

Hispanics Draw Even With Blacks In New Census

Latino Population Up 60% Since 1990

The nation's Hispanic population has grown so rapidly that the 2000 Census shows their numbers are roughly equal to that of African Americans, a demographic shift that has broad implications for politics and culture at the beginning of the millennium.

New census figures also reveal a higher-than-expected number of blacks who included themselves in more than one race. One in 20 residents who identified themselves as black -- 1.76 million people -- also checked at least one other race in the 2000 Census, which allowed that option for the first time.

These are the first demographic details to emerge from the long-awaited and politically contentious 2000 Census. The once-a-decade figures are considered critical because they affect congressional district boundaries, federal funds, policy and marketing decisions.

The number of Americans who described themselves as Hispanic grew by nearly 60 percent in the 2000 Census and now total 35.3

million, about 3 million more than the Census Bureau had predicted. Demographers have said for years that Hispanics, who can be of any race, would become the nation's largest minority group early this century, but that milestone is arriving sooner than forecast.

"It's appropriate perhaps that it's happened at the beginning of the new century," said Harry Pachon, director of the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute, a Latino think tank in suburban Los Angeles. "It's a present-day reality of what the United States has become. You have to be aware of the richness of ethnic life in this country."

The black population ranged from 34.7 million to 36.4 million, with the larger number including those who checked black and another race.

The unexpected increase in Hispanics is probably due mainly to high levels of immigration and poor counting in the past. John Long, chief of the Census Bureau's population division, said yesterday

that earlier government estimates may have missed many immigrants, both documented and undocumented. For the 2000 Census, the government staged an extensive outreach campaign to encourage minority residents to be counted.

While the new racial counts reflect real demographic shifts, they also result from changing census policies, including the new ability to report more than one race. Also, the Census Bureau allows Americans to define their own backgrounds.

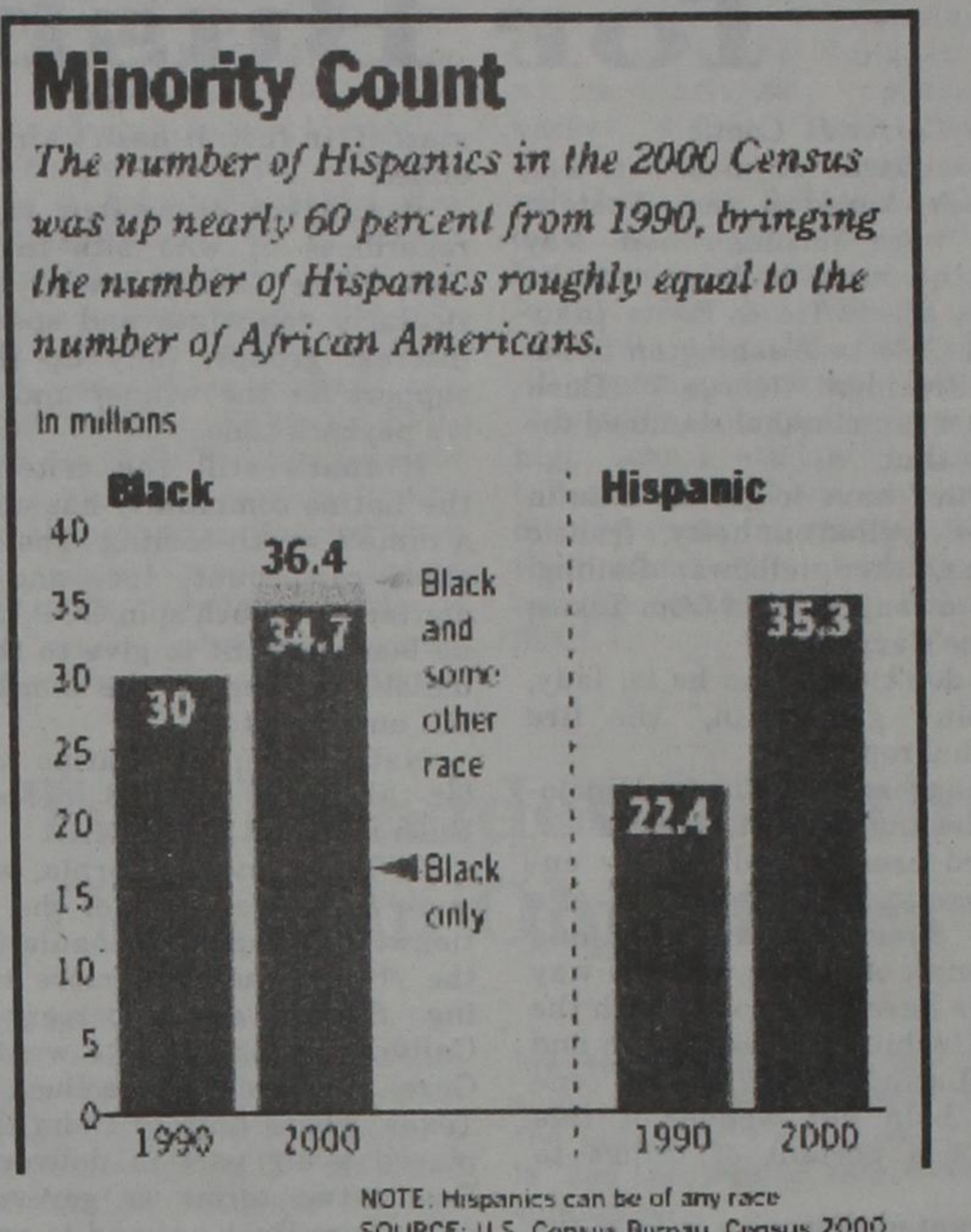
Because Hispanics can be of any race, a portion would also be counted as blacks, whites, Asians and Native Americans. The numbers available yesterday did not include racial breakdowns for Hispanics.

Hispanics are generally considered to be people whose ancestors are from Spanish-speaking countries. In the United States, about two-thirds of Hispanics are of Mexican descent. The demographic milestone

reflected in the new Hispanic population totals carries implications not only for political power in this country but for cultural dynamics. The growing Latino population, for example, may sometimes mix uneasily with African Americans, in political life and in neighborhoods.

Around the country, the relationship between the nation's two largest minority groups has at times been tense, sparking a civil disturbance a decade ago in Mount Pleasant and sharp political disputes in Compton, a formerly black Los Angeles suburb that is now mostly Hispanic.

But members of social organizations representing the two groups said those disagreements are growing pains that might soon fade. "So many issues that the Latin American community are concerned about are the same issues that African Americans are concerned about: quality education, election reform and issues like racial profiling and civil rights



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News Briefs

Congresswoman Recovers After Cutting off Fingertip

Miami - Cuban-American Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (Rep. - FL) was recovering Thursday after cutting off the tip of her finger in an accident earlier this week at her Miami home.

Ros-Lehtinen, who had to undergo surgery, also cut her lip and blackened her eye when she fell - fainted - after realizing she had lost the tip of her right, ring finger.

The congresswoman said the incident, which occurred Monday, was "a silly household accident."

"That day, I woke up a half hour late. I was still half-asleep when I went to my daughter Patricia's room to wake her up and tell her she was going to be late. I slammed the door to her room and caught my finger with one of its metal parts," Ros-Lehtinen said in statements published by the Spanish-language daily El Nuevo Herald.

As she was heading to the kitchen to put ice on her finger, she glanced at her finger and fainted.

"When I realized the fingertip was cut off, I fainted, and in the fall I banged my face against the knobs on the stove," she recalled.

Doctors were not able to sew back the tip of her finger, "because since it was such a tiny piece, it made it more difficult to stitch it back on," she added.

Dominican Official Admits Police Use Excessive Force

Santo Domingo - A Dominican official acknowledged Thursday that the police use excessive force against suspects, but denied that summary executions, indiscriminate arrests, and torture are part of the government's policy against crime.

Extrajudicial executions and other human rights violations by the police "do not imply, under any circumstance, that this is the government's line," said presidential legal adviser and spokesman Guido Gomez Maza.

The statement came in response to the release Tuesday of the U.S. State Department's annual report on human rights, which said Dominican police mistreat suspects.

Some 250 suspects were summarily executed last year and others were tortured or illegally arrested, the report said.

Arguing that abuse of power is not confined to the Dominican Republic, Gomez noted the Rodney King case and that of a Haitian national who was sodomized with a broom by New York police officers.

"I am completely convinced that in American society, where the human rights standards on which all other countries are judged spring from, there is also abuse in that area," the president's legal adviser said.

For the past several years, the State Department has gathered documented reports concerning frequent police abuse in the Dominican Republic, noting that it "limits" its reports to actions involving judiciary officials.

The report also describes the torture of citizens in the detention centers of the National Drug Control Directorate (DNCD).

The Dominican Human Rights Committee charged that during present police chief Pedro de Jesus Candelier's almost two years in office, more than 400 suspects have been allegedly summarily executed during shootouts with the police.

