

U.S. Foreign-Born Up To 26 Million

By Joseph Torres
Is it good news or should we sound the alarm?
Foreign-born residents living in the United States have climbed to 10 percent of the population, its highest mark in nearly 60 years.
Using its latest 1997 figures, the Census Bureau released a report this month showing that half of this country's foreign-born are native to Latin America. Mexico alone contributes 7 million of the 26 million immigrants living here.
In 1930, the figure was 11.6 percent, and the vast majority of U.S. immigrants were from Europe. The new census study reveals an increase of 1.3 million immigrants over 1996.
Louis DeSipio, a political science professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, points out that the current crop of newcomers face serious obstacles, including low educational attainment and a lack of services stemming from declining tax bases in urban areas. Most immigrants, he notes, settle in cities along our coasts.
By no coincidence, the five states with foreign-born populations higher than the 10 percent national average all have

coastlines. They are: California -- 24.9 percent; New York -- 19.6 percent; Florida -- 16.4 percent; New Jersey -- 15.4 percent; Texas -- 11.3 percent.
While leaps in immigration offer fodder for political debate, the governors of four of those five (all except California) have consistently praised the contributions of immigrants, rejecting any temptation to blame "newcomers" for any economic or perceived social woes their states may endure. So have the mayors of most major cities in those states. Los Angeles' Richard Riordan and New York City's Rudolph Giuliani, both Republicans, are shining examples.
Hispanic leaders with intimate knowledge of immigrant communities appreciate their fairness and candor.
Luis Miranda, president of Hispanic Federation of New York City, credits immigrants with spearheading the revitalization of that metropolis' decayed neighborhoods by opening small businesses, creating jobs, and keeping money circulating in the communities. In many metropolitan areas, transportation system improvements de-

manded by suburban communities have enabled more affluent city residents to move to the suburbs, reducing the urban tax base.
DeSipio points to the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act as being responsible for altering the color of the immigrant flow.
The act eliminated national-origin quotas that favored European nations and opened the door to greater immigration from Asian, African and Latin countries. It based immigration on family reunification and labor market skills.
The new census report reveals that about a quarter of all foreign-born residents 25 or older have completed four or more years of college, the same as the national average. But it also notes that 35 percent did not complete high school, compared to 16 percent for native-born residents.
Rice University professor of sociology Stephen Kleinberg stresses that it is harder now for immigrants to improve their economic status because blue collar jobs no longer lead to prosperity or stability, as was the case earlier in the century. Hispanic immigrants tend to be unskilled

with less education, making it particularly difficult for them to get ahead, he says.
The census report states additionally that only a third of all foreign-born U.S. residents have become naturalized U.S. citizens. Those who immigrate from Mexico have historically been slow in applying for U.S. citizenship. But in the past two years, they've been applying in record numbers.
Now, in spite of inexcusable Immigration and Naturalization Service processing backlogs, the "citizenship" percentage appears ready to climb fast.
It's ironic that the individuals and groups behind the legislation to deny legal-resident non-citizens equal treatment are providing the impetus. As more and more Latino immigrants become citizens and register to vote, Hispanic political muscle flexes fatter.
That's good news for a community that is still badly under-represented in state and federal political chambers. And it's cause for those who prefer not to share their spoils of power to sound the alarm.
(Joseph Torres is editor of the national news digest Hispanic Link Weekly Report, in Washington, D.C.)

News Briefs

Texas Growers Fined for Child Labor

Farm labor contractors illegally employed children as young as six to pick onions in the Rio Grande Valley earlier this month, the Labor Department said Friday, announcing \$34,200 in civil penalties against six growers.
"Young children should not be working in the fields even if they are with a parent," said Labor Secretary Alexis Herman.
Labor's Wage and Hour Division found that nine farm labor contractors employed 36 children aged 12 and under in the fields during the first two weekends of April in violation of federal child labor laws. Half of the children were under the age of 10, four of them 6-year-olds.
Federal labor laws generally prohibit the employment of children under the age of 12 in agriculture.
The children were working for nine individual contractors who were supplying farm labor for six Rio Grande Valley companies -- B. Burns Farms of Faysville, J.S. McManus Produce Co. of Weslaco, Pemelton Farms of Mercedes, Sharyland Plantation of Mission, Starr Produce Co. of Rio Grande-City and Val Verde Farms of McAllen.
The action is one of more than 50 enforcement sweeps the Wage and Hour Division will conduct in agriculture this year as part of a targeted enforcement program in "salad bowl" commodities -- onions, garlic, lettuce, cucumbers and tomatoes.
The Texas case "is significant in the respect that for years we've heard from the Department of Labor that there hasn't been any enforcement in child labor because children couldn't be found working in agriculture," said Darlene Adkins, vice president of the National Consumers League, which has launched a child labor coalition.
"So, we're very pleased that they've targeted this industry finally for child labor violations," she added. "There are so many children working in this industry."

Charitable Gifts Disclosure Legislation Blasted

A Congressional bill requiring public disclosure of charitable contributions by publicly held corporations continues to draw opposition from both companies and nonprofit organizations.
In letters to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), which is studying the potential effect of the bill, critics of the proposed legislation have argued that public disclosure would add costs and invite pressure from special interest groups and shareholders, resulting in less corporate giving.
Rep. Paul E. Gillmor (R-OH), who introduced the bill a year ago, said that shareholders had a right to know how managers were distributing corporate assets and that disclosure would discourage managers from making hard-to-justify donations to pet charities.
"I don't think companies get much sympathy if they can't defend what they're doing with shareholders' money," said Rep. Gillmor. Although the official comment period on the disclosure bill has ended, the SEC said it is still accepting letters on the issue. (Philanthropy Journal Digest, April 8; New York Times, April 3)

Clinton's Education Plan Under Fire

President Clinton's proposal to use federal money to hire teachers and build schools is drawing criticism from Republicans and advocates for disabled children who say he should first ensure that states have the money to educate youngsters with special needs.
The federal government this year gave states about \$3.8 billion to help local schools educate disabled children. That is well below the target amount set out in legislation a quarter-century ago.
Meanwhile, special education services such as transportation, classroom aides, equipment and even private school tuition for children with special needs are a major and fast-growing expense.
The nonpartisan Economic Policy Institute says nearly \$2 out of every \$10 spent on education in 1996 went to special needs.
For the past two years, Congress has given more to special education than the administration proposed, bringing the federal share of overall costs up to 10 percent. The law authorizes federal spending of up to 40 percent.
A budget blueprint passed this month by the Senate would increase spending for special education by \$2.5 billion over five years, far from enough to meet the 40 percent goal.
Governors, parents of disabled children, school boards and state officials have all called for more federal support. Some Democrats agree, but they dispute the idea that a tradeoff with other education programs is necessary.
"We've found money for highway funds," said Sen. Chris Dodd, D-Conn., referring to a \$217 billion transportation spending bill making its way through Congress. "We can find it for" special education.
The Education Department says 40 percent federal support is a cap, not an obligation, and the "free appropriate" education required under the 1975 law is a civil right, not an unfunded mandate as the GOP argues.
Paying for 40 percent of special education would cost the federal government \$14.7 billion in 1999, the department estimates, consuming nearly half its discretionary budget.
Special education requirements are becoming increasingly tough on states, especially as courts reaffirm their responsibility to support local schools.
Ohio voters must decide this spring whether to raise the state sales tax by a penny, in part to meet special education costs. Michigan last year settled a lawsuit over special education by agreeing to pay \$1 billion to school districts.

New Law Could Boost Nonprofit Pay

Recently enacted "intermediate sanctions" by the IRS are designed to impose new financial penalties on nonprofits that pay their executives excessive salaries. In the past, compensation was determined to be reasonable if it compared closely with salary levels at similar nonprofits.
However, while the new law is designed to rein in nonprofit pay, it may actually open the door for many nonprofits to boost pay levels, according to the Nonprofit Business Alert, a new monthly publication for nonprofit executives from Prentice Hall's Bureau of Business Practice.
The "fine print" in the conference committee report (the explanatory language behind the new law) says that nonprofit pay levels can be compared with for-profit organizations as well as nonprofits in determining reasonableness.

"El Respeto al Derecho Ajeno es La Paz."
"Respect for the Rights of Others is Peace."
Lic. Benito Juárez

EL EDITOR

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Comentarios de Bidal

by Bidal Agüero
I guess promises didn't last very long. The mud started flying this week as Frank Gutiérrez's ad rang out over the radio claiming that Victor didn't have any respect for women.



The ad only aired a few times but I guess a few were to many as I hear that it was promptly pulled after many complaints from women who didn't like the letter "B" being said.
And who knows what is being said about Frank, maybe not on the radio but in back rooms.
So what about the issues? Mike Montes seems to know them. His comments to a forum this past week were straight and to the point about what needs to be done. This while Windy and Mikel argue about people not liking one of them or taking trips to watch the Grammys.

Tonight the candidates will square off at a forum sponsored by the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. It's going to be interesting to see what happens.
Next week I will offer a few suggestions as to who we think is the better candidates to serve on the City Council and as Mayor. We might even try and think about the other City Council positions even though it seems that they could care less about the Hispanic votes as evidenced by their ignoring all Hispanic media. Don't they know that we make up pretty close to 30% of the population? And they don't all live in Arnett Benson.
****Pico de Gallo****
Don't forget to see Comentarios on Telemundo at 11:30 on Saturday. We might even make our endorsements there. Also on the show in two weeks will be the return of el Indio Pata Rajada. El que sabe todo y nada de todo."

