

el Saltillo

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Latino Presence Negligible

Supreme Court Hears Affirmative Action Cases

By Fresia Rodriguez Cadavid

As the Supreme Court heard two hours of opening arguments April 1 in what many consider the most significant civil rights cases to be argued before the nine justices in the last quarter-century, Hispanic presence was limited -- from the solemn halls inside the court to the rally outside and ensuing media coverage.

Why so?

Héctor Flores, national president of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), provides an explanation frequently expressed by other Hispanic activist leaders: "In this country, the equation for civil rights is a black-white equation. Latinos are an afterthought."

That starts with the Court itself, which has never had a Hispanic

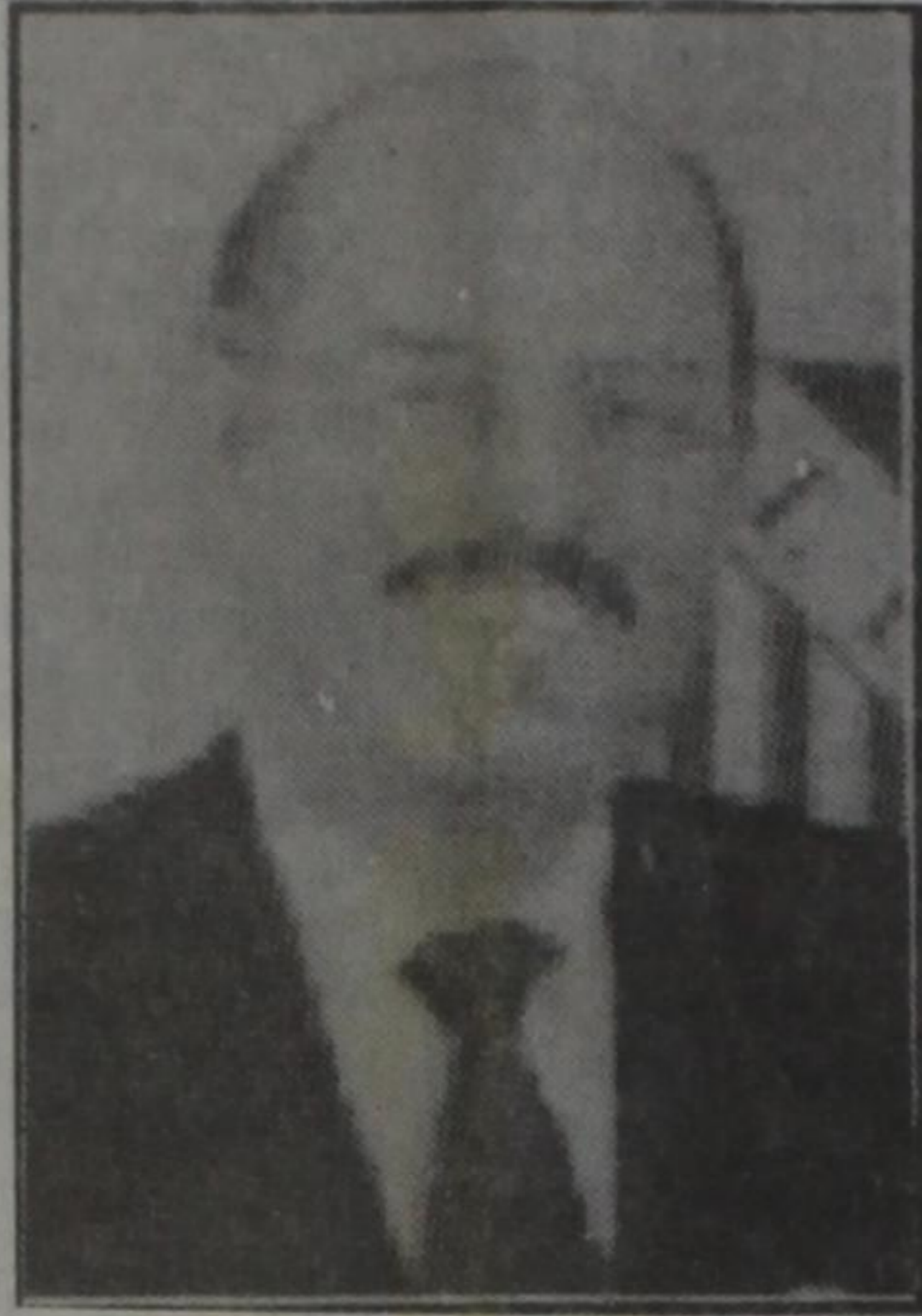
justice.

Flores, along with representatives from such national groups as the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the National Council of La Raza and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, joined protestors to demonstrate their support for affirmative action on the streets outside the Court building.

These and other Latino groups had been extremely busy for weeks preparing and disseminating briefs and commentaries on their positions on the cases.

Yet the lengthy, lead stories carried by such newspapers as The New York Times, Washington Post and Los Angeles Times on the day following the hearings failed to quote a single Hispanic legal perspective or comment.

The crowd outside the Court, estimated as large at 7,000, was made up mostly of students who traveled to the capital from throughout the country. The vast majority were black, thanks to organizational support from the NAACP and black advocacy groups. After meeting in front of the Court, they moved down the mall to



Hector Flores - national LULAC President

the Lincoln Memorial for a daylong rally.

The two affirmative action cases being heard challenge the fairness and legality of race-conscious admissions policies in higher education. They were brought by white students who claim they were rejected by the University of Michigan undergraduate and law schools based on their skin color. A decision is expected by July.

In terms of total numbers, "(Hispanic) turnout could have been better," rally participant Stephanie Scott told Hispanic Link. A Latina freshman at Washington, D.C.'s Georgetown University, she was one of four members of the Georgetown chapter of the Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA) student group to participate.

Of more than 100 reporters who covered the oral arguments inside the Supreme Court for mainstream media, only one was Hispanic. Those representing Hispanic media weren't visible at all, except for two reporters with Hispanic Link News Service, which also had a reporter outside with the crowd. No major Spanish-language news outlet was present in the Court chambers, where both broadcast and print reporters had access but no cameras were permitted. Univision and Telemundo covered the subsequent rally.

John Torres, who traveled from Oakland University in Michigan to attend, called Hispanic student participation in the rally "disappointing."

A smattering of Hispanic college students from New Mexico, California and Massachusetts were on hand. LULAC sponsored about 25 from the University of Texas at Austin.

Although some Hispanic leaders pointed to distance, travel cost and low grassroots mobilization efforts as partially explaining the limited Hispanic involvement, they noted that the participation did not reflect the importance of the issue for Hispanics.

"We can't 'displace and blame' on the issue -- not for ourselves," CHC Chairman Rep. Ciro Rodriguez (D-Tex.) told Hispanic Link, "but for subsequent generations and the entire country. We are the leading minority in this country. We need to start acting as such."

Tribunal Supremo Escucha los Casos de Acción Afirmativa

Por Fresia Rodríguez Cadavid

Mientras el primero de abril el Tribunal Supremo de los Estados Unidos escuchaba por dos horas los argumentos iniciales de lo que muchos consideran los casos civiles más importantes que se presentan frente a sus nueve jueces en los pasados veinticinco años, la presencia latina era limitada, lo que se podía palpar en la sala del tribunal, en las protestas que se llevaban a cabo afuera y en la cobertura noticiosa a continuación.

¿A qué se debió?

El presidente de la Liga de Ciudadanos Latinoamericanos Unidos (LULAC, por sus siglas en inglés) Héctor Flores proveyó una respuesta que otros líderes activistas hispanos han utilizado antes: "En este país, la ecuación de los derechos civiles

sólo incluye las variables para el blanco y el negro. Los latinos siempre estamos al margen".

Para empezar, en el Tribunal Supremo nunca ha habido un juez latino.

Flores y otros representantes de grupos nacionales como el Grupo de Congresistas Hispanos, el Consejo Nacional de la Raza y el Fondo Mexicano Americano para la Defensa Legal y la Educación se unieron a los manifestantes que se congregaron en las calles alrededor del tribunal para mostrar su apoyo en favor de la acción afirmativa.

Estos y otros grupos latinos han estado muy ocupados en las semanas pasadas preparando y disseminando notas y comentarios sobre su posición en cuanto a los casos.

(Continúa pagina 3)

NCLR urges immediate Texas legislature action on Education Bills

The National Council of La Raza (NCLR) is deeply concerned that the Texas Legislature has failed to address education issues of critical importance to the Latino community and to the Texas public school system as a whole. Specifically, State Representative Dora Olivo (D-Fort Bend) has introduced legislation, H.B. 336 and H.B. 337, which have the potential to improve the schooling of Latinos and other Texas students. Yet, neither bill has received a hearing in the Committee on Public Education. It is disappointing that the committee of jurisdiction has refused even to debate these bills.

H.B. 336 and H.B. 337 would give schools flexibility in making important decisions about Texas' public school students. Neither bill would adversely affect the academic standards in the current Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) system. Both bills would simply provide school-level personnel and parents more options for helping students pass the TAKS and complete high school.

Representative Olivo's legislation would allow schools to use multiple criteria in making high-stakes decisions about students. Rep. Olivo's approach is not novel or revolutionary. In its report, High Stakes: Testing for Tracking, Promotion, and Graduation, the National Research Council states that important decisions, such as grade

retention and promotion, tracking, and graduation, should not be made solely on the basis of test results, but should take into account multiple sources of information about students, such as classroom grades, teacher and parental input, child development, and school attendance. Rep. Olivo is not alone in advocating for this approach. It is supported by 17 educational and civil rights organizations representing millions of Texans.

Given that more than two in five (41.7%) Texas students are Latino and that too many Latinos are not provided the adequate educational opportunities needed to pass the TAKS, it is clear that the Committee's refusal to, at the very least, hold a hearing on these bills has significant implications for Latinos specifically and the Texas public schools as a whole. Unfortunately, it appears that the Committee is unwilling to fulfill its legislative responsibility and will let these bills die without ever having been debated.

Time is running out. If hearings are not set on H.B. 336 and H.B. 337 by April 8, then these bills will never see the light of day, and the Texas legislature will have missed a chance for thoughtful discussions on strategies for improving the educational landscape for all Texans. NCLR urges the Committee to do the right thing and give these bills the hearing they deserve.

Report Focuses on Closing Achievement gap for Hispanics

Commission on Education for Hispanics Issues Final Report



The President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans released its final report during an event today at Hialeah Senior High School near Miami, Fla.

Members of the commission were joined at the event by fellow commissioner and Latin recording artist Jon Secada, who is also a graduate of the high school.

The report, "From Risk to Opportunity: Fulfilling the Educational Needs of Hispanic Americans in the 21st Century," is the result of an

extensive, 18-month review and represents the most comprehensive plan to date aimed at closing the educational achievement gap for Hispanic Americans -- now the nation's largest minority group.

"Every child in America is a gift, and the task of educating each and every child is a noble endeavor," said Commission co-chair Frank Hanna.

"This is also a matter of great urgency, which requires immediate attention and an accountability for results."

