

el Editor

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Lubbock, TX USA

Latino Leaders Await Outreach from Kerry Camp

By Fresia Rodríguez Cadavid

With John Kerry securing wins March 2 in California, New York and seven other states and effectively capturing the Democratic nomination for President, Latino leaders are looking for fresh signals from the Kerry camp on what his presidency may mean to the Hispanic community.

Gabriela Lemus, director of policy and legislation for the League of United Latin American Citizens, says that as of yet, Kerry has not shaped a message for Latinos. "It is in the making. The real 'hearts and minds' campaign will start now for the Latino community," she says.

Larry González, director of the Washington, D.C. office of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, says it's hard to say yet how Kerry will resonate with Latinos. "Kerry is going to have to take his case to Latino voters in the battleground states," where Bush has started running his

campaign ads, he says.

Lemus sees the fact that Kerry is a veteran working in his favor among Latinos. His criticism of the No Child Left Behind Act and stances on the economy and health care are also very critical, she states. "Whether it be education or the economy, Kerry will need very real and concrete plans to address these issues in the Latino community."

In the California Democratic primary, Kerry won by more than 3 to 1 among Latinos, according to an exit poll conducted by The Los Angeles Times. Other exit polls showed that Hispanics accounted for 15 percent of the total vote, with seven out of 10 Hispanic voting for Kerry. He swept the state with 64% of the vote.

Sen. John Edwards of North Carolina, with 20 percent of the vote, was the only other candidate with double-digit support. Edwards dropped out of the race the following day.

In New York, where 70 percent of the state's Democratic primary vote traditionally comes from the New York City metropolitan area, Kerry garnered 61% of the vote. New York City is 27 percent Latino, according to U.S. Census figures.

Dag Vega, spokesperson for the Kerry campaign, told Hispanic Link that Kerry's

victories in California and New York, as in Arizona and New Mexico, were in part due to endorsements and campaigning by strong Latino leaders. "His message of opening opportunities in education and health care is important and resonates with the Hispanic community," Vega said.

With the nomination cleared, Kerry is left to name a running mate. Among the most notable names being floated are Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York, Rep. Richard Gephardt of Missouri, Gen. Wesley Clark, Edwards and New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson. Richardson, a Mexican American, has repeatedly said he intends to complete his first term as governor and run for re-election in 2006.

González says that if Kerry were to choose Richardson and convince him to be his running mate, it would be a tremendous boost for Latinos, demonstrating how far Latinos have come politically in recent years. "It will mark a historic moment in the evolution of Latino politics without question."

He notes that the vice presidential decision will be determined by the strategy Kerry adopts. Edwards would appeal to southern voters, while Richardson would aid Kerry in securing the Latino electorate and the Southwest, he says.

Festival Starts Friday

"¡Viva Aztlan!"

The phrase will be shouted loud and clear by over 500 young persons who will come to Lubbock to celebrate the 10th annual Viva Aztlan Festival to be held in Lubbock this weekend. Viva Aztlan simply stated means "our heritage lives!" For ten years the Viva Aztlan Dance Festival has been flourishing Mexico's traditions into the Lubbock community. The initial concept: to involve all communities in an exciting way.

The festival is a competition for ballet folklórico groups which will be held at the Civic Center Theatre March 12-13. As part of the tenth year anniversary Viva Aztlan introduces a small Mariachi competition for a taste of spicy Mexican ballads. The added bonus for participating Mariachi groups is being critiqued by a professional Mariachi group from San Antonio, TX, Mariachi Los Caporales. The festival is open to the public and tickets can be purchased at the door.



Folklorico Guadalupean - Muleshoe, TX

The founder of Viva Aztlan, Bidal Agüero, is very excited about the tenth annual anniversary because it brings back memories from 1994. Agüero states he envisioned a bigger future for the folklorico groups in Lubbock. "Ten years ago I saw a surge of folklorico groups being formed in Lubbock," Agüero said, "I felt the only way these groups could expose themselves and enhance their skills was to bring in other folklorico groups from other cities." Since most folklorico groups in Lubbock did not have the money to bring master instructors from Mexico, Viva Aztlan created this opportunity.

Agüero and his devoted committee members then asked folklorico groups across the United States to participate in the competition. To much of their surprise they have hosted groups from New Mexico, Colorado, Illinois, Mexico, and Texas. The first year of the competition was a great surprise to all the committee members because the kids evolved the word 'competition'. The charisma they manufactured while performing was not to win a trophy, nor was it a manufactured entity. The charisma came from the naturalness of their soul.

Ballet Folklórico has a tradition that runs deep within Mexico's culture. When a dance is taught to a group of dancers they will learn the steps, the movement, the grace and persona that is coupled with that particular dance. Since every song has a different meaning students also learn the origin of the song and also learn why costumes differ from song to song.

Upon asking Rick Castaneda, a dancer for Ballet Folklórico Aztlan in Lubbock, why he enjoys dancing folklorico he responded by stating, "I like to see groups of dancers coming together to learn about our heritage." He continued by stating that the most enjoyable part of dancing is practicing. "We are all so close and we laugh so much, it's a great stress reliever."

According to Zenaida Reyes, committee chair of Viva Aztlan, the festival has also become a close-knit collaboration of dancers, groups, and instructors. "It's not about awards anymore. It's a chance for groups to network and educate themselves." Over 500 students participate in the competition and special workshops that are given by the master instructors each year.

Collaboration or not the festival is a competition and groups come to win. This year 16 groups will compete for categories ranging from Best Costumes to Best Overall Dance Troupe. Each year the Best Overall Dance Troupe from the previous year is invited to return to present a showcase before the awards ceremony. Mexico 2000 from Dallas, TX will be featured in this year's showcase along with the participating Mariachi groups.

"We are here to host a competition, but the greatest award is the pride each group has in our heritage," Agüero said. Que Viva Aztlan!

Viva Aztlan Dance Festival is funded in part by the Lubbock City Council as recommended by the Lubbock Arts Alliance. Additional help is also given by United Supermarket, Lubbock Avalanche-Journal, Excel Energy, El Editor Newspaper, and Magic 93.7.

Democratic Group Courts Hispanics in Ads

WASHINGTON - In a new ad airing Friday, a young Hispanic girl asks, "President Bush (news - web sites), why did you break your promise?", part of an effort by a group of moderate Democrats to court Hispanics and challenge the Republican incumbent.

The New Democrat Network started running two 30-second Spanish-language ads in Albuquerque, N.M., Phoenix, and Las Vegas, kicking off what it says will be a \$5 million advertising effort through spring and summer in media markets with high concentrations of Hispanics. So far, the group says it has a \$2.5 million pledge from several donors and is working to raise the rest of the money.

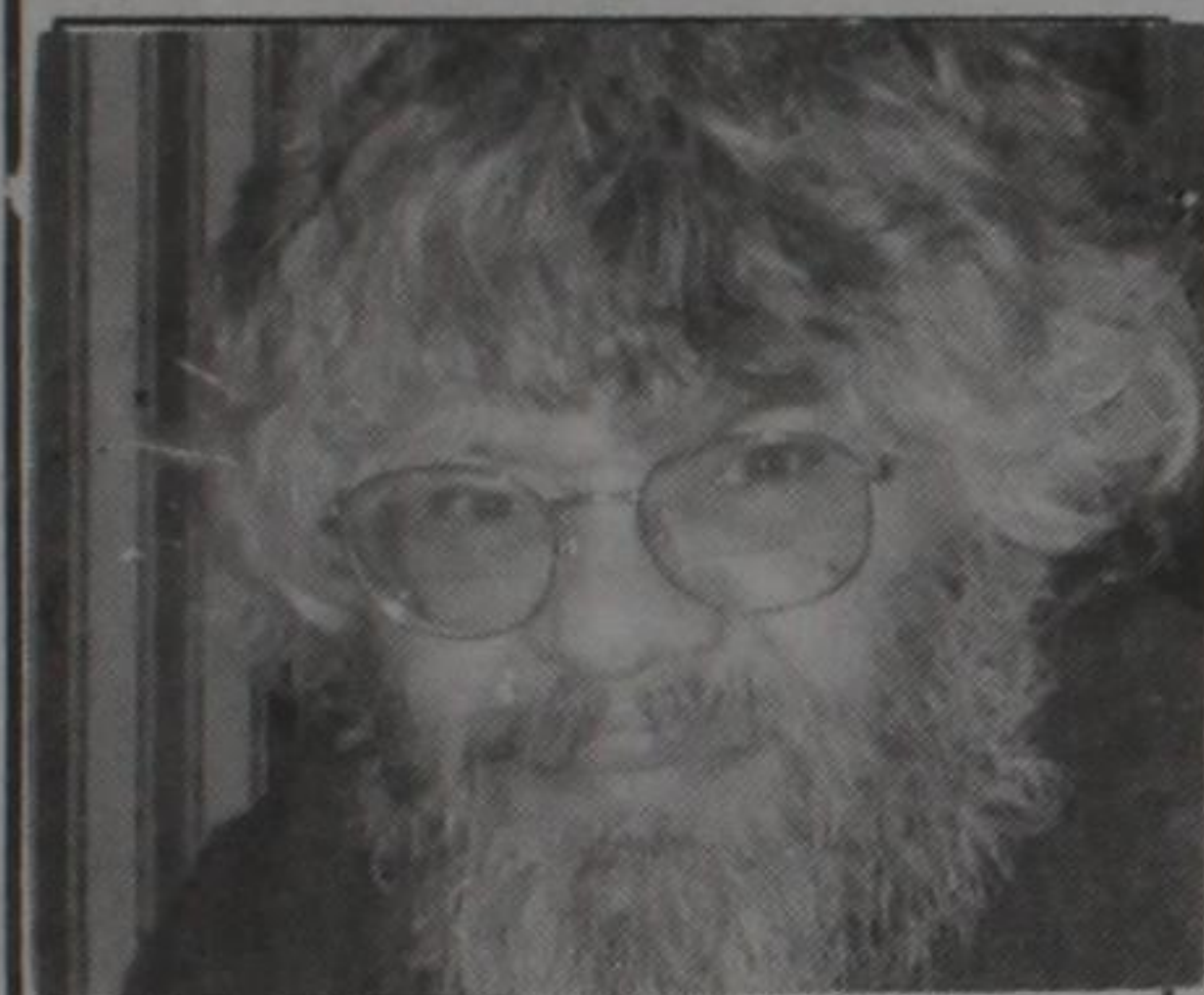
The Bush campaign disputed the ads, saying the president's budget calls for spending 30 percent more on institutions that aid Hispanics than originally planned. One ad tells Hispanics that "the Democrats have always been our best friend. With them, progress is secured." In the ad, a Hispanic man watches as a rundown school and store morph into renovated buildings. The man holds a Spanish-language newspaper with the headline, "Latinos applaud Democratic agenda."

A second commercial — the one with the young girl — questions Bush's commitment to education. "When he wanted to reach the White House, George Bush promised to be a friend of the Latino community and do what's best for our children," the ad says. "But he has not kept his promises." Scott Stanzel, a Bush campaign spokesman, said Bush "is investing more money in elementary and secondary education than at any other time in American history." The president's budget, Stanzel said, provides \$96 million for Hispanic-serving institutions and another \$1 billion increase for Title I funding for poor schools.