México Lograra Paz Con Guerrilla Zapatista Antes Del Año 2000

Tuxtla Gutiérrez (México), 15 abr (EFE).- El Gobierno de México alcanzará un acuerdo de paz con el rebelde Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN) antes del año 2000, aseguró hoy el gobernador del estado de Chiapas, Roberto Albores Guillén.
"Vamos a llegar al año 2000 con paz, el gobierno federal y estatal juegan a una salida política democrática", dijo Albores Guillén a corresponsales extranjeros en Tuxtla Gutiérrez, capital de Chiapas, 750 kilómetros al sureste de la capital mexicana.
El gobernador de Chiapas afirmó que "independientemente de las consideraciones catastrofistas, y no pecamos de ingenuos, en este momento están dadas las condiciones para la negociación" con la guerrilla zapatista.
El EZLN se levantó en armas en enero de 1994 y tras diez días de enfrentamientos se pactó un alto el fuego que sigue vigente y que permitió una primera fase de negociaciones en marzo de ese mismo año que concluyó sin acuerdos.
En febrero de 1995 el gobierno lanzó una ofensiva para recu-

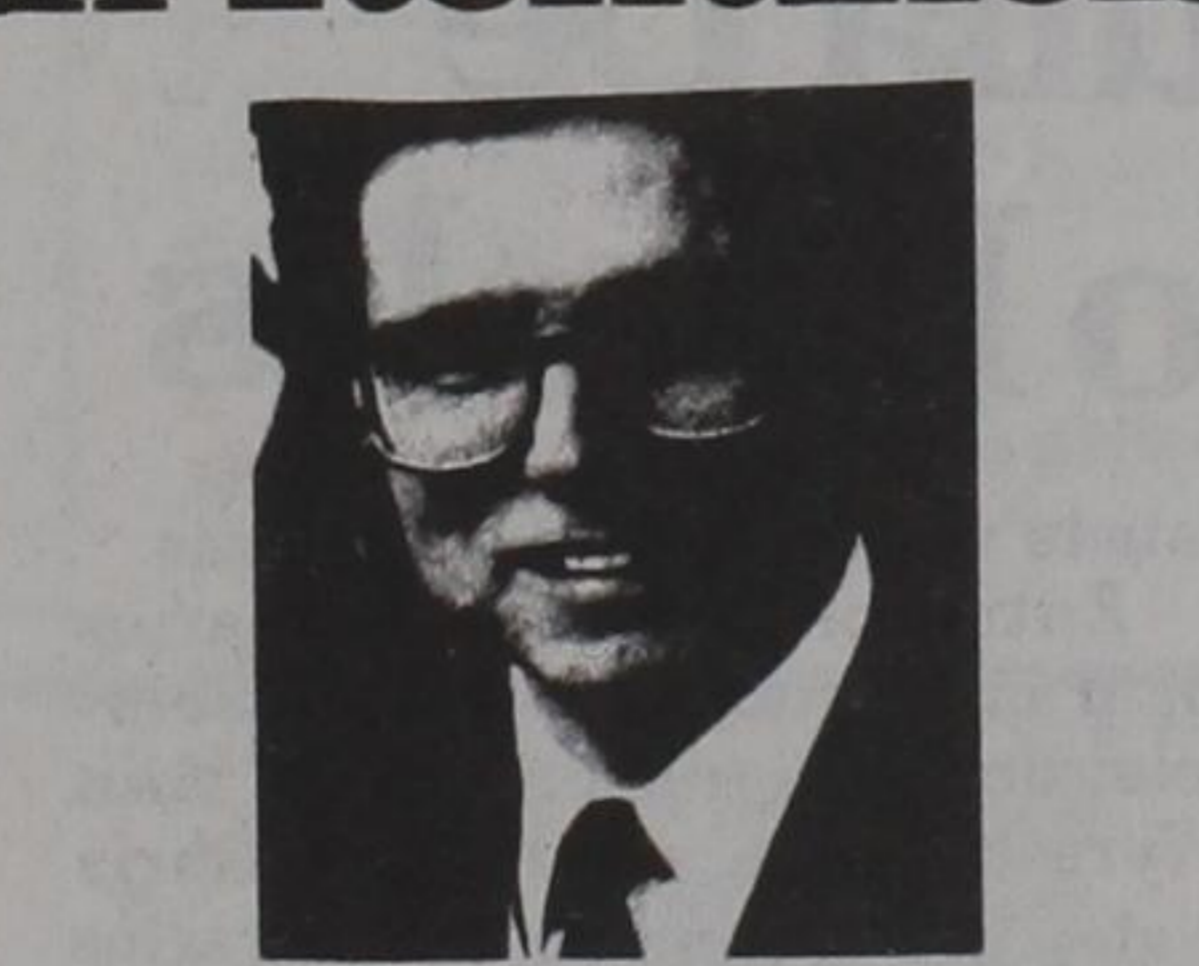


perar las zonas ocupadas por el EZLN y un mes después el Congreso aprobó una ley de Diálogo.
El proceso de paz comenzó en abril de 1995 y en febrero de 1996 el Gobierno y el EZLN firmaron los Acuerdos de San Andrés en materia de derechos y cultura indígena.
En septiembre de 1996, el EZLN abandonó la mesa de diálogo al argumentar que el gobierno mexicano no cumplía los Acuerdos de San Andrés, y desde entonces se encuentra

suspendida la negociación.
El gobernador rechazó que en Chiapas haya una persecución contra los extranjeros, en referencia a las decisiones de las autoridades de migración que han decretado la expulsión de diecinueve de ellos desde enero pasado.
El sábado pasado, el gobierno detuvo a cuatro españoles, tres estadounidenses, dos belgas, dos canadienses y una alemana, y los acusó de apoyar a simpatizantes del EZLN en la creación de municipios "autónomos".
Albores Guillén declaró que en Chiapas se aplicará la ley en el caso de los 38 municipios "autónomos" creados por simpatizantes del EZLN y que si en éstos se atropella la ley, no se procederá a desmantelarlos, sino a aplicar la ley y hacer valer el imperio de la ley.
El gobernador afirmó que si los llamados municipios "autónomos" quieren ejercer otra potestad jurídica y atentar contra la existentes, definitivamente, vamos a actuar en consecuencia y confirmo que el gobierno se encuentra recabando información sobre éstos para que cese la impunidad.

Organizaciones Latinas Lamentan Renuncia De Peña

Por Carmen Alicia Fernández
Washington, 6 abr (EFE).- Las máximas autoridades estadounidenses y organizaciones latinas en este país lamentaron hoy la renuncia de Federico Peña como secretario de Energía en el gabinete del presidente Bill Clinton, donde era el único hispano.
El presidente Clinton alabó a Peña por sus "servicios invaluable" durante más de cinco años en dos cargos de este gabinete y dijo que había aceptado con "resignación" su renuncia.
Por su parte, las organizaciones hispanas pidieron a Clinton que lo sustituya con otro latino.
Peña fue el primer hispano en alcanzar un puesto de relevancia a nivel nacional en Estados Unidos y en su honor bautizaron una calle en Denver (Colorado), en donde fue alcalde a principios de esta década, como "Peña Boulevard".
Clinton agregó que el funcionario le "proporcionó gran parte del análisis que me dio la confianza" para presionar y poner en marcha medidas que detengan el calentamiento global del planeta "sin dañar la economía" de Estados Unidos.
Por su parte, el vicepresidente Al Gore se declaró "entristecido". Peña explicó en una conferencia de prensa que su intención es dedicarse a su familia y dirigir su trabajo hacia la empresa privada. Aclaró que permanecerá en el cargo hasta junio.



Aunque en círculos políticos de Washington la decisión de Peña no pareció inesperada, líderes de organizaciones hispanas se declararon sorprendidos por la renuncia y lamentaron que salga del gabinete de Clinton.
"En realidad me tomó por sorpresa su renuncia, no lo supe hasta esta mañana", dijo a EFE Ingrid Durán, directora de la Asociación Nacional de Oficiales Latinos Nombrados y Elegidos (NALEO por sus siglas en inglés).
"Queremos decirle al presidente Clinton que es importante tener un gabinete diverso. El tiene que ingeniárselas para hacer lo mejor en favor de esa representatividad", agregó.
"Aunque nadie me lo había comunicado todavía, me parece que la renuncia de Peña es muy lamentable, porque es el único hispano que teníamos en el gabinete", dijo Mario Acosta Vélez, director del Comité Latino de Derechos Civiles de Washington, D.C.
Durante el primer Gobierno de Clinton, el gabinete tenía

dos hispanos, ambos de ascendencia mexicana, Peña, en el Departamento de Transporte y Henry Cisneros, en el de Vivienda. Cisneros dejó el Gobierno el año pasado y es presidente ahora de la principal cadena de televisión hispana de Estados Unidos, Univisión, y actualmente se enfrenta a un proceso judicial por un escándalo sentimental que le podría haber inducido a cometer perjurio.
En Colorado, donde Peña realizó su carrera política y llegó a ser alcalde de Denver, los políticos hispanos también exigieron que Clinton mantenga la representación de los latinos en su gabinete.
"Por favor, mantenga a un hispano en ese cargo", pidió a Clinton el senador estatal hispano Rob Hernández.
El legislador agregó que hay muchos hispanos calificados para sustituir a Peña en la cartera de Energía.
Entretanto, Bob Martínez, también senador estatal en Colorado, expresó que la decisión de Peña es "razonable".
"Lo entiendo, ha sido el secretario que más tiempo ha permanecido con Clinton. Seguramente ya está cansado y quiere estar con su familia", dijo.
Por su parte, el senador federal por Colorado, Ben Nighthorse, el único indígena en el capitolio estadounidense, descartó los rumores de que Peña pensaba postularse como candidato a la gobernación del estado.

El Editor, Lubbock, Tx, April 23, 1998

No Hay Mas Que Un Modo De Honrar A César Chávez

Por Dick Meister

Los Trabajadores Agrícolas Unidos (UFW en inglés) están adentrándose en su sexto año sin la dirigencia de César Chávez -- un año en el cual el sindicato bien puede anotarse una victoria tan importante como sus triunfos principales bajo Chávez antes de su muerte el 22 de abril de 1993.

La ley de California que sigue siendo la única ley de todas partes que otorgue derechos de negociación colectiva a los trabajadores agrícolas, los primeros contratos sindicales para los trabajadores agrícolas -- todo eso y más se ganó durante los 29 años de Chávez como presidente del UFW.

Muchos de los contratos han caducado, sin embargo, y la ley de la negociación rara vez ha sido cumplida en los años recientes.

Pero en este quinto aniversario de la muerte de su presidente fundador, el UFW tiene esperanzas de invertir lo que ha sido una disminución continua de la suerte del sindicato.

Las esperanzas descansan primordialmente en la campaña del UFW a fin de ganar derechos de sindicalización para los 20,000 hombres, mujeres y niños que recogen la cosecha de fresas de California, que es altamente gananciosa. La victoria sería un acontecimiento importante, comparable a la obtención de contratos de los cultivadores de uvas del estado que llevó al crecimiento rápido del UFW hace un cuarto de siglo.

El primer acontecimiento importante se produjo la semana pasada, cuando el UFW firmó su primer contrato con un productor de fresas desde que empezó la campaña. Swanton Berry Farms, un gran cultivador de bayas orgánicas al norte de Santa Cruz, firmó el contrato después que sus trabajadores acordaron por votación ser representados por el UFW en unas elecciones de votación secreta realizadas por el estado el 2 de diciembre.

En verdad, la campaña ha atraído un apoyo sólido de las



organizaciones sindicales, políticas, eclesiásticas, de los derechos civiles, comunitarias y de consumidores, así como de otros grupos cuyo respaldo fue crítico para obtener los contratos de las uvas.

Un apoyo especialmente sólido ha procedido del presidente de la AFL-CIO, John Sweeney, y de otros funcionarios de la federación sindical. Ellos y sus sindicatos afiliados han puesto millones de dólares en esa gestión y proporcionado al UFW cientos de organizadores y otras ayudas importantes.