Cuban Exile Groups Oppose Latin Grammys in Miami

Miami - Efforts by local leaders in Miami, some of whom are Cuban-Americans, to bring the second annual Latin Grammy Awards to the city have sparked a controversy among many Cuban exiles because Cuban artists could take part in the event.

Although the efforts to bring the event to the city are backed by Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) President Jorge Mas Santos, some exile groups have voiced their dismay at the participation of Cuban artists "chosen and sent by the ruling tyranny."

The Cuban Patriotic Council said it "reserves the right to reject the participation of artists, athletes, intellectuals and professors that represent Castro-communism in public or academic events."

"So we will do to those who come to participate in the Grammy Awards or in any other ceremony," the anti-Castro group asserted in a statement.

Meanwhile, the head of Vigilia Mambisa, Miguel Saavedra, said the event "mocked" the Cuban exile community and threatened to organize protests.

Latinos In The Juvenile Justice Maze:

Youth Crime, But Adult Time

By Angela Medina

Juvenile crime has decreased substantially each year for the past six years. Yet tough-on-crime legislation is in full force, with kids as young as 11 being tried as adults in some states and held in adult prisons.

Latino youths are among those being hardest hit by this trend.

Ronnie Veras is one of those kids. Five years ago, Ronnie was charged as an accomplice in a tragic Arizona case in which the victim was killed during a botched theft. Although Ronnie did not fire the gun and had no previous record, he was, at age 16, prosecuted as an adult and sentenced to a minimum of 25 years in prison.

Although statistics clearly show devastating effects, hundreds of Latino youths in the justice system continue to be held in adult jails while their trials are pending and, once sentenced, housed with adults.

Young people confined in adult facilities are sexually assaulted five times more often than youths in juvenile facilities, assaulted by staff twice as often and assaulted with a weapon 50 percent more often. Youths in jails are eight times more likely to commit suicide than youths in juvenile detention facilities.

Raúl Yzaguirre, president of the National Council of La Raza, makes the point: "It is

well documented that funneling Latino youths into adult prisons is much more likely to produce hardened criminals than putting them in the diversion and prevention programs to which white juveniles have greater access. We all pay a price for this injustice."

"Youth Crime/Adult Time: Is Justice Served?" was published by the Building Blocks for Youth Initiative and quantifies the practice of transferring youth into the adult criminal justice system. The first of its kind, the 48-page study includes enough young Latino males -- 22 percent -- to provide a good measure of disparate placements. (Only one Latina was among the 100 females in its sample.)

The authors also point out that inconsistencies in the collection and presentation of national data on Latinos continue to be a problem in measuring disparities in treatment of Hispanic youths. Project consultant Marcia Rincón-Gallardo urges, "We must advocate for better data collection to stop the widespread practice of counting Latino youths only as 'Caucasian.'"

Five sites where Latino youths constituted 40 percent or more of the sample were studied. The report reveals:

-- Latino youths were less likely than white non-Hispanic youths to have retained private counsel. Youths represented by

such counsel were less likely to be convicted and more likely to be transferred back to juvenile court.

-- Latino youths were more likely than white youths (37 percent vs. 26 percent) to receive a sentence of incarceration (as opposed to split sentences or probation). This held true when controlling for the adjudicated offense. Of those convicted of a violent offense, 46 percent of Latinos received a sentence of incarceration, compared to 34 percent of whites.

-- Latino youths were nearly three times more likely than white youths to receive some term of incarceration for a public order offense, 34 percent vs. 13 percent.

Overall, substantial numbers of the surveyed youth -- 28 percent of the Latinos, 23 percent of the whites, 43 percent of the blacks -- were not convicted. Nearly half -- 45 percent of Latinos, 40 percent of whites, 46 percent of blacks -- were released within 24 hours.

At least 40 states have built into their popular new "tough-on-crime" statutes increased prosecution of juveniles in adult criminal court. Such legislation overlooks that our kids are still kids, the report comments. The nursery-rhyme policy "you do the adult crime, you do the adult time" scores very well in political polls, but it is actually counterproductive in its impact

on crime, states U.S. Rep. Bobby Scott (Va.), the ranking Democrat on the House Subcommittee on Crime. "It is unjustly applied and has a disproportionate effect on minority youth."

Youths tried in adult criminal court face the same penalties as adults, including the possibility of the death penalty or life without parole. They receive little or no education, mental-health treatment or rehabilitation. Their criminal records may significantly limit their future education and employment opportunities.

An adult felony conviction in most states results in loss of voting rights, sometimes for life. Convicted felons can no longer apply for student grants or loans.

"We need to focus on investing in the programs -- education, job training and substance-abuse prevention and treatment -- that reduce crime by promoting opportunity," says NCLR's Yzaguirre.

(Angela Medina is a 2000/2001 Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute fellow. She has divided her nine-month Washington experience between the offices of the nonprofit Youth Law Center and the office of U.S. Rep. José Serrano (D-N.Y.), where she is currently working.)

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Los Latinos En El Laberinto De La Justicia Juvenil: Crimenes Juveniles Y Las Sentencias Para Adultos

Por Angela Medina

La criminalidad juvenil ha disminuido mucho cada año de los últimos seis. No obstante, sigue vigente legislación con penalidades fuertes para niños de tan sólo 11 años en algunos estados, que están siendo procesados como adultos, y también sentenciados a cárceles para adultos.

La juventud latina está entre los que más han sido afectados por esta tendencia.

Ronnie Veras es uno de aquellos niños. Hace cinco años, Ronnie fue acusado de ser cómplice de un caso trágico en Arizona en el que la víctima fue asesinada durante un robo mal ejecutado. Aunque no fue Ronnie quien disparó la pistola, y no tenía antecedentes criminales, a los 16 años fue procesado como adulto y sentenciado a un mínimo de 25 años en prisión.

A pesar de las estadísticas que constatan los efectos devastadores en los niños, cientos de jóvenes latinos procesados por el sistema judicial siguen encarcelados en cárceles para adultos antes de ser procesados, y una vez sentenciados, vuelven a ser integrados con los adultos en las cárceles.

Los jóvenes encerrados en instalaciones para adultos son víc-



timas del acoso sexual cinco veces más que los que están en instalaciones juveniles, son víctimas del acoso por parte del personal dos veces más, y atacados con armas con una frecuencia 50 por ciento mayor que sus contrapartes en las instalaciones juveniles. Los jóvenes encarcelados en instalaciones para adultos tienden a suicidarse con mayor frecuencia, también.

Presidente del Consejo Nacional de La Raza, Raúl Yzaguirre señala que "Está claramente documentado que el canalizar a jóvenes latinos a las cárceles para adultos tiende a

producir más criminales endurecidos que al ponerlos en los programas de diversificación y prevención a los que los jóvenes blancos tienen mayor acceso. Todos pagamos el precio por esta injusticia."

"Youth Crime/Adult Time: Is Justice Served?" ("Crimen juvenil/sentencias para adultos: ¿Es justo?"), que publica Building Blocks for Youth Initiative, hace un análisis cuantitativo en cuanto a la práctica de transferir a jóvenes al sistema judicial criminal para adultos. El primer análisis de este tipo, el estudio de 48 páginas incluye a sufi-

cientos jóvenes latinos -- 22 por ciento -- para medir con precisión las colocaciones desiguales. (Hay sólo una latina entre las cien mujeres de la muestra).

Los autores también señalan que las inconsistencias en la recolección y presentación de datos nacionales referentes a latinos continúa siendo un problema al medir las desigualdades en el trato de jóvenes hispanos. Consultora para el proyecto, Marcia Rincón-Gallardo enfatiza que "Debemos insistir en mejor recolección de datos para eliminar la práctica general de contar a los jóvenes latinos simplemente como 'caucásos.'"

Se estudiaron a cinco lugares en los que la juventud latina constituía 40 por ciento o más de la muestra. El informe revela que:

-- Los jóvenes latinos tenían menos tendencia a contratar a un abogado privado que los jóvenes blancos, no hispanos. Los jóvenes representados por un abogado recibían menos condenas y volvían con mayor frecuencia a la corte juvenil.

-- Los jóvenes latinos (37 por ciento) recibían con mayor frecuencia que los jóvenes blancos (26 por ciento) sentencias de encarcelamiento (versus sentencias

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It's Payback Time for Bush's Amigos

By Carlos D. Conde

Flashback: A mass of long dresses, tuxedos and Western hats were inching their way into the main ballroom at the Texas Black Tie & Boots Inaugural Gala in Washington to salute President George W. Bush when a fire marshal slammed the doors shut.

"But I have to get my man in there!" yelled a hefty, frantic Latina, her elbows flailing. "He's a congressman from Texas, and he's expected!"

"I don't care who he is, lady, he ain't getting in," the fire marshal replied.