Hispanics traditionally have favored the Democratic Party in presidential elections, but support has dropped in recent years. Bush also is

Comentarios

by Bidal Agüero



It certainly is a "wake up call" as Abel Cruz puts it in his column on page 2. Your vote does count! I can begin to count how many times I was told in this past election that they weren't going to vote because their vote didn't really matter. Would you believe that if 75 more voters would have voted for one or the other candidate, that candidate would have won! Just in asking a few of my friends if they voted, then of them didn't vote because of one reason or the other and those reason were really unexcusable. I got six "I forgot", six "I just didn't have time" and a few "I had a flat on the way to the polls."

What ever the reason, there was really no good excuse since everyone of them could have voted early during the 10 days allocated to everyone.

The run off election is scheduled for April 13 and again there will be 10 days of early voting. Any voter regardless if he voted or not and who did not vote in the Republican primary can vote in the run off.

It is my understanding that there will be several forum set up by various organization and I encourage everyone to attend and listen to the candidates.

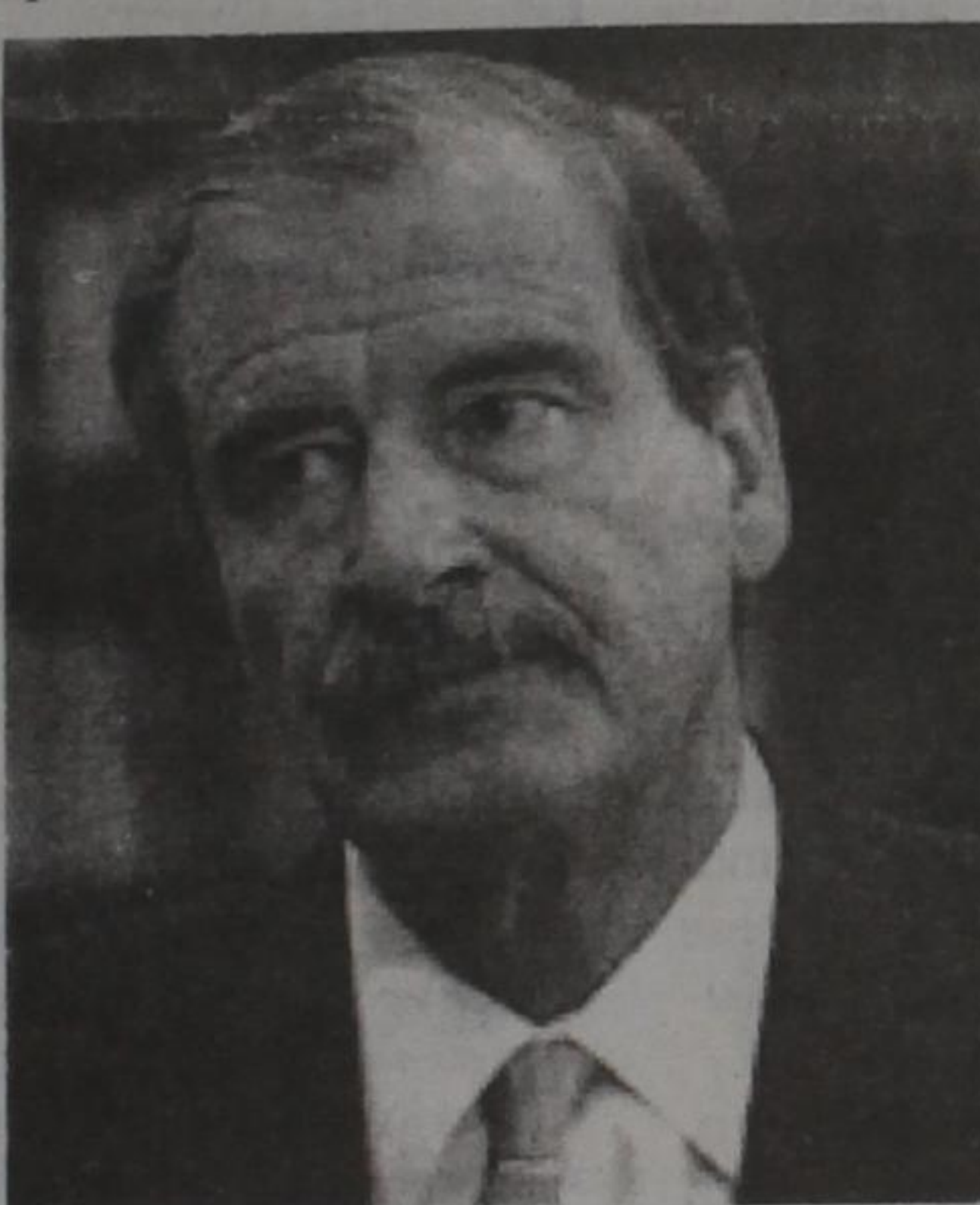
Ysabel Luna has decided to endorse Ysidro Gutierrez for the Commissioner's post. Luna says that he is endorsing Gutierrez because a definite need is needed. "We have given Gilbert a chance for 12 years. The problems in Lubbock and especially in East Lubbock, still exist. We need someone new."

Don't forget the Viva Aztlan Festival this coming weekend. Everyone that attends is in for a full weekend of outstanding entertainment. You should especially make a concentrated effort to attend on Saturday night starting at 7 pm and watch last year's winner from Dallas.

Out congratulations all those people that voted in the last election. Those that didn't vote. Don't complain. You had your chance to voice your opinion. Contact Bidal at editor@elano.net

Fox Defiende a la Clase Política

En medio de la peor crisis de credibilidad en la clase política, durante la historia reciente del país, el presidente Vicente Fox salió en



defensa de este cuestionado sector y aseguró que en México hay muchos políticos y funcionarios

gubernamentales que no son corruptos.

Por otro lado, el jefe de gobierno capitalino, Manuel Andrés López Obrador, insistió en que detrás de la difusión de videos sobre corrupción se encuentra el Estado mexicano e incluso autoridades estadounidenses, mientras el presidente Vicente Fox rechazó la participación de su gobierno y exigió presentar pruebas.

Andrés Manuel López Obrador dijo en una rueda de prensa que esta semana presentará las pruebas de sus señalamientos y adelantó que están sustentadas en "versiones de secretarías, choferes, meseros y empleados del gobierno federal".

El primer mandatario pidió a la población que "no haga generalizaciones pesimistas ni juicios a la ligera", sobre el comportamiento de gobernantes y servidores públicos en el desempeño de sus funciones oficiales.

(Continued Page 5)

Immigrants Grants Alerts to Fraud Because of Bush Initiative

A growing number of immigrants are being swindled by people who promise them legalization based on the temporary worker project proposed by United States president

George W. Bush, warned an official source.

"Bush announced a proposal for Congress to debate, but it is not yet a full program. The Congress is supposed to act on it," pointed out the spokesperson for the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services office, Daniel Kane.

The U.S. head of state proposed last January a bill for temporary workers that would make legal stay for a three-year period easier for the more than eight million undocumented workers.

Notwithstanding, the proposal has met with obstacles in Congress on the

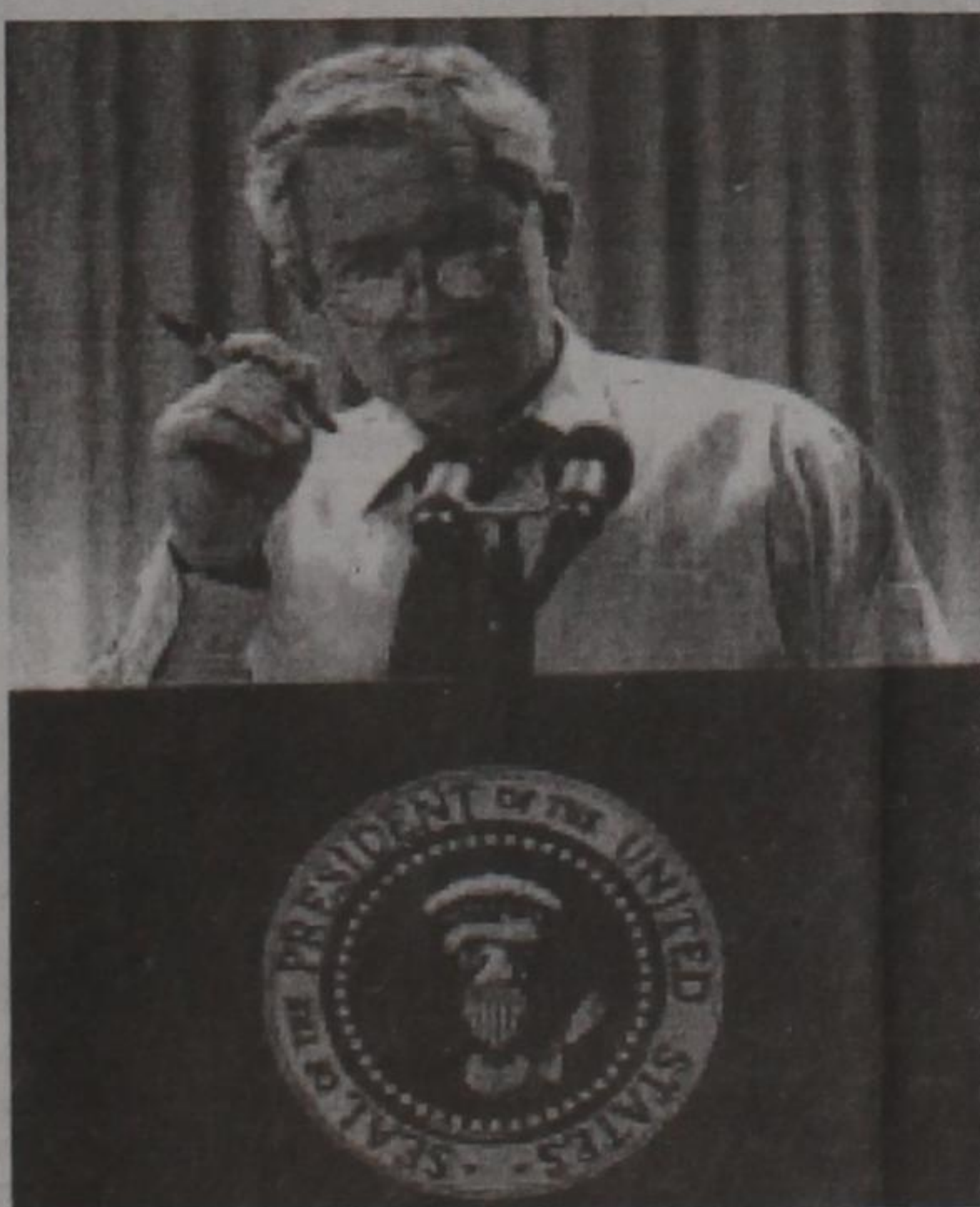
part of some Republicans who state that it is very generous and from Democrats who consider it to be incomplete.

Kane said, "the saddest part of all this is that 99 per cent of the swindlers are Latinos, they speak Spanish, they come from countries in Latin America, and they exploit and oppress people when they lie to them charging exaggerated fees and selling them false hopes."