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FBI podrá detener indocumentados que cruzan la frontera México-EE.UU.

Ciudad Juárez, México- Los indocumentados que pretendan cruzar ilegalmente la frontera de México con Estados Unidos podrán ser detenidos por el Buró Federal de Investigaciones (FBI) de ese país, informaron autoridades de México y Estados Unidos.

La oficina de Seguridad del Territorio Nacional de Estados Unidos (DHS por sus siglas en inglés) "otorgó facultades al FBI para arrestar a personas indocumentadas que hayan entrado de manera ilegal o a quienes se les vengán sus documentos", dijo a la prensa en la fronteriza Ciudad Juárez (norte) Hardrick Crawford, titular del FBI en El Paso, Texas.

La nueva facultad del FBI "será utilizada para combatir el terrorismo y arrestar a personas que tengan este tipo de antecedentes sin esperar a que intervenga (como en el pasado) personal del Servicio de Inmigración y Naturalización (SIN)", dijo el funcionario norteamericano.

La DHS de Estados Unidos fue creada formalmente hace un mes y agrupa al Servicio de Aduanas, la Patrulla Fronteriza y el Servicio de Inmigración y Naturalización, entre otras oficinas dedicadas a cuidar las fronteras estadounidenses.

Las nuevas disposiciones migratorias de Estados Unidos se dieron a conocer luego que autoridades de ambos países realizaron un recorrido por los principales puentes fronterizos del estado de Chihuahua (norte de México), Texas y Nuevo México (sur de Estados Unidos).



Comentarios

by Bidal Agüero

Continuing our look at Congressional candidates for the upcoming election on May 3rd, of the seventeen candidates that have filed a few are unknown persons who by filing to express their opinions on how the federal government functions and should change.

Although they would be considered long shots, who is to say that any of these candidates will manage, in their own way, to bring out enough voters to pull out at least a run-off spot.

Before going into examining each of these candidates a few words have to be said about Carl Isett -who I wrote about last week-and his efforts to work for the people he wants to represent. Few of these people know that as chairman of the House Conservative Caucus, he signed a document that would cut funding to Texas Tech by \$20 million. By signing the state funding reduction pledge of the Caucus and through his efforts on the state appropriations committee, Isett has asked for a drastic reduction in services for many Texas who depend on state aid in order to survive. (See proposed cuts on page 2). By looking at the proposed cuts, we can definitely see that the people he wants to represent does not include "us poor people."

The long shots that I mentioned unfortunately include two Democrats that are saying the right things but because of the stoical attitude of West Texas voters have a minimal chance of being elected. Serri Simmons-Smussen and Kaye Gaddy both understand "us poor people's" plight as both have stated that they are against President Bush's tax plan. "I'm against it", says Simmons-Smussen, "I think it only helps the wealthiest 1 percent and does not take into account the middle and lower income classes." Gaddy made an impressive presentation when she spoke to the Lubbock Hispanic Chamber of Commerce using all the customary ideologies of the Democrat party - most of which are beneficial for "us poor people." Either candidate would be a good choice for all the die-hard-yellow-dog democrats that are going to vote.

Other candidates that I would consider long shots include Ricard Bartlett, John Bell, Jamie Beryhill, Bill Christian, Mike Cnaway, Donald May, and Chip Peterson. Although Green Party candidate Julia Penelope is also a long shot, she deserves a good look for those people who want to vote their real conscience and are concerned about the rights and well fare of all citizens.

Next week we look at Stace Williams and Vickie Sutton. Plus we make a review of a few of the front-runners before our endorsements and election issue on April 24th. Don't forget, early voting starts on April 16th. write to Bidal at eleditor@llano.net

El Editor
Newspapers

La Explosión del Inglés:

¿Peligrosa Hasta Para Si Mismo?

Por Domenico Maceri

Un lector se burló de mí una vez diciendo que le importaba un comino que desaparecieran todos los idiomas del mundo menos uno.

Es poco probable que esto pase, claro, pero si ocurriera, el candidato más apto a sobrevivir sería el inglés.

Al ir en aumento el número de personas que aprenden inglés en las escuelas contra los que lo aprenden como idioma nativo de sus padres, aumenta también la probabilidad que se convierta en una materia pedagógica como las matemáticas o la programación de computadoras.

Se calcula que unas 322 millones de personas hablan el inglés como lengua materna y otras 350 millones lo hablan como segundo idioma, mientras que muchas más personas en todo el mundo lo aprenden por lo que se ha convertido en el idioma preferido a nivel internacional.

El inglés también va en aumento por la fuerza económica, militar y cultural de los países anglohablantes, en particular los Estados Unidos, además de Gran Bretaña, Canadá, Australia y Nueva Zelanda.

El inglés es el idioma dominante o uno de los de mayor uso en Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Malasia, Nigeria, Paquistán, las Filipinas, etc. En total, en 47 países el inglés

es el idioma dominante o uno de los idiomas oficiales.

Son obvias las ventajas de saber hablar inglés. La lengua shakespeariana se ha vuelto indispensable en muchas partes. Todos los pilotos de avión deben hablar inglés. El comercio internacional se lleva a cabo casi siempre en inglés. Es muy probable que un empresario japonés converse en inglés con su contraparte árabe. Los inspectores de armas de las Naciones Unidas en Irak tienen en común el inglés.

Mucha de la investigación científica y médica del mundo se realiza en países de habla inglesa, por ende los médicos que no sepan leer inglés pueden poner en peligro la vida de sus pacientes. La demora en esperar que se traduzca al idioma local los últimos hallazgos de la investigación puede resultar mortal, en particular hoy en día con la incidencia del SIDA.

Si la investigación se realiza en países donde no domina el inglés, en la mayoría de los casos los resultados se publican en inglés. Cuando el famoso Instituto Pasteur optó por publicar sus revistas en inglés hace unos años, creó furor en Francia. Sin embargo, los funcionarios del Instituto bien sabían lo que hacían -- reconocer que el inglés es hoy la lengua franca. El francés era

demasiado limitante, no podía proveer un público lo suficientemente extenso para la difusión de las investigaciones del Instituto.

El inglés es uno de los seis idiomas oficiales de las Naciones Unidas y una de dos lenguas de trabajo, junto con el francés. Es con mucha razón que los franceses se quejan que al inglés se le da prioridad en la ONU.

La explosión del internet de aquí a unos años es otro factor que apunta a la importancia del inglés. Se calcula que el 70 por ciento del contenido del internet está en inglés.

No obstante, sólo un 44 por ciento de los usuarios del internet son nativohablantes del inglés. El número de hablantes nativos del español es mayor que el de los hablantes nativos del inglés. El número de hablantes nativos del chino es mayor que la suma de los dos últimos grupos. Sin embargo, el inglés domina el internet por lo que muchas de las innovaciones tecnológicas del mundo conectado por cables se han generado en inglés. Los que quieren vender productos por internet o comunicar su mensaje al mayor público posible deben usar el inglés.

La fuerza del inglés resulta preocupante a los lingüistas que temen la desaparición de muchas de las 6,000 lenguas

mundiales a raíz del proceso de globalización.

Aunque no es posible echarle la culpa al inglés directamente, es cierto que su fuerza amenaza aquellas lenguas habladas por poblaciones reducidas. Es una amenaza también a los idiomas hablados por millones de personas como el francés, el alemán, el polaco, el portugués, etc.

En Canadá y en Francia se han decretado leyes para proteger el francés de la invasión de palabras en inglés. Alemania, Polonia y Brasil han considerado seguir este ejemplo para salvaguardar sus lenguas nacionales.

Es irónico, pero la explosión del inglés puede ser peligrosa hasta para sí mismo. Es probable que en la medida en que el inglés se vuelva el segundo idioma de todo el mundo, será considerado simplemente un instrumento como las matemáticas, el Fortran o el Algol (idiomas de programación).

Para mantenernos ligados a nuestra humanidad, tendremos que valernos del idioma que representa nuestra cultura -- aquel idioma que aprendimos de nuestros padres. Y será ese idioma en gran parte otro, mas no el inglés.

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The English Explosion:

A Danger Even To Itself?

By Domenico Maceri

A reader once taunted me that he couldn't care less if all the languages of the world except one disappeared.

It's unlikely, of course, that we'll see that happen. But if it does, the most likely candidate to survive would be English.

As the number of people who learn English in schools continues to increase over those who learn it from their parents as a native language, the likelihood that it will become a subject like math or a computer code also increases.

An estimated 322 million people speak English as their native language and another 350 million speak it as their second language. In addition, many more people around the globe are learning English because it has become the preferred international language.

English is rising because of the economic, military, technological and cultural power of English-speaking countries, particularly the United States, but also Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

English also is the dominant or one of the working languages in such nations as Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan and the Philippines. In all, 47 countries around the world have English as the dominant or one of the national languages.

The advantages of knowing English in the world are obvious. Shakespeare's tongue has become indispensable in many areas. All airline pilots must know English. International trade is usually conducted in English. A Japanese and an

Arab businessman are quite likely to converse in English. United Nations arms inspectors in Iraq used English as their common language.

Much of the world's scientific and medical research is carried out in English-speaking countries. Thus foreign doctors who cannot read English may endanger their patients' lives. Waiting for the translation of the latest research into the local language could prove lethal, especially in these days of AIDS.

If research is carried out in non-English-speaking countries, it is normally published in English. When the world-renowned Institut Pasteur decided to put out its journals in English several years ago, it created a furor in France. Yet officials at the Institut knew what they were doing -- acknowledging that English was the current lingua franca. French was too limiting, unable to provide a large audience for the Institut's research.

English is one of the six official languages of the United Nations and one of two working languages, along with French. French speakers often complain, with good reason, that English is given priority at the U.N.

The explosion of the Internet in the last several years also points to the importance of English. Estimates are that 70 percent of Internet content is in English. However, only about 44 percent of Internet users are native English speakers. The number of native Spanish speakers is larger than native English speakers. The number of native Chinese speakers is

larger than the sum of both of these two groups. Nevertheless, English dominates the Internet because many of the technological innovations of the wired world have been generated in English. Those wishing to sell products on the Internet or communicate their message to the largest possible audience have to use English.

The power of English alarms linguists who see many of the 6,000 world languages in danger of disappearing because of the globalization process.

Although you cannot blame English directly, its power poses a threat to languages spoken by small numbers of people. English also threatens world languages spoken by millions of people such as

French, German, Polish, Portuguese.

Canada and France have passed legislation to protect French from an onslaught of English words. Germany, Poland and Brazil have considered following suit to safeguard their national languages.

Ironically, English may even pose a threat to itself. It's likely that as English becomes everyone's second language, it will be seen as nothing more than a tool like math, Fortran or Algol.

To stay in touch with our humanity, we'll have to resort to the language that represents our culture -- the language we learned from our parents. And for most people around the globe, that language will be something other than English.