Congressman Rubén Hinojosa, looking a bit crestfallen, turned around and led his entourage in search, perhaps, of a more friendly venue. Nothing personal, of course, but the way things have gone so far with the new Bushies in Washington and the Latino constituency, one can't help but wonder if this wasn't a portent of things to come.

Granted, Hinojosa is from the wrong party and he's already employed, but it serves to illustrate what may be in store for a swarm of resume-carrying, Republican-friendly Latinos looking for jobs in the new administration. As far as high-level appointments are concerned, the process is off to an inauspicious

start if, in fact, it hasn't already ended.

It happens every four years, regardless of who sits in the Oval Office. Constituencies, particularly non-white and special-interest groups, tally up their support for the winner and say it's payback time.

If that's still the criterion, the Latino community has about a dime's worth coming. The Bushies can count, too, and no matter how much spin GOP Latino leaders want to give to their ballot-box support, the numbers tell another story.

Nationwide, the Latino vote for Al Gore was 63 percent. Bush received 33 percent.

In Texas and California, with more than two-thirds of the nationwide Hispanic population, the choice was even more telling. Seventy-seven percent of California's Latino vote went to Gore; 22 percent chose Bush. In Texas, where Latinos claim they played a big part in delivering Bush's two terms as governor, and where Bush seemed to enjoy a close "hermandad" with them, it didn't show in the presidential returns. Gore received 65 percent of the Texas Latino vote; Bush got just 33 percent.

Is there any need to wonder about Latinos not being visible at the job-parceling feast in Washington?

One can't help but be amused by some of the post-election doublespeak. In a postmortem analysis at a GOP winter meeting, Latino strategists claimed the ethnic vote helped Bush capture the White House. They said the election showed Bush can count on the independent Latino vote. If anything, that vote should give him cause for worry.

You could say the GOP got what it paid for. In an election where the Republicans overall spent hundreds of millions of dollars, the Republican National Committee, the Bush-Cheney campaign and state GOPs spent a combined, paltry \$19 million in Latino outreach and media campaigns.

Still Bush showed he's a good sport. He chose (and then jettisoned) Linda Chávez as his Secretary of Labor. Anyway, her selection incensed Latinos who considered her about as authentic as a gringo-made margarita.

He also picked Texas Supreme Court Justice Alberto Gonzales as his White House Counsel and Cuban-American Mel Martínez of Florida as HUD Secretary. Both carry little political baggage. Before the election, Texas Railroad Commissioner Tony Garza was considered a given for a high administration post. Also on the A-list was San Antonio Congressman Henry Bonilla.

Both seem to have disappeared from the radar screen.

Some Latino political activists are grouching about Bush naming two African Americans to cabinet posts and another to a cabinet-level position when blacks delivered him only 8 percent of their vote.

Whatever the sentiments, Bush knows he needs to build Latino and black support for his presumed re-election race. So shortly after claiming the presidency, he invited both factions - separately, of course - to Austin for a friendly, let-by-gones-be-by-gones session.

He left the closing to his chief of staff Andrew Card, who said he assumed all the Latinos present had voted for Bush. Noticing the stares, Card then asked if any had not. After a long pause, only Raúl Yzaguirre, president of the National Council of La Raza, raised his hand.

The silence from the others was deafening, but it spoke volumes. Latinos are in for some serious rehabilitation if they want to be Bushies.

(Carlos D. Conde, of Boca Raton, Fla., writes about Hispanic topics. His e-mail address is CDConde(AT)SIGN@aol.com/(c) 2001, Hispanic Link News Service. Distributed by Los Angeles Times Syndicate International.

Estableciendo Una Nueva Relación de Cooperación Entre EEUU y Mexico

Por: Raul Yzaguirre y George R. Vickers*

Desde su campaña presidencial, George W. Bush ha manifestado su compromiso fundamental a América Latina. Señalando la importancia de la región en los temas que más afectan la vida de los ciudadanos estadounidenses, esta semana Bush hará su primer viaje al exterior a México donde se va a reunir con el presidente Vicente Fox. Esta reunión puede ser el cumplimiento de lo prometido durante la campaña de establecer una relación "especial" entre México y los Estados Unidos. Si es así, se espera que uno de los temas principales será el proceso anual estadounidense de certificación antidroga, una política que ha causado fricción entre Estados Unidos y sus aliados del sur. La persistencia de este proceso podrá perjudicar la meta de Bush de mejorar relaciones con Latinoamérica ya que la certificación ha impedido la colaboración entre los EE.UU. y América Latina.

El presidente mexicano Vicente Fox ha manifestado su conformidad con el proceso actual, marcándolo "contraproducente, unilateral, e irritante."

Además, se espera que durante la reunión Fox le pida a Bush un compromiso de eliminar este proceso.

Esta reunión llega en un momento clave en la relación entre Estados Unidos y el resto del hemisferio donde el gobierno de Bush podrá efectuar un cambio. A finales del mes pasado, un grupo bipartidista de senadores estadounidenses, liderados por los Senadores Dodd y McCain, presentaron un proyecto de ley que, de ser adoptado, significaría un avance en la cooperación entre los países del hemisferio en sus esfuerzos para combatir el consumo, tráfico, y producción de estupefacientes ilegales. El proyecto de ley de Dodd y McCain representa una oportunidad para que el gobierno de Bush busque mecanismos multilaterales más efectivos para combatir el vicio, la violencia y la corrupción en el tráfico de drogas en el hemisferio.

La iniciativa Dodd-McCain tiene como fin suspender por dos años el proceso norteamericano conocido como "certificación." Conforme a la política actual de certificación, el Presidente de EE.UU. evalúa anualmente los esfuerzos realizados por los países productores y/o traficantes de drogas ilegales para controlar su producción y exportación. Los países que no logren cumplir con lo esperado por el Presidente norteamericano no reciben la certificación por parte de los EE.UU., consecuentemente los países enfrentan sanciones definidas por la ley incluyendo la suspensión de toda clase de ayuda económica, (a excepción de la ayuda para combatir al narcotráfico y ayuda humanitaria), y la oposición de los Estados Unidos a los préstamos de los bancos multilaterales.

Esta política se basa en la idea de que la producción de drogas en el extranjero es la causa de muchos problemas sociales en EEUU. Supone que el peligro que afronta la comunidad estadounidense sería disminuido si sus vecinos del sur pudieran prevenir la producción y el tráfico de drogas. La política no reconoce que los EE.UU. tienen el mercado de consumo de drogas ilegales más grande del mundo, que el tráfico se deriva de esto y que los vecinos de América Latina legítimamente insisten en

que es el consumo estadounidense el que causa el problema.

El proceso de certificación actual no ha sido efectivo en la lucha antidroga. Esencialmente el proceso de certificación es parte de un intento general y equivocado por parte de Estados Unidos de prevenir el ingreso de drogas al país. A pesar de una inversión de casi \$30 mil millones en esfuerzos internacionales para el control de las drogas no ha logrado rebajar la oferta de drogas disponibles en los EE.UU. Según la Oficina Nacional de Combate a la Droga (ONCD), que depende de la Presidencia, "La cocaína sigue estando fácilmente a disposición en todos los centros principales metropolitanos."

Además, durante su visita a México en Agosto del año pasado, el general Barry McCaffrey, titular de la ONCD durante el gobierno de Clinton, indicó que la certificación antidroga debería desaparecer durante la próxima administración, añadiendo que "Fox pide asociación sin enfrentamiento. El pide balance, respeto, y deferencia a la soberanía. Yo pienso que encontrará socios dispuestos a esto."

Los gobiernos de América Latina les gustaría ver el desarrollo de una estrategia multilateral entre las principales naciones productoras, exportadoras y consumidoras, que mejore la colaboración con respecto a la investigación y el procesamiento de los crímenes relacionados a las drogas. Organismos multilaterales como la Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA) y el Programa de las Naciones Unidas para la Fiscalización Internacional de Drogas pueden jugar un papel importante en el desarrollo de estas estrategias cooperativas. Adicionalmente, el nuevo mecanismo multilateral de evaluación, iniciado por la OEA, permite a los realizadores de políticas considerar otras alternativas al proceso unilateral estadounidense de la certificación.

Esta política unilateral de certificación, ha sido un obstáculo para la colaboración entre Estados Unidos y los países de América Latina dificultando los avances en otros temas. El resentimiento y hostilidad causado por el proceso de certificación perjudica el avance de los intereses comunes con nuestros vecinos del hemisferio en temas como el apoyo a la democracia, los derechos humanos y la prosperidad. Si se suspendiera este proceso unilateral, el congreso estadounidense y el gobierno de Bush podrían anunciar que los países de América Latina realmente son socios esenciales, en vez de adversarios, en la lucha contra el tráfico internacional de drogas que destruye vidas y amenaza comunidades en todas las Américas.