La necesidad de contratos se hace dolorosamente evidente. Los trabajadores, cuya mayoría está formada por mexicanos y mexicanoamericanos muy pobres, hacen parte del trabajo más arduo y peligroso de las labores agrícolas por jornales de subsistencia. Sólo promedian \$8,500 al año y tienen pocos, si algunos, beneficios marginales. Se pueden dar por afortunados si tienen agua fresca que beber y servicios sanitarios limpios en los campos de trabajo.

Los trabajadores no tienen seguridad en sus empleos y casi ninguna protección contra los actos arbitrarios de los empleadores. Ellos relatan de jefes que despiden a los trabajadores, les bajan su paga y hasta los

golpean por quejarse de las circunstancias, o por dedicarse a la actividad sindical; que hostigan sexualmente a las mujeres recogedoras y que descansan en gran medida sobre el trabajo infantil ilegal.

Ellos trabajan doblados por mitad, recogiendo las fresas a mano. La fruta es demasiado frágil como para ser recogida, excepto por trabajadores que se inclinan y se mueven rápidamente a lo largo de surcos estrechos, en agua de un pie de profundidad, inclinándose hasta el nivel del suelo para recoger una baya, después otra y otra más. Las afecciones de la espalda son comunes, como lo son las que surgen del uso extremadamente frecuente de los insecticidas por parte de los cultivadores, de los que se sabe que ocasionan el cáncer y los defectos congénitos -- sin embargo, el seguro médico es raro.

Los trabajadores están en los campos durante casi 12 horas al día, a menudo por una paga que es aún menor que el mínimo legal. Después de eso, van a sus casas, que sólo son tugurios, apartamentos minúsculos, cuartos de moteles o dormitorios congestionados, o a una casa que comparten dos o tres familias, o media docena de hombres sol-

teros o algo así.

La lucha del UFW para lograr derechos sindicales para los trabajadores se centra en la región de Watsonville y Salinas, en el norte de California, que por sí sola produce más de la mitad de las fresas que se consumen en los Estados Unidos y el Canadá.

Los 270 cultivadores de fresas de la región pueden evidentemente permitirse la sindicalización. La producción y los réditos de más de \$650 millones al año son mayores que las de cualesquiera vendedores de frutas, exceptuando a los cultivadores de manzanas. Ellos continúan elevándose anualmente.

Sin embargo, a medida que las utilidades de los cultivadores se han elevado a niveles sin precedentes, la proporción de los trabajadores ha disminuido continuamente, hasta el punto de que ahora sólo ganan nueve centavos por cada dólar que gastan los consumidores por las fresas que ellos cultivan y recogen.

Las presiones del UFW y sus partidarios han dado a algunos de los trabajadores sus primeros aumentos de jornales en un decenio. Para algunos otros eso ha significado también seguro de salud financiado por los empleadores, mejores circunstancias de trabajo y otras concesiones.

Pero eso ha sido menos que suficiente. Para la mayoría de los recogedores de fresas, así como para la mayor parte de los trabajadores agrícolas, la paga continúa siendo miserablemente baja, los beneficios inexistentes y las condiciones de trabajo abismales.

Ellos necesitan y merecen no menos que la vida decente que César Chávez procuró para aquellos que cultivan y cosechan los alimentos que nos mantienen a todos.

(Dick Meister, columnista por cuenta propia de San Francisco, es co-autor de "A Long Time Coming: The Struggle to Unionize American Farmworkers" -- Macmillan)

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There's But One Way To Honor César Chávez

By Dick Meister

The United Farm Workers is embarking on its sixth year without the leadership of Cesar Chavez -- a year in which the union may very well score a victory as important as its major triumphs under Chavez before his death on April 22, 1993.

The California law that remains the only law anywhere to grant collective bargaining rights to farmworkers, the very first union contracts for farmworkers -- all that and more was won during Chavez's 29 years as UFW president.

Many of the contracts have expired, however, and the bargaining law has scarcely been enforced in recent years.

But on this fifth anniversary of its founding president's death, the UFW has hopes of reversing what has been a steady decline in the union's fortunes.

The hopes rest mainly with the UFW campaign to win union rights for the 20,000 men, women and children who harvest California's highly profitable strawberry crop. Victory would be a breakthrough comparable to the winning of contracts from the state's grape growers that led to the UFW's rapid rise a quarter-century ago.

The first breakthrough came last week, when the UFW signed its first contract with a strawberry producer since the campaign began. Swanton Berry Farms, a large organic berry grower north of Santa Cruz, signed on after its workers voted to be represented by the UFW in a state-conducted secret ballot election on Dec. 2.

Certainly the campaign has drawn strong support from the labor, political, church, civil rights, community and consumer organizations and other groups whose backing was crucial to obtaining the grape contracts.

Particularly strong support has come from AFL-CIO President John Sweeney and other officers of the labor federation. They and their affiliated unions have put millions of dollars into the effort and provided the UFW with hundreds of organizers and other important help.

The need for contracts is painfully obvious. The workers, most of them dirt-poor Mexicans and Mexican-Americans, do some of the roughest and most dangerous of all farm work for a pittance. They average but \$8,500 a year and have few, if any, fringe benefits. They're fortunate if they have fresh drinking water and clean field toilets at work.

The workers have no job security and almost no protection against the arbitrary acts of employers. They tell of bosses who fire workers, cut their pay or even beat them for complaining of conditions or for engaging in union activity, who sexually harass women pickers, who rely heavily on illegal child labor. They work bent in half, picking the strawberries by hand. The fruit is too fragile to be harvested except by stooping workers who move swiftly along narrow furrows a foot deep in water, bending to ground level to snatch up a berry, then another and another. Back ailments are common, as are ailments stemming from the growers' extremely heavy use of pesticides known to cause cancer and birth defects -- yet health insurance coverage is rare.

The workers are at it for as many as 12 hours a day, often

for pay that is even less than the legal minimum. After that, it's home to a shack, tiny apartment, motel room or crowded dormitory, or to a house shared by two or three families or a half-dozen or so single men.

The UFW's battle to win union rights for the workers is centered in the Watsonville and Salinas region of Northern California that alone produces more than half the strawberries consumed in the United States and Canada.

The region's 270 strawberry growers obviously can afford unionization. The output and returns of more than \$650 million a year are greater than those of any fruit sellers except apple growers. They continue to rise yearly.

Yet as grower profits have risen to record levels, the workers' share has steadily decreased, to the point that they

now get only nine cents for every dollar spent by consumers for the berries they grow and pick.

Pressures from the UFW and its supporters have given some of the workers their first pay raises in a decade. For some others it's also meant employer-financed health insurance, better working conditions and other concessions.

But that hardly has been enough. For most strawberry pickers, as for most farmworkers, pay remains miserably low, benefits non-existent, and working and living conditions abysmal.

They need and deserve no less than the decent life Cesar Chavez sought for those who grow and harvest the food that sustains us all.

(Dick Meister, a freelance columnist in San Francisco, is co-author of "A Long Time Coming: The Struggle to Unionize America's Farm Workers" -- Macmillan)

Mas Tecnicas Patrulla De Frontera Contra Flujo Ilegales

Washington, 15 abr - El nuevo director de la Patrulla de Frontera de EEUU, Gustavo de la Viña, de origen español, ha declarado a EFE que incrementará la preparación del personal y el uso de tecnología avanzada para atajar eficazmente el flujo de indocumentados.

Pero el nuevo jefe de la Patrulla de Frontera, presentado en un acto especial en la sede del Servicio de Inmigración de Estados Unidos (INS) junto con otros 6 nuevos altos cargos de esa entidad, afirmó que los 7.200 agentes bajo su mando también tendrán la obligación de auxiliar a los extranjeros ilegales que corran peligro.

"Adoptaremos medidas de protección de los inmigrantes indocumentados ante los graves peligros que afrontan en sus recorridos, especialmente en la zona del desierto, porque nuestra tarea requiere una alta dosis humana para gente que se expone a grandes riesgos", señaló.

De la Viña, cuyos agentes patrullan la línea divisoria de alrededor de 3.200 kilómetros entre EEUU y México, explicó que concentrará sus esfuerzos en áreas de alta incidencia de inmigrantes que pretenden entrar ilegalmente en Estados Unidos, como San Diego (California), Tucson (Arizona) y McAllen (Texas).

Unos 2.200 agentes han sido

asignados a la vigilancia en el área de San Diego, que abarca 107 kilómetros y que es considerada uno de los puntos preferidos por los extranjeros que, sin cumplir los requisitos migratorios, pretenden entrar al territorio estadounidense.

De la Viña indicó que aprovechará al máximo el refuerzo de agentes --unos 1.200 más para 1998-- decidido por la directora del Servicio de Inmigración (INS), Doris Meissner, para mantener selladas las fronteras de este país.

Gustavo de la Viña, nacido en Texas de padres españoles, que trabaja desde hace 28 años en el INS, sustituye a Dough Krame, quien desempeñó la jefatura de la Patrulla de Frontera de Estados Unidos los últimos diez años.

La responsable del INS, Doris Meissner, presentó el martes a los siete nuevos miembros de su jefatura de administración, nombrados como parte de un proceso de reorganización para mejorar la atención al público y la vigi-

lancia de las fronteras del país.

Entre los nuevos funcionarios figuran la subdirectora del Servicio de Inmigración, Mary Ann Wyrsh, quien sustituye a Chris Sale, que renunció hace varios meses.

Michael A Person es el nuevo ejecutivo de operaciones, que dependerá directamente de Meissner; Consejero General es Paul W. Virtue; jefe de la Patrulla de Frontera, el hispano Gustavo de la Viña, mientras que la dirección regional del Este estará a cargo de William R. Yates.

En la jefatura de la región central estadounidense ha sido nombrado Mark K. Reed, y en la de la región del oeste Johnny N. Williams.



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Sittin' Here Thinkin' A Delicate Balance

Lost amidst the self-satisfied news of continued American prosperity and unbridled stock market growth is the dirty little secret that, for many poor families, welfare reform is simply not working.

Nearly everyone in America agrees that people who can work should work. There is nothing new in that. In fact, the federal Family Support Act of a decade ago supported that notion and called for massive job training and placement services that were, unfortunately, never adequately funded. The problem, then and now, is that there are too few available jobs, too little training, and too many welfare recipients who lack the skills to fill even the lowest skilled jobs. The cost of day care, for some welfare families, makes work a net income loss and that is when day care can even be found.

The idea behind the 1988 version of welfare reform was to get as many people as possible into employment and, as a result, off welfare. Today the idea is to get people off welfare, through securing employment or through any other available means. It is a big difference.

Every politician in America is bragging, or wishing he could brag, about lowered caseloads. There are millions, literally millions, less people on welfare than there were a few years ago. Some states and counties have cut their welfare loads so deeply that they are awash in cash and are able to fund popular projects or, better yet, to cut taxes. Politicians are building their careers on how effective they are at spending less on helping the poor. Those politicians whose caseloads are not dropping fast enough to brag about are envious and put serious pressure on their welfare administrators to produce greater savings and surpluses.