"There are notary publics and attorneys who practice

immigration law, who want to make easy money from these services but they do not help the undocumented worker, on the contrary, what they do is motivated by their own greed, their hunger for wealth," he added.

The official pointed out that recently a group of swindlers set up for business in the Washington area like "a circus tent", handing out flyers offering their



"services", collected the fees in advance and then vanished with all the money.

Kane indicated, on the other hand, that fees for immigration services will go up until next April, warning immigrants not to be taken in by notaries or lawyers who charge higher fees.

He recommended immigrants to first verify references and recommendations of the people who are offering them their services.

The spokesperson for the USCIS said the victims of this fraud should denounce their case to local authorities or community or religious organizations that offer aid to immigrants.

"The notaries and attorneys involved in cases of fraud can be legally processed, therefore, it is of utmost importance that immigrants report fraud to avoid it growing like a cancer within the community," insisted Kane

Enjoy the Adventures of Tejas on Page 2.

Spanish-Lanugage Influence in U.S. Keeps Expanding

By Frank Gómez

A somewhat shopworn but still popular joke about newly arrived U.S. immigrants from Europe or Asia says: "Hey, you're in America now. Learn Spanish!"

That advice fits CEOs, executives, marketers and communicators, candidates for elective office, publishers and others who want to reach some 45 million Hispanics and tap their \$653 billion in annual purchasing power.

Those who are serious about these markets must be serious about Spanish. Understanding and speaking it can make the difference in signing a deal or growing the bottom line. Along with 350 million Latin Americans, 37 million Spaniards and other millions of North and Sub-Saharan Africans, more than 30 million residents of the United States speak Spanish. It is the world's third most spoken language after Chinese and English.

While Spanish was the first European language in what is now the United States, its importance has been recognized only recently. In the centuries that followed the arrival of Cristóbal Colón in 1492 in what has become known as the Americas, Spanish and English have influenced each other.

Given that English is a mi-

nority language in this hemisphere, given our continuing immigration and a higher Latino birth rate, given the growth of Spanish-language media and the high profile of Latino entertainers, English continues to adopt more Spanish language terms.

The most significant influence of Spanish on English was, initially, in the cattle industry. Spain introduced large-scale cattle ranching into Mexico, including what is now our West and Southwest. After the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the California Gold Rush accelerated a fusion of cultures with far-reaching consequences.

That fusion made Spanish terms, or corruptions of them, commonplace. One example is the adoption into English of the Spanish word *lariat*, the rope used to *lasso* (whoops, there's another one) cattle. Its origin is *la reata*, braided cowhide strips used for roping. This influence is felt in a variety of arenas. Places familiar to U.S. children stretch from Valdez, Alaska, and the Straits of Juan de Fuca to countless rivers, mountains and cities in California, which even has a town named Manteca (lard).

They flow throughout the Southwest: Las Vegas (the plains), Amarillo (yellow), San Antonio, Texas, on into Missouri (Calabazas, the name for

squash and the county of Mark Twain fame), and into Florida, Georgia (Vidalia onions were named for a Spanish general) and the Carolinas.

Literally hundreds of words from Spain and Latin America permeate U.S. English. You may quickly recognize among them: *salsa, siesta, taco, tamales, arroz con pollo, café con leche, campesino, caudillo, guerrilla, junta, mano a mano, merengue, plaza* and *vista*.

Scholar Jorge Castañeda, Mexico's former foreign minister, popularized the use of this gastronomic staple in referring to bilateral issues. "The whole enchilada," he said, letting the U.S. government know that Mexico wanted to negotiate the entire package of issues, including immigration, between the two neighbors.

With the growing number of Spanish-speakers in the United States, Spanish is becoming much more pervasive. Non-Hispanics are seeing the future and are learning our "second language." Candidates for elective office feel compelled to sprinkle some words and phrases into their public dialogue (they need serious coaching on language matters AND cultural issues, but that's another subject). Even profanity is known, understood, spoken and written by public figures who do not even speak Span-

ish.

That Latinos are "hot" explains the influence. In politics, music, fashion, cuisine, literature and other areas, the *idioma de Cervantes* is shaping English. Singers in English have "crossed over" and recorded in Spanish; Spanish-language artists are recording in English. More and more, native speakers of both languages are recording bilingually.

Thomas Jefferson, a true U.S. colonial visionary, gave this advice to his nephew Peter Carr in 1789: "Pay attention to the Spanish language and strive to acquire a complete knowledge of it. Our future relations with Spain and Latin America will convert that language into a valuable acquisition."

Jefferson was right; but an inward-looking, continental nation did not heed him. While many U.S. public figures now understand the language imperative, many do not. Some haughtily dismiss languages other than English as inconsequential.

Successful entrepreneurs, communicators and elected officials who are active in this arena, however, do understand. Language matters. Spanish matters. And it's not a joke. It has been around for centuries, and will be around for many more.

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La Influencia del Español en EEUU Continua Expandiendose

Por Frank Gómez

Hay un chiste acerca de los inmigrantes de Europa o Asia recién llegados a EEUU, que aunque un poco trillado, aun es popular, que dice: "Oye, ahora estás en América. Aprende español!"

Ese consejo le aplica a los principales ejecutivos de empresas, a expertos en mercadeo y comunicadores, candidatos a puestos electivos, editores y a otros que quieren llegar a los 45 millones de hispanos y su poder adquisitivo anual de más de \$653 mil millones.

Los que toman en serio estos segmentos del mercado deben tomar en serio el español. Entender y hablar dicho idioma puede conducir a la firma de un contrato o a que haya un saldo económico positivo. Además de unos 350 millones de latinoamericanos, 37 millones de españoles y otros tantos millones de oriundos de Africa del Norte y Meridional, en suma más de 30 millones de personas que residen en los Estados Unidos hablan español. Es el tercer idioma que más se habla en el mundo después de inglés y chino.

Aunque el español fue la primera lengua europea que se habló en lo que ahora es Estados Unidos, la importancia de dicho idioma no fue reconocida hasta hace poco. Posterior a la llegada de Cristóbal Colón en 1492, en lo que ahora se conoce como las Américas, el inglés y el español se han influenciado uno al otro.

El inglés continúa adoptando una mayor cantidad de palabras del español, debido a que el inglés es una lengua de minorías en este hemisferio. El inglés absorbe vocabulario del

español gracias a la constante inmigración de hispanohablantes al país, a la creciente tasa de nacimientos de latinos, al incremento de medios de habla hispana y al creciente número de artistas latinos que encuentran éxito en los Estados Unidos.

Al principio, la influencia más significativa del español en el inglés fue en la industria de la ganadería. España trajo a México la modalidad de estancias de ganado a gran escala, en lo que es ahora el oeste y el suroeste de los Estados Unidos. Después del Tratado de Guadalupe Hidalgo en 1848, la fiebre del oro en California aceleró una fusión de culturas que trajo grandes consecuencias.

Esa fusión popularizó palabras en español, o alteraciones de éstas. Un ejemplo es la adopción al inglés de la palabra *lariat*, la cuerda que se usa para tirarle el lazo (he ahí otra) al ganado. El origen de la palabra en inglés, *lariat*, nos viene del español, la *reata*, que se refiere a tiras de cuero trenzadas, las cuales se utilizaban como cuerda. Entre otras palabras, se encuentran las siguientes:

Esta influencia se percibe en una variedad de campos. Hay lugares conocidos entre los niños de EEUU, y que llevan nombres en español, que se extienden desde Valdez, en Alaska y los Estrechos de Juan de Fuca, hasta los ríos, las montañas y las ciudades en California, en donde incluso hay un pueblo que se llama Manteca.

Las palabras en español van desde el suroeste con Las Vegas (las planicies), Amarillo (el

color), y San Antonio, en Missouri (Calabazas, el nombre del vegetal y el condado donde Mark Twain se hizo famoso) y hasta Florida, Georgia (las cebollas Vidalia llevan el nombre de un general español) y las Carolinas.

Literalmente, cientos de palabras procedentes de España y Latinoamérica se han impregnado en el inglés de EEUU. Algunas de ellas las podrá reconocer un anglohablante rápidamente: *salsa, siesta, taco, tamales, arroz con pollo, café con leche, campesino, caudillo, guerrilla, junta, mano a mano, merengue, plaza* y *vista*.

Jorge Castañeda, hombre de letras y pasado ministro de asuntos externos de México, popularizó el uso de uno de los platos gastronómicos de dicho país al referirse a las relaciones entre ambos países. Castañeda utilizó la frase, "The whole enchilada", para dejarle saber al gobierno de EEUU que México quería negociar todo un grupo de asuntos, incluido la inmigración, entre los dos países vecinos.

Debido al creciente número de personas en Estados Unidos que hablan español, el mismo está mucho más difundido. Las personas que no son hispanas miran hacia el futuro y están aprendiendo nuestro "segundo idioma". Los candidatos a puestos electivos se sienten obligados a salpicar algunas palabras y frases en español en su discurso público (necesitan que se les adiestre seriamente en asuntos del lenguaje y cultura, pero eso es otro asunto). Las figuras públicas que no hablan español, incluso conocen, entienden, hablan escriben palabras soe-

ces.

El hecho de que los latinos estén a la moda explica la influencia. En la política, la música, la moda, la cocina, la literatura y otras áreas el idioma de Cervantes está moldeando al inglés. Los cantantes en inglés han hecho el consabido cross over al grabar en español. Y los cantantes de habla hispana ya graban en inglés. Cada día son más los hablantes de ambos idiomas que hacen grabaciones bilingües.

En 1789, Thomas Jefferson, un verdadero visionario de la época colonial de EEUU, le aconsejó a su sobrino Peter Carr, "Presta atención al idioma español y procura adquirir completo conocimiento del mismo. Nuestras futuras relaciones con España y América Latina convertirán ese idioma en una valiosa adquisición".

Jefferson estaba en lo cierto, pero una nación centrada en sí misma no le prestó atención. Mientras muchas figuras públicas ahora entienden la necesidad de hablar español, muchos otros no la entienden. Algunos despachan con altanería cualquier idioma que no sea inglés y lo tildan de inconsecuente.

Sin embargo, los empresarios exitosos, comunicadores y funcionarios electos activos en este campo, sí entienden. El idioma es importante. Y no es una broma. El español ha estado presente por siglos y lo estará por muchos más.

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Wake Up Call or Loud Message?

By Abel Cruz

According to local election night numbers, only 9 votes separated the top 2 vote getters in the race for County Commissioner in Precinct 3. If you are the type of person that has always thought that your vote doesn't count, look again.

Nine whole votes! The last time Mr. Flores was involved in the Primary election four years ago; his vote total equaled 54%, thereby giving him the primary win. This year the vote tally in the precinct was higher but his vote tally was at 44% thereby creating a runoff situation with Mr. Gutierrez who also garnered 44% of the vote.

Apparently some voters have been listening and getting the message that your voice is truly in your vote. Choose not to vote and your voice will not be heard.

One bit of good news this time around, there were 1,990 votes cast this year versus the 1,850 in the year 2000. That is a healthy 7.5% increase over the last primary, but nowhere near the number of registered voters in the precinct. And that is the sad part.