Raul Yzaguirre es presidente del Consejo Nacional de la Raza (NCLR) una organización privada, sin fines de lucro y sin afiliación política establecida con el fin de reducir la pobreza y la discriminación y mejorar las oportunidades a las que tienen acceso los hispanoamericanos. George R. Vickers es director ejecutivo de la Oficina en Washington para Asuntos Latinoamericanos (WOLA) una organización non-gubernamental sin ánimos de lucro, cuya finalidad es promover el pleno respeto a los derechos humanos, la democracia y la paz en América Latina.

Es La Hora De Cobrar Deudas Para Los Amigos Latinos De Bush

Por Carlos Conde

Flashback: Una masa de vestidos largos, chaquetas esmoquin y sombreros texanos se acercaban a paso lento al salón de baile de la Gala Texana de Corbata Negra y Botas en Washington para hacer honor al Presidente George W. Bush cuando un oficial del cuerpo de bomberos cerró de golpe las puertas.

Una latina, gruesa y desesperada, codos agitados, le gritó a uno de los oficiales, "Pero tengo que meter a mi hombre allí. Es congresista de Texas y se le está esperando."

"No me importa quién sea, señora. No entra," dijo el oficial. El congresista Rubén Hinojosa, un poco cara caída, se volvió y encabezó a su séquito, en busca, quizás, de un ambiente más ameno. No era nada personal, claro, pero como han ido las cosas hasta ahora con los nuevos Bushies en Washington y los votantes latinos, uno no puede dejar de preguntarse si esta experiencia no fue un augurio de eventos futuros.

Es cierto que Hinojosa pertenece al partido opositor, y ya está empleado, pero sirve para ilustrar lo que le puede esperar a la invasión de latinos, hojas de vida en mano, simpatizantes del partido republicano que buscan trabajo en la nueva administración. En cuanto a los nombramientos de alto nivel, el proceso ha comenzado de forma poco propicia, si no ha acabado ya.

Esto ocurre cada cuatro años no importa quién esté en el Ofi-

cina Ovalada. Los distritos de votantes, en particular los grupos que no son blancos y de intereses especiales, hacen la suma de su apoyo del ganador y exigen el pago de la deuda.

Si el criterio es ése todavía, la comunidad latina va a recibir el equivalente a diez centavos. Los Bushies saben sumar, también, y digan lo que digan los líderes republicanos latinos sobre su apoyo en las urnas, los números dicen otra cosa.

A nivel nacional, el voto latino para Al Gore fue de 63 por ciento. Bush recibió 33 por ciento. En Texas y California, que comprenden más de dos-tercios de la población hispana, la selección fue aún más reveladora: 77 por ciento del voto californiano fue para Gore; 22 por ciento optó por Bush. En Texas, donde los latinos dicen que jugaron un papel importante en la entrega de los dos términos de gobernador de Bush, y donde parecía que Bush disfrutaba de una 'hermandad' unida con ellos, no se vio en los números finales del voto presidencial. Gore recibió 65 por ciento del voto latino en Texas; mientras que Bush recibió sólo el 33 por ciento.

No hay por qué preguntarse por la poca visibilidad de los latinos en el banquete de repartición de trabajos en Washington.

Es difícil no reírse de algunas de las declaraciones hipócritas después de las elecciones. En un análisis posmortem en una de las reuniones de republicanos este invierno, los estrategas latinos

declararon que el voto étnico ayudó a Bush en la captura de la Casa Blanca. Dijeron que la elección mostró que Bush puede contar con el voto independiente latino. En realidad, el voto independiente latino debería preocuparle.

Se podría decir que el partido republicano recibió lo justo por lo que pagó. En unas elecciones en las que los republicanos en total gastaron cientos de millones de dólares, el Comité Nacional Republicano, la campaña Bush-Cheney y los partidos estatales republicanos todos juntos gastaron un mero 19 millones en campañas de alcance a grupos latinos y medios de comunicación.

A pesar de todo, Bush mostró que no es un resentido. Selección (y después rechazó) a Linda Chávez como Secretaria de Trabajo. De cualquier forma, seleccionarla había enfurecido a los latinos que la consideran tan auténtica como una margarita hecha por gringos.

También seleccionó al Juez de la Corte Suprema de Texas, Alberto Gonzales como Consejo para la Casa Blanca y el cubano-americano Mel Martínez de Florida como Secretario del Departamento de Vivienda y Desarrollo Urbano.

Ninguno de los dos tiene mucho impulso político. Antes de las elecciones, el Comisionado de Ferrocarriles en Texas, Tony Garza, se consideraba imprescindible para un puesto importante en la administración. Tam-

bién en la lista de primeros estaba el congresista de San Antonio Henry Bonilla. Los dos parecen haber desaparecido del radar.

Algunos activistas políticos latinos se están quejando del nombramiento que hizo Bush de dos africano-americanos a posiciones en el gabinete y otro a una posición a nivel del gabinete cuando los negros le dieron sólo 8 por ciento de su voto.

Cualesquiera sean los sentimientos, Bush sabe que debe alentar el apoyo de los latinos y los negros para su esperada campaña de re-elección. Entonces, a poco después de asumir la presidencia invitó a ambas facciones -- por separado, claro está -- a Austin para una sesión amistosa, sin recos. Le dejó el cierre de la sesión a su jefe de personal, Andrew Card, quien dijo suponer que todos los latinos presentes habían votado por Bush. Al notar las miradas fijas, Card preguntó si había alguno que no había votado por Bush. Después de una larga pausa, el único en levantar la mano fue Raúl Yzaguirre, presidente del Consejo Nacional de La Raza. Ensordecía el silencio de los demás, al mismo tiempo que expresaba muchísimo. A los latinos les toca un programa serio de rehabilitación si quieren ser Bushies.

Carlos Conde, de Boca Raton, Florida, escribe de temas latinos. Su dirección de correo electrónico es: CDConde(AT)SIGN@aol.com

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it and deal with it," she said. "There are enough issues out there and enough commonality that we share."

The increasing Hispanic population has had an impact on everything from political campaigns to business marketing. Major corporations pay millions to advertise on Spanish-language television, where ratings in some cities surpass those of English stations. Salsa is now more likely to sit on America's kitchen tables than ketchup.

Next week, the government plans to release more detail on race from the census, including counts for Asian Americans, Native Americans, whites and others. One of the most closely watched numbers will be how many people checked more than one race box.

The new census figures provided a glimpse into the mixed-race figure. The numbers showed that far more people than expected checked off black and another race in the census. Recent national studies had indicated that 1 percent or 2 percent would, although some experts said the publicity about the new option could drive numbers up.

One in 12 black children

younger than 18 also were reported as belonging to more than one race, many of them from the nation's growing number of interracial marriages. Among African Americans 50 and older, 2.3 percent designated themselves as being more than one race.

According to Urban Institute demographer Jeffrey Passell, who found the figures on the Census Bureau's Web site, the multiracial numbers for blacks are "substantially higher" than could have been forecast based on intermarriage and mixed-race birth certificates.

"It looks to me like it's a lot of people acknowledging ancestors who might have been a number of generations ago," Passell said. "It demonstrates a willingness, a desire to report more details about their genealogy."

The multi-race option was added to the census form at the urging of the growing number of people who had married someone of another race or who were children of mixed-race parents. The option was opposed by many civil rights groups, who feared it would diminish their influence and cause confusion in enforcing equal-protection laws.

Roderick Harrison, a former Census Bureau official who is at the Joint Center for Political and

Economic Studies, said the high multi-race numbers will make it difficult to track whether blacks have made progress in school test scores, health, access to jobs or housing and other important social goals.

But advocates for the multi-race option say it reflects the real United States, where racial categories are not as fixed as many believe.

"We're not surprised at all," said Francis Wardle, director of the Center for the Study of Biracial Children in Denver.

"Everyone knows that the world is not made up of single-race people. The reality is moving faster than the census."

Commerce Secretary Donald L. Evans yesterday approved a Census Bureau recommendation that unadjusted population figures be released for redistricting purposes.

Democrats and civil rights groups had hoped that bureau officials would recommend releasing numbers adjusted statistically to compensate for 3 million people left out of the count. Evans yesterday did not rule out using adjusted numbers later for another major purpose of the census, distributing billions of dollars in federal funds.

Latino Population From Page One

enforcement," said Hilary Shelton, director of the NAACP's Washington bureau.

When police stop drivers of color on the basis of racial profiles, he said, "half the time... they don't know whether they are black or Latino."

Marisa Demeo, general counsel of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, said tension between the groups can't be avoided. "We have to face

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Economic Region Canada-Mexico-United States

The approval and subsequent signing of NAFTA (TLC as is known in Mexico), by the three North American trade partners, has signaled what could be the continent's first economic front, what happens in the future could be very well determined by the way the region prospers and develops economically.