It is not hard to lower a welfare caseload. Welfare departments can require that recipients show up at 8 in the morning, every Monday, for work and training orientation lectures. Some percentage of recipients will miss these meetings. Their cases can be closed for "failure to comply with work-seeking requirements." Some will re-apply, some will disappear. Every week, or more often if you have the capacity to put on those bogus motivational speeches more regularly, you get to close cases.

The same thing can be done by requiring weekly written reports of job-seeking efforts, by having people show up to rake leaves even when there are no leaves to rake, and by doing endless things to force recipients to continually re-establish and maintain their eligibility. You can schedule people into resume writing classes, job clubs, all sorts of low cost activities nearly all the time. Sooner or later many recipients will miss a beat, fail to show up, and you can close their case.

Why do some percentage of recipients fail to comply? Some recipients are simply too disorganized, are borderline mentally ill or way beyond the border, and could no more keep an appointment for job training or fill out a written report than they could hold a steady job. Some understand harassment and humiliation when they see it and are too proud, at least for a time, to keep coming back. For some, showing up at 8 in the morning is impossible because they have a job off the books somewhere that they have not been reporting, or because the recipient does not exist or lives elsewhere. Forcing people to show up or report is an effective fraud reduction measure. And some, which conservatives cheer, find that it is getting to be more work to stay on welfare than it is to go to work.

How widespread is this practice of practiced harassment? How much does it contribute to the drop in welfare caseloads? A recent federal study showed that in a three month period 38% of recipients leaving welfare did so because of state imposed sanctions for administrative infractions like those above. More than half of the case closures in Indiana were for sanctions and 40% of closures in Tennessee were sanction related, versus only 29% who left because of employment. In New York City only 29% of those leaving welfare found full or even part time jobs in the first several months after they were no longer on assistance. The remaining 71%, according to tax withholding records, were earning either nothing at all or less than \$100 per month after leaving welfare.

How fair is the system of administrative sanctions? In New York City, when welfare recipients appeal their administrative case closing, they win the hearings two-thirds of the time and are re-instated. Welfare administrators, of course, know that only a small fraction of recipients will appeal their decisions.

Current national policy gives administrators and caseworkers the go-ahead to harass people into giving up their benefits. Everyone understands that the big knife is coming anyway -- the famous two year time limit that every recipient but those exempted for disability will face. At that time, coming very soon, even the most compliant, the best hoop-jumpers and most needy will lose out. At the end of welfare as we knew it, when the big clock runs out, all the recipients will go off the rolls whether they have a job or a way to support their kids or not.

I was a welfare administrator throughout most of the 1970's and 1980's. I find myself now reading reports of caseload-lowering tactics that are familiar to me and that, on occasion, I practiced. But there was always a delicate balance in the welfare business in my day, or at least there was in Wisconsin and Minnesota when I worked there. My colleagues and I walked a fine line between trying to help poor people and guarding the taxpayer's interest against fraud and abuse. That line seems to be gone now. Today success as a welfare administrator lies not in how effectively you help people, but in how effectively you can keep people from getting help.

It is not hard to lower welfare caseloads. All you need is a booming economy, the go-ahead to drive people away from the benefits that are established to help them, the political backing to do it ruthlessly, and an indifference to the human costs.

Lowering caseloads is easy. Dealing with the long run social costs of impoverishing families will be very difficult indeed.

Ira Cutler says he's seeking a semi-legitimate outlet for thoughts and ideas too irreverent, too iconoclastic, or just too nasty for polite, serious, self-important company. He promises us a Monday column most weeks. More recently Ira has become involved in communicating in another way, through speeches which he calls Standin' Here Talkin'.

Los Latinos De Los Estados Unidos Y Del Caribe Empiezan A

Enfrentarse A Un Asunto Prohibido

Por Miguel Pérez

"En Puerto Rico no se habla de la raza", alega Marta Moreno Vega, fundadora del Centro Cultural del Caribe y el Instituto de la Dispersión Africana, de Nueva York. "Es algo así como: 'Oh, todos estamos mezclados, de modo que está bienD'".

Las comunidades negras de su tierra puertorriqueña y de otras naciones de la América Latina son más pobres que sus contra-partes de piel más clara, dice ella. "Ellos obtienen menos oportunidades. El gobierno les presta menos atención al suministrarles recursos."

"Y", agrega ella, "se encuentra la misma cosa dentro de nuestras comunidades latinas de Nueva York y Nueva Jersey".

La conclusión no es de ella solamente. Ha sido alcanzada por un grupo de estudiosos y activistas comunitarios latinos que están determinados a hacer algo acerca de ella. En este mes, ellos servirán de anfitriones a una conferencia de dos partes -- en Nueva York y Puerto Rico -- para empezar un debate que se ha demorado demasiado sobre la raza y la construcción de la identidad puertorriqueña.

"¿Cómo luciría el paisaje político de la Ciudad de Nueva York si los afroamericanos, afrocaribeños y afrolatinos hubieran formado un programa de trabajo común?" pregunta Moreno Vega. "¿Cuál sería la realidad de Nueva Jersey? Todos existimos bajo estas etiquetas de 'minoríasD o 'personas de colorD, pero no hay construcción de coaliciones que surtan efecto sobre los cursos de acción públicos".

El problema es que hay poca documentación sobre la historia de los afro-latinos. Aún los eruditos la pasan por alto. "De modo que, cuando se va a buscar información histórica, sencillamente no la hay".

En los Estados Unidos, por lo menos estamos teniendo debates sobre derechos civiles, acción afirmativa, representación adecuada en el centro de trabajo, multiculturalismo y su efecto sobre la enseñanza, advierte ella. "Pero no se encuentra eso en Puerto Rico".

La conferencia entre los días 21 y 24 de abril, en el Centro de Conferencias de la Escuela Superior Baruch, de la Ciudad de Nueva York, continuará entre el 29 de abril y el 1x de Mayo en la Universidad de Puerto Rico. Al con-

memorar la emancipación de los esclavos en Puerto Rico en marzo de 1873, la misma co incidirá con una larga serie de acontecimientos sobre la experiencia negra en la isla.

Habrán debates sobre los movimientos culturales y espirituales, el racismo y los cursos de acción públicos, el color negro y la identidad puertorriqueña, las imágenes de los medios informativos y cómo afectan a los latinos. Los afro-caribeños y afro-americanos se sentarán juntos y proyectarán sobre el futuro de las relaciones raciales.

"Esto no será un fin, sino el comienzo de reunir información y datos", dice Moreno Vega. "Lo que esperamos que salga de ello son proyectos y actividades. Estamos esperando que abrirá las mentes de las personas ... para empezar a mirar dentro de nuestras propias familias y captar nuestra historia antes de que se pierda".

"Estamos esperando que los estudiosos dejen de ser racistas en sus actitudes y empiecen a presentar cursos en las universidades sobre este campo de asuntos, que realmente no existen. Tenemos que mirar a la historia que compartimos con otras comunidades africanas y ver que la esclavitud ocurrió por todo el Caribe y que nuestra historia común enriquece a nuestra cultura, porque cuando se baila salsa, o se piensa en la santería, o se comen ciertos alimentos, todo eso

tiene una base africana".

Al reunir a los afroamericanos y a los latinos negros de las Américas, la conferencia hará historia. Nunca ha habido debates a este nivel. La comunidad afroamericana ha visto por lo general al racismo y a la raza en el marco de los Estados Unidos, sin mirar a la dispersión africana más amplia, dice ella.

"Ahora, los afroamericanos están empezando a aventurarse en el Africa, pero a fin de comprender la experiencia africana, hay que mirar a todas las piezas del rompecabezas -- en el Brasil, Cuba, Trinidad, Haití y así por el estilo. Hay que hacer una cantidad de trabajo tremenda para armar este rompecabezas ... extenderse sobre 400 años de esclavitud y de la mentalidad posterior a la esclavitud".

Moreno Vega hace notar que, entre los latinos, los comentarios hechos por amor y amistad pueden ser muy dañinos. "Usted sabe, dice la gente: 'Oh, él es negro pero su arte es blanco'. ¿De qué se trata?"

"Parece que el único modo de que podamos comprender quiénes somos es comprender lo que hubo antes de nosotros y lo que contribuye a ser quienes somos", sugiere ella.

(Miguel Pérez es columnista del Bergen Record en Bergen, Nueva Jersey.)

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SALUD

Hora de Romper el Hábito Para Siempre, Sin Reservas Ni Excusas

(NU) - Si usted es una de las 17 millones de personas que trata de dejar de fumar cada año, sabe que difícil es hacerlo, y mantenerlo. Para que este sea el año de dejar de fumar para siempre, puede unirse a otros fumadores y tomar un paso gigantesco hacia una mejor salud el 17 de noviembre -- con "El Gran Día de No Fumar" de La Sociedad Americana del Cáncer. Este evento nacional exhorta a los fumadores a romper con el hábito por un día.

El Problema
¿Porqué un evento tan grande para ayudar a la gente a dejar de fumar? Porque dejar de fumar no es fácil. Según el Reporte del Cirujano General de 1988, la nicotina es tan adictiva como la heroína o la cocaína. Desafortunadamente, muchas personas no se percatan de que tienen una adicción física y se sienten frustradas cuando sus intentos de dejar de fumar fracasan. Pero existe esperanza -- casi la mitad de los fumadores han dejado de fumar, y muchos más lo están logrando cada día.

Visite a su Médico
Si usted vuelve a fumar entre los primeros días o semanas, los expertos recomiendan que visite a su médico. Su doctor le ayudará a descubrir si está adicto a la nicotina y podrá determinar si necesita terapia de abstinencia de nicotina.

"La terapia de abstinencia de nicotina, incluyendo los parchos de nicotina, puede ayudar a la persona que ha hecho intentos previos de dejar de fumar sin éxito," indica el Doctor Elbert Glover, Director del Instituto de Investigación del Tabaco de la Escuela de Medicina de la Universidad de West Virginia. "Los parchos de nicotina funcionan alejando gradualmente al fumador de la nicotina a la que ha creado adicción, y son libres del carcinógenos y otras substancias tóxicas que contienen los cigarrillos."

Dejar de Fumar Para Siempre
Además de la terapia de abstinencia de nicotina, existen otros consejos generales que le pueden ayudar a que su intento sea un éxito:

- Rompa los vínculos del hábito de fumar. Por ejemplo, si usted fumaba luego de comer, párese de la mesa inmediatamente y camine.
- Encuentre actividades que dificulten el fumar, tales como jardinería, ejercicios, o lavar automóviles.
- Use técnicas de relajación. Respire profundo y lentamente mientras cuenta hasta cinco; exhale la respiración lentamente, cuente hasta cinco de nuevo.