In this day and age, is there any reason why anyone would not exercise their right to vote?

Based on local reports, Mr. Flores sees the election results as a wakeup call. When I read his quote, it occurred to me that it was more of a loud message than a wakeup call. The message being that of the 1,990 voters in Precinct 3, at least those that cared enough to vote, 1,112 were not satisfied with Mr. Flores performance the past 4 years. If they were, they would surely have returned Mr. Flores to office. Can he turn it around in the run off, only time will tell?

On the other side of the coin, Mr. Gutierrez seems to have been successful in getting his message across to the voters. Apparently his campaign, built around a different management style and a desire to move the precinct forward and not just maintain the status quo, was heard loud and clear by the voters. The fact that he didn't win, was probably due to the fact that the third candidate, Ysabel Luna, siphoned off some votes from Mr. Gutierrez. Apparently 243 voters in the precinct agreed with Mr. Luna that change was needed and voted for him. On Wednesday, Mr. Luna threw his support behind Mr. Gutierrez, encouraging people that had voted for him to vote for Mr. Gutierrez in the run off election. What effect that will have, only time will tell.

Both Mr. Gutierrez and Mr. Flores have expressed a desire to debate at least a couple of times before the election in April, with Mr. Gutierrez expressing a desire to debate at least once a week.

And to quote "soon to be jailbird" Martha Stewart, "that's a good thing"!

It's a good thing, because maybe we'll just get to hear what each candidate's vision for the precinct will be for the next 4 years and beyond. What their plans are for the precinct besides county road maintenance? What their plan is for bringing precinct 3 up to equal par with the rest of Lubbock County? To all of those people who took the time to vote in this primary election, congratulations! It's obvious that you understand that if you want things to change then it is truly up to you. You should also feel very special since 1,990 of you who took the time to vote, made the decision for the rest of Precinct 3. Well, at least until April 13!

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COLUMN OF THE AMERICAS

By Patrisia Gonzales and Roberto Rodriguez

The Bush-Clinton Morality Play

A lie is a lie is a lie and is equally deplorable, whether it involves a blue dress or the loss of thousands of lives. As we see the Middle East, Iraq and Haiti burn, it sounds counterintuitive, but this is the moral lesson the previous president's detractors taught us.

Agree with this morality or not, it's indisputable that President Clinton did dishonor his office. Clinton's supporters rejected that right-wing morality play primarily because his detractors applied it disproportionately, selectively and with a vengeance. They didn't show the same outrage when the Reagan-Bush administration went behind the backs of Congress to conduct its secret and illegal wars in Central America and Africa at the cost of hundreds of thousands of lives.

None of this excuses Clinton's moral lapses. Few of his supporters were willing to concede that his conduct was unbefitting of a president. Instead, they gave him a pass because of that right-wing hounding, as exemplified by special prosecutor Kenneth Starr, who investigated Clinton endlessly.

During that time, pre-eminent indigenous human rights activist Suzan Harjo was the first person we know of who wasn't an extreme right-winger who was unequivocal in her denunciation of the president's moral transgressions. She was straightforward: The struggle to uplift humanity requires the highest of morals. The lesson here is that morality - including the view that all life is sacred - is not the domain of one political party. And just because one supports people politically doesn't mean one has to adopt their morality. Conversely, those who adopt high moral standards have to apply them equally, lest they be perceived as hypocritical.

Translated: A lie is a lie is a lie, regardless of who tells it, and it doesn't become truth simply because one parses or twists the meaning of words.

Enter the current President Bush's stalwart supporters and their "arguments" - The president never claimed that the Iraqi threat was imminent. (Echoes of "it depends on the meaning of what 'is' is.")

- The president cooperated with and acted on behalf of the United Nations. (No. The allies spied on - and the president willfully circumvented the will of - the United Nations.)

- We went to war because Iraq refused entry to the U.N. weapons inspectors. (This argument has been recently advanced by the president himself, as well as his supporters.)

- Iraq was a direct threat to the United States, and even though we found no WMDs, it was an even bigger threat than we previously thought. (Mind-boggling logic.)

The war was part of the president's road map and vision of bringing peace and democracy to the Middle East. (Anyone smell a Nobel Peace Prize?) - It is necessary to give up our rights and freedoms while we fight to protect our rights and freedoms. (Not yet content, the president and Attorney General John Ashcroft is clamoring for a USA Patriot Act II.) In all this, Saddam Hussein's extreme brutality (which the Reagan-Bush administration tolerated) has never been in question. No one has suggested he be given a pass.

The question before the nation has been one of truth, honesty and credibility. Can the administration's above rationales be considered simply incompetent explanations (or evidence of utter incompetence), as opposed to lies? Perhaps that question was answered recently when several dozen prominent scientists issued a report criticizing the administration's systematic misuse of science to bolster virtually all its policies, including the environment, arms control, public health... and war.

In regard to Iraq, the evidence suggests that the president was so desirous of war that he exaggerated and manipulated the truth for fear of losing his pre-emptive war initiative.

In his own mind, the president had a great cause; thus, the spilling of thousands of lives would be worth it. Unfortunately, that morality play taught to us by Clinton's detractors is that a lie, regardless of the cause (or how many fear-laced patriotic ads the president hurls at us) is still a lie. Forget the individual words. If the president is reduced to mincing words, then we already know the answer. Despite this, the administration's plan seems to be to continue to treat us all like children.

And now we come to understand the importance of credibility. Haiti's democratically elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, has charged that the United States kidnapped him and assisted the thugs rebels in staging their insurrection. The administration denies this. Who do we believe? Right about now, President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela and Cuba's Castro should be concerned.

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European Union Demands Justice for Guantanamo Prisoners

The European Parliament on Wednesday urged the United States to end the legal limbo which it has used to imprison some 660 people at its military base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, without trial for over two years and demanded they all be given proper access to justice.

"(We) ask the US authorities to immediately put an end to the current legal limbo in which the detainees held in Guantanamo Bay have, since their arrival, been placed," the European Union assembly said in a report it approved on Wednesday.

"(We ask Washington) to guarantee an immediate access to justice in order to determine the status of each individual detainee on a case-by-case basis (and) to ensure that those charged with war crimes receive a fair trial in accordance with international humanitarian law," the parliament said.

The parliament said it was "concerned about conditions at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base and about the physical and mental states of the detainees" and said Washington should allow them to communicate freely with their families and the authorities in their



The European Parliament this week urged the United States to end the legal limbo which it has used to imprison some 660 people at its military base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, without trial for over two years and demanded they all be given proper access to justice.

home countries.

The assembly said the conditions under which the prisoners are being held, and for which Washington has come in for severe international condemnation, should be discussed at the

forthcoming EU-US summit in June.

"We are all agreed on the importance of fighting terrorism but we cannot surrender our basic human rights and the values

continued on page 4

Mexico and Japan to Sign Free Trade Pact

Japan and Mexico have inched closer to signing a free trade pact after agreeing on industrial products, clearing the last major hurdle in bilateral talks, a Japanese trade official said Wednesday.

The two sides have reached a basic agreement on Japanese car and steel exports to Mexico following an accord on Mexican farm product exports to Japan, he said.

"With the basic agreement reached on industrial goods, we have taken a big step forward toward signing a free trade agreement with Mexico," said an official with the regional co-operation division of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry.

"The final stage of our negotiations is not yet over but we've overcome the biggest hurdles -- farm goods and industrial products," he said.

The basic agreement over industrial goods was reached Wednesday during a teleconference between Japan's trade minister, Shoichi Nakagawa, and Mexican Economy Secre-



tary Fernando Canales, the official said.

During the teleconference, Canales agreed to phase out tariffs on all steel imports from Japan within 10 years and allow tariff-free imports of Japanese cars for up to five percent of the Mexican automobile market in the first year, said public television network Japan Broadcasting Corp. (NHK).

Mexican tariffs on Japanese automobiles will be totally abolished in seven years, NHK said without citing sources.

The latest development came a day after Mexico's farm min-

ister, Javier Usabiaga, said "important progress" had been made in stalled talks on facilitating Japanese imports of Mexican farm products, including oranges, orange juice, beef, chicken and pork.

NHK also said the two nations were expected to conclude an FTA by the end of this month after they work out minor outstanding issues at ministerial-level talks this week.

Japan has an FTA with Singapore and is in bilateral free trade talks with Malaysia, the Philippines, South Korea and Thailand.

US Border is Open - For a President

By Tom Miller

When Mexican President Vicente Fox begins a two-day visit with George W. Bush in Crawford, Texas, Friday, the subject of immigration will surely dominate.

To reach Prairie Chapel Ranch, Mr. Fox will fly over the US-Mexico border and land at Waco, then motor a half-hour west. But what if he were coming to the US not as a neighboring president-rancher-former governor from the state of Guanajuato? What if he were heading for the States as an impoverished campesino from Guanajuato whose cousin, Manuel, had wired him money from Kansas to come to the bewildering promised land?

First, Vicente would travel either by trying to flag down a series of trucks heading north

about 500 miles on four different highways, or, for less than \$50, he'd journey by 12-hour bus ride to the border town of Nuevo Laredo. He might spend that first night in the local migrant refuge, one of many shelters established for northbound travelers in Mexican border towns. Earlier, smugglers, commonly called "coyotes," would have spotted him at the terminal and tried to sign him up for a trip north leaving at dawn the next morning.

"These are the front teeth of Latin America," the poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti has written of Mexicans at border town bus stations, "looking grim, tough, and hungry."

Next, for a fat fee the coyote would shepherd Vicente, and probably many others, across the Rio Grande slightly upriver

from Laredo. If all went well - and statistically it would - they'd be picked up and taken to a safe house before being ferried to a possible job in North Carolina or Illinois or just about anywhere in the States.

Vicente might stay in Texas, of course, but historically that state has been simply awful for Mexican labor, legal or otherwise. Mexican consuls in Texas, for much of the 20th century, sent reports to their Foreign Ministry in Mexico City about the brutal treatment suffered by their countrymen. Conditions were so bad during the 1941-1964 bracero program that Mexico refused to send workers to Texas much of the time, even legally.

There are horror stories these days about campesinos cheated

and robbed by coyotes at the border, stuffed into trucks and freight cars on their way north, dehydrated in the Arizona desert, exploited in Florida citrus fields, and living miserably in California labor camps. These dreadful reports are true - every one. What's seldom heard about, however, is the Mexicans and others who make it with minimal difficulty, whose success is not measured in statistics but on construction crews and in our kitchens and front yards.

Many are quick to blame the US Border Patrol, now part of the Department of Homeland Security, for border problems. And to be sure, its policy of massing agents near relatively safe urban areas results in crossers entering in more precarious locales. But the hapless

Border Patrol is neither the cause of nor the solution to the dilemma.

Immigration results from push-and-pull factors. The pushers can be famine, hurricanes, civil war, lack of jobs, drought. The pullers may be social stability, economic strength, or real job possibilities.

It's as true in sub-Saharan Africa and throughout Eastern Europe as it is across the 1,933-mile US-Mexico border.

And in the case of the border, the push factors are mainly economic, exacerbated by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which has worsened the plight of low-income Mexicans by allowing agricultural imports, such as corn, to undercut the price of their own products, and by

promoting market conditions to encourage growing crops for export rather than for subsistence.