Here is what Ambassador Berruga had to say:

"It's of paramount importance to develop a clear vision of the economic region we are building in North America. Based on what we accomplish we'll be able to do a better job in the immigration field, legal matters, the borders situation and the environment. So far our Canadian partners have shown great interest in this concept, as well as how to deal with energy problems.

"If we, Canada, Mexico and the United States fail to develop a joint vision in our region our immediate and long term future, it is going to be very difficult to deal wisely with the most urgent matters and stir them in the right direction.

"In a very important paragraph of the document 'La Propuesta de Guanajuato' President Fox stated, 'We'll strive for the consolidation of an economic front in North America.'

"This is the first time that in an official document signed by two of the three countries signatories to NAFTA there is mention of an economic community in North America. We must

remember that something similar happened before when the creation of the European economic community was the beginning of the consolidation for the European community.

"Without a clear vision of what kind of economic zone we want to create it's going to be very difficult to implement an immigration package. Of course that is a very importante matter by itself but, is just part of a wider and more complex aspect of our relations and closely related to business, investment, telecommunication, environment and disaster prevention matters."

Panama zone
President Fox has announced his intention to create a zone for the economic development of Mexico's southern states. The program could include the participation of the Central American countries and extend the developing zone to Panama. What is the status of Plan Zona Panama?

"This project is one of several matters under evaluation, in this case we have to answer one of these questions: Do we focus exclusively on NAFTA as outlined? or do we dedicate our attention to what we call the Mexican preference, that is, to extend the Treaty's space from Alaska to Panama?"

"We think the second of the options could be more beneficial, there are several reasons for this, we know that as far as energy conduction and transporta-

tion is concerned the connections between Alaska and Panama are deficient."

"Let's use as an example what's happening with the energy crisis in the State of California.

Mexico sells them enough energy every day to supply 50,000 homes with electricity. We could easily increase the volume to fulfill the needs of 400,000, but California does not have the capability to conduct our production capacity. The existing high tension lines can carry a volume of energy for 150,000 homes.

"When it comes to delivering petroleum or natural gas, the problem is the same, there aren't enough pipelines.

"At the present time the construction of a gasoduct between Mexico and Guatemala, that eventually will reach Panama, is in its final stage. Once this pipeline is completed we'll be able to deliver natural gas to all Central American countries.

"The project to build a high speed railroad to accelerate the traffic of overseas containers between the Gulf of Mexico and Pacific Ocean's ports, across the Tehuantepec Isthmus in the State of Oaxaca, is still on the drawing boards."

In our next edition we'll bring to you the rest of our interview with Ambassador Berruga, dealing with the Mexico-Cuba relations, use of Mexican trucks across the United States as well as trade with Illinois.

Leading Organization Group to Address Under Representation in Business & Management Education

For the first time ever, a group of leading organizations have banded together to address the problem of minority underrepresentation in business and management education. In an unprecedented step, the organizations agreed to work together in a new coalition, The Diversity Pipeline Alliance, to leverage their individual efforts to attract more African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans and Native Americans to pursue careers in business.

"Business is a career and educational choice rich with opportunity for young African Americans, Hispanic Americans and Native Americans. Minority students need to hear that message," said Nicole Chestang, Executive Vice President and Secretary of the Graduate Management Admission Council (R)GMAC, lead sponsor of the effort.

"The Diversity Pipeline Alliance is a powerful effort and opportunity to enact some true change in the diversity of tomorrow's workplace," said Bernard J. Milano, President of the KPMG Foundation and the PhD Project, a founding member of the Alliance.

In the months ahead, the Diversity Pipeline Alliance will prepare and release a comprehensive report on the status of minority participation in business education. Subsequently, the Alliance will conduct an aggressive marketing campaign to show minorities aged 12 to 24

how studying business can open exciting career opportunities.

The Diversity Pipeline Alliance was formed in response to increased demand for a diverse workforce. This demand creates pressure on institutions to diversify classrooms. One indicator that achieving this diversity will be a challenge is the 24% drop from 1995 to 1999 in minorities taking the GMAT(R) for admission to graduate business school.

"The Pipeline Alliance wants to convince young African American, Hispanic American and Native American students that going to business school opens up a world of career options," explained Paul Danos, Dean of the Amos Tuck School of Business Administration.

These are the organizations involved:

- CitiGroup Foundation Consortium for Graduate Study in Management
- Graduate Management Admission Council
- KPMG Foundation
- Leadership Education and Development (LEAD)
- Management Leadership for Tomorrow (MLT)
- National Black MBA Association, Inc. (including Leaders of Tomorrow(TM))
- National Society of Hispanic MBAs
- The PhD Project
- The Robert A. Toigo Foundation
- Sponsors for Educational Opportunity (SEO)

mio amico, mio fratello
(in memory of
Joe Uvalles)

where have you gone?
you walked into the night
and i didn't see you
again
i looked and looked for you,
gazed at your sketches
you'd given me, perhaps
to feel your presence
i tuned in a Beatles radio
station to try to hear you
singing along with the lyrics,
opened a window amidst
a coolness night, to
listen for your familiar whistle,
i read some Kerouac
to try to relive
our conversations, and
still, i never saw you again
never to hear your voice

madrigal

Gabriel
when your little
head's on my shoulder
all else is distant
indifference: the hours
of toil for little pay, the
love that evades
my embraceful eyes,
the sad song of night.
The moment stirs words
in my heart and
the recollection of you
standing by your new tricycle,
and the unfinished poem
I scribbled then

madrigal

De La Pagina Uno

divididas o libertad bajo palabra). Esta estadística se mantiene aún cuando se controla la muestra en términos de la ofensa adjudicada. De los convictos por ofensas violentas, 46 por ciento de los latinos recibieron sentencias de encarcelamiento, en comparación con 34 por ciento de los blancos.

-- Los jóvenes latinos tenían una probabilidad casi tres veces mayor que los jóvenes blancos de recibir una sentencia de encarcelamiento por una ofensa de orden público, 34 por ciento versus 13 por ciento.

En total, muchos de los jóvenes estudiados -- 28 por ciento de los latinos, 23 por ciento de los blancos, 43 por ciento de los negros -- no fueron convictos. Casi la mitad -- 45 por ciento de los latinos, 40% de los blancos, 46 por ciento de los negros -- salían libres en 24 horas.

Al menos 40 estados han incorporado a sus estatutos populares de sentencias fuertes para jóvenes el procesar con mayor frecuencia a los ofensores juveniles en cortes criminales para adultos.

Este tipo de legislación no toma en cuenta el hecho que nuestros niños todavía son niños, comenta el informe. La política de "cometes un crimen adulto, recibes una sentencia adulta" es muy popular en las encuestas políticas, pero en realidad resulta contraproducente para el impacto que quiere lograr contra la criminalidad, dice representante de los Estados Unidos para Virginia, Bobby Scott, demócrata de mayor cate-

goría del sub-comité de la Cámara para el crimen. "Se aplica de manera injusta y tiene un efecto desproporcionado en jóvenes minoritarios."

Los jóvenes procesados en cortes criminales para adultos reciben las mismas penalidades que los adultos, que incluye la posibilidad de pena de muerte o sentencias de vida sin posibilidad de libertad condicional. Reciben pocos, o ningún beneficio programado de educación, tratamiento psiquiátrico o rehabilitación. Sus antecedentes criminales pueden limitar de manera significativa su educación futura o sus oportunidades de empleo.

El ser convicto de delito grave como adulto en muchos estados resulta en la pérdida del derecho al voto, a veces de por vida. Los criminales convictos de delitos graves pierden el derecho de solicitar becas o préstamos estudiantiles.

Raúl Yzaguirre, del Consejo Nacional de La Raza, concluye que, "Necesitamos enfatizar la inversión en programas -- la educación, la capacitación laboral y la prevención del uso de narcóticos y tratamiento -- que reducen el crimen al promover la oportunidad."

(Angela Medina es becaria para el año 2000/2001 del Instituto del Grupo de Congresistas Hispano. Ha dedicado su experiencia de nueve meses en Washington entre las oficinas del Youth Law Center, sin fines de lucro, y el despacho del representante demócrata de los Estados Unidos para Nueva York, José Serrano, donde se encuentra actualmente trabajando.)

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Gramm's Immigration Proposal

Regarding the Gramm Project Ambassador Berruga had this to say:

"Senator Gramm's proposal hasn't been presented to us in writing. There isn't a document we've seen or know of, that has been introduced in the US Senate."

"His proposal, verbally presented to us, basically consists in a regularization process for the Mexican workers called Guest Workers Program.

"The process would require registration of applicants to the program in order to receive a working permit that would allow them to go to work in the United States.

"The undocumented workers residing in the United States could also -according to Senator Gramm's verbal presentation- apply for a permit. The qualifying applicants, then, would be eligible to accrue benefits in a pension plan, receive Medicaid benefits and be protected by workers' guarantees.