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¿Buenas Noticias? Los Latinos Impulsan El Aumento De Los Nacidos En El Extranjero Hasta 26 Millones

Por Joseph Torres

¿Es una buena noticia, o deberíamos hacer sonar la alarma? Los nacidos en el extranjero que residen en los Estados Unidos han aumentado hasta ser el 10 por ciento de la población, su cantidad más alta en casi 60 años.

Empleando sus cifras de 1997 más recientes, la Oficina del Censo publicó un informe en este mes, el cual muestra que la mitad de los residentes de los Estados Unidos nacidos en el extranjero son oriundos de la América Latina. México solamente aporta 7 millones de los 26 millones de inmigrantes que viven aquí.

En 1930, la cifra era del 11.6 por ciento, y la inmensa mayoría de los inmigrantes a los Estados Unidos procedían de Europa.

El nuevo estudio del Censo revela un aumento de 1,300,000 inmigrantes sobre el año 1996.

Louis DeSipio, catedrático de ciencia política en la Universidad de Illinois, recinto de Urbana-Champaign, señala que la cosecha actual de recién llegados se enfrenta a obstáculos graves, incluyendo el nivel bajo de enseñanza y la falta de servicios producidos por la disminución de las bases impositivas en las zonas urbanas. La mayoría de los inmigrantes, hace notar él, se asientan en las ciudades a lo largo de nuestras costas.

No es coincidencia que los cinco estados que tienen poblaciones de extranjeros más altas que el promedio nacional del 10 por ciento todos tengan costas. Estos son:

- California, 24.9 por ciento
- Nueva York, 19.6 por ciento
- Florida, 16.4 por ciento
- Nueva Jersey, 15.4 por ciento
- Texas, 11.3 por ciento

Aunque los saltos de la inmigración ofrecen forraje para el debate político, los gobernadores de cuatro de esos cinco estados (todos exceptuando a California) han elogiado constantemente a los aportes de los inmigrantes, rechazando cualquier tentación de culpar a los "recién llegados" por cualesquiera males sociales económicos o percibidos que sus estados puedan sufrir. Así lo han hecho los alcaldes de la mayoría de las ciudades importantes en esos estados. Richard

Riordan, de Los Angeles, y Rudolph Giuliani, de Nueva York, ambos republicanos, son ejemplos brillantes.

Los dirigentes hispanos que tienen conocimiento íntimo de las comunidades inmigrantes agradecen su equidad y sinceridad.

Luis Miranda, presidente de la Federación Hispana de la Ciudad de Nueva York, da crédito a los inmigrantes por encabezar la revitalización de las vecindades deterioradas de esa metrópoli, al abrir pequeños negocios, crear empleos y mantener al dinero circulando en las comunidades.

En muchas zonas metropolitanas, los mejoramientos del sistema de transporte exigidos por las comunidades suburbanas han permitido que los residentes más acomodados de la ciudad se muden a los suburbios, disminuyendo la base impositiva de la ciudad.

DeSipio señala a la Ley de Inmigración y Nacionalidad de 1965 como responsable por alterar el color de la corriente inmigrante.

La ley eliminó las cuotas de origen nacional que favorecían a las naciones europeas y abrió la puerta a una mayor inmigración desde las naciones asiáticas, africanas y latino-americanas. La misma fundó la inmigración sobre la reunificación de las familias y las habilidades para el mercado de trabajo.

El nuevo informe del Censo revela que la cuarta parte de todos los residentes nacidos en el extranjero, de 25 años de edad o más, han terminado cuatro o más años de escuela superior, la misma proporción que el promedio nacional. Pero también hace notar que el 35 por ciento no terminó los estudios de secundaria, comparándose con el 16 por ciento para los residentes nacidos en este país.

El catedrático de sociología de la Universidad Rice, Stephen Kleinberg, enfatiza que es más difícil ahora para los inmigrantes el mejorar su situación económica debido a que los empleos "de cuello azul" ya no llevan más a la prosperidad o la estabilidad, como fué el caso anteriormente en este siglo.

Los inmigrantes hispanos tienden a carecer de habilidades

y tener menor enseñanza, haciendo que sea especialmente difícil para ellos el salir adelante, dice él.

El informe del Censo dice además que sólo un tercio de todos los residentes de los Estados Unidos nacidos en el extranjero se han convertido en ciudadanos naturalizados de los Estados Unidos. Los que inmigran desde México han sido históricamente lentos para solicitar la ciudadanía de los Estados Unidos. Pero durante los dos años más recientes, ellos han estado solicitándola en cifras sin precedentes.

Ahora, a pesar de los retrasos inexcusables en los trámites del Servicio de Inmigración y Naturalización, el porcentaje de la "ciudadanía" parece estar listo a aumentar rápidamente.

Es irónico el que las personas y los grupos que respaldan a la legislación para denegar a los ciudadanos que son residentes legales un trato equitativo, estén proporcionando el impulso. A medida que una cifra cada vez mayor de inmigrantes latinos llegan a ser ciudadanos y a inscribirse para votar, el músculo político hispano se hace más voluminoso.

Esa es una buena noticia para una comunidad que está aún muy sub-representada en las cámaras políticas estatales y federales. Y es causa para que aquéllos que prefieren no compartir sus privilegios hagan sonar la alarma.

(Joseph Torres es editor del semanario de resumen nacional de noticias)

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Discerning The Muck From The Mire

By Victor Landa

A well-respected fellow journalist here in San Antonio told me that there are hardly any more hard-nosed investigative reporters left in the business. "Almost everything comes from unidentified sources," he said.

In other words, most stories come from people peddling buckets of dirt.

At least partly, I agree. It's amazing how much of a reporter's time is taken up by unsolicited jaunts into the mud of some anonymous call. Newsrooms have become the modern-day political battleground, with lines drawn across telephones, faxes and e-mail. Regard for the media has become equal to that of a turn-of-the-century grave digger: we've become the best place to bury your enemy.

The trick is being able to discern the muck from the mire -- and there is a difference. Muck is that which oozes from contempt, mostly personal, mostly outrageous. That the head of such-and-such an agency keeps an apartment downtown, paid for with public funds, for perverse rendezvous, or that businessman X is in cahoots with politician Y to buy votes in order to secure contract Z. The combinations of alleged corruption and flagrant immorality are worthy of the raunchiest made-for-TV movies.

The mire, on the other hand, is that which carries enough

of a hint of the truth to be worthy of a little digging. These are the stories that reporters will follow with a pick-ax, exhausting the vein in search of the prize-winning mother lode.

Most of the sensational stories of corruption, greed and immorality start as terse phone calls, hints, tips. Whether the tip will lead to paydirt depends mostly on the instinct of the reporters and editors. It helps if they grew up in a small town.

In places like the city where I grew up, everybody knows everyone else's business. The comadre network, better known as *el chisme*, is at once a model of efficiency and a clearing house of information and social commentary. One learned quickly how to keep one's ear in the gossip and one's name out of it.

Newsrooms can be much like small communities in that respect, with gossip and information, muck and mire, flowing about. This is why the Clinton-Lewinsky sideshow has taken up so much of the center stage. It's also why reporters were the last to realize the part they played. If the president and the intern are the main characters, the media has played the part of the fool. The villains, of course, are the leader's libido, the revenge-thirsty prosecutor, the shadowy woman with the questionable motive and the

three elements that drive every political plot; power, lust and greed.

That the media are fools is their own doing and no one should (or will) waste and ounce of sympathy on them (us). From the beginning of this mudslide every report has been based on hearsay and innuendo. For lack of facts and for want of satisfying the ravenous appetite for faster, better and newer information, journalists leaned heavily on the informal market of information known as the "leak."

We analyzed the leak, we discussed it among experts, we even up-dated leaks with newer leaks. We became adept at the art of differentiating sources "within the White House" from sources "close to the president." The leaks were enough to cause a current of rapids. When the president's lawyer drafted a 15-page letter to the special prosecutor, complaining about the malicious leaks from within his office, he faced the floodgate of national media and gave an account of the letter, live on national television, and people watched.

Someone once said that the two great American religions are optimism and denial. I would add that our two favorite pastimes are voyeurism and the competition for moral superiority.

The national obsession with the president's private life says as much about the state of national politics and the media as it does about Americans. This issue is whether the President lied, or asked someone to lie, but that hasn't been the focus of our attention.

While the press frets and ponders its plummeting approval rating, that of president remains high.

(Victor Landa is news director of KVDA-TV Telemundo in San Antonio, Texas.)
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Mas Tecnicas Patrulla De Frontera Contra Flujo Ilegales

Washington, 15 abr (EFE).- El nuevo director de la Patrulla de Frontera de EEUU, Gustavo de la Viña, de origen español, ha declarado a EFE que incrementará la preparación del personal y el uso de tecnología avanzada para atajar eficazmente el flujo de indocumentados.

Pero el nuevo jefe de la Patrulla de Frontera, presentado en un acto especial en la sede del Servicio de Inmigración de Estados Unidos (INS) junto con otros 6 nuevos altos cargos de esa entidad, afirmó que los 7.200 agentes bajo su mando también tendrán la obligación de auxiliar a los extranjeros ilegales que corran peligro.

"Adoptaremos medidas de protección de los inmigrantes indocumentados ante los graves peligros que afrontan en sus recorridos, especialmente en la zona del desierto, porque nuestra tarea requiere una alta dosis humana para gente que se expone a grandes riesgos", señaló De la Viña, cuyos agentes patrullan la línea divisoria de alrededor de 3.200 kilómetros entre EEUU y México, explicó que concentrará sus esfuerzos en áreas de alta incidencia de inmigrantes que pretenden entrar ilegalmente en Estados Unidos, como San Diego (California), Tucson (Arizona) y McAllen (Texas).

Unos 2.200 agentes han sido asignados a la vigilancia en el área de San Diego, que abarca 107 kilómetros y que es considerada uno de los puntos preferidos por los extranjeros que, sin cumplir los requisitos migratorios, pretenden entrar al territorio estadounidense.

De la Viña indicó que aprovechará al máximo el refuerzo de agentes -unos 1.200 más para

Sports Had A Special 'Dance Card' In This Texas Town

By Andy Porras

ESPN's nationally televised town hall meeting on racism in sports would have pleased my late father, Jose Porras. How appropriate that the dialogue with President Bill Clinton was held in Texas, he would have said.

My dad was a school board member in the all-Chicano district of San Felipe in Del Rio, Texas, during the early 1950s. I wish he had been sitting there on stage this month, swapping experiences with such deft-the-odds sports luminaries as National Football League star Jim Brown and Olympian Jackie Joyner-Kersey. He would have been right at home.

There certainly was room for Raza representation. ESPN's excuse that a bunch of brown players turned them down because they had other commitments was as lame as \$2,000 claiming horse at a bordertown racetrack.

But put that aside. It's nothing new for this country to view national issues of discrimination through black and white lenses only. So their airing dirty sports laundry on national television, wherever it may lead, was at least a step in the right direction.