The pull factors are job possibilities - and, increasingly, they're cultural as well: Look at American billboards, watch American movies. Wouldn't you like to live in that unreal world? From everything he's seen, northbound campesino Vicente certainly would.

Unless the two presidents meeting this week act upon the push-pull premise, yet another stab at stabilizing the southern frontier will surely meet the same fate as previous ones, and thousands more Vicentes will enter the US every week.

• Tom Miller is the author of "On the Border" and editor of "Writing on the Edge: A Borderlands Reader."

Festival



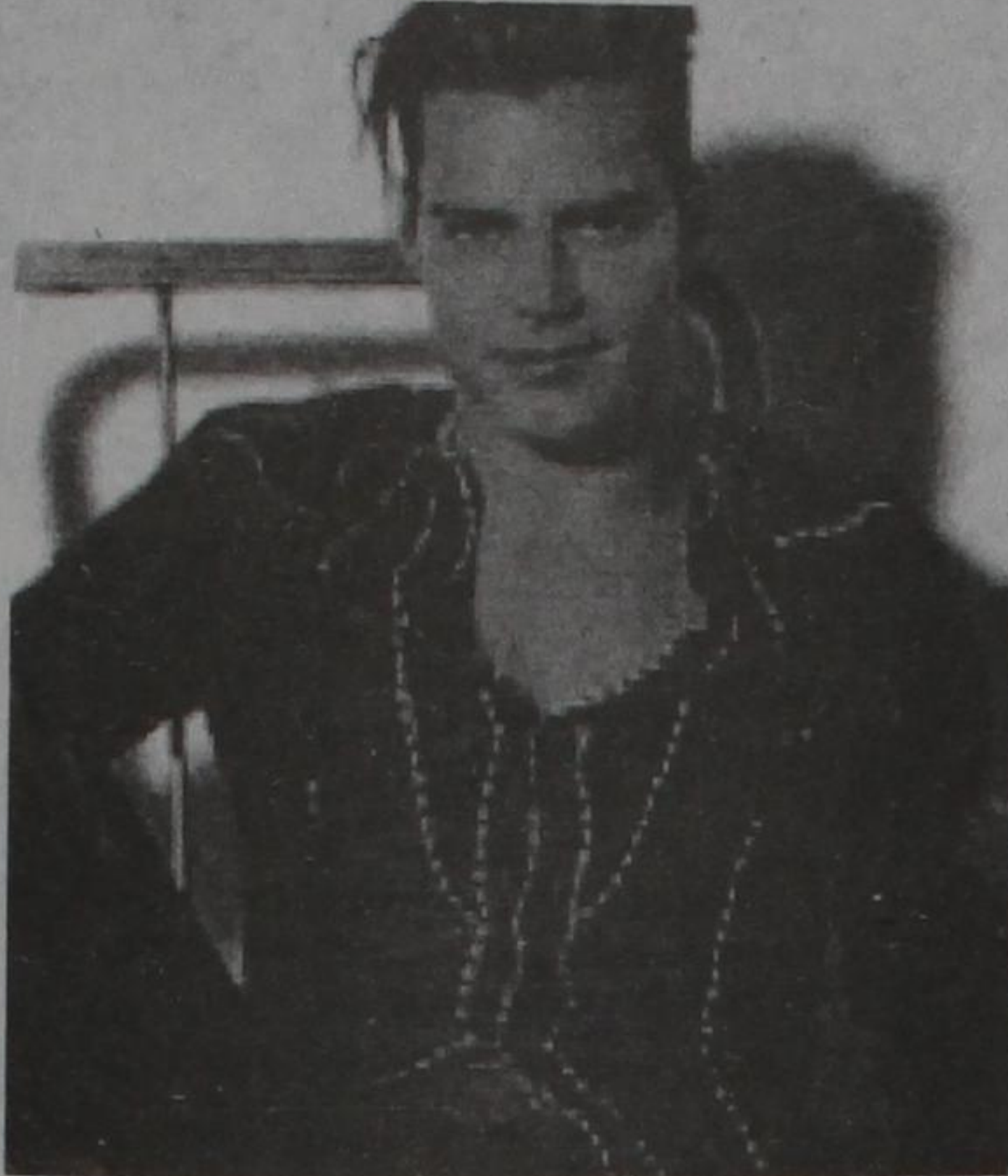
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Ricky Martin Defends Privacy of Relationship



circulated since he renewed his courtship with the Mexican TV hostess.

"I've been made a father about seven times and Rebeca has been made pregnant around nine. They never let up, but that is not our obsession. Our obsession is to be all right and for everything else to come when it will," stressed Ricky.

Having a child, he added, must be something wonderful, a miracle for any couple, but I think those things must be allowed to flow. "There are many things for my career, I want to spend enough time in Los Angeles, there is a new tour to be launched, a new album."

With respect to the legal battle against his ex representative and agent, Angelo Medina, the singer pointed out that it was

not an easy decision to file the suit for 2.5 million dollars at the court.

Ricky, whose suit was answered by Medina's counter-suit for 63.5 million dollars, stated that he had decided to end his professional relation with Medina since last year as part of his resolve to "continue taking steps to grow as a person and as an artist."

"I believe one opens and closes cycles. Angelo Medina had done great work for my career; there is no doubt about that. But this is about moving on, taking steps and continue taking risks growing as a person and as an artist," reiterated the singer.

"It's not that there were no more possibilities of moving forward and growing (during

his professional relation with Medina), I think that it was a time in which my inner being demanded growth in many aspects," explained the singer of "She bangs".

"Angelo was very involved in everything and I needed to face a more entrepreneurial position, beyond being only focused on music and the stage. It's a need I had," said Ricky, as he voiced his appreciation for the work Medina did during 12 years.

"I'm very grateful for all the work Angelo did during so many years of my career. I grew a great deal as an artist during the process and he also grew as a businessman," he added.

The singer expressed he harbored no hard feelings in his heart, since that would be

"digging my own grave. Although I have the right to those feelings, I also know that if I detach it will be very good for me."

Around six years ago, the Puerto Rican promoter asked the artist to be the godfather to his first daughter Fiorella, who is the youngest of his three children, at a religious ceremony held in the Cathedral in San Juan under strict private security.

"That's my girl. There is no reason for the relationship to suffer. She knows that her godfather loves her and he wants her to be a well-brought up young lady, with lots of values. I will try for her to always have God the Father in mind, because that is my duty as her godfather," he ended. NTX

Puerto Rican singer Ricky Martin remained true to his resolution to continually defend the privacy of his relationship with Mexican TV presenter Rebeca de Alba, "just like any other couple in the world".

The vocalist stated in declarations to local daily El Vocero that for the time being he does not wish to give interviews alongside his girlfriend, since he considers that the entertainment media knows enough about them already,

and he feels that as a couple they need more space and privacy.

"We need our space, just as any other couple in the world," said the singer of "Jaleo and 'Livin' la vida loca", going on to state, "this is our life, and what has already been made public is enough."

The artist commented that his relationship is very stable and that becoming a father is a wish that will be fulfilled in due time, in spite of so many versions of pregnancy having

Reto Para Reyes

Dicen que José Reyes tiene las manos del venezolano Omar Vizquel, cubre la cantidad de terreno del boricua Roberto Alomar y supera en fortaleza de brazo a su compatriota Rafael Furcal.

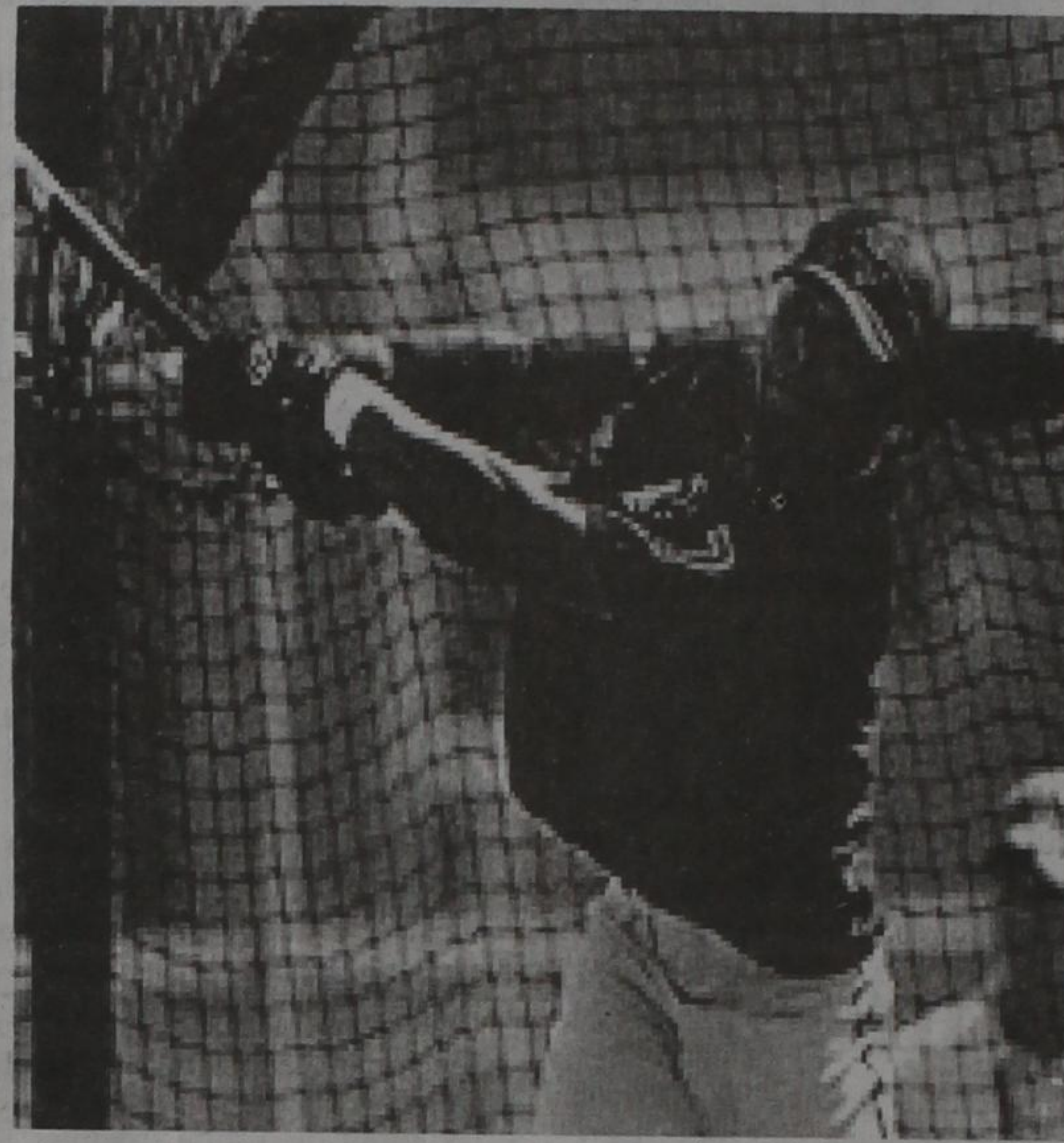
De ahí que los Mets de Nueva York vean al dominicano como una suerte de salvador de una franquicia que en el 2003 esperaba contender por el título y quedó relegada al sótano de su División.