"In a nutshell this seems like a very simple program to implement, but, Senator Gramm hasn't outlined specific procedures that would make his proposal comprehensive. Again, I can tell you we have not received a concrete proposal and I don't know whether he has presented his proposal or not to the U.S. Senate.

"As you know there had been many amnesty proposals for the undocumented workers living in the United States. A decision that doesn't encompass an immediate project was reached due to the Presidents' meeting.

"The consensus was to leave the responsibility to propose and devise the best formula to orderly organize the immigration and labor worlds to a group of negotiators that includes the Secretary of State and the US Attorney for the United States and the Ministers of Foreign Relations and of the Interior for Mexico."

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Youth Rally To Attract Over 2000 Youths

The Catholic Diocese of Lubbock is sponsoring Youth Rally 2001. Youth Rally 2001 will take place on March 10 in the Exhibit Hall of the Lubbock Memorial Civic Center. The rally will consist of a keynote speaker, Sal Solo from Chicago, IL, a concert by New Covenant from San Angelo, Mass, two rounds of workshops, dinner, and an ending with a dance. This year's theme is See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Speak No Evil. The participants have a choice on several topics for the workshops: Sharing your faith, Gospel messages, facing temptation, sexuality, friendship, music, planning beyond graduation and several others.

The presentors of these workshops are within the community. The cost of the Rally is \$30 which includes registration packet, dinner, T-shirt, workshops, and dance. Registration will begin at 8:00 am at the door. Scholarships are available for more than one member in family. The day will be filled with fellowship, fun, and prayer. All denominations are welcome. This rally is for junior high and high school students. Several colleges have been invited to display their information about their school. For information or call the Youth Office at 806-792-3943.

Two Presidents With Common Objectives

By Eduardo Balderas Sr.

The meeting of presidents George W. Bush and Vicente Fox Quesada that took place a short while ago in the cradle of Mexican Independence did not produce announcements for dramatic accords and agreements, nevertheless it served its purpose to show solidarity and friendship between two presidents with common philosophies and goals for their administrations.

Emphatically and appropriately President Fox stated that the decisions necessary to solve the problems originated by thorny issues like continuous illegal immigration and the large and growing number of undocumented workers now living for a long period of time in the United States, can't be made exclusively by the executive branch of government.

Finding the solution for those problems as well as several more at the core of the Bush-Fox conversations, will be the result of studies, law initiatives and other legislative procedures that must take place in the houses on both sides of the Rio Grande.

The number of undocumented workers living and laboring in the nation varies depending on who does the counting, nevertheless it is generally accepted that it surpasses the five million mark.

The jobs performed by these workers are mostly in the menial category; jobs that the American workers won't take for different reasons, mainly because of the lack of health coverage and other benefits as well as

low salaries that in many occasions don't even comply with the minimum wage laws. There is also the lack of safe working conditions.

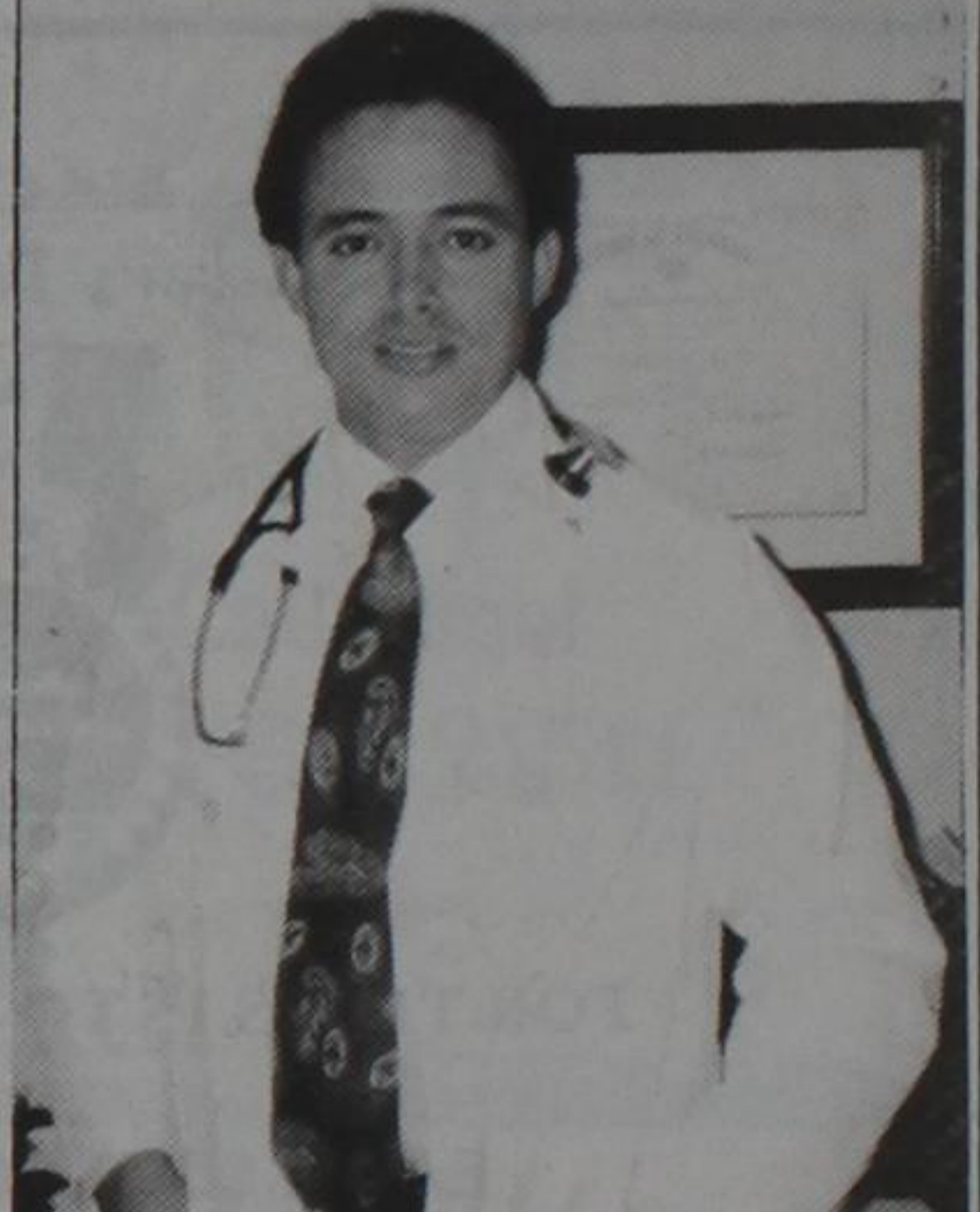
A short time before the Presidents' meeting, Texas' Senator Phil Gramm traveled to Mexico City accompanied by a group of American Legislators in order to negotiate a program that would provide permits to Mexican national to work legally in the United States for a term of one year.

The Gramm "project" has created some doubts regarding the motives for the proposal amongst Democrat members of Congress, since the Texan Senator's voting record on immigration matters "leaves a lot to be desired."

During my recent visit to Mexico to cover the presidents' meeting I had the opportunity to interview one of the top officials in the Fox Quesada administration, Ambassador Enrique Berruga Filloy sub-Secretary for the Foreign Relations Secretariat.

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A Homeland That Pains Me

Colombia: La Patria Que Me Duele

By Raquel Morris-Ruiz
Colombia. My beloved country. The land of *mis ancestros* and *compatriotas*.

Like 2-year-old Jonathan, 9-year-old Zulay, 35-year-old Roxana, 27-year-old Pablo Emilio, 60-year-old doña Gertrúdz, 65-year-old don Saturnino and 40 million other Colombians who are paying with their lives for a sin created by the international community: *la droga*.

In the recent film "Traffic," the U.S. drug czar played by Michael Douglas quits his prominent government position to help his daughter, a drug addict. This film affirms something that many Colombians and international advocates have known for a long time: The drug war is not about combat, guns and hostility. The drug war is about love, family, health and social justice.

There's no shortage of opinions on how to solve the war on drugs. Former President Clinton signed a law that provides \$1.3 billion for "Plan Colombia," Colombia's war on drugs. The money is primarily for military equipment and training for Colombian military forces to fight narco-traffickers and to destroy coca and poppy crops. This means more war for a country that is dying from war.

Since Dec. 22 of last year, the Colombian government, with U.S. military aid, has fumigated four indigenous communities in the Valle del Guamez and San Miguel, in the state of Putumayo.

Food crops, gardens of medicinal and sacred plants, and fish hatcheries were completely destroyed. Approximately 80 families were displaced to neigh-

boring Ecuador. The fumigation was a complete surprise. For the last two years, these communities have been engaged, with the government, in the peaceful process of developing "Plan de Vida," which includes 100 percent manual eradication of illicit crops. Pablo Emilio Díaz Queta, the leader of Plan de Vida and the Cofán indigenous community in the region, was assassinated the first week of January.