But back to Dad. Down in South Texas during the Elvis Presley/Pedro Infante era, high school football games were just about the only source of live entertainment we Chicanos had going for us.

The San Felipe Independent School District, born out of discrimination and sheer determination, fielded its pride and joy, the San Felipe High School Mustangs -- or Los Mestenos, as most of the older fans called the purple- and gold-clad gridiron group.

Composed of all Chicanos (until the middle '50s, when segregation was finally outlawed), including its coaching staff, band, pep squad and cheerleaders, the Mustangs carried their bordertown barrio's honor into redneck-infested towns like Carrizo Springs (home of the Texas Rangers' head honcho), Cotulla (where Lyndon Baines Johnson started his teaching career), and Hondo (where they still displayed "No Dogs or Mexicans Allowed" signs in some of the restaurants.)

There were other towns La Raza would visit during the football season. Many of the team's boosters traveled to out-of-town games (ITALS) al estilo migrante (UNITALS) in canvas-covered trucks. It was a sight to behold, a caravan of old cars, pickups and the migrant transports. The men, women and their families provided a legendary following for the team. They wrapped themselves in an invisible shroud they called "The Spirit of San Felipe" and took it with them whenever they followed their sons and daughters.

It was this (ITALS) animo

(UNITALS) that prevailed throughout the year. Whether the school's youngsters traveled to a game or scholastic event, they had their fans, genuine in their encouragement on the field or forum.

One day Dad went with the school superintendent, Dr. Eulalio Calderon, to line up football opponents for the Mustangs for the following season. It was late at night when he arrived home, stoop-shouldered with tears in his eyes. My Mom had awakened to greet him. He hollered something at her and they sat down at the kitchen table to talk.

"They won't sign a contract to play our boys," he told her in Spanish. "You know why? Because we're a 'Mexican school'! That's why!"

Listening through the thin wall of my bedroom, I didn't understand exactly what was going on. Dad explained it to me later. "They're trying to tell us that we are not good enough for them. They don't want to let their kids play against a 'Mexican school.'"

There was an "interscholastic district" that incorporated some four schools in our area. By state law, the others had to compete with San Felipe in eve-

rything, sports and academic events. But whoever heard of a Texas high school football team playing only four games in a season? What Mr. Calderon and my Dad were trying to do was fill out the rest of the dance card, so to speak. But the other towns refused to "dance with Mexicans."

Schools in neighboring towns, within driving distance, didn't accept our school because it was run by Chicanos, staffed by mostly Chicano teachers, and, of course, it had an all-Mexican football team.

So San Felipe played technical schools, private academies and even college teams from Monterey and Saltillo, Mexico. They were the only ones that would dare play our Mustangs.

Dad could have told that story to President Clinton. And I'm sure he would have followed it with some sound (ITALS) consequences, (UNITALS) some good advice, to the group and to the country. On the brown side.

(Andy Porras now resides in Sacramento, Calif., where he writes a weekly column on Hispanic issues for The Sacramento Bee and hosts a community talk program on radio station KSQR - La Bonita.)

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Hill's Bout With Jones Jr. Won't Be His Last

Boxing Forum: Who will win this fight?

JACKSON, Miss. -- Virgil Hill admits that he is fighting for the money, and because of that his bout next week against Roy Jones Jr. will not be his last.

After Roy Jones Jr. is fighting Virgil Hill for the opportunity to fight a bigger, quality opponent. But Hill's just in it for the money.

Insinuations during a teleconference Wednesday that the April 25 fight in the Mississippi Coast Coliseum at Biloxi would be his career finale, Hill spoke up.

"This is not my last fight. I'm not retiring. I'm nowhere near retiring," Hill, 34, said. "The thought has not even crossed my mind."

Hill (43-2, 20 knockouts) said his main motivation in fighting Jones is "for the economic purposes" and he plans to continue fighting until "reaching financial security ... when my accountant comes back and says we're where we want to be."

JONES, A THREE-DIVISION CHAMPION WHO wants at least one heavyweight bout, wanted to fight a bigger, quality opponent.

Hill, who held two light-heavyweight championship titles until last June, is five years older than Jones. But at 6-foot-1 with a 78-inch reach, Hill is two inches taller and has a four-inch reach advantage.

Jones (35-1, 30 KOs) is relinquishing his WBC light-heavyweight belt. He has no plans to take on the top contender for the title, as required by the

WBC.

"There are always aspirations in the back of my mind to do things that I'm not supposed to do," Jones said. "If the economic situation is right, and advantageous for my career ... I will go up and prove my point one time (at the heavyweight level), then get back to where I'm comfortable."

Jones turned down a reported \$6 million payday against Buster Douglas, after his father and former trainer advised him against taking the fight on the guarantee of money and a shot at Evander Holyfield.

THE NONTITLE 12-ROUNDER AGAINST HILL, for which Jones will likely make only about one-third of what he was promised to fight Douglas, has a contract weight limit of 177 pounds. That is two pounds over the light-heavyweight limit, and nearly 20 pounds under the heavyweight scale.

Jones has won the WBC light-heavyweight, IBF super middleweight and IBF middleweight titles. He is considered by some as the best pound for pound fighter in the world.

Hill was twice a WBA light-heavyweight champion from 1987 until last June, when after 21 title defenses he lost a 12-round decision to Darius Michalczewski of Germany. Hill also won the IBF title, but relinquished it without a defense.

Promoter Murad Muhammad said Wednesday that more than 5,000 of the 11,000 seats -- ranging from \$15 to \$300 -- have been sold for the fight at the Coast Coliseum.

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IT'S TIME FOR

Another Side Of The Draft

They have been timed in the 40. Their bench-press strength has been recorded. Their vertical leap has been measured.

The numbers are in for the NFL Draft class of '98. And behind the numbers are the stories that tell the human side of the draft.

Some of the interesting notes on the class of '98...

THE BROOKING INSTITUTE: Georgia Tech linebacker KEITH BROOKING has two brothers and a sister - and a lot of other brothers and sisters. For the past eight years, Keith's mom BRENDA has opened the Brooking home in Senoia, Georgia to children who come from broken or troubled homes. "At times, she's had three or four foster kids in the house," says Keith. Coupled with the Brooking siblings, there sometimes would be seven or eight youngsters in the house. "My mom takes care of the kids, just until the parents get back on their feet," Keith says. "It definitely brings you to reality. My brothers and sisters and I knew that it was something that my mom was doing from the bottom of her heart."

DWIGHT NOT AFRAID OF HEIGHT: Iowa wide receiver TIM DWIGHT likes the high life. "He's a great athlete," says Hawkeye running back TAVIAN BANKS (see Banks note below), "but he's a little crazy." Dwight once jumped off a balcony into a snowdrift. But that feat pales in comparison to his swan dive off a cliff over the Wisconsin River. Tim was swimming with some buddies one summer on the river when he looked up and spotted the cliff. In moments, he was up there, poised to dive. When an excursion boat passed, down he went. "It seemed like a day before I hit the water," Tim says. "I landed right in the middle of a group of guys jet-skiing. They were like, 'Where did you come from?' I said, 'From up there!' There's a ton of stuff I haven't done that I want to do. Bungee jumping, sky-diving..."

PAYTON, NOT PEYTON, IS THEIR FAVORITE: A lot of attention in the draft will be on PEYTON MANNING, quarterback of Tennessee. But for two other high-ranked prospects, there's a "PAYTON," as in "WALTER," who'll be on their minds. Walter Payton, Pro Football Hall of Fame running back of the Chicago Bears, was the childhood idol of Nebraska running back AHMAN GREEN and Marshall wide receiver RANDY MOSS. As a youngster, Green would watch any tape of Payton he could find or read any book or article about him. "I liked the way he worked in practice and his offseason fitness programs that kept him away from injuries," Green says. This March 31, Moss, on a tour of the Bears' offices, actually got to meet and eat with his idol, who was there for a board meeting. "My heart sort of dropped and I got nervous that I'm eating with Walter Payton," said Moss. "I used to wear his jersey, and the little towel like he did around his waist."

"HEY, I'M NOT ONLY SMART...": Ivy League schools are certainly not known for producing NFL players, although

three were taken in last year's draft - Cornell defensive tackle SETH PAYNE (Jacksonville) and running back CHAD LEVITT (Oakland), and Columbia defensive end MARCELLUS WILEY (Buffalo). Another good prospect for the NFL this year is 6-5, 308-pound Harvard tackle MATT BIRK, who was the first Harvard player to be invited to the NFL scouting combine in 10 years. "It's nice," says Matt, "to be from Harvard and be known for something other than being able to derive pi."

10 LITTLE-KNOWN FACTS ABOUT PEYTON MANNING: He's been covered "every which way to Sunday" by the media during his college career. There's not much that is not known about Tennessee quarterback PEYTON MANNING. Here are 10 facets of his background that, if not unknown, are little-known:

* His favorite quote is from Pro Football Hall of Fame coach CHUCK NOLL: "Pressure is something you feel only when you don't know what the hell you're doing."

* He watched so much tape at Tennessee, his teammates nicknamed him "Caveman."

* He grew up in an 1853 home in the Garden District of New Orleans, with novelist ANNE RICE and rocker TRENT REZNOR of "Nine Inch Nails" as neighbors.

* He guaranteed himself immortality in the state of Tennessee by choosing to return to school for his final season of eligibility, according to former NFL quarterback DAN FOUTS.

* He'd lie awake at night as an eighth-grader listening to tapes of his father ARCHIE's college games at Mississippi, and can name all the starters on his father's 1969 Rebel team.

* Father Archie is mentioned in two JOHN GRISHAM novels: in A Time To Kill, he is in a poster on a character's wall, and in The Pelican Brief, a Supreme Court justice is named "Archibald Manning."

* His 3.6 grade point average was the highest in his major, speech communications.

* A Baptist hospital in Knoxville, Tennessee reported that many parents named their first borns "Peyton" after he decided to stay in school. And the Knoxville Zoological Gardens named its seven-foot giraffe after the 6-5 Manning.

* He scheduled informal passing drills this past summer at night, so teammates would not have an excuse, such as water-skiing or golf, to miss them.

* He likes black high-tops - "kind of the JOHNNY UNITAS look."

STYLIN': Iowa running back TAVIAN BANKS last season showed up for media day with his hair dyed gold. "He's a lot better looking," said Hawkeyes head coach HAYDEN FRY, "than Dennis Rodman."

FOOTBALL'S NOT WORK -- THIS IS WORK: An unheralded, 160-pound senior at Glades Central Community High School in Belle Glades, Florida, Morris Brown cornerback ROOSEVELT BLACKMON was a walk-on at the Division II school in Atlanta. Now he is a top-rated prospect.

Jobs Blackmon held before, and while at, Morris Brown:

1. Gravedigger
2. Used-car salesman
3. Stocker at Winn-Dixie
4. Assistant equipment manager at Morris Brown

"One thing for sure," Morris Brown head coach JOE CROSBY told Blackmon, "if football doesn't work out, you can always get another job."

