - some wearing Chihuahua masks and waving boycott signs - chanted for fair wages and better working conditions while marching from Santa Ana's Memorial Park.

Music by the rap-rock group Rage Against the Machine blared from a flatbed truck in the procession. Rage guitarist Tom Morello showed up to voice support.

Taco Bell agreed to meet with a delegation from the Coalition of Immokalee Workers. Immokalee is the area in southern Florida where most of the tomato pickers work.

Despite the promise of a meeting, Taco Bell spokeswoman Laurie

Gannon said the company's position would not change.

"We do not get involved in another company's labor disputes," Gannon said.

Labor experts say Taco Bell and other corporations should heed such protests. The proliferation of e-mail, cell phones and the Internet means 18- to 24-year-olds - Taco Bell's target market - who are interested in fair working conditions can be connected.

"I've been impressed," said Kent Wong, director of the UCLA Center for Labor Research and Education. "This particular campaign seems to have developed significant momentum over the last several months."

Student and labor-rights groups helped curtail Nike's use of low-paid labor recently. Locally last year, Justice for Janitors won better contracts for maintenance workers by going directly to building owners, bypassing labor contractors.

"The fast-food industry has never been held responsible for the conditions in the field; this is a new way to get into the farm-worker problem by going to

consumers," said protest organizer Greg Asbed.

The average farm worker earns about \$7,500 a year, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

Tomato workers are paid 40 cents - unchanged since 1978 - per bucket, which holds about 32 pounds of tomatoes. On an average day, tomato pickers earn \$40 to \$50, according to the coalition.

The meeting Monday between Taco Bell and the coalition is a first, said organizer Laura Germino.

Taco Bell could help by urging growers to pay 1 cent more per pound and provide medical insurance and sick days, she said.

Along the 13 stops so far -- they go to Flagstaff today -- the group has been joined by union, minority and civil-rights groups, including the United Auto Workers, the Service Employees International Union, the Korean Immigrants Workers Association, the United Farm Workers and Justice for Janitors.

Taco Bell purchases tomatoes through a Florida vegetable broker that buys produce from different growers, Gannon said. Taco Bell does not have a contract with Six

L's Packing Co. Inc., the protest's primary target.

Taco Bell has talked to Six L's executives, however, to encourage a resolution of the labor dispute because the protests are affecting Taco Bell's image and disrupting restaurant operations, Gannon said.

The campaign hasn't had much impact on sales, however. After three years of mostly declining sales at Taco Bell restaurants open for more than a year, they have risen each month since October 2001.

Asbed said he thinks the increase in sales since October resulted from consumers looking for bargains during a recession and after September's terrorist attacks.

Students were out in force in support of the workers; many started out in Florida, and others joined along the way.

As consumers, one of the few powers we have is the ability not to buy," said Salvador Sarmiento, a University of California, Irvine, student who used to eat at Taco Bell three times a month. "If they see a drop in profit, they will address the problem."

Bush Not Doing Enough For Hispanics, Reyes Charges

Just before President Bush's visit to El Paso, a group of Hispanic lawmakers, led by U.S. Rep. Silvestre Reyes of El Paso, berated Bush for allegedly doing too little to help the nation's 35 million Hispanics.

"Bush is good at talking about issues that affect the Latino community, but fails to follow through with the resources needed to tackle these issues," said

Democrat Reyes. He represents a congressional district where about eight in 10 residents are Hispanic.

Bush administration officials have rejected such charges, arguing that the president's education initiatives, the appointment of several Hispanics to Cabinet posts and his pro-immigration policies benefit millions of U.S. Hispanics.

Reyes and several other Hispanic lawmakers including Rep. Joe Baca, D-Calif., were especially

critical of the president's proposed 2003 budget, which won House approval on Wednesday.

The \$2.1 trillion proposed budget includes domestic spending cuts to help offset the costs of the war on terrorism. Reyes voted against the budget, but Rep. Henry Bonilla, a Republican from San Antonio whose district includes part of El Paso, voted for it. Bonilla praised the president for "really looking after our nation."

Alejandro Burgos, El Paso County Republican Party chairman, said the thousands of Hispanics who turned out to cheer on Bush in El Paso on Thursday disagree with Reyes' criticism of Bush.

"You can tear apart any budget to find things you don't agree with, but it is Mr. Reyes' duty to find ways to help El Paso. He should stop his partisan complaining and spend that time accomplishing something for El Paso and the Hispanics that live here."

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Gonzalez From Page One

support among conservative Republicans such as Orrin Hatch of Utah, the GOP's ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Gonzales would need his backing to ascend to the high court.

"I simply could not be more impressed," Hatch says.

Some Republicans initially feared that Gonzales might be a "stealth liberal" like David Souter, who was named to the Supreme Court 12 years ago by Bush's father. To the dismay of many Republicans, Souter, 62, has become one of the four liberal justices on the nine-member court.

There has been no indication that anyone on the court will retire soon, but most speculation focuses on the three oldest justices.

Sandra Day O'Connor, 71, the court's swing vote because she is the conservative most likely to vote with the liberals, recently said her retirement is not imminent. Conservative Chief Justice William Rehnquist, 77, has said that he has considered leaving but does not seem to have slowed down. Liberal justice John Paul Stevens, 81, has said nothing about retirement.

The court is deeply split on issues such as abortion, affirmative action and religious liberties, and any change among the justices could mean a difference in the law.