In his eight-hour visit to Cartagena de Indias last Aug. 30 to kick off Plan Colombia, President Clinton walked through the beautiful, old part of the city, the Corralito de Piedras. But he didn't see the barrios of San Francisco or María la Baja with extreme poverty -- where María Jesús lives in an 8-by-10-foot *bareque* (mud) hut with a dirt floor and shares a bed with her mother and seven brothers and sisters. Where breakfast, lunch or dinner is twice a week. Where 10-year-old María Jesús doesn't know the difference between the vowels and consonants because she cannot go to school. In her barrio, the only well-known word is *supervivencia* because going to school is a luxury. Survival is all she knows.

My husband, Bob, an industrial engineer from Pennsylvania, visited Colombia with me for the first time last December. A former Air Force colonel, he was amazed how friendly we Colombians are, open and sharing everything we have, even though my friends are living several notches below where they were five years ago.

The outskirts of Bogota are filled with campesinos who left the countryside to escape the guerrillas and paramilitaries.

Taking cues from the media, I am afraid that too many people in the United States stereotype us as drug dealers. When I first arrived in the United States three years ago, I was detained in Immigration and treated as a criminal. When I asked the reason for the abusive treatment, I was told, "You are *Colombiana*." I am neither the first nor the last to have this experience.

The media should give its attention to the strength, resilience and creativity we have given the world, like Gabriel García Márquez, Manuel Elkin Patarroyo, who discovered the malaria vaccine, and Fernando Botero, the artist of "Las Gordas." They are only three of 40 million talented Colombians who with *amor por su patria*, get up every morning hoping for

peace in their land.

The impact on Colombia of fighting narco-trafficking is more than jungles and campesinos. During the 1990s, the Colombian economy went into a slow tailspin as narco money found other outlets. The collapse of the artificial opulence created by the Capos affected everyone in society. My uncle, don Francisco, woke up one day bankrupt. His whole life's work in a thriving Medellín window factory was destroyed. The construction industry nearly vanished. My childhood girlfriend Marcela Solano, a television producer, works more than 72 hours a week, earning about \$450 per month. Five years ago, she made \$2,500. Like other broadcasting companies, my friend's drastically reduced its productions in 1997 because of the lack of advertisers. But at least she has a job until next August. Andrés Felipe and Moises have been unemployed for several years -- some of Colombia's 23 percent unemployed.

The drug war will never bring us peace.

Colombia will have peace only when María Jesús has the opportunity to go to school like American children. When baby Pedrito, orphaned by the drug war, has the fundamental rights of food, education and opportunity. When Zulay and Roxana can go back to their *parcela* in Garzón, not risking their lives. When don Saturnino and doña Gertrúdz can have a better option than growing coca.

But soon they won't have any land for their crops because Colombian police with their U.S. helicopters are destroying the ecosystem with chemicals. Then Saturnino and Gertrúdz will join other hundreds of thousands of people displaced by the violence.

What if those \$1.3 billion were invested in programs for campesinos and their families so they didn't need to continue growing coca? What if the U.S. government, instead of bleeding *mis compatriotas*, turned its attention to the millions of Carolines in their own families?

In one way or another, more than 40 million Colombians are paying with their lives for *la droga*.

We *exiliados* left our beloved country. In our *exilio*, we lost families, friends, music, poetry, food and culture. We exchanged our beautiful Spanish, and in the process of learning the new language, we become the butt of jokes. We wake up every day with tears in our souls, missing all we left behind. We exiles are dying in our hearts. *Mis compatriotas* are bleeding with their hearts and lives.

All because of a gram of cocaine that Caroline, Bud, Scott and the international community is putting up their nose.

(Raquel Morris-Ruiz, who now lives in San Antonio, Texas, is a freelance writer.)

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Por Raquel Morris-Ruiz
Colombia. Mi patria añorada. Tierra de mis ancestros y compatriotas.

Como Jonathan y Zulay, como sus padres Roxana y Pablo, como los abuelos Gertrúdz y Saturnino, 40 millones de colombianos pagan con su vida por un pecado del que es culpable la comunidad internacional: la droga.

Seguendo el mensaje que nos deja Michael Douglas en la película Traffic, quien intempestivamente renuncia a su cargo como Zar anti-drogas, para ir al lado de su hija drogadicta Caroline, la guerra contra la droga poco tiene que ver con armas u hostilidad. Se libra primero en casa, en familia y con una gran dosis de amor. Es algo que colombianos y algunos extranjeros han sabido hace mucho tiempo.

No faltan opiniones sobre la mejor manera de combatir el flagelo de la droga. El ex-presidente Clinton firmó una ley con la que se financia el Plan Colombia por 1.3 billones de dólares, plan estratégico con que el gobierno de Pastrana piensa librar esta batalla. Pero el dinero está principalmente destinado para equipo y entrenamiento militar, el cual es usado más que todo para combatir a los "narcos" y destruir los cultivos de coca y amapola. Más guerra para un país que se desangra en medio de la guerra.

Desde el pasado 22 de diciembre, el gobierno colombiano, con la asesoría militar de los Estados Unidos ha fumigado, entre otras, a cuatro comunidades indígenas

del Valle del Guamez y San Miguel, en el Departamento del Putumayo, unos 1500 kilómetros al suroeste de Bogotá. La fumigación arrasó de paso con cultivos de comestibles, hierbas medicinales y plantas sagradas, además de criaderos de peces. Unas 80 familias fueron desplazadas hacia el vecino Ecuador.

A los indígenas los cogió por sorpresa la fumigación porque durante los últimos dos años, estas comunidades nativas participan en el proyecto gubernamental Plan de Vida, un proceso pacífico que incluye erradicación total, manual, de cultivos ilícitos. Pablo Emilio Díaz Queta, líder del Plan Vida y de la comunidad indígena del Cofán en la región, fue asesinado en la primera semana de enero.

Durante su visita de ocho horas a Cartagena de Indias el 30 de agosto pasado, para inaugurar el Plan Colombia, el ex-presidente Clinton se paseó por la parte más bella y antigua de la ciudad, "El Corralito de Piedra." Pero no vio la extrema pobreza de los barrios San Francisco, Nelson Mandela o el Pozón. Es en uno de estos barrios marginales que vive María Jesús, en una choza de bahareque de unos 80 pies cuadrados. El piso de la vivienda es de tierra y ella comparte una cama con sus siete hermanos y su madre. Desayuno y cena son un lujo que ocurre dos veces a la semana. A sus 10 años, María Jesús no conoce la diferencia entre vocales y consonantes porque ir a la escuela es un lujo. Sobrevivir es todo lo

que ella sabe. Mi esposo Bob, un ingeniero industrial de Pennsylvania y ex-coronel de las Fuerzas Armadas, visitó a Colombia por primera vez, conmigo, en diciembre. Quedó atónito con lo amigables y hospitalarios que somos los colombianos, abiertos y dispuestos a compartir lo que tenemos. Con sorpresa encontró también a la mayoría de mis amigos viviendo en condiciones inferiores a las de hace cinco años, pues el desempleo de profesionales ha aumentado de manera aterradora.

Los alrededores de Bogotá están llenos de campesinos desplazados de sus campos por las guerrillas o los paramilitares.

Guiándonos por lo que reportan los medios de comunicación, me temo que demasiadas personas en los Estados Unidos nos aplican el estereotipo de narco-traficantes. Cuando llegué a este país por primera vez hace tres años, me detuvieron en Inmigración y me trataron como a una criminal. Cuando pregunté el por qué del trato abusivo, me dijeron, "Usted es colombiana." No fui ni la primera ni seré la última en tener esa experiencia.

Los medios deberían fijarse mejor en la fuerza, la flexibilidad y la creatividad que hemos aportado al mundo, con personajes como el Premio Nobel de Literatura, Gabriel García Márquez, el descubridor de la vacuna contra la malaria, Manuel Elkin Patarroyo o Fernando Botero, el famoso artista de Las Gordas, para nombrar sólo los tres más conocidos y notables entre los 40 millones de colombianos que con amor de patria, nos levantamos cada mañana con la esperanza de ver el milagro de la paz en nuestra tierra.

El impacto del combate contra el narcotráfico en Colombia afecta más que la selva o los campesinos. Durante la década de los noventa, la economía colombiana entró en recesión. El desplome de la falsa opulencia creada por los Capos afectó a toda la sociedad. Mi tío, don Francisco, despertó un día en bancarrota. Su fábrica de ventanas, producto del trabajo de toda una vida se fue a pique porque prácticamente desapareció la industria de la construcción.

Mi amiga de infancia, Marcela, productora de televisión, trabaja más de 72 horas por semana, y gana unos \$450 al mes. Hace cinco años ganaba \$2,500. Como otras compañías, la de mi amiga redujo drásticamente sus producciones en 1997. Esto ocurrió a consecuencia de la disminución de pauta publicitaria. Pero, por lo menos tiene trabajo asegurado hasta el próximo agosto. Andrés Felipe y Moises engrosan el 23% de desempleados desde hace varios años.