HE BETTER HOPE HE'S NOT TAKEN BY A NEW YORK TEAM: If Washington center OLIN KREUTZ thought Seattle was busy when he first arrived as a Husky, what will be his reaction if the New York Jets or Giants take him in the draft? Of course, it's understandable how big cities might awe the 6-2, 300-pounder. He's from Hawaii (Oahu), the land of laid-back.

"People in Hawaii are calm and relaxed and they give you your space," Olin says. "They don't talk to you much if you don't want to be talked to. The people in Seattle will get right into your space. In Hawaii, there's an imaginary space that you have where you don't bug anybody." The one aspect of Kreutz' Hawaiian life that is not laid-back is his "personal trainer" -- grandfather GEORGE PERRY. Grandpops leads Olin and other Hawaiian-grown Division I players in grueling offseason workouts.

MOM WAS RIGHT: JANET STAAT, as all good mothers, was not afraid to put her son, Arizona State defensive tackle JEREMY STAAT, in his place as a grammar-schooler, or guide him as a college student. "His goal in life was to challenge authority," Janet says of those days when Jeremy was a rambunctious, bigger-than-the-other-kids nine-year-old. "My goal in life was to keep him within boundaries." Not the best of students, mother and son agreed that he was not ready for any of the big-time colleges that recruited him as a 17-year-old. So Jeremy went to Bakersfield (Calif.) Community College, where an

assistant coach thought his difficulties with studies and grasping some of the playbook nuances might be the result of a learning disability. "Don't let your pride hinder your studies," Janet told Jeremy. "If there is something wrong, go find out." Jeremy did, and was diagnosed with dyslexia and attention deficit disorder. Once he knew the problem, his grades improved and he was accepted by ASU, which has programs for students with learning disabilities. Jeremy Staat now majors in interdisciplinary studies, concentrating on sociology and justice.

STRONG...AND SMART: Florida State tackle TRA THOMAS last summer became the strongest Seminole ever, and he has a former England Monarch of the NFL Europe League to partly thank for it. Thomas, 6-7, 349 pounds, bench-pressed 550 pounds last offseason - the best FSU bench-press summer mark ever. One of the coaches urging him on? STEVE GABBARD, the first player ever drafted by the then-London Monarchs of the then-World League in 1991, who helped the team to a World Bowl title that year. Like Thomas, Gabbard was switched from the defensive to the offensive line during his career. "Pass protection technique is one of the hardest things to learn," says Gabbard. "Tra really has it down." He also has his studies down. A criminology major, Thomas was one of six FSU scholarship players to earn a 3.5-or-higher grade-point average last year.

INTO THE TWO-WAY FRAY: To their ability to play both ways on offense and defense, add a talent for memorable quotes to the bios of SCOTT FROST of Nebraska and R.W. MC QUARTERS of Oklahoma State. Frost, who played quarterback, running back and defensive back in college, was asked his "best" position. "Athlete, I guess," he answered. McQuarters, a defensive back-wide receiver, was asked the difference between himself and the

more well-known Heisman Trophy winner CHARLES WOODSON, another two-way player. "Publicity," he said.

THE "ART" OF FOOTBALL: They are two big bruisers, with something very "un-bruiserlike" in common - art. They are 6-6, 305-pound San Diego State guard-tackle KYLE TURLEY and his line coach ED WHITE, the 6-1, 269-pound former 17-year NFL guard with Minnesota and San Diego. Turley is an art major, and feels lucky to be one. "When my teammates teased me about it," he says, "my response was, 'Hey, I have fun going to school. Do you?'" His studies have included painting, ceramics, sketching and a welding class where "we made abstracts out of steel and metal." Kyle visits White's ranch in Julian, California in the offseason and they discuss their favorite subject other than football. White has been a landscape architect, draws, and works with metals. "We talk about all aspects of art," Turley says. "We compare sketch books. We see who can do a better sketch." Sketchbooks and playbooks -- that's Turley's life right now. "My life plan includes teaching art in high school," he says. "My goal also is to make the NFL and play as long as coach White."

DRAFT NIKS: PENN STATE RUNNING BACK CURTIS ENIS will have live-in help wherever he goes in the NFL - his mom, dad and sister. All three will live with him in his rookie year. "I won't have to worry about so many little things with my mom and my dad there to help me out," says Curtis. WASHINGTON GUARD BENJI OLSON was this year's champion of the Huskies offensive line's annual "all-you-can-eat-rib-eating contest," consuming a record 65 ribs. PENN STATE LINEBACKER AARON COLLINS comes from a big family -- a BIG family. He is one of 19 children. The Collins Clan was featured on a 1996 OPRAH WINFREY show entitled "My Big Family." DARTMOUTH SAFETY LLOYD LEE was featured in a fashion photo layout of Ivy League all-stars last summer in Vanity Fair. CALIFORNIA CORNERBACK KATO SERWANGA

and his brother WASSWA, a safety at UCLA, were the only identical twins in the Pac 10 last season. Born in Kampala, Uganda, the brothers played together throughout high school, at Sacramento State and Pacific before choosing separate schools. In the history of the NFL, there have been only nine sets of twins, most recently this past season - TIKI (New York Giants) and RONDE BARBER (Tampa Bay). STANFORD WIDE RECEIVER DAMON DUNN is an ordained Baptist minister, preaching at local Stanford-area churches. He comes from good football stock. His late father MIKE LOCKETT was the starting fullback for the Texas Longhorns team that went undefeated in 1977, and blocked for Heisman Trophy winner EARL CAMPBELL. MAYBE THEY CAN NEGOTIATE THEIR OWN CONTRACTS: BOSTON COLLEGE QUARTERBACK MATT HASSELBECK (son of former NFL pro DON) and STANFORD DEFENSIVE END KAILEE WONG are into finance. Hasselbeck worked the past two summers for Fidelity Capital Markets in Boston. Wong passed the summer at a venture capital firm in the Stanford area. "It's something I'd like to do after my football career," says Kailee. LSU PUNTER CHAD KESSLER, the acceptance speaker for the athletes honored at the National Football Foundation's Hall of Fame banquet last year, is a microbiology major with a 3.91 grade point average. VANDERBILT DEFENSIVE BACK COREY CHAVOUS is a film buff - a football film buff. He has more than 500 feet of tape of the NFL's great receivers, going all the way back to DON HUTSON. Chavous has taped everything he has been able to find on NFL receivers since 1983. Classic Sports Network has been a gold mine for him. Off his tapes, Corey says the three receivers he'd most like to go up against are CLIFF BRANCH, LANCE ALWORTH and CHARLEY TAYLOR. He can get some tips from his uncle, BARNEY CHAVOUS, a defensive end with the Denver Broncos from 1973-85.



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The Grades Are In AFC and NFC Team-By-Team Picks

By John Schaefer

From Peyton Manning to Cam Quayle -- another NFL Draft has come and gone. Curious as to how your team fared? Here are draft grades for the NFL's 30 teams, based primarily on how well they addressed their needs.

AFC East

Buffalo Bills -- Grade: B-minus

Buffalo traded its first-round pick to the Jaguars for QB Rob Johnson. In the second round, the Bills took Sam Cowart, who gives much-needed help at inside linebacker. Robert Hicks, a future offensive tackle, went in the third round. Buffalo needs receiving help and it selected two (Fred Coleman and Kamil Loud), but they were late-round choices who probably won't amount to much.

Indianapolis Colts -- Grade: B

The Colts needed offensive help like Indianapolis needs a night-life. They got it with QB Peyton Manning and receivers Jerome Pathon and E.G. Green in the first three rounds. After that, the Colts draft was solid but unspectacular -- two offensive linemen and two defensive players.

Miami Dolphins -- Grade: B-minus

After striking out in their bids for Sean Gilbert and Chester McGlockton, the Dolphins needed to add talent to their defensive line. Miami waited until its third pick before taking a lineman, Kenny Mixon of LSU, and it only took one other lineman in the draft. Offensive line concerns weren't addressed until the second day, although Scott Shaw of Michigan State holds much promise. Jimmy Johnson added some fine talent, but Miami still has holes to fill.

New England Patriots -- Grade: B

New England restocked its backfield with RB Robert Edwards and FB Chris Floyd. The Patriots also found a needed backup for TE Ben Coates in Alabama's Rod Rutledge. Defensively, the Pats should have taken at least one cornerback to play opposite Ty Law.

New York Jets -- Grade: B

Bill Parcells cleaned up with 12 total picks, including four fifth-rounders and three six-rounders. Quantity, yes. But any quality? Maryland DE Eric Ogbogu is a potential steal from round six, and Scott Frost is an intriguing prospect at safety. With so many picks, at least a couple are bound to become starters down the road.

AFC Central

Baltimore Ravens -- Grade: B

The Ravens took care of their top two needs by selecting CB Duane Starks and WR Pat Johnson in the first two rounds. After that, Baltimore didn't select again until round five, so Starks and Johnson probably are the only ones who will emerge as major contributors.

Cincinnati Bengals -- Grade: C-plus

The Bengals needed linebacker help and they went nuts making sure they got it, using three of their first four picks on that position. Meanwhile, Cincinnati neglected its troubles on both lines.

Jacksonville Jaguars -- Grade: B-plus

Jacksonville needed a running back and secondary help, and that's what it got. Fred Taylor should step in as the No. 1 halfback, while Donovan Darious and Cordell Taylor will see time in the secondary.

Pittsburgh Steelers -- Grade: A

Director of football operations Tom Donahoe is a wizard at selecting players, and he had another stellar draft this year. Pittsburgh wanted OG Alan Faneca and DE Jeremy Staat, and it got both in the first two rounds. Cornerback Deshaea Townsend is a real find in the fourth round.

Tennessee Oilers -- Grade: A-minus

Kevin Dyson was what the Oilers needed opposite Yancey Thigpen at receiver. Cornerback Samari Rolle is a first-round talent who slipped to the second round. Guard Benji Olson holds much potential. The other picks don't make the heart beat faster.

AFC West

Denver Broncos -- Grade: A-minus

The Broncos found the receiver and safety they wanted with Marcus Nash and Eric Brown. Brian Griese figures to get the thankless task of replacing John Elway some day, and two potential backups for RB Terrell Davis were picked in the second day.

Kansas City Chiefs -- Grade: B

Victor Riley someday will step in on the offensive line, while Rashawn Shehee joins a crowded backfield. With the signings of DT McGlockton and DE Leslie O'Neal last week, Kansas City could afford to ignore those areas.

Oakland Raiders -- Grade: B

Oakland's draft started off with a bang as CB Charles Woodson and OT Mo Collins were brought into the fold. But then the Raiders took the extra pick they received as compensation for losing McGlockton by taking Leon Bender, who is another McGlockton. Guard Gennaro DiNapoli of Virginia Tech was a sharp addition.