Tras brillar en las Menores, probó en apenas 42 juegos con los Mets que los reportes sobre su talento no estaban errados, dándole un nuevo sentido a la palabra esperanza.

"José es tan bueno como lo habían vendido", expresó el lanzador ex Marlin, Al Leiter. "Uno siempre quiere que conecten por donde juega él, porque es un out automático".

En un principio, los Mets ascendieron a Reyes por unos días, pero su trabajo fue tan soberbio que el club lo retuvo por el resto de la temporada.

"Aprendí mucho y, sin duda, eso habrá de servirme esta temporada", indicó Reyes. "No



estoy contento con haber llegado. Ahora empieza la lucha por la permanencia".

Cuando los Mets firmaron a

los pocos días comenzó su proceso de aclimatación.

"Me parece como si hubiera jugado segunda toda la vida", afirmó Reyes. "He trabajado mucho en la mecánica. Creo que contaremos con una buena combinación".

Pero los Mets no sólo se frotan las manos por el talento defensivo de Matsui y Reyes. El equipo sueña con que se conviertan en una réplica ofensiva del exitoso dúo Marlin de Juan Pierre y Luis Castillo al tope de la alineación.

Tanto el japonés como Reyes -que se convirtió en el jugador más joven de la historia en pegar jonrones desde ambos lados del plato- son ambidextros que pueden aunar fuerza y tacto.

"El equipo espera bastante de nosotros", señaló Reyes. "Creo que ya tocamos fondo y ahora nos toca salir a flote".

Las expectativas alrededor de Reyes son altas. La prensa neoyorquina lo califica de fenómeno, de mágico y de otros fabulosos adjetivos.

"Lo importante es dar el máximo en cada juego", apuntó Reyes, quien cumplirá 21 años en junio. "Ya después empezarán los premios por su propio peso. Para ganar el Guante de Oro, primero hay que evitar los errores".

Kazuo Matsui, el mejor pelotero japonés desde la llegada de Hideki Matsui a los Yankees, le pidieron a Reyes que pasara a la intermedia.

El equipo temió que el dominicano recibiría con cierto desagrado la noticia, pero Reyes aceptó gustosamente el reto de una nueva posición, y a

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From Page Three

Europe shares with America in this fight," Danish Liberal MEP Ole Andreasen, who drafted the report, told the parliament during a debate on the issue on Tuesday.

"The transatlantic relationship is invaluable and irreplaceable and could be a formidable force for good in the world (but) only if human rights are clearly respected as universal and non-negotiable," the parliament said.

The US administration says the men imprisoned at Guantanamo, who come from 42 countries, are suspected Taliban or Al-Qaeda activists. It has classified them as "enemy combatants", a category human rights groups say does not exist and which Washington is using to keep them imprisoned indefinitely without charge, beyond the reach of either US or other courts.

The US has refused to declare the men -- most of whom were seized in Afghanistan following the attacks of September 11, 2001 -- "prisoners of war", thus depriving them of the legal protection provided by the Geneva Conventions on the rules of war.

In February the BBC reported that three Afghan boys, who were between 11 and 13 when they were arrested by US forces, were released after two years at Guantanamo after an international outcry over their detention. They were never charged.

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The Community Health Center of Lubbock, located at 1318 Broadway, is pleased to announce that their John A. Buesseler Eye Clinic has been chosen as the site of a Glaucoma research project funded by Friends of The Congressional Glaucoma Caucus Foundation of Lake Success, New York. The glaucoma research mission is to determine if the individual participant has glaucoma and to answer the question "What is the occurrence of glaucoma in Lubbock County?"

The principal investigator in this clinical project is Dr. Deborah r. Eezzuduemhoi, M.D., Glaucoma Specialist with the Department of Ophthalmology, TTUHSC.

We will be conducting screenings this month on Tuesday, March 16, and Wednesday, March 17, at the clinic. Screenings may also be requested Monday through Friday, except Thursday afternoons, with no appointment necessary. Please come to CHCL 1318 Broadway, second floor, or you may call 806-765-2611, ext 248, for more information.

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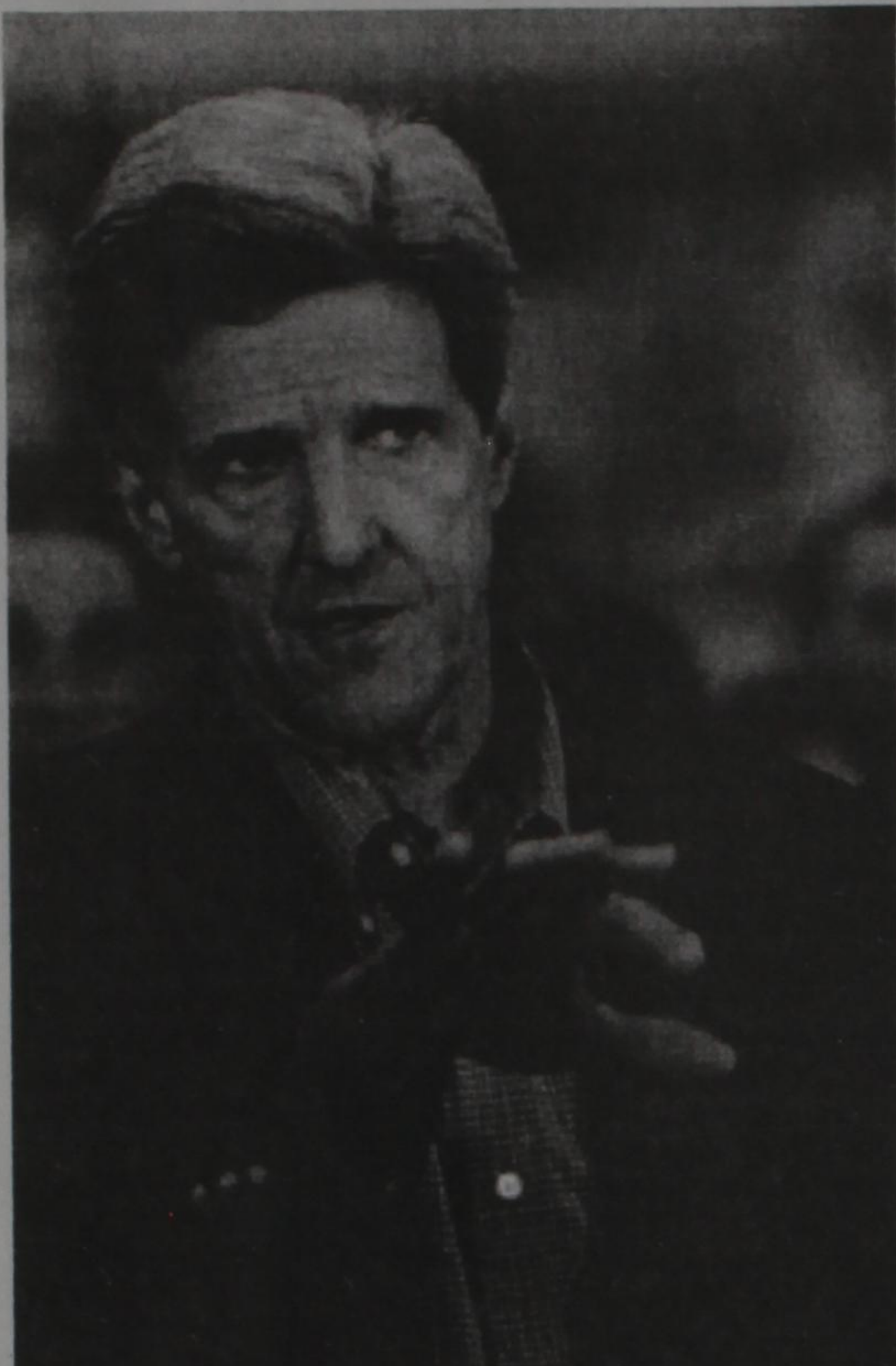
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Dirigentes Latinos Esperan Ser Reconocidos por Kerry



Por Fresia Rodríguez Cadavid

Al lograr John Kerry la victoria el 2 de marzo en California, Nueva York y siete estados más, así efectivamente asegurándose la nominación del partido demócrata a la candidatura presidencial, los dirigentes latinos buscan nuevas señas de Kerry respecto a lo que puede significar para la comunidad hispana su presidencia.

Gabriela Lemus, directora de política pública y legislación para la Liga de Ciudadanos Unidos Latinoamericanos,

(LULAC por sus siglas en inglés), indica que hasta el momento, Kerry no ha formulado un mensaje para los latinos. "Se está haciendo. La verdadera campaña, de mentes y corazones" empezará ahora para la comunidad latina", afirma.

Larry González, director de la sede en Washington, D.C. de la National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, a su vez indica que no se sabe todavía cómo caerá Kerry a los latinos. "Kerry va a tener que llevar su caso a los votantes latinos en los estados

que son campo de batalla", donde ya Bush ha comenzado a emitir propagandas televisivas en pro de su propia campaña, explica.

Lemus percibe el hecho que Kerry sea veterano de la guerra de Vietnam como un punto a su favor entre los latinos. Su crítica del acta para la educación, No Child Left Behind (que ningún niño quede rezagado) y posiciones en cuanto a la economía y la salud son también muy importantes, asegura. "Sea la educación o la economía, Kerry necesitará planes muy reales y concretos para dirigirse a estas áreas con la comunidad latina".

En las elecciones primarias demócratas de California, Kerry ganó con más de 3 a 1 entre los latinos, según indica una encuesta de salida realizada por el periódico The Los Angeles Times. Otras encuestas de salida señalan que los hispanos fueron el 15 por ciento del voto total, y de ellos, 7 de cada 10 votaron por Kerry. Tuvo una victoria rotunda en el estado, llevándose el 64% del voto total.

El senador John Edwards, de Carolina del Norte, quien obtuvo 20 por ciento del voto, fue el único candidato aparte de Kerry quien logró apoyo de dos cifras. Edwards se retiró de la campaña al día siguiente.

En Nueva York, donde 70 por ciento del voto de la elección primaria demócrata se deriva, tradicionalmente, del área metropolitana de la ciudad de Nueva York, Kerry se llevó el 61% del voto. La ciudad de Nueva York cuenta con una población 27 por ciento latina, según reza cifras del Negociado del Censo.

Dag Vega, vocero de la campaña de Kerry, le indicó a Hispanic Link que las victorias

que logró Kerry en California y en Nueva York, así como en Arizona y en Nuevo México, se debían en parte al respaldo que le dieron y la campaña que le hicieron líderes fuertes latinos. "Su mensaje de promover oportunidades en la educación y la salud es importante y tiene reflejo entre la comunidad hispana", afirma Vega.