La guerra contra las drogas nunca nos traerá la paz.

Esta llegará cuando María Jesús tenga la oportunidad de ir a la escuela como los niños norteamericanos. Cuando Pedrito, de 2 años, huérfano por culpa de esta insensatez, tenga garantizados sus derechos fundamentales de alimento, educación e igualdad de oportunidades. Cuando Zulay y Roxana puedan volver a su parcela en Garzón, sin poner en peligro sus vidas. Cuando don Saturnino y doña Gertrúdz tengan una mejor opción que cultivar la coca. Pero pronto no tendrán la tierra para sus cultivos, porque la policía colombiana desde los helicópteros norteamericanos están destruyendo los ecosistemas con los productos tóxicos. Entonces, Saturnino y Gertrúdz se unirán a los otros cientos de miles de personas desplazadas por la violencia.

¿Qué tal si los \$1.3 billones se invirtieran en programas para los campesinos y sus familias, para que no tuvieran que seguir cultivando la coca? ¿Qué pasaría si el gobierno de los Estados Unidos, en vez de desangrar a mis compatriotas, prestara más atención a las millones de familias que producen Carolines?


De una forma u otra, más de 40 millones de colombianos estamos pagando con nuestras vidas por la droga. Nosotros, los exiliados, abandonamos nuestra patria añorada. En el exilio, perdimos a nuestras familias, música, poesía, comida y cultura. Canjeamos la riqueza de nuestro español, y en el proceso de aprender el nuevo idioma, nos convertimos en blanco de chistes. Nos despertamos todos los días con lágrimas en el alma por todo lo que dejamos atrás. Nosotros, los exiliados, nos estamos muriendo en nuestro corazón. Mis compatriotas se desangran con sus corazones y con sus vidas.

Todo por un gramo de cocaína que Caroline, Bud, Scott y tantos otros consumidores en el mundo están metiéndose por la nariz.

(Raquel Morris-Ruiz, que ahora vive en San Antonio, Texas, es escritora.) (c) 2001, Hispanic Link News Service. Distribuido por Los Angeles Times Syndicate International.

Lea El Editor

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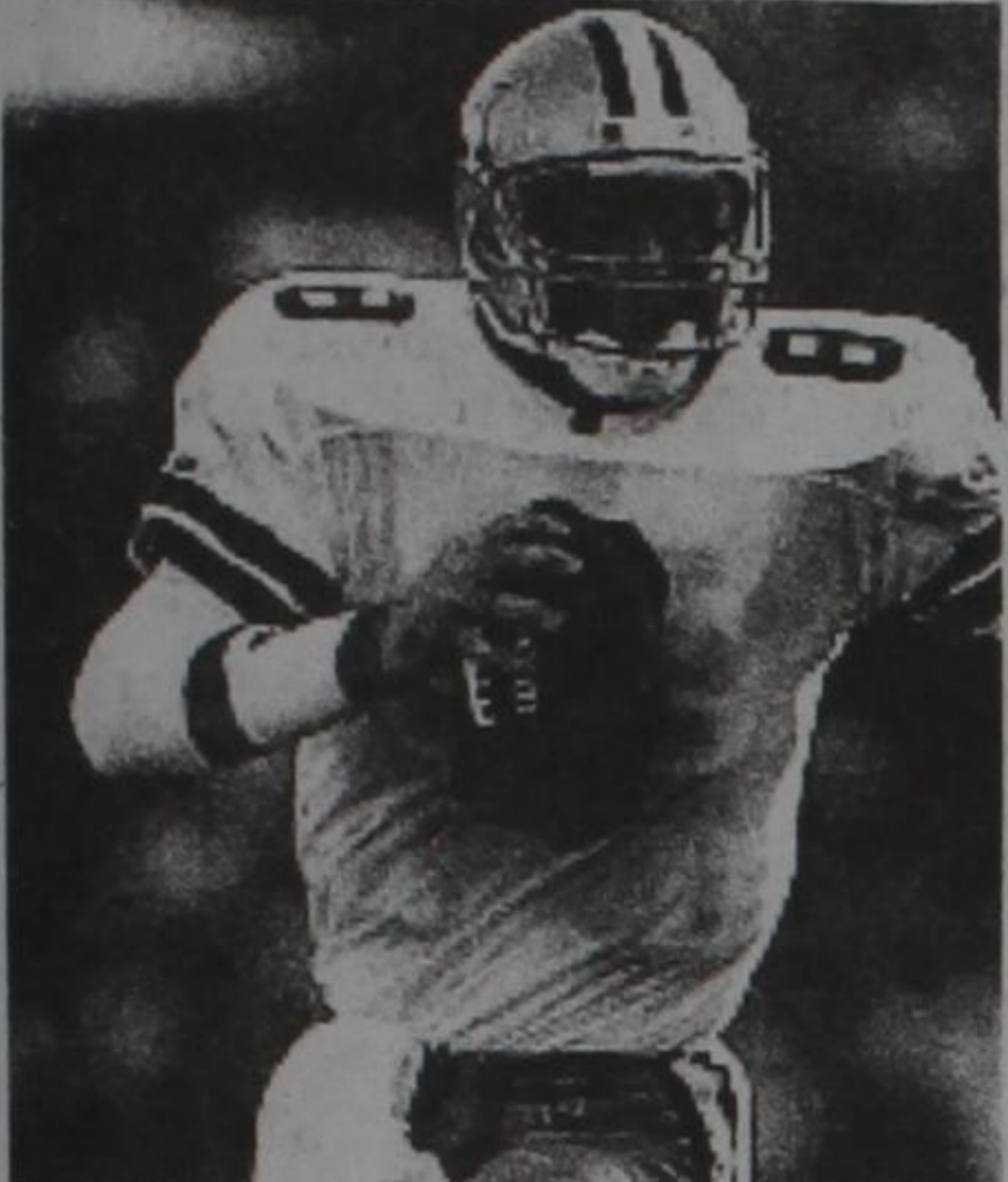
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With Aikman Gone, Questions Hover Over Cowboys

By Len Pasquarelli

The lone surviving member of *The Triplets*, one of the most prodigious offensive triumvirates in NFL history, paused Wednesday evening to gather his thoughts. But even after a minute of meditation had expired, its passage marked by a series of audible sighs, **Emmitt Smith** was left all but speechless by the release of quarterback **Troy Aikman** by the **Dallas Cowboys**.

Finally the second-leading rusher in NFL history decided he could put his feelings into words and the events of Wednesday into perspective.



Troy Aikman might end up with former Cowboys assistant Norv Turner in San Diego.

"It's like an era has ended," said Smith, who in less than a year has witnessed the departures of wide receiver Michael Irvin and now Aikman. "I guess it's true that nothing lasts forever. Even if you know something like this might happen, it's still hard to come to grips when it actually does. I know, though, that a special time is over now."

And so, too, is Aikman's tenure with the Cowboys.

Unable to reconcile a \$7 million bonus due the 12-year veteran quarterback on Friday, and a basic difference of opinion over the wisdom of Aikman continuing a celebrated career that in recent campaigns has been marked by recurring concussions, the Cowboys released the quarterback who led them to three Super Bowl victories.

To deal with the salary cap ramifications of the Aikman move, Dallas was forced to release offensive tackle **Erik Williams** and defensive tackle **Chad Hennings**. The most likely candidate to replace Aikman, team sources confirmed for SportsLine.com on Wednesday night, is Tony Banks.

The decision on Aikman came only nine days after Dallas owner Jerry Jones told SportsLine.com he hoped to reach an agreement to extend the deadline on the bonus. As recently as Monday, league sources were still awaiting a request by Jones and agent Leigh Steinberg to push back the deadline to as late as June 1, but Wednesday morning an NFL Players Association official confirmed that such a request had yet to be made and that both sides "know the clock is ticking."

Jones on Wednesday termed the release of Aikman "the most difficult" decision he had made in his stewardship of the franchise. Aikman, after all, was the first draft choice the Cowboys made after Jones purchased the franchise. Aikman contended the divorce was "amicable" and said that the resolution was mutually agreed upon.

At the root of the decision, however, were common denominators that traditionally are the basic elements of most squabbles: Money and family.

The cap-strapped Cowboys, in the end, did not feel comfortable

delaying the inevitable and still having some financial exposure in the matter. Aikman, 34, and having suffered at least 11 and possibly as many as 14 concussions in his career, was not yet ready to accede to Jones' entreaties that he retire having played for no other team than the one with the blue star on its silver helmet.

Two of the concussions occurred in 2000, when Aikman played in just 11 games, twice needed painkiller shots for a back problem, and suffered through the toughest season since a 1989 rookie year when he was the first overall prospect selected in the draft.

"There's just no way Troy wanted to go out this way and (Jones), who sort of saw himself as the father