Letter to the Editor

Last week's "Comentarios de Bidal" were on target but you were much too sweet in your critique of Carl Isett. The glaring reality begs closer scrutiny. Carl Isett says he is a friend of business and a friend of the tax payer. He consistently asks voters to judge him on his record. The sad truth is that Carl Isett's record clearly demonstrates that Carl Isett is "Neither" or as the popular axiom states; "With Friends like Carl, who needs enemies."

Carl Isett has consistently voted the Straight Conservative Party Line in detriment to Lubbock and all West Texas. He voted along Party lines to redistrict West Texas, this was very hurtful to us. He voted along Party lines against Speaker Pete Laney, this also was very hurtful to West Texas. As President of the conservative coalition he championed the position paper against John T. Montford's "Excellence" initiatives for TTU, this also is very hurtful to West Texas. TTU stands to lose \$20 million. Recall that TTU was founded to serve West Texas. Carl Isett's most recent act against West Texas is his sponsorship of Texas security infrastructure bill which greatly increases police powers of the state at the expense of individual liberty. Carl Isett supports limited judgments against mal-practice even in cases of gross negligence. And he speaks with glee of cutting health care and denuding education for what he calls the "Noble Goal of Lower Taxes". Cuts as proposed by Carl Isett will lower Texas to dead-last in the nation in health care and education for its own citizens. The future depends on education and Carl Isett is dead-set on its demise.

It is clear that Carl Isett loyalty lies with the Conservative Agenda and not the people of West Texas. His running for Congress is the most glaring example of his total disregard for West Texas. He is willing to give up important committee chairmanships in Austin to run for the position of most junior representative in Congress. Clearly he has put his personal ambitions above the needs and interests of West Texas voters. Carl Isett appears to have wide spread support. If voters knew about Carl Isett's Straight Line Support of the Conservative Agenda he would not be so popular. Carl Isett support of the ultra-conservative spending cuts for south Plains College and TTU is especially hurtful to hispanics.

Why is it that some hispanic leaders in Lubbock support a man who's record is so hurtful to our people and brags about it? Figure it out!!!!!! Ysidro Gutierrez

Republican Excess in a Time of Belt tightening

By Texas Democratic Party Chairwoman Molly Beth Malcolm

Let's take a short quiz.

Suppose you were the Governor of a major state - i.e., Texas - and your state government faced a budget deficit of nearly \$10 billion.

You would: A) To set an example, cut your own budget to help critical programs avoid devastating cuts. B) Hire a total of 3 chefs to cook your meals at the Governor's Mansion.

Suppose you were the Speaker of the House of this same major state, and preliminary budget plans called for denying health insurance to 250,000 children from working families.

You would: A) Call for shared sacrifice and delay expenditures on luxury items. B) Spend \$3,700 of taxpayer money on a mattress and boxsprings, place mats, napkins, candles and other tableware, as well as \$6,600 to repaint the Speaker's apartment.

And suppose you were the Lt. Governor of this great state, and a plan was presented that would reduce school funding for 85% of the school districts in Texas.

You would: A) Hold down staff salaries and hirings to show you are willing to make sacrifices like all other state agencies. B) Double the staff salaries from just two years before.

If you're like most Texans, you answered "A" to these three questions. If you're Governor Rick Perry, Speaker Tom Craddick or Lt. Governor David Dewhurst, you probably answered "B."

That's right, Rick Perry has not one, not two, but three chefs. I understand the need for one chef at the Governor's mansion, but three? With three chefs cooking for him, how does Perry stay so thin?

Speaker Craddick blew our money on tea cups, bowls, frying pans, place mats, an iron, re-painting and a new bed at the Speaker's apartment. Who knew Tom Craddick was a secret Martha Stewart fan?

And then there's Lt. Governor Dewhurst, who doubled his office's salaries. His chief of staff gets paid like a celebrity - \$221,000 a year. I'd wager there are more people getting pink slips in Texas right now than raises.

However, it's not that each of these Republicans is throwing money around. It's that they are spending it at a time when there are proposals on the table to slash education and health care funding and deny hundreds of thousands of Texans services they are presently receiving.

What we need is shared sacrifice. If the children, teachers, and senior citizens of Texas are forced to sacrifice, don't you think the leaders should sacrifice too? We need a little less Marie Antoinette and a lot more Joan of Arc around here. It seems to me Perry, Craddick and Dewhurst could do without a few luxuries.

It might make a difference if they did. If Rick Perry had to survive with just one chef, Tom Craddick had to make-do without new dishes, and David Dewhurst had to get by without a staff paid like corporate CEO's, maybe, just maybe, they would understand better what they're about to do to the rest of Texas.

PROPOSED CUTS
The two-year budget recommended by the House Appropriations Committee would cut current spending of state tax revenue by 5.5 percent. The proposed cuts would mean:
- More than 250,000 children would lose Children's Health Insurance Program coverage.
- About 330,000 poor children either would lose or could not obtain Medicaid coverage.
- About 17,000 low-income pregnant women would lose Medicaid coverage.
- More than 56,000 elderly or disabled people would lose services of home attendants.
- About 10,000 sick and destitute adults would lose Medicaid coverage.
- Dozens of child-abuse investigators would be laid off, increasing caseloads of other investigators.
- Teaching hospitals would lose money for treating the poor and training young doctors.
- Teachers and school employees would lose much of their \$1,000 health insurance stipend.
- Retired teachers would lose some health-care funding.
- Current and retired state employees would lose some health benefits.
- The University of Texas at Arlington would lose 12.5 percent of state tax money; UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, 9.6 percent; the University of North Texas, 6 percent; UT-Dallas, 4.4 percent.
- State aid to public schools would be cut by 2 percent.

The War in Iraq: I Will Not Be Intimidated

Hon. Charles Rangel

Recently, on the Hannity and Colmes TV show, Sean Hannity challenged my patriotism because I said, "I just don't believe that you bomb women and children in order to enforce something against a lying cheat."

50 years ago, I was a young American in combat, fighting the communists in North Korea. Our soldiers are brave young men and women just for being there, and I know they're scared, like I was. My heart truly goes out to them--and to their families--who I know are praying and worried to death.

Our troops don't know who is the enemy--whether they are men in uniforms or in street clothes. Our troops don't target men or women or

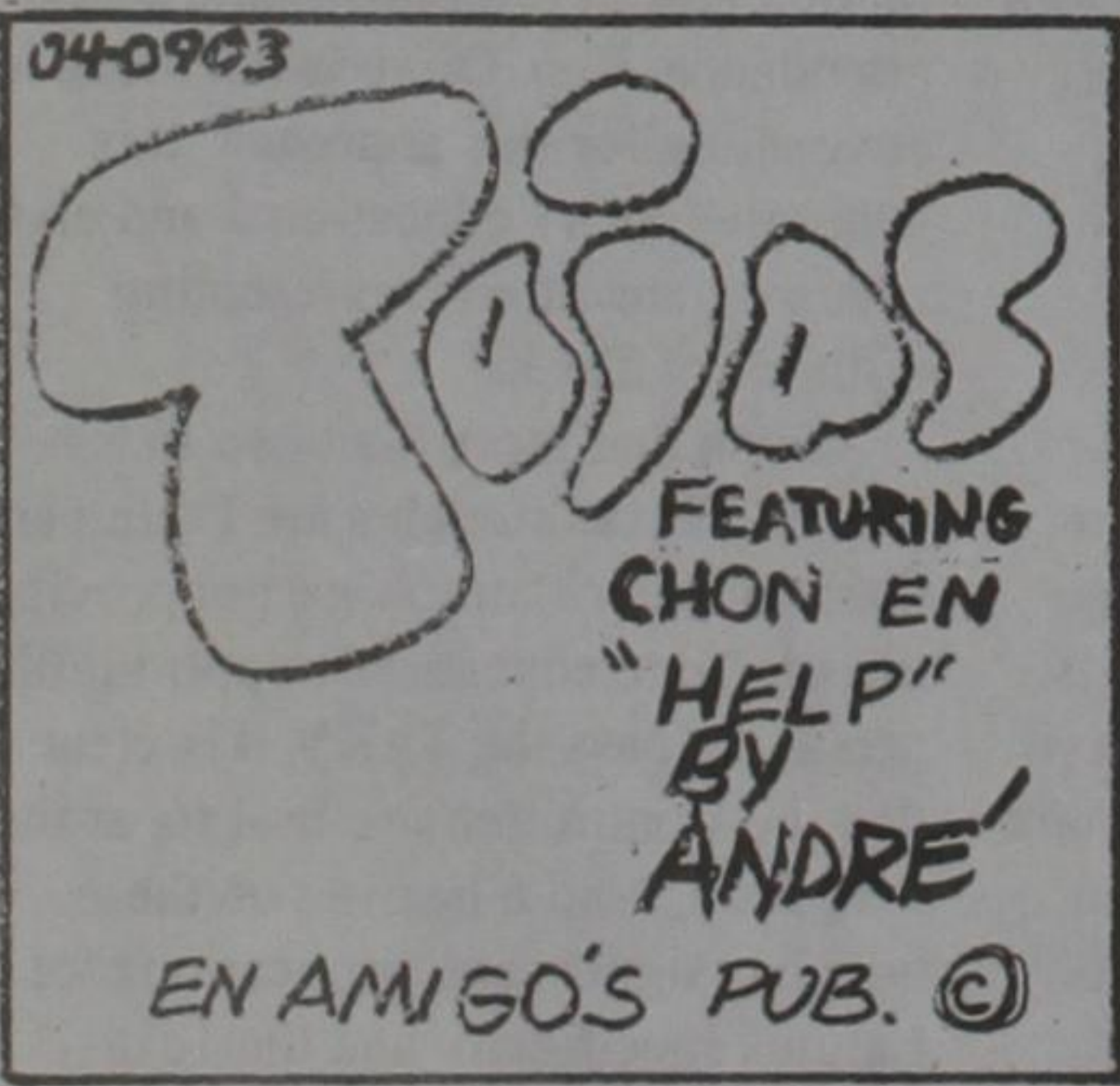
children. They're in guerrilla warfare, and the only rule is to defend themselves. And no matter how much we do to pinpoint targets from the air, bombs don't know the difference between enemy troops and innocent people.

What Sean Hannity does not know, because he did not serve in the armed forces, is that soldiers obey the orders of the Commander-in-Chief. Our troops are doing that. But if we were not in this war, there would be no bombing at all, and it would not be necessary to consider the issue of "collateral damage."

Nothing is more precious to Americans than our freedom to speak out, to disagree. It's frightening that, in their passion for this war, some people are accusing anyone who opposes it of being unpatriotic. If members of Congress are going to be attacked for fulfilling their responsibility to their constituents to speak out on matters of war and peace, then we might as well tear up the Constitution.

I do not support the war, but I revere the troops, and I am drafting legislation that will show, in a tangible way, the country's appreciation for their sacrifice. The program will provide generous higher education and health care benefits, for the troops after their discharge, their spouses and children. For those who wish to go into business, it will provide the necessary resources.

Sean Hannity deliberately distorted my views on the program in his attempt to challenge my patriotism. I will continue speaking on behalf of my constituents and in defense of the Constitution. I will not be intimidated.