Con la nominación asegurada, Kerry ahora debe nombrar a su candidato para vice-presidente. Entre los nombres más notables están los de la senadora Hillary Rodham Clinton, de Nueva York, el representante Richard Gephardt de Missouri, el general Wesley Clark, Edwards y el gobernador de Nuevo México, Bill Richardson. Richardson, estadounidense de ascendencia mexicana, ha dicho repetidamente que quiere acabar su primer término como gobernador de Nuevo México y volver a lanzarse para gobernador en el 2006. Según González, si Kerry seleccionara a Richardson y lograra vencerle que fuera su vice-presidente, sería un tremendo impulso para los latinos, ya que demostraría lo lejos que han llegado en términos políticos en los últimos años. "Marcaría un hito en la evolución de la política latina, sin lugar a duda".

Señala que la decisión para vice-presidente se determinará según la estrategia que adopte Kerry. Explica que Edwards resultaría popular entre los electores del sur, mientras que Richardson serviría de ayuda para Kerry para asegurarse la victoria entre el electorado latino y el suroeste.

En 2004, Hispanic Link News Service. Distribuido por Tribune Media Services International.

Viva Aztlan Festival Schedule of Workshops and Competition

Friday's Schedule - March 12, 2004

Registration 9:00 a.m. Civic Center Theatre Lobby
 Children's Workshop 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Rodolfo Hernandez Revolucion
 Mariachi Workshop 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
 Lunch (On your own) 12:00 to 1:30 p.m.
 Children's Workshop 1:30 to 3:15 p.m.
Jose Munoz Michoacan or Zacatecas
 Mariachi Workshop 1:30 to 3:15 p.m.
 Children's Competition 4:00 to 4:20 p.m. "Ballet Folklorico Nuestra Herencia - Lubbock, TX
 4:25 to 4:45 p.m. "Ballet Folklorico Guadalupano - Muleshoe, TX"
 4:50 to 5:10 p.m. "Ballet Folklorico Paloma Libre - Lorenzo, TX"
 5:15 to 5:35 p.m. "Fiesta del Sol - Lubbock, TX"
 Dinner (On your own) 5:35 to 7:00 p.m.
 Children's Competition
 7:00 to 7:20 p.m. "Star Dance Academy - Hobbs, NM"
 7:25 to 7:45 p.m. "Ballet Folklorico Aztlan - Lubbock, TX"
 7:50 to 8:10 p.m. "Roswell Folklorico - Roswell, NM"
 Mixer 8:35 to 10:00 p.m. Ramada Inn - Campbell Room

Saturday's Schedule - March 13, 2004

Adult's Workshop 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. - Jose Tena Chihuahua
 Mariachi Workshop 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. Rooms 108 - 111
 Director's Workshop 10:15 to 11:45 a.m. Workshop
 Rodolfo Hernandez Technique
 Mariachi Workshop 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Rooms 108 - 111
 Lunch (On your own) 12:00 - 1:30 p.m.
 Mariachi Competition
 12:30 to 12:45 p.m. "Mariachi Amistad - Lubbock, TX"
 12:50 to 1:05 p.m. "Mariachi Nueva Generacion - Lubbock, TX"
 Mariachi Workshop 1:30 - 3:00 p.m. Rooms 108 - 111 (If needed)
 Adult's Competition
 1:30 - 1:55 p.m. "Star Dance Academy - Hobbs, NM"
 2:00 - 2:25 p.m. "Fiesta del Sol - Lubbock, TX"
 2:30 - 2:55 p.m. "Alma Folklorica de Oklahoma - Guyton, OK"
 3:00 - 3:25 p.m. "Ballet Folklorico Paloma Libre - Lorenzo, TX"
 3:30 - 3:55 p.m. "Paisano Folklorico Dancers - Terlingua, TX"
 4:00 - 4:25 p.m. "Ballet Folklorico Quetzales - El Paso, TX"
 4:30 - 4:55 p.m. "Mexico 2000 Folklorico Dance - Dallas
 5:00 - 5:25 p.m. "Ballet Folklorico Aztlan - Lubbock,
 5:30 - 5:55 p.m. "Mexico-Espana Dance School - San Antonio, TX Dinner
 6:00 - 7:30 Provided by Viva Aztlan Festiva Location: St. Joseph's Hall - 102 N. Ave P.
 Last year's winner 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.
 Mexico 2000 Folklorico Dance - Showcase
 Awards Ceremony 9:15 - 10:00 p.m. Civic Center Theatre

Fox Defiende a la Clase Política

viene de la primera pagina

En gira de trabajo por el fronterizo estado de Baja California, Fox garantizó que "no por el hecho de serlo, todos los políticos están sujetos a conductas cuestionables".

Recalcó que, "afortunadamente, existen muchas y muchos mexicanos, muchas y muchos políticos, muchas y muchos servidores públicos que estamos decididos a servir, que estamos decididos a cumplir y que estamos decididos a rendir cuentas dentro del espacio público".

El gobierno federal que él preside, dijo, ha asumido como principio la exigencia ciudadana de combatir la corrupción y, en este sentido, aseveró que "nuestros esfuerzos en pro de la transparencia y de la rendición de cuentas están por encima de intereses coyunturales y conflictos particulares".

Fox aseguró por tanto que "vamos a seguir trabajando para librar a los mexicanos de este terrible lastre que tanto frena nuestro desarrollo".

Videosobornos
 La declaración del jefe de la nación se produce en momentos en que los medios nacionales revelan encuestas de opinión que confirman el grave descrédito en que han caído políticos a raíz de la divulgación de una serie de videos en los que se exhiben a legisladores, delegados, y funcionarios públicos en presunto tráfico de influencias a cambio de jugosas sumas de dinero.

Al tiempo que el mandatario mexicano salía en defensa de un sector de la clase política, en la ciudad de México el procurador general Rafael Macedo de la Concha informaba que el empresario Carlos Ahumada y el ex director de finanzas del gobierno del Distrito Federal, Carlos Ponce, son investigados por presunto lavado de dinero.

Ahumada, dueño del diario El Independiente y del equipo de futbol Santos Laguna, aparece en una de esas filmaciones entregando gruesas sumas de dólares tanto a René Bejarano, ex líder de la fracción del Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD) en la asamblea del DFI, como a Carlos Imaz, jefe delegacional en Tlapan.

Interrogado por los reporteros sobre supuestos donativos que el mismo Ahumada habría hecho también a la fundación Vamos México, que encabeza Marta Sahagún, esposa del presidente Fox, el procurador respondió que no depende de su voluntad el hecho de que puedan o no investigar a esa asociación, ya que eso lo determinará la investigación del caso.

Del mismo modo comentó que carece de conocimiento en el sentido de que los videos hayan sido promovidos por la Oficina Federal contra el Narcotráfico (DEA).

En una entrevista con TV Azteca la noche del lunes, Fox rechazó "tajantemente" las acusaciones de López Obrador, señalado como el político con más posibilidades de llegar a la presidencia en 2006.

"De las menciones con respecto al gobierno federal y a mi gobierno, sí tengo que ser categórico: no hay absolutamente nada, ninguna participación. Mal haría yo en estar promoviendo la destrucción de nuestras instituciones, de nuestros partidos políticos", dijo el mandatario.

Horas antes, el jefe de gobierno capitalino, el perredista López Obrador, insistió en que cuenta con información de que el gobierno mexicano pidió a las autoridades del vecino país su apoyo para la filmación de

Ponce, en la que se ve al ex funcionario apostando y despilfarrando dinero que no puede justificar con su salario.

"Tenemos la hipótesis de que hubo participación de un órgano de inteligencia del extranjero para poder filmar estas imágenes", declaró el gobernante de la capital mexicana al perfilar que, de acuerdo con los convenios internacionales, serían "la Procuraduría y una dirección de la Secretaría de Hacienda", las que habrían hecho la solicitud a través de la DEA.

Interpretó que, mediante este operativo aparentemente binacional, "pensaron que era un misil dirigido a mí, que iba a afectar todo mi entorno, y que la conclusión a la que podían llegar es que "si el secretario de finanzas y el secretario particular (Bejarano) estaban involucrados en casos de corrupción, luego entonces el jefe de gobierno también es un corrupto".

El mandatario local repitió que sus adversarios políticos no van a lograr acusarlo de corrupto, porque "lo que es más importante en mi vida son mis principios, mi integridad y mi honestidad".

Hasta antes de que se produjeran los escándalos de los videos, la semana pasada, López Obrador era el político más popular de México. Tenía mejores calificaciones que los demás gobernantes más visibles, incluyendo el presidente Fox. Los expertos lo consideraban como el personaje que tenía más probabilidades de

ganar las elecciones presidenciales de 2006.

Por su parte, el presidente del Instituto Federal Electoral, Luis Carlos Ugalde, informó que este órgano ha iniciado una investigación preliminar en torno a las actividades financieras tanto del PRD como del Partido Verde Ecologista de México (PVEM), ambos involucrados en escándalos.

El funcionario admitió que, aunque el primer partido está inmiscuido en un problema de índole local, se pretende averiguar si eventualmente los recursos monetarios también fueron usados en las campañas proselitistas a nivel nacional.

Según Ugalde, "por el momento no hay evidencia, pero Federico Doring [diputado del PAN] presentó una denuncia ante nosotros, y tenemos que proceder en esa materia".

En un elemento complementario a la cadena de escándalos, el propio ex diputado Bejarano, captado guardando muchos billetes en la bolsa en la oficina del empresario Ahumada, denunció que ha empezado a recibir amenazas de muerte.

Concretamente dejó escuchar dos advertencias altisonantes que quedaron grabadas en su radiolocalizador y en las que, en pocas palabras, ruegan porque pronto muera.

Especuló que los mensajes están siendo enviados por los individuos que orquestaron el escándalo y, aunque no lo afirmó de manera tajante, insinuó que entre ellos podría estar el polémico Ahumada.

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For additional information contact the Texas Tech University System Project Manager Michael S. Knight. Contact via phone (806) 742-2116, Fax 806-742-2241 or e-mail: michael.knight@ttu.edu.

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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE

Case No. 3-98-0211 – Coleman, et al. vs. General Motors Acceptance Corporation

NOTICE OF PROPOSED CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT

TO: BLACK AND HISPANIC GMAC CUSTOMERS whose Standard Rate Contracts were acquired between May 10, 1989 and present by General Motors Acceptance Corporation (“GMAC”), General Motors Acceptance Corporation, North America, or General Motors Corporation.

WHY IS THIS NOTICE IMPORTANT? If you had an account with GMAC or any of the other companies listed above, involving the purchase of a motor vehicle at any time between May 10, 1989 and the present, you might be a member of a certified class action lawsuit in which a proposed Settlement has been reached. Plaintiffs allege that GMAC has a policy or practice that results in Blacks and Hispanics paying more than similarly situated white customers in violation of the Equal Credit Opportunity Act. Capitalized terms used in this Notice are defined in the Settlement Agreement.

THIS IS ONLY A SUMMARY NOTICE. You can log onto www.ECOA-settlement.com to review a copy of the Settlement Agreement and all documents submitted to the Court in connection with preliminary approval, which contain further information about the Settlement.

THE SETTLEMENT: If the Settlement is approved by the Court, GMAC has agreed to: (i) not acquire any Contract from dealerships if the APR is more than 2.50 percentage points above the Buy Rate (2.00 percentage points if it is an Extended Term Contract); (ii) add a disclosure in Contracts produced and distributed by GMAC informing vehicle purchasers that the Annual Percentage Rate may be negotiable and that the selling dealership may assign the Contract and retain its right to receive a portion of the finance charge; (iii) launch a Diversity Marketing Initiative involving 1.25 million preapproved firm offers of credit to Black and Hispanic consumers over the next several years with respect to vehicle financing at a participating GM dealership; (iv) contribute \$1.6 million to fund certain consumer education and assistance initiatives with respect to credit financing; and (v) pay Class Counsels' attorneys fees up to \$9 million and costs up to \$600,000 with Court approval. Because this Settlement resolves a claim for declaratory and injunctive relief only, there will be no compensatory damages paid to Class Members. Class Counsel has advised the Court of agreements entered into between Class Counsel and the Class Representatives concerning litigation related payments for their efforts devoted to this Litigation, and will request reimbursement of those payments as costs under Section 9.2 of the Settlement Agreement. These requests are outlined in Exhibit 1 to the Preliminary Order, but in no way is the Court's final approval of the settlement contingent on approval of the reimbursement requests. You will be releasing all claims for equitable, declaratory and/or injunctive relief that have been made, or could have been made, in this Litigation under the ECOA or any other federal or state statute or any common law theory arising out of the business practices challenged in the Litigation, that arose or that will arise on or before the Effective Date. Notwithstanding the foregoing, you will not be releasing any claims for monetary relief.

OBJECTIONS: If you wish to object to the Settlement, to Class Counsel's request for attorney's fees and expenses or to Class Counsel's request for reimbursements to Class Representatives, you must deliver by hand or send by first class mail, postage prepaid, your position with all supporting papers, such that they are received on or before March 22, 2004, to:

Plaintiffs' Co-Counsel:
National Consumer Law Center
Attn: GMAC Settlement
77 Summer Street, 10th Floor
Boston, MA 02110-1006

GMAC's Co-Counsel:
Thomas E. Dutton
Kirkland & Ellis
200 East Randolph Drive
Chicago, IL 60601

You also must file such papers, showing proof of service upon all counsel identified above, with the Clerk of the United States District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee, 801 Broadway, Room 800, Nashville, Tennessee 37203, on or before the same day. Any Class Member who does not make an objection in the manner provided shall have waived such objection and shall forever be foreclosed from making any objection to the fairness, adequacy or reasonableness of the proposed Settlement, to Class Counsel's request for attorney's fees and expenses or to Class Counsel's request for reimbursements to Class Representatives.

FAIRNESS HEARING: A hearing will be held before the Honorable Aleta A. Trauger in Courtroom 873 at the United States District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee, 801 Broadway, Nashville, Tennessee, on March 29, 2004, at 9:00 a.m. C.S.T. (the "Fairness Hearing"), to determine whether the proposed Settlement is fair, adequate and reasonable and should be approved; and whether an award of attorney's fees, costs and reimbursements should be made to Class Counsel, including related reimbursements to Class Representatives. **You may, but are not required to, attend the Fairness Hearing.**

For More Information, or to obtain a copy of the Settlement Agreement as described above, you can contact the lawyers representing the Class: National Consumer Law Center, 77 Summer Street, 10th Floor, Boston, MA 02110 (617-542-8010); Bernstein Litowitz Berger & Grossmann LLP, 1285 Avenue of the Americas, 38th Floor, NY, NY 10019 (212-554-1400); Law Office of Clint W. Watkins, 5214 Maryland Way, Ste. 402, Brentwood, TN 37027 (615-376-7000); Terry & Gore, 209 Tenth Ave. South, Ste. 310, Cummins Station, Nashville, TN (615-256-5555); or Gilmore Law Office, 116 Court St., P.O. Box 729, Grove Hill, AL 36451 (251-275-3115).

Please Do Not Contact The Court Or The Clerk Of The Court Concerning This Notice

Dated: February 18, 2004

By Order of the Court

THE HONORABLE ALETA A. TRAUGER
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE

CORTE DE DISTRITO DE ESTADOS UNIDOS PARA EL DISTRITO MIDDLE DE TENNESSEE

Caso No. 3-98-0211 — Coleman, et al. vs. General Motors Acceptance Corporation

AVISO DE PROPUESTA DE ARREGLO POR ACCIÓN DE CLASE

PARA: CLIENTES AFROAMERICANOS E HISPANOS DE GMAC cuyos Contratos con Tasa Estándar fueron celebrados entre el 10 de mayo de 1989 y la actualidad por General Motors Acceptance Corporation (“GMAC”), General Motors Acceptance Corporation, North America o General Motors Corporation.

¿POR QUÉ ES IMPORTANTE ESTE AVISO? Si usted tuvo o tiene una cuenta con GMAC o con cualquier otra compañía indicada arriba, en relación a la compra de un vehículo motorizado en cualquier período que abarque entre el 10 de mayo de 1989 y la actualidad, usted podría ser un miembro del juicio certificado de acción de clase por el cual se ha llegado a una propuesta de Arreglo. Los demandantes alegan que GMAC tiene una política o práctica que hace que los clientes afroamericanos e hispanos paguen más que los anglosajones violándose así la Ley de Igualdad de Oportunidades de Crédito. Los términos escritos en mayúscula en el presente Aviso están definidos en el Contrato de Arreglo.

ÉSTE ES SÓLO UN RESUMEN DEL AVISO. Usted puede visitar www.ECOA-settlement.com para examinar una copia del Contrato de Arreglo y de todos los documentos presentados en la Corte en relación con la aprobación preliminar, la cual contiene más información sobre el Arreglo.

EL ARREGLO: Si el Arreglo es aprobado por la Corte, GMAC acordará: (i) no recibir ningún Contrato de los concesionarios si el APR supera en más del 2.50 por ciento la Tasa de Compra (2.00 por ciento si es un Contrato con Término Extendido); (ii) agregar una cláusula en los Contratos realizados y distribuidos por GMAC informando a los compradores de vehículos que la Tasa Porcentual Anual puede negociarse y que el concesionario donde compraron el vehículo podrá transferir el Contrato y retener su derecho de recibir una parte del cargo por financiamiento; (iii) lanzar una Iniciativa de Mercadeo sobre la Diversidad que incluya 1.25 millones de ofertas de crédito preaprobadas para consumidores afroamericanos e hispanos a distribuirse en los próximos años con relación al financiamiento del vehículo en concesionarios GM participantes; (iv) contribuir \$1.6 millones al financiamiento de ciertas iniciativas educativas y de ayuda para el consumidor relacionadas con el financiamiento de crédito y (v) pagar los honorarios legales de los Abogados de Clase hasta \$9 millones y costas hasta \$600,000 con la aprobación de la Corte. Debido a que este Arreglo resuelve una reclamación por desagravio de mandato judicial y declaratorio solamente, no se le pagará indemnización compensatoria a los miembros de la acción de clase. El Abogado de Clase ha advertido a la Corte que existen acuerdos celebrados entre el Abogado de Clase y los Representantes de Clase con respecto a pagos relacionados con el litigio hechos por éstos en sus esfuerzos por llegar al presente Litigio, y solicitará el reintegro de dichos pagos tomándolos como costas, las cuales están especificadas en la Sección 9.2 del Contrato de Arreglo. Estas solicitudes están descritas en el Documento anexo 1 de la Orden Preliminar, pero de ninguna manera la aprobación final de la Corte depende de la aprobación de las solicitudes de reintegro. Usted librára todas las reclamaciones por desagravio de mandato judicial y/o declaratorio equitativo que se han hecho o pudieron haberse hecho, en virtud de este Litigio bajo la ECOA o cualquier otro estatuto estatal o federal o teoría de derecho consuetudinario resultante de las prácticas comerciales objetadas en este Litigio, que han surgido o surgirán en la Fecha de Vigencia o antes de ésta. No obstante lo antedicho, usted no librára ninguna reclamación por desagravio monetario.

OBJECIONES: Si usted desea objetar el Arreglo, la solicitud del Abogado de Clase para recibir los honorarios de los abogados y las costas del litigio o la solicitud del Abogado de Clase para recibir los reintegros de los Representantes de Clase, deberá sustentar su posición aportando toda la documentación acreditativa que tenga en su poder y tendrá que entregarla en mano o por correo de primera clase con franqueo prepago. Dicha documentación deberá ser recibida antes del 22 de marzo de 2004 o ese mismo día y deberá enviarse a:

Coabogado de los demandantes:
National Consumer Law Center
Attn: GMAC Settlement
77 Summer Street, 10th Floor
Boston, MA 02110-1006

Coabogado de GMAC:
Thomas E. Dutton
Kirkland & Ellis
200 East Randolph Drive
Chicago, IL 60601

Usted también debe presentar dichos documentos, mostrando la debida prueba de la notificación judicial a todos los abogados identificados arriba, ante el Secretario de la Corte de Distrito de Estados Unidos para el Distrito Middle de Tennessee, 801 Broadway, Room 800, Nashville, Tennessee 37203, antes o ese mismo día. Cualquier Miembro de la Clase que no presente objeción alguna de la manera indicada será descartado y nunca más podrá entablar objeción alguna sobre la imparcialidad, suficiencia o razonabilidad del Arreglo propuesto, la solicitud del Abogado de Clase de los honorarios de los abogados y las costas del litigio o la solicitud del Abogado de Clase de los reintegros a los Representantes de Clase.

VISTA SOBRE IMPARCIALIDAD: Una vista se llevará a cabo ante la Honorable Aleta A. Trauger en la Sala 873 (Courtroom 873) en la Corte de Distrito de Estados Unidos para el Distrito Middle de Tennessee, 801 Broadway, Nashville, Tennessee, el 29 de marzo de 2004 a las 9:00 de la mañana (hora del centro) (la "Vista sobre imparcialidad") con la finalidad de determinar si el Arreglo propuesto es justo, adecuado y razonable, si éste debería ser aprobado y si deben adjudicarse al Abogado de Clase honorarios legales, costas y reintegros; incluyendo los reintegros a los Representantes de Clase. **Usted puede, pero no está obligado, a asistir a la Vista sobre imparcialidad.**

Para obtener mayor información, o solicitar una copia del Contrato de Arreglo como se describe arriba, usted puede comunicarse con los abogados que representan a la Clase: National Consumer Law Center, 77 Summer Street, 10th Floor, Boston, MA 02110 (617-542-8010); Bernstein Litowitz Berger & Grossmann LLP, 1285 Avenue of the Americas, 38th Floor, NY, NY 10019 (212-554-1400); Law Office of Clint W. Watkins, 5214 Maryland Way, Ste. 402, Brentwood, TN 37027 (615-376-7000); Terry & Gore, 209 Tenth Ave. South, Ste. 310, Cummins Station, Nashville TN (615-256-5555) o Gilmore Law Office, 116 Court St., P.O. Box 729, Grove Hill, AL 36451 (251-275-3115).

Por favor, no se comunique con la Corte ni con el Secretario de la Corte en referencia al presente Aviso

Fecha: 18 de febrero de 2004

Por orden de la Corte

LA HONORABLE ALETA A. TRAUGER
CORTE DE DISTRITO DE EE.UU.
PARA EL DISTRITO MIDDLE DE TENNESSEE