San Diego Chargers -- Grade: C

The Chargers are pinning all their hopes on QB Ryan Leaf. If he becomes great, then San Diego's trade with Arizona to grab him was brilliant, but if he's a bust, or even just decent, then the Chargers gave up way too much for him (two first-rounders, a second-rounder and two players). General manager Bobby Beathard continued his disturbing habit of dealing future

first-round picks for current second-round spots. Receiver Michael Ricks better perform like a first-round player, or else Beathard will have been suckered again.

Seattle Seahawks -- Grade: C

Anthony Simmons is a bit undersized for linebacker, but Seattle went with him anyway in round one. Ahman Green was projected by some as a first-rounder, but the Seahawks nabbed him in the third. Simmons must become a quality starter or this draft likely will be a bust.

NFC East

Arizona Cardinals -- Grade: A-minus

If Arizona isn't careful, it might develop a positive reputation. Andre Wadsworth was a no-brainer with the third pick of the draft, but the Cardinals showed a flair for player picking by grabbing S Corey Chavous and offensive lineman Anthony Clement in round two. The remainder of Arizona's draft was short on impact players, but with those first three picks, who cares?

Dallas Cowboys -- Grade: B-minus

The Cowboys get points for going right after their needs on both lines, but in so doing they made two questionable picks. Defensive end Greg Ellis was a bit of a reach with pick No. 8, while DT Michael Myers has shown himself to be a fat, lazy player. However, OT Flozell Adams should pay off.

New York Giants -- Grade: B-minus

The Giants made several odd picks, starting in the first round with S Shaun Williams, who is a fine player but doesn't fill a big need on this team. New York then took WR Joe Jurevicius, who doesn't have the downfield speed the Giants need at that position. The Giants finally got it right in round three with Purdue speedster Brian Alford, and OT Toby Myles has raw potential.

Philadelphia Eagles -- Grade: C-minus

The Eagles needed a receiver, so they traded their sixth-round pick to the Jets for Jeff Graham. That's like holding a bake sale to pay for your new car. Tra Thomas finally should relieve Philadelphia's left tackle headache, but his prior drug involvement raises disturbing visions of Ben Williams.

Washington Redskins -- Grade: C

The Redskins added some fine players, but they didn't target their needs well. Offensive linemen and youth at cornerback was needed, but no linemen and just one corner (a seventh-rounder) was selected. Instead, Washington took TE Stephen Alexander with its first pick, even though Jamie Asher already mans that position. Linebacker Shawn Barber is one to watch.

**NFC Central
Chicago Bears -- Grade: C-plus**

It's a well-established fact the Bears know nothing about how to draft, so their selection of Curtis Enis, when they already have a gazillion running backs, makes perfect sense. Chicago surprised some observers, however, by following the Enis pick with several solid choices, including S Tony Parrish, OG Olin Kreutz and TE Alonzo Mayes, who is a character risk but has loads of ability.

Detroit Lions -- Grade: C

The Lions did nothing to help their defensive line, which was a mistake, and there are health concerns surrounding QB Charlie Batch. If Batch doesn't amount to anything, then this becomes a poor draft.

Green Bay Packers -- Grade: B

Reggie White's retirement makes the Packers' first two choices -- DT Vonnie Holliday and DE Jonathan Brown -- look more and more sensible. Green Bay restocked its secondary on day two with CB Roosevelt Blackmon, who is raw but possesses potential.

Minnesota Vikings -- Grade: B-plus

Everyone wants to talk about Randy Moss, and why not? The controversial Marshall receiver can single-handedly make or break the Vikings' draft. With Cris Carter and Jake Reed playing in front of Moss for a couple years, and with his brother,

Eric, on the team, Minnesota has the people in place to keep Moss in line while he develops. The Vikings worked on their defensive holes with their next five picks, including unheralded CB Ramos McDonald.

Tampa Bay Buccaneers -- Grade: B-plus

The Bucs just get scarier and scarier. Jacquez Green joins recent free agent signee Bert Emanuel on a receiving corps that badly needed an infusion of talent. Cornerback Brian Kelly will be given an opportunity to start at some point in the season.

NFC West

Atlanta Falcons -- Grade: A

The Falcons draft began with a bang as stud linebacker Keith Brooking was gobbled up in round one. The things just kept going well, with the selections of several more potential impact players. Center Bob Hallen, WRs Jammi German and Tim Dwight, and S Omar Brown all could see significant playing time this season. Cornerback Elijah Williams and OT Ephraim Salaam also could shine. Atlanta will need a lot of help this season, but it definitely found some keepers.

Carolina Panthers -- Grade: C

Like the Bengals, the Panthers practiced over-kill while addressing a need. Carolina sought defensive line help and used its first three selections for that need, even though the

Panthers are on the verge of acquiring DT Gilbert. Meanwhile, the Panthers' offensive woes were almost completely ignored. Hope you Panther fans like low-scoring games.

New Orleans Saints -- Grade: B-minus

Mike Ditka wants to mold the Saints in the image of his Bears teams, which explains his selection of OT Kyle Turley and bruising TE Cam Cleeland. It looks like the Saints will push the Panthers on the dull-o-meter, however, as little was done to put some pizzazz in the offense.

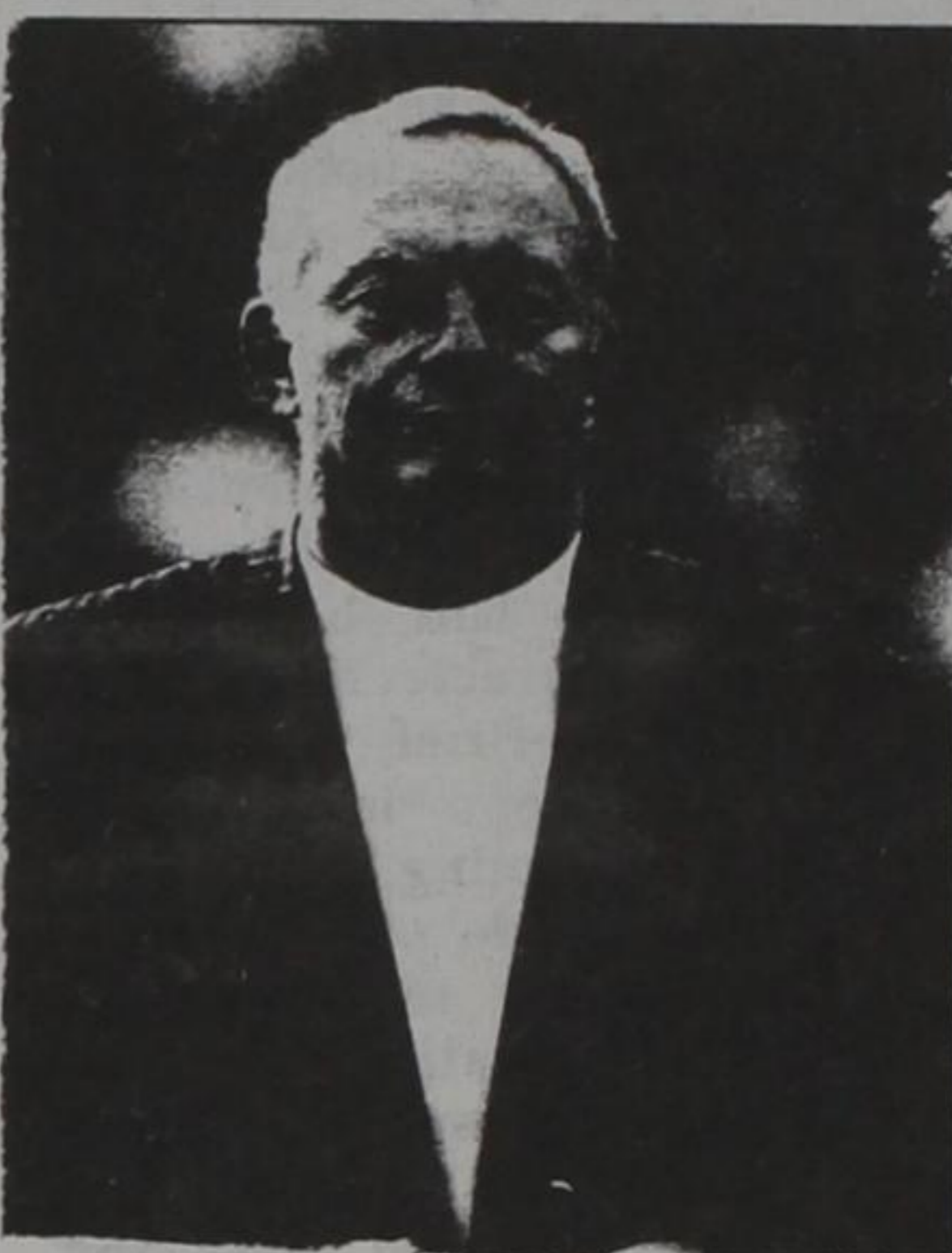
San Francisco 49ers -- Grade: B-plus

The 49ers' recent trade for Jamie Brown eliminated offensive tackle as a top need, so San Francisco attacked its other main trouble spot by tabbing CB R.W. McQuarters with its No. 1 pick. The Niners didn't ignore the offensive line, though, as three of their next four picks went for that unit. If two of those men develop into starters, this could go down as a terrific draft.

St. Louis Rams -- Grade: A-minus

St. Louis was one of the most successful teams at targeting its needs. DE Grant Wistrom, RB Robert Holcombe, LB Leonard Little, and TE Roland Williams all should see major playing time. And WR Az Hakim has big-play potential, but also character questions. In all, a draft with much promise.

How The Cowboys Did



DRAFT REVIEW -- The Dallas Cowboys did exactly what they needed to do: Get a starting-quality defensive end. Get a starting-quality offensive tackle. And the Cowboys didn't make any reaches or attempt to get cute with maneuvering around in the draft to grab multiple picks.

To their credit, they didn't take any chances of losing first-round pick Greg Ellis by trading out of the eighth pick into a lower location more suited to select him. They wanted Ellis, and took him. And also know that at least they made an attempt to move up to Arizona's third pick for defensive end Andre Wadsworth. But swapping firsts, giving up a second and next year's first wasn't enough for the Cards. So the Cowboys simply stayed put, taking Ellis, considered the third-best defensive end in the draft behind Wadsworth and Grant Wistrom.

Then with the seventh pick in the second round, the Cowboys couldn't believe their luck, Michigan State offensive tackle Flozell Adams slipping right out of the first round, mostly thanks to a senior season damaged by a severely sprained ankle and a partial loss of hearing in his right ear. Teams were afraid Adams would not be able to play left tackle, the position he played for Michigan State before crowds of nearly 100,000 in the Big Ten. The Cowboys needed help on the offensive line, be it

one game his senior season. He was suspended by Alabama for his involvement with an agent. But Myers was considered by many to have first-round talent, and should provide some strength in the defensive tackle rotation.

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