Casos de Afirmativa de la primer pagina

Sin embargo, al día siguiente, las largas historias de primera plana de periódicos tales como el New York Times, el Washington Post y el Los Angeles Times no citaron la perspectiva o el comentario legal hispano.

La muchedumbre de aproximadamente 7,000 personas que se reunió a las afueras del tribunal estaba compuesta de estudiantes que llegaron hasta la capital desde distintos puntos de la nación. El esfuerzo organizacional del NAACP y de grupos defensores negros se vio reflejado en la muchedumbre, la que estaba compuesta mayormente de africano-americanos. Luego de reunirse frente al tribunal, se movilizaron al parque donde se encuentra el Monumento a Lincoln, donde llevaron a cabo una manifestación que duró todo el día.

Los dos casos sobre acción afirmativa que se están viendo en el Tribunal Supremo retan la justicia y la legalidad de las políticas de admisión de educación superior que toman en consideración el origen étnico. Los mismos los presentaron estudiantes blancos que reclaman que tanto la escuela de leyes como la escuela subgraduada de la Universidad de Michigan los rechazó por el color de su piel. Se espera que el tribunal haya tomado una decisión para el mes de julio.

En términos de cifras globales, "la asistencia (hispana) pudo haber sido mejor", le dijo Stephanie Scott, una de las manifestantes, a Hispanic Link. Scott, una latina de primer año en Georgetown University, fue una de cuatro miembros del Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA) de esa universidad que participó en la actividad.

De un total de más de 100 reporteros de los principales medios que cubrieron los argumentos dentro del tribunal, sólo uno era hispano. Los que representaban los medios de comunicación hispanos apenas se veían, con la excepción de dos reporteros de Hispanic Link News Service, quien también tenía un reportero cubriendo la manifestación. Ninguna agencia de noticias en español importante estuvo presente en la sala a la cual se permitió acceso a la prensa escrita y de radiodifusión, pero no a las cámaras. Telemundo y Univisión cubrieron la manifestación que se llevó a cabo después.

John Torres, quien viajó desde la Universidad de Oakland en Michigan, dijo que la participación de estudiantes hispanos en la manifestación fue "decepcionante".

Un puñado de estudiantes hispanos de Nuevo México, California y Massachusetts estuvo allí. LULAC auspició a 25 estudiantes de la Universidad de Texas en Austin.

Aunque muchos líderes activistas hispanos señalaron que la distancia, los costos de transporte y poca movilización por parte de grupos de base son algunas de las razones que explican la limitada participación hispana, aclararon que la poca participación no refleja lo importante que este asunto es para los hispanos.

"No podemos echar a un lado este asunto. Tenemos que hacer algo, no sólo por nosotros, sino por las generaciones venideras y por la nación entera", dijo Ciro Rodríguez, representante demócrata de Texas y presidente del Grupo de Congresistas Hispanos a Hispanic Link. "Somos la minoría dominante en esta nación y necesitamos comenzar a actuar como tal".

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Can the Left Win the Presidency in El Salvador?

By Randy Jurado Ertil

The Salvadoran left may be on the brink of winning the presidency in that nation's March 2004 elections. Based on last month's competition for congressional seats and some key mayoral posts, it is possible. The *Farabundo Martí National Liberation* (FMLN in Spanish) won 31 congressional seats while the opposition National Republican Alliance (ARENA in Spanish) won only 27.

Many Salvadorans have become disillusioned with the ruling ARENA party, which has controlled the presidency since 1989.

ARENA lost much support, especially among the working poor, due to labor disputes with striking doctors opposed to the privatization of El Sal-

Education Excellence for Hispanic

de la primer pagina

President Bush formed the commission in October 2001 to develop an action plan to close the educational achievement gap for Hispanic Americans. The commission heard from more than 1,600 parents, teachers and experts and found a deepening crisis that affects all Americans.

Co-chair Eneledia Schofield remarked, "As a principal, I see the daily struggles that Hispanic parents endure to make college a reality for their children. This report signifies our Nation's strong commitment to making an impact in improving Hispanic education."

One of every three Hispanic American students fails to complete high school and only 10 percent of Hispanic Americans graduate from four-year colleges and universities. This not only threatens to leave behind yet another generation of Hispanic children, but also could limit mobility in the labor force, potentially jeopardizing our country's ability to compete economically.

Building on the president's No Child Left Behind initiative, the report sets forth recommendations for parents, educators, and leaders from business, local communities, faith-based institutions and government. In addition, the commission recommends six strategies to address the present dilemma:

- Set new and high expectations for Hispanic American children.
- Support No Child Left Behind.
- Reinforce and expand a high-quality teaching profession.
- Launch a research agenda to support Hispanic American children.
- Create pathways to college graduation.
- Create increased federal accountability and coordination.

"Closing the educational achievement gap of Hispanic American children is everyone's business," said U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige.

"The president and I believe every child can learn and with the reforms of No Child Left Behind, every child will learn. We're not letting any more Hispanic children slip through the cracks. It's a disgrace and it is going to stop. And the report the commission has given the president provides thoughtful ideas about how we can further expand our efforts in this area."

Hialeah Senior High School, located in the northwestern part of Dade County, is one of 35 high schools in the nation's fourth largest school system. The school serves 3,000 students, and Hispanics represent over 90 percent of the Hialeah community. The high school will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2004.

vador's *Seguro Social Hospital*, which provides cheap or free medical services. President Francisco Flores did not settle this dispute effectively, and now many of these doctors and other professionals are supporting the FMLN.

In the elections, ARENA once again lost San Salvador. Now there is infighting amongst its members to determine who should be in the inner circle of its National Executive Council (COENA). Members were so surprised and angered with the election results that former President Alfredo Cristiani and Armando Calderón Sol have volunteered to provide guidance for restructuring the party.

Some ARENA supporters are holding President Francisco Flores and his closest advisor, Juan José Daboub, directly responsible for the key electoral losses.

El Salvador's left and right wing parties both have changed since the signing of the Peace Accords in 1992. Some former guerrillas became supporters of ARENA and vice versa. The United States no longer sees Central America as an important "hot geopolitical spot."

A few old guerrilla commanders remain active and continue to play leadership roles. Both Salvador Sánchez Ceren, who once commanded the Popular Forces for Liberation, and Schafik Handal, one of the oldest leaders of El Salvador's Communist Party, now control the FMLN.

Rumor has begun to circulate that Schafik Handal could be the presidential nominee for the left, even though the young FMLN mayor of Santa Tecla, Oscar Ortiz, has begun to question the old commanders' positions of leadership. An ambitious Ortiz has publicly expressed his interest in running.

Handal remains one of the best-known and respected figures of Latin America's revolutionary movements. His reputation as a fearless, stubborn and confrontational leader committed to his political ideals is legendary.

While it would have been unimaginable in the 1980s to predict that Handal would seek the presidency, now that most Marxist-Leninist inspired revolutions have ended, anti-Communist rhetoric has decreased somewhat.

To make Handal even more interesting, he is of Middle Eastern descent. His family emigrated from Palestine and settled in Usulután in the early 1900s. There, they established thriving businesses and gained a reputation for being just employers. Like most Salva-

dorans of Middle Eastern descent, Handal is a "Turco." Perhaps as the result of Turkish immigration to El Salvador, the term *Turco* was coined to describe Salvadorans from the Middle East.

ARENA members have in the past accused Handal of being a Palestine sympathizer, and now more than ever they may attack his roots. Handal's followers say that he is experienced and politically astute; his foes call him an historical, orthodox figure, an extremist.

Once ARENA selects its own dynamic duo, the showdown for the presidency will begin. Archie Baldocci, one of the country's most powerful and wealthy individuals, has acquired a serious illness and resigned as head of ARENA's political arm. He is respected among the nation's elite. As a member of the Dueñas family, his lineage is historical. This is one of the wealthiest land-owning families of El Salvador

since the 1800s.

ARENA most likely will select a member of one of the wealthiest families or a well-qualified business owner with close ties to one of these families. This could lead to its downfall. Many of ARENA's leaders are not accepted by El Salvador's poor. Many are not in touch with the daily struggles of a working-class person trying to survive. The FMLN and ARENA will compete for the support of El Salvador's middle class.

Both parties have made inroads into the Salvadoran community living in the United States. The U.S. Salvadoran population numbers well over 1 million. It cannot vote in El Salvador elections. However, U.S. Salvadorans can play a key role in that country's politics with monetary contributions. Some ARENA and FMLN candidates are already visiting U.S. cities with large Salvadoran populations to capture future political donations.

The FMLN has a history of being supported by many of the Central American community-based organizations established since the 1980s. However, ARENA has extensive links with the U.S. Salvadoran business sector. It also has established good relationships with well-known Salvadoran nonprofit organizations.

The FMLN can appeal to some conservative sectors if it chooses to embrace some aspects of capitalism. By the same token, ARENA can make headway in securing the "poor people's" vote if it becomes more involved with the country's working-class masses.

El Salvador established a historical precedent in 1992 when the right and left signed the Peace Accords. It may once again shock the world by electing its first leftist president next year.

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NCLR applauds restoration of food stamp benefits to qualified legal immigrants

On April 1, qualified legal immigrants regained the opportunity to access federal Food Stamp Program benefits. Immigrants are qualified to receive benefits if they have legally resided in the U.S. for at least five years, and if they otherwise meet the income and resource requirements of the Food Stamp program.

Previously, most legal immigrants, regardless of when they entered this country, were denied access to federal food stamps by laws associated with 1996 welfare reform. The April 1 restorations, together with two smaller restorations that extended benefits to legal immigrant children and disabled persons (effective October 2002), will result in restored access to nutrition programs for an estimated 400,000 low-income immigrants. These restorations were signed into law

by President Bush as part of the 2002 Farm Bill.

The Food Stamp Program, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) through the Food and Nutrition Service, enables low-income families to buy nutritious food using coupons and Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards. Through the receipt of food stamps, low-income households can increase the nutritional value of their food supply by 20 to 40%, and in so doing avoid debilitating hunger, stay healthy, and achieve their full potential at school and in the workplace.

The restoration of federal food stamps to qualified immigrants represents a critical step toward ensuring that, as these individuals work, pay taxes, and strive to secure better opportunities for their families, they have access to the

critical support systems they need to continue their vital contributions to our society.

Over the next six months, USDA will work with a number of national community-based organizations, including NCLR, to communicate the eligibility changes through a variety of outreach activities, including Spanish-language radio announcements on the Hispanic Radio Network. The radio announcements are part of the Food Stamps Make America Stronger campaign, which includes outreach to a wide range of immigrant groups, seniors, and the working poor.

More information on the restoration of food stamp benefits to qualified immigrants is available from the Food and Nutrition Service at www.fns.usda.gov or from the Food Research and Action Center at www.frac.org.

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Dallas pone a prueba a Lakers

Los habituales forjadores de milagros se tomaron la noche. Los consuetudinarios ejecutores de las proezas estuvieron ausentes como tales, Kobe Bryant y Shaquille. Fue la noche de los casi anónimos, de quienes son el soporte de las hazañas, pero apenas reciben regalías de la admiración por los otros.

Fue la noche de trabajo y aciertos para Phil Jackson, que encontró un tablero de exigencia continua para repeler la propuesta exigente de los Mavericks de Dallas.

La noche del eclipse de dos soles y del alumbramiento del resto.

La noche en que los Lakers confirmaron que están listos para la batalla extrema, la de los playoffs, y que cuentan con el respaldo de Devean George (21 puntos) Derek Fisher (16), Robert Horry (17) y Rick Fox (16). Shaq y Kobe terminaron con 14 puntos, entre sus producciones más bajas en el torneo.

Así, en un juego procesado a un incesante ritmo y un cautivante nivel técnico y físico, los Lakers se impusieron a los líderes de su Conferencia, a los favoritos de la liga, a los Mavericks, por 108-99, en un final de delirio, digno corolario del encuentro.

Fue además, una lección anticipada. Oportuna incluso. Lakers recibió un enganche del escenario que le aguarda en los playoffs de la NBA.

Nervio, fuerza, concentración, dedicación y sed de sangre del monarca. Así se plantaron anoche los Mavericks: con lo mejor y con sus mejores, sin consideraciones ni regateos de ninguna especie.

Dallas transpiró cada segundo, con sus habituales lujos, Steve Nash y Dirk Nowitzki, convertidos en auténticos sabuesos que limitaron a Kobe Bryant a sólo cuatro puntos en la primera mitad, en una de sus más bajas producciones de la campaña.

Rudo y duro. Juego intenso. Con el valor agregado de promocionarse a sí mismo como uno de los frentes de batalla de la postemporada.

Acciones que bordeaban en la anoréxica frontera de lo permitido y lo prohibido en el reglamento. Un camino sinuoso a



veces recorrido con delicadeza y a veces con toda la brusquedad del caso, al grado que Eschmeyer, en un lance de pancraccio lanzó a revolcarse sobre la duela la paquidémica humanidad de Shaquille, con la consiguiente rabia del lagunero.

El desenlace del primer correo fue 22-22. La presencia de Lakers en el marcador recayó en Rick Fox y Derek Fisher, quienes con tres triples y dos, respectivamente, mantuvieron el equilibrio en el tanteador.

¿Kobe? Encarcelado con eventuales dobles custodios, sufría el sueño de los justos: 12 minutos y cero puntos. Mismas cifras, aunque más transpiradas, eran las del mexicano Eduardo Nájera, de Dallas, convertido en el guardián de O'Neal.

En el segundo apartado, con la pizarra en 27-28, la pelota seguía enemistada con Kobe y fue recluido en la banca con su casillero en blanco, como reflejo del aseado método y desaseado recurso de persecución de que era objeto.

Cuando Lakers prescindió de Shaq y Kobe en la cancha, Dallas vio colapsada su estrategia. Se encontró con más circulación de la pelota, perdieron sus blancos específicos y en el titubeo, el adversario, revolcó, de 29-31 a 35-31 con triple de George, canasta de Pargo y cas-

tigo de Horry.

Con 36-31 y 5:07 en el reloj, regresó Kobe. Hasta que el juego había madurado en 20 minutos con 11 segundos, halló sus dos primeros puntos desde la zona de fusilamiento.

Así, la segunda rebanada se clausuró con la estampida de los Mavericks con un parcial de 25-28 y un global de 47-50.

El tercer capítulo mantuvo el ritmo veloz y feroz en la disputa. El marcador enloquecía ante las maromas por el trámite intenso, espectacular, vertiginoso del juego, en el que irónicamente, permanecían marginados dos de los mejores cosechadores de Lakers: Bryant y Shaquille, dejando en George, Horry, Fisher y Fox la responsabilidad.

29-25 en el parcial y 76-75 en el acumulado, fue el saldo del tercer cuarto, el cual finalizó Eschmeyer con cinco personales y un par de indultos exasperantes de los jueces, y con un coro de idolatría, reclamo, imploración y arenga, para el astro dormido: "Ko-be, Ko-be, Ko-be".

En el capítulo final desembocó la algidez del encuentro, el depósito en la duela de los últimos restos de energía y talento, con el dominio final de Lakers para el epílogo de 108-99.

Spurs hold off Blazers for 10th Win in a row

The San Antonio Spurs won their 10th straight game Wednesday night, fending off a strong second-half rally by the Portland Trail Blazers for an 84-79 victory.

Tim Duncan has 11 points and 11 rebounds for the Spurs.

The win ensured the Spurs would end the day with the best record in the league and at least in a tie for first place in the Midwest Division with Dallas with four games left. The Mavericks played later Wednesday in Phoenix.

Stephen Jackson made two free throws with 10.6 seconds remaining and Tony Parker added one more a few seconds later to clinch it.

The Trail Blazers, trailing by 12 at the half, trimmed San Antonio's lead to 81-79 on two free throws by Bonzi Wells with 1:28 left. But Portland missed its final three shots, while the Spurs ran down the clock before picking up the three free throws from Jackson and Parker to cap the scoring.

Manu Ginobili's 17 points led six Spurs in double figures. Parker added 15 and Bruce Bowen 13, all in the first half. Tim Duncan had 11 points and 11 rebounds.

Derek Anderson paced Portland with 20 points, and Wells and Damon Stoudamire each had 12.

Portland cut its deficit to six points by the end of the third period behind three baskets by Wells and two 3-pointers from Anderson. At the other end, the Spurs managed only 10 points in as many minutes.

Both teams started out with cold shooting, making only six of their first 25 shots combined.

Jackson stole the ball from Wells and fed Malik Rose for a dunk to pull the Spurs into a 11-11 tie, and a drive by Ginobili on the next possession put San Antonio ahead to stay.

Bowen made three of his four 3-point attempts in the half for 13 points, helping the Spurs maintain a double-digit lead through most of the second quarter.

Parker went 5-for-7 from the floor in the first two quarters and Ginobili was 4-for-6, including two 3-pointers. The Trail Blazers struggled against San Antonio's tight defense, making only three baskets in the first six minutes of the second period.

Cuban Playwright Wins Pulitzer Prize

TOP HONOR: Cuban-born playwright Nilo Cruz, in his apartment in New York City, after learning on Monday that he received the Pulitzer Prize for his play 'Anna in the Tropics.' The 42-year-old Cruz becomes the first playwright of Hispanic descent to win drama's most prestigious honor. KATHY WILLENS/AP

Nilo Cruz, a playwright who came to Miami on a Freedom Flight from Cuba at the age of 10, won the Pulitzer Prize for drama Monday for Anna in the Tropics, a play that had its world premiere in October at tiny New Theatre in Coral Gables.

The 42-year-old Cruz becomes the first playwright of Hispanic descent to win drama's most prestigious honor, which was announced Monday along with six other Pulitzers in the arts and 14 in journalism.

"Miami, Cuba and all the Latinos got a Pulitzer Prize today," a weeping Cruz said as he waited for a train back to New York after teaching his regular Monday playwriting class at Yale University. "I'm at a train station, and I feel like I'm going to heaven."

Commissioned by New Theatre and written with the assistance of a National Endowment for the Arts/Theatre Communications Group grant, Anna in the Tropics is set among Cuban-Americans working in an Ybor City cigar factory in 1929 Tampa.

As the factory's new "lector" reads to the workers from Leo Tolstoy's Anna Karenina, a passionate affair mirroring the one in the novel ignites both jealousy and tragedy.

Though future productions of the play are planned at New Jersey's McCarter Theatre, California's South Coast Rep and Chicago's Victory Gardens Theatre, Anna has only been seen so far by New Theatre's audiences.

IN TEARS
"I'm in tears now. This is the greatest honor in our theater's history," said Rafael de Acha, artistic director of New Theatre.

"This is evidence of Nilo's importance as one of the most gifted playwrights in this country. He gives voice to the stories, the struggles and the sensibilities of the Cuban-American with grace, sensitivity, imagination and immense theatricality."

Cruz, who was born in the Cuban city of Matanzas, grew up in Miami and discovered poetry at Melrose Elementary

School, 3050 NW 35th St. He plunged into theater at Miami-Dade Community College's Wolfson Campus, becoming a member of Teresa Maria Rojas' Prometeo theater troupe. Divorced, he is the father of 14-year-old aspiring jazz singer Chloe Garcia-Cruz.

Hearing the news of her son's win, his mother, Tina, said in Spanish, "I'm very happy. Papi [Cruz's late father, also named Nilo] would be very proud."

Cruz's sister Clara Martha, who lives with their mother in Westchester, was teaching Spanish at Hiialeah Gardens Elementary School when the Pulitzer was announced.

"We are very, very proud. We always keep the faith and pushed him to keep doing what he's doing," she said. "For me, Anna in the Tropics is his No. 1 play."

SMART PREDICTION
Though Cruz began getting his plays produced all over the United States after finishing his master's degree at Brown University in 1994, his work wasn't performed in South Florida until 1998. The small but prestigious Florida State in Palm Beach County's Manalapan became the first area company to stage one of his plays when it did A Park in Our House, followed by its world premiere of A Bicycle Country in 1999.

"The fact that such a quiet, smart and poetic playwright as Nilo could be seen as the brilliant artist he is says so much for theater today," Louis Tyrrell, artistic director of Florida Stage, said Monday.

BROUGHT HOME
The Coconut Grove Playhouse finally brought Cruz "home" by staging its own production of A Bicycle Country in 2000 in its Encore Room space, and at the time Cruz's early mentor Rojas said, "Nilo's words are full of poetry and beauty. He has a tremendous psychological power to get inside his characters' souls."

"I do believe that one day Nilo will win the Pulitzer Prize."

That day has come, just two days after Cruz received another top honor, the American Theatre Critics/Steinberg New Play Award, for Anna in the Tropics at the Humana Festival for New American Plays in Louisville, Ky.

The only other Hispanic playwright to be honored in the Pulitzer drama category is Maria Irene Fornés, another of Cruz's teacher-mentors, whose play What of the Night? was a finalist for the prize in 1990. Cuban-American novelist Oscar Hijuelos won a Pulitzer in 1990 for The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love "I want to honor this moment," Cruz said Monday through his tears. "My struggles as an artist have paid off."

Recognizing History, Education & Leaders

Fiestas del Llano, Inc. is now accepting applications for the first ¡Si Se Puede! Scholarships, to be awarded on Cinco de Mayo Day, (May 5, 2003). Five \$2,000 scholarships will be awarded during an awards and scholarship banquet, which will benefit the new Hispanic Cultural Center of Lubbock.

Young men of Mexican - American or Latin-American descent; between the ages of 17 through 24-years-old; who reside in the 19th Congressional District; who are currently seniors in high school or are enrolled in a college or at Texas Tech University, and who have intentions of attending TTU; are encouraged to apply by April 20.

The banquet will be held in conjunction with the historical celebration of when Mexico conquered French forces in Puebla, Mexico in 1862. Several trailblazers and leaders of the community will be honored and recognized. The banquet will be held May 5, 2003 at the McInturf Conference Center, located on the Southwest side of University Medical Center, at 6:30 p.m.

Other events will include a parade on May 3, 2003, which will honor troops, and observe the historical celebration.

For more information, please call at 797-7233, or email contact@fiestasdelllano.org

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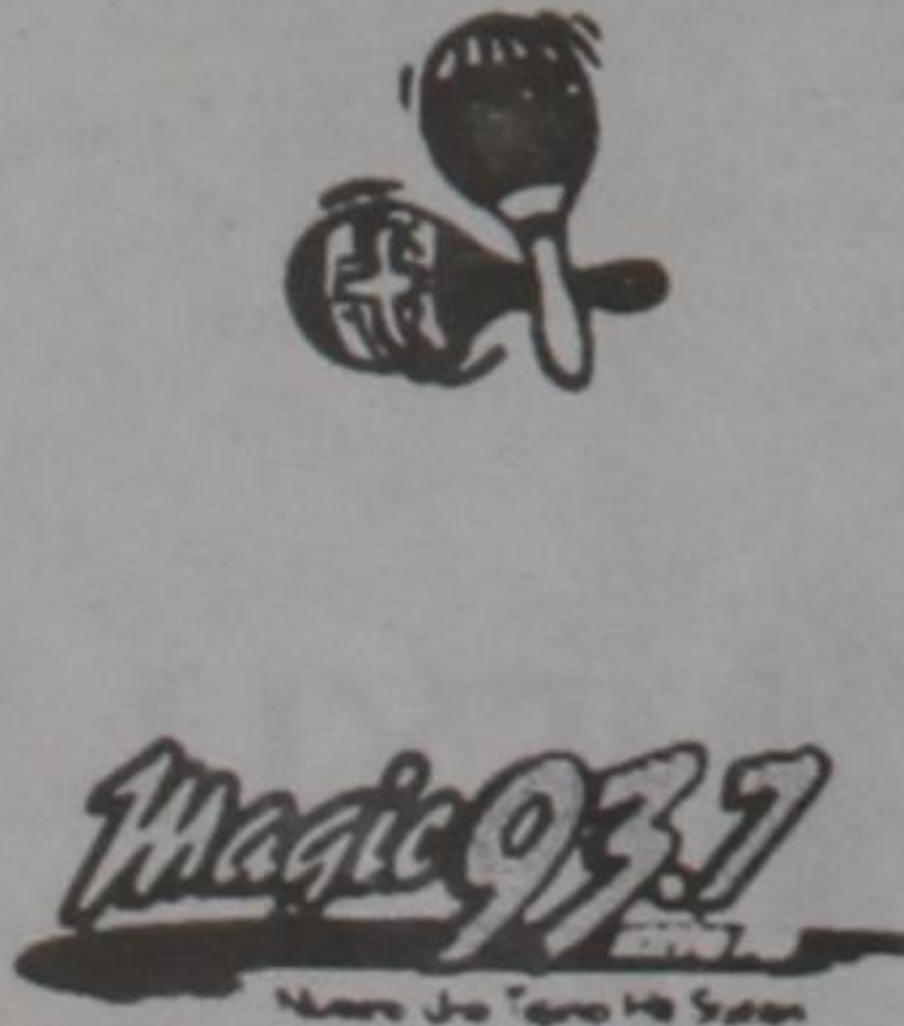
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Anti-War Front Seeks U.N. Role in Post-War Iraq

France, Germany and Russia, the main voices opposed to the U.S.-led war in Iraq, said on Friday the United Nations would have to play a key role in rebuilding the country because it alone had legitimate authority.

French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin, speaking after a meeting with his German and Russian counterparts, Joschka Fischer and Igor Ivanov, said British and U.S. forces would have a special role in securing Iraq, but not beyond that.

"In the armed phase, in the securing phase, the primary responsibility obviously is that of the coalition forces on the ground," he told a news conference. "Beyond that, the United Nations must play a central role in solving the Iraqi crisis."

Fischer and Ivanov echoed his position. Italy and Belgium later did the same, reflecting unity among European Union and NATO states which on Thursday pressed Secretary of State Colin Powell to grant the U.N. a key role in post-war Iraq.

The staunchly anti-war Pope John Paul weighed in after receiving Villepin in a private audience at the Vatican late on Friday, saying the international community must "help the Iraqis themselves be the main engine of the reconstruction."

Belgium urged the European Union in a letter to Greece, current EU president, to state that the U.N. would have a pivotal role to play in the post-war political and economic reconstruction of Iraq.

And Italy, which was one of Washington's firmest pre-war allies, said the U.N. and Europe were key to rebuilding Iraq.

"The U.N. must play an important role not only in the humanitarian phase, but even more in the reconstruction of Iraq," said Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini after talks with Villepin in Rome late Friday.

"And of course, Europe must also play an important role."

Powell, in Brussels on his first visit to Europe since the outbreak of the war, agreed the U.N. should be a partner in running Iraq after President Saddam Hussein is overthrown, but he did not spell out how Washington would share power.

FRENCH SOFTENING

France spearheaded international efforts to prevent a war in Iraq, and together with Russia and China had threatened to use its veto at the U.N. Security Council to block any resolution authorizing a military attack.

Villepin, seeking to repair Franco-British ties badly strained by France's opposition to the conflict, said that Paris shared London's views on the reconstruction of Iraq.

Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said on Thursday Britain wanted power to be handed to the Iraqi people quickly, with the United Nations playing an oversight role like it did in Afghanistan after a U.S.-led assault drove out the hard-line Taliban in 2001.

"It is clear that we share the same objectives, the same convictions and in particular that we agree on the central role that must be given to the United Nations," Villepin said.

The comments came after President Jacques Chirac sent his apologies on Thursday to Britain's Queen Elizabeth over the defacing of British World

War One military graves in northern France with anti-British slogans.

In a gesture welcomed by London, Chirac said France's thoughts were with the British soldiers stationed in Iraq.

France and Italy also appeared to mend rifts on Friday with Villepin saying during a joint news conference with Frattini: "We have to do everything in our power to preserve the unity of the international community without which it is powerless."

NON-NYET-NEIN
The three foreign ministers, dubbed the "non-nyet-nein" front when they stood up against U.S. pressure for war, avoided specifics about the reconstruction of Iraq.

They stressed they were faced with an immediate humanitarian crisis and the threat of regional instability that highlighted the need to relaunch the Middle East peace process.

"It is clear that this war must finish, and the sooner the better for everyone, including the United States," Russia's Ivanov said. "To talk about any clear schemes of reconstruction for Iraq is at the very least premature."

Fischer said only that the U.N. had the legitimacy to tackle weighty issues such as the fight against terrorism and efforts to stabilize the region.

Villepin added: "The principle of international legitimacy itself is a principle to which we are all attached. There must be no discussion on the principle or on the terms."

He dismissed talk that the countries that had opposed the war would be frozen out of reconstruction efforts.

"The idea that Iraq can be a sort of Eldorado, a cake that states can carve up, seems to me contrary to good sense and the reality of a state which is being tested at this time," he said.

On Monday, Villepin is due to travel to Sweden and to hold talks back in Paris with the Romanian foreign minister.

Sharpton: Bush Ignoring Domestic Issues

Democratic presidential hopeful Al Sharpton said Monday that war in Iraq will not silence his criticism of President Bush whom he accused of neglecting

domestic problems to pursue an "undefined, unnecessary battle."

"Don't be too cowardly to speak out now," he said in a speech that repeatedly brought the packed audience of low-income voters to its feet. "If you can't open your mouth now, you don't deserve to run for president."

Sharpton said instead of spending billions on the war, the Bush administration should focus on funding education, housing and prescription drugs for military families and other low-income Americans.

"Don't love the troops when they are in uniform overseas and not love them when they are in blue jeans at home," he said.

As he left his appearance, Sharpton was asked about a report in The State newspaper of Columbia, S.C., that he would run as an independent if he fails to win the Democratic nomination.

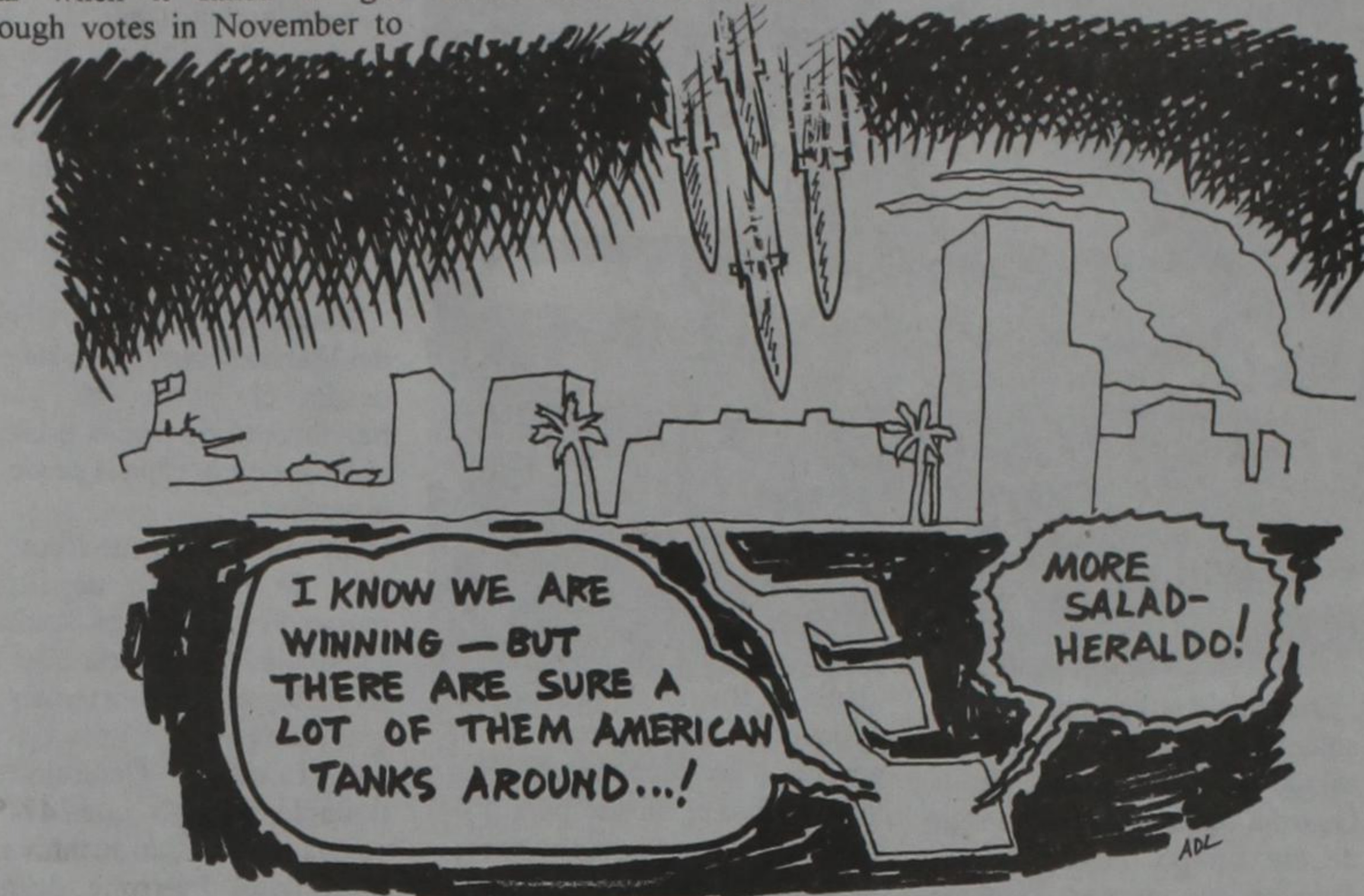
Sharpton said he also may pursue another party's nomination if he is the Democratic

nominee. Sharpton is from New York, where candidates can seek office as the candidate from several different parties, including Liberal, Conservative, and Independence. The Liberal Party disbanded this year when it failed to get enough votes in November to

maintain its status as a recognized party in New York.

"I would not rule out another line if I'm the Democratic nominee," he said. "I'm in the Democratic primaries. I'm not running in any other primaries until after I'm the nominee."

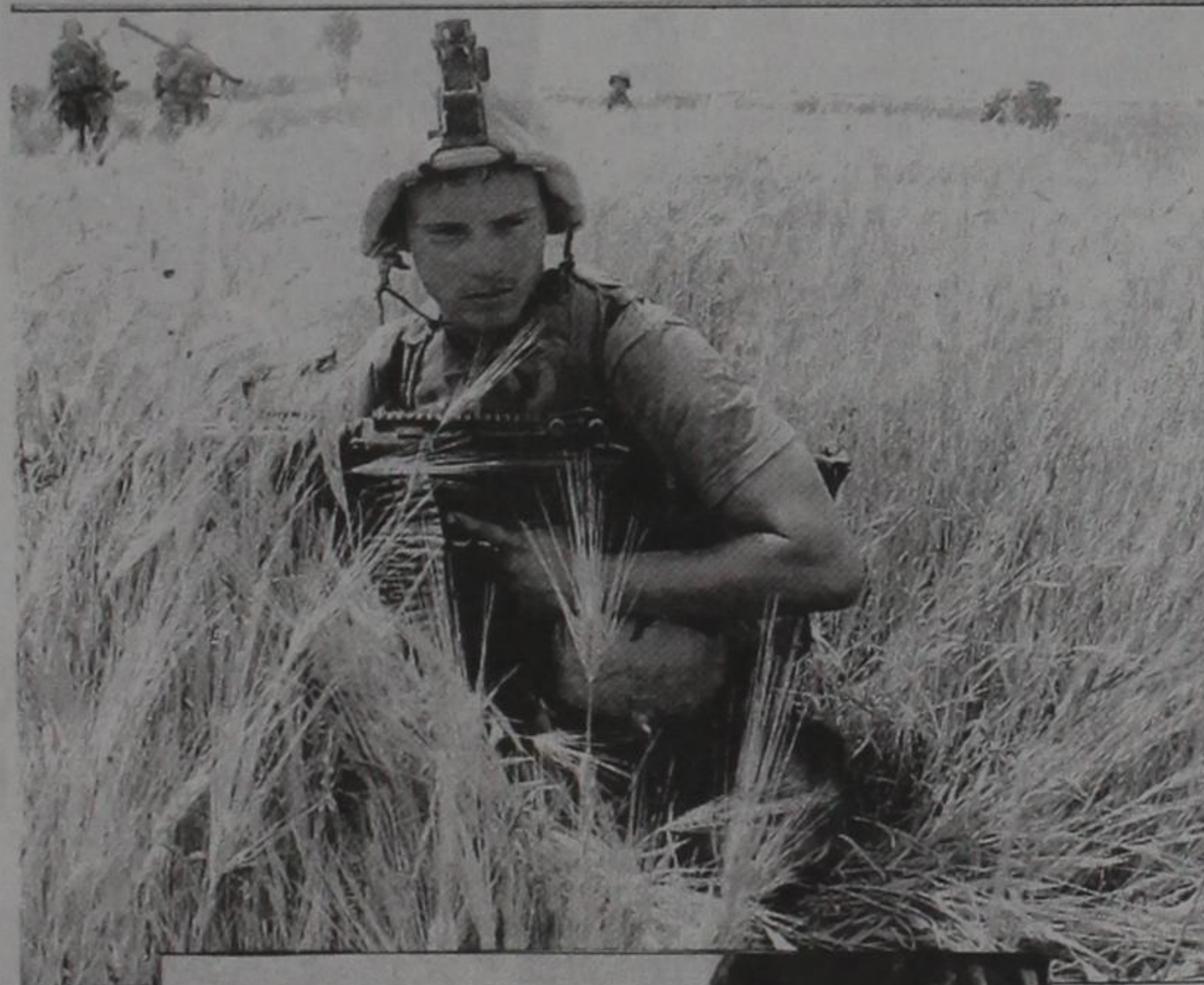
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Lo Mejor En Comida Mexicana

EU toma aeropuerto militar en Bagdad, caen dos aviones

Las tropas estadounidenses reforzaron ayer el control sobre varias zonas de Bagdad, aplastaron un contraataque iraquí y tomaron un aeropuerto militar y un enorme arsenal.

británico, Tony Blair, hablaron en Irlanda del Norte acerca del Irak de posguerra y la magnitud del papel de la ONU en la reconstrucción.

Los líderes de Francia, Ale-

manía y Rusia — principales oponentes en Europa a la guerra— se reunirán en San Petersburgo el sábado para discusiones que casi seguramente se concentrarán en la reconstrucción.

Inicialmente, el secretario general de la ONU, Kofi Annan, iba a estar también en Rusia, pero cancelo su visita y dijo que asistiría la semana próxima a la cumbre de la Unión Europea en Atenas.

En Nueva York, el embajador iraquí ante la ONU, Mohammed Al Douri, dijo que el gobierno iraquí sigue en control. Declaró ayer que cree que Saddam Husein está vivo, aunque no tiene comunicación con Bagdad.

En Kuwait, el comando británico anunció que un jeque local fue impuesto como administrador de Basora, la segunda ciudad más importante de Irak.

El jeque no fue identificado y no se sabía por el momento si se trata de un líder tribal o religioso, pero sus decisiones serán aceptadas, dijo el coronel Chris Vernon, vocero de las fuerzas británicas.

Basora fue capturada por los británicos en la culminación de

un arduo trabajo de dos semanas. El jeque y su comité serán los primeros líderes civiles impuestos por las fuerzas invasoras y la misión que tiene por delante es del todo inédita.

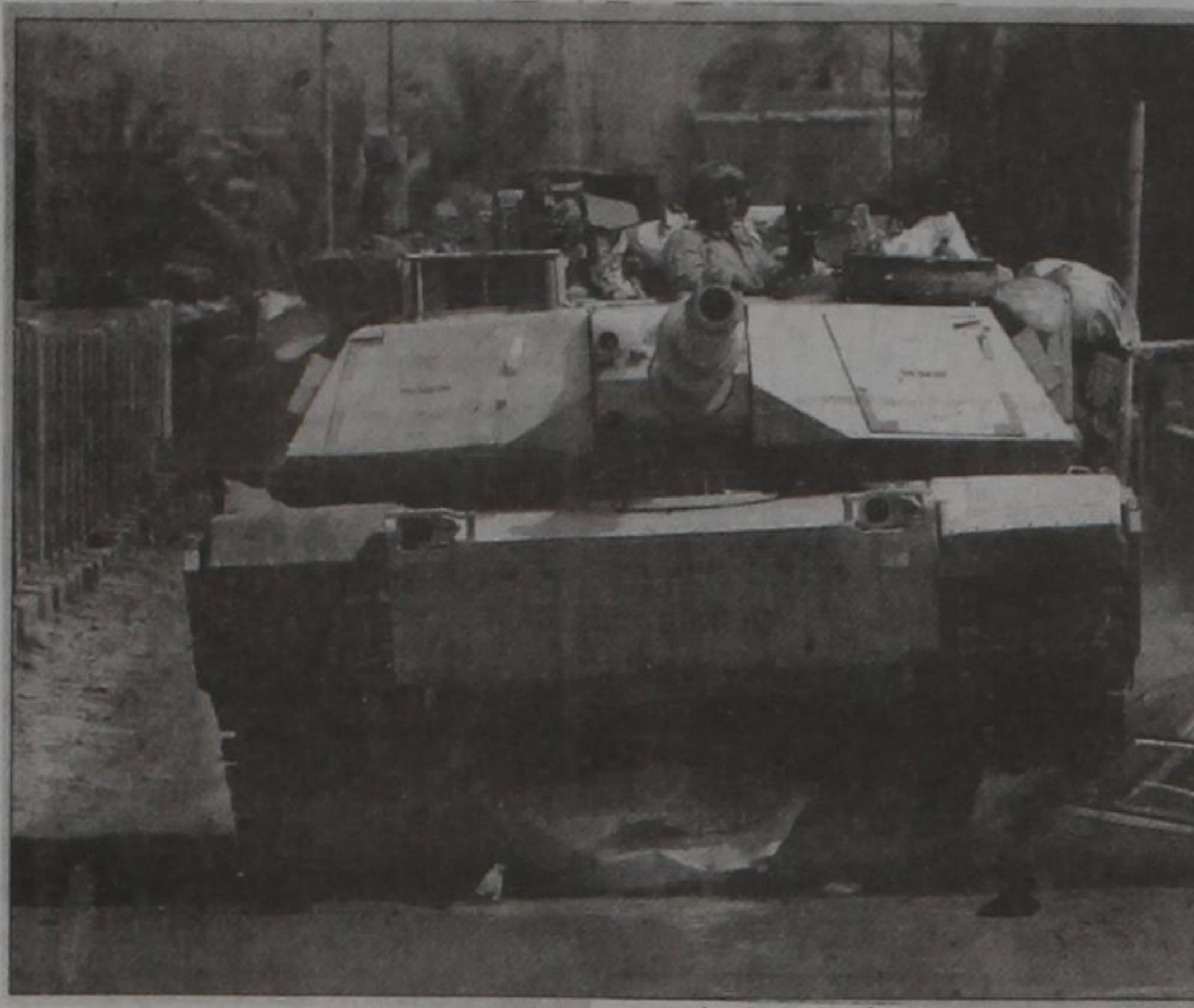
Choques en Bagdad
Las fuerzas iraquíes atacaron a los estadounidenses en Bagdad desde el norte, el primer movimiento de tropas estadounidenses en la capital desde esa dirección.

Un camarógrafo de Reuters y otro de Telecinco de España murieron cuando los soldados estadounidenses atacaron el hotel Palestina con morteros y armas ligeras.

El Comando Central estadounidense dijo que disparó contra las oficinas de Al Yazira y el hotel Palestina después que sus efectivos fueron atacados con disparos desde esos edificios.

Los infantes de Marina y también irrumpieron el lunes en el centro de Bagdad, donde capturaron un palacio presidencial continuaban perdidos.

El Pentágono anunció que la cifra de estadounidenses muertos en el conflicto subió a 96. Ocho soldados están desaparecidos y siete están prisioneros, de acuerdo a las cifras oficiales.



Dentro de la capital, algunos soldados estadounidenses desalojaron a elementos de la Guardia Republicana de la sede de ese cuerpo de elite. Otros descubrieron un gran complejo de viviendas excavadas en una cueva, completo con pisos de mármol, techos de 10 pies y luces fluorescentes.

En el este de la capital, los infantes de Marina tomaron el Aeropuerto Rashid, de uso militar, y capturaron municiones para unos tres mil soldados. De igual modo tomaron una cárcel donde encontraron uniformes ensangrentados de soldados estadounidenses e indumentaria contra los gases pertenecientes a soldados de EU.

Mientras tanto, los militares estadounidenses fueron blanco de duras críticas por ataques contra un hotel y una oficina de televisión que mataron a tres periodistas extranjeros.

Funcionarios del Pentágono dijeron ayer que no sabían si el presidente Sadam Husein había muerto en el ataque aéreo de la víspera contra un barrio de Bagdad. El ataque destruyó tres casas colindantes y mató a por lo menos tres personas.

Las autoridades iraquíes seguían con tono desafiante, jurando nunca rendirse a las fuerzas estadounidenses. "Ellos serán quemados", dijo el ministro de Información Mohamed Saeed Al Shajaf.

La prensa británica escribe hoy que Sadam sobrevivió el intento de asesinato. "Probablemente no estaba en el edificio cuando fue bombardeado", publicó The Guardian.

Según The Times, el servicio de inteligencia británico, el MI6, informó a la Agencia Central de Inteligencia (CIA) de EU que Sadam Husein había abandonado el edificio bombardeado en Bagdad justo antes del ataque.

"Pensamos que partió del lugar de la misma manera en que llegó, utilizando túneles o a bordo de un automóvil", señalaron las fuentes cercanas a los servicios secretos citadas por The Times.

Bush y Blair
Mientras tanto, el presidente estadounidense, George W. Bush, y el primer ministro

manía y Rusia — principales oponentes en Europa a la guerra— se reunirán en San Petersburgo el sábado para discusiones que casi seguramente se concentrarán en la reconstrucción.

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Basora fue capturada por los británicos en la culminación de



combatientes paramilitares iraquíes libraron un intenso combate por el control de un aeropuerto militar en el sudeste de Bagdad, dijo el Comando Central. El mayor general Jim Mattis, de la infantería de Marina, declaró que sus fuerzas han encontrado combatientes de Jordania, Sudán y Egipto.

Los tanques estadounidenses

Cinco de Mayo Activities

Banquet to recognize trailblazers, provides scholarships, and benefit new Cultural Center

The first "Si Se Puede" Awards & Scholarship Banquet will be held to benefit the new Hispanic Cultural Center at 3rd & University on Monday, May 5, 2003, incidentally Cinco de Mayo Day. The event will showcase contributions and achievements of Hispanic leaders and trailblazers whom have helped to execute the mission of embracing Hispanic culture, observing and sustaining tradition in Lubbock, Texas by preserving the history and setting the path for others.

Individuals from the community will be honored in a variety of categories including Business, Civic, Church, Education, Medical, Media, Civil, Law, and Lifetime Achieve-

ment. Lala and Conrado Cavazos will be inducted into the Hall of Fame. In addition to the awards, Fiestas del Llano, Inc. will provide (5) \$2,000 scholarships to young men interested in pursuing a higher education degree at Texas Tech University. The scholarships will be named in honor of local Hispanic pioneers.

The festive banquet will be held in the McInturff Conference Center located at Southwest section of University Medical Center Hospital, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Individual tickets are \$25; a reserved table of eight is \$300; Corporate sponsorships are \$500. All proceeds will benefit the Hispanic Cultural Center of Lubbock fund. Tickets may be purchased by contacting Christy Martinez, Board Chair, at 797-7233, or Jenny Blanco, Vice Chair, at 298-5208.

-PARADE-

The 2003 Cinco de Mayo parade is experiencing a few changes. This year Fiestas del Llano, Inc. will organize the parade in an effort to increase cultural awareness and observe the historical celebration when Mexico conquered French forces in Puebla, Mexico in 1862.

The parade showcases multiculturalism with floats that display a montage of important Hispanic cultural icons and traditions, as well as the diversity that comprises the Lubbock community.

Businesses, schools, and organizations are encouraged to participate in the parade not only to celebrate the Hispanic heritage, but also to showcase their programs, products, and volunteers.

This year's theme is "Si Se Puede", which means it can be done. Participants are encouraged to decorate their floats with a patriotic flare, in honor of our troops and allies.

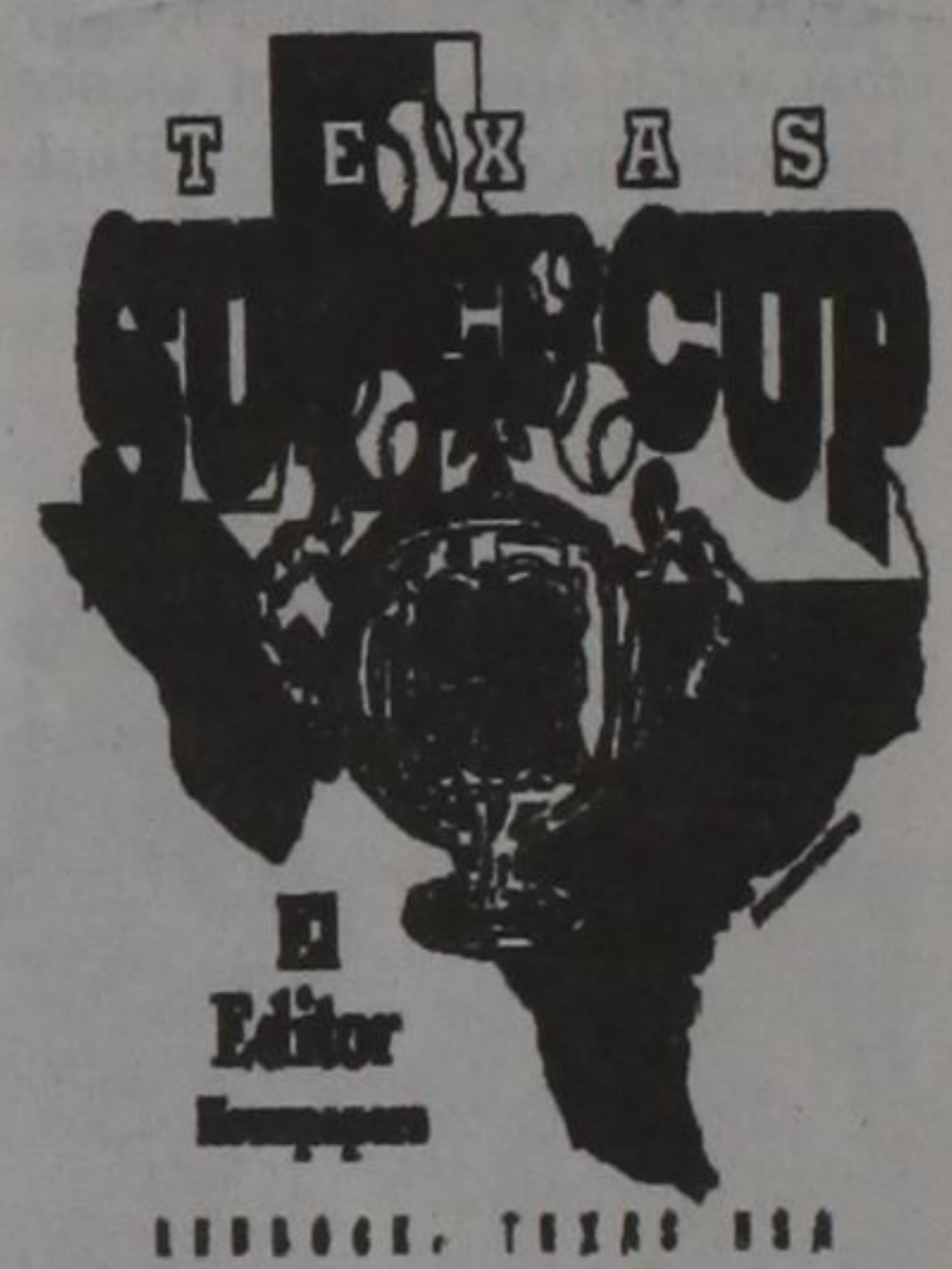
The parade is an opportunity to make the Hispanic commu-

nity aware of programs, voting, as well as to send a message that displays their embracement of the Hispanics culture.

In addition to the parade, Fiestas del Llano, Inc. will be hosting the first "Si Se Puede" Awards & Scholarship Banquet, with proceeds benefiting the new Hispanic Cultural Center. Several trailblazers and leaders of the community will be honored with an award. In addition, five \$2,000 scholarships will be given in honor of local Hispanic pioneers. The banquet will be held Cinco de Mayo, May 5, 2003 at the McInturff Conference Center at 6:30 p.m.

Interested parade participants can request parade applications until April 25th, and should return them by April 30. For more information, please call Teresa Herrera, Parade Chair, at (806) 747-7977, or Christy Martinez, Board Chair at (806) 797-7233. Or visit www.fiestasdelllano.org to download a parade application.

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EL EDITOR Newspapers

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Summer employment with Girl Scouts at Camp Rio Blanco. Seasonal Staff needed June 1-July 28. Positions needed are Craft, and Waterfront directors, Lifeguard, Cook, Kitchen Assistants, Unit Leaders and Counselors. Contact Shannon Spencer at sspencer@girlscoutscaprock.com, or 806-745-2855 or 800-530-4957 for more information.

KCBD TV, Newschannel 11, has an immediate opening for a News Assistant, (Part-time). Must have the desire to do quality work under tight deadlines. Will be responsible for research and production of 5 pm and 10 pm health segment. Responsibilities also include but not limited to organizing interviews, editing, writing, and internet work. College students are welcome to apply. Hours are flexible. Strong organizational and people skills required. Send cover letter to Benji Snead, KCBD News Director, 5600 Ave. A, Lubbock, Tx, 79404. No phone calls. E.O.E.

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Agency No. 768

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www.marketplace.state.tx.us
GSC Class Item No 992.55.

Additional information or questions regarding the Request For Qualifications should be addressed to the Texas Tech University System: Project Manager: Debbie Griffin. Contact via phone (806) 742-2116, Fax 806-742-2241 or e-mail: debbie.griffin@ttu.edu.

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