Besides Gonzales, those mentioned most frequently by GOP sources include U.S. appeals court judges J. Michael Luttig and J. Harvie Wilkinson III of Virginia, Emilio Garza of Texas, and Samuel Alito of New Jersey. Another candidate would be U.S. Solicitor General Theodore Olson, who represented Bush in the Florida election dispute and whose wife, Barbara, died aboard a hijacked jet on Sept. 11.

Several factors -- which justice retires first and the political currents of the day, as well as recent moves of potential nominees -- could alter the dynamics of any selection process. If Rehnquist were to retire first, for example, the White House might seek a more experienced lawyer than Gonzales to replace the chief. But for now, many insiders believe Gonzales is on deck for a nomination.

Gonzales, the son of migrant farm workers who worked his way up to Harvard Law School, is "in as good of a position as anyone," says C. Boyden Gray, White House counsel to Bush's father.

"We think he's a leading contender," says Elliot Minberg of the liberal People for the American Way.

"We're watching him." Playing it close to the vest Gonzales, 46, declined to be interviewed. He and other administration officials are reluctant to discuss anyone's prospects for the court. However, Gonzales acknowledged in an interview last year that it would be foolish for the White House not to be preparing for a vacancy on the court.

As Texas lawmakers such as Sibley learned, Gonzales is not easy to penetrate. In scripted speeches he has delivered recently, it's clear that despite his higher profile, the hard-to-read Al Gonzales lives on: the slight smile, the non-committal nod, the one-sentence answers.

In the interview last year, he was careful when discussing judicial philosophy. He declined to answer specific questions on controversial issues that inevitably confront Supreme Court nominees, such as abortion and affirmative action. He emphasized that his personal views might be different from how he would vote on a case.

Gonzales' two-year tenure on Texas' Supreme Court, which ended when he resigned so he could follow Bush to Washington, was too brief to offer much insight into his attitudes as a jurist. Texas lawyers regarded him as a moderate on a generally conservative court.

In Washington, Gonzales' close-to-the-vest manner hasn't always played well, particularly among Democrats who are pressing the administration for a more ideologically diverse roster of nominees for federal courts.

He has had a strong hand in crafting a roster of nationally recognized advocates for conservative causes. They include Jeffrey Sutton, an Ohio lawyer who has successfully argued several states' right cases at the high court, and Paul Cassell, a University of Utah professor known for his work against the "Miranda" rights that police read to crime suspects.

For months, Gonzales and Democrats have been at loggerheads over nominees to several courts, particularly in Midwestern and Mid-Atlantic states. Many Democrats report a pattern in their dealings with Gonzales: He is pleasant. He suggests differences can be worked out. Everyone walks away optimistic. Then nothing

happens.

"I have heard of too many situations, involving too many reasonable home-state senators, in which the White House has shown no willingness to work cooperatively" on judicial nominees, says Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy, D-Vt.

GOP senators counter that it's Democrats who have been inflexible. Gonzales says the Democrat-led Senate "has not done enough to meet its constitutional responsibility" of voting on judicial nominees. He criticizes the Senate for not holding hearings on some nominees from last spring and says that he has been meeting with senators to break standoffs.

In the interview last year,

Gonzales said he looks at character when he screens potential nominees for trial and appeals courts.

"Is this a good person? That's very important to this president."

He said the White House also focuses on competence and conservative judicial philosophy. He said society's problems are for elected lawmakers, not judges, to solve.

Gonzales was born in San Antonio to Pablo and Maria Gonzales, the second of their eight children. His parents, both children of Mexican immigrants, met as teenage farm workers. Pablo had finished only the second grade; Maria had made it to sixth grade.

The family settled in Houston, where Pablo became a construction worker. They lived in a two-

bedroom house with no hot running water. Gonzales began dreaming of college when he helped with a neighbor's soda concession business at Rice University's football stadium. But with no money after high school graduation in 1973, Gonzales enlisted in the Air Force.

Stationed at Fort Yukon, Alaska, he met Air Force Academy graduates who urged him to apply to the academy in Colorado Springs. Gonzales was admitted in 1975 but left the academy for Rice in 1977, one of a string of occasions in which he reached a difficult goal, then left for another challenge.

After graduating from Harvard Law School in 1982, Gonzales went to work for the Houston-based

law firm Vinson & Elkins, which long represented the energy giant Enron. (As a state court judge, Gonzales, like many Texas candidates, received campaign contributions from Enron).

Gonzales rejected a job offer from the first President Bush in 1988 to try to become one of Vinson & Elkins' first minority partners. He was made a partner in 1991, then left for Austin in 1995 to become the governor's counsel.

Got Bush off jury duty

One of Gonzales' most controversial actions in that post was helping to get George W. Bush excused from jury duty in 1996, a situation that could have required the governor to disclose his then-secret 1976 conviction for drunken driving in Maine. Gonzales

suggested to the judge and defense lawyer that if Bush served, he would not, as governor, be able to pardon the defendant in the future.

Whether Gonzales' rapid rise in government culminates at the high court remains to be seen.

Last year, the Hispanic National Bar Association gave Gonzales a list of prominent Hispanic judges and lawyers to try to show that there is a large pool of Hispanic candidates for a Supreme Court seat. Gonzales' name was on the list.

Carlos Ortiz, a former president of the bar, says Gonzales told him to take it off, that he did not want a seat on the high court.

Looking back, Ortiz says, "I wasn't sure whether he was really being serious or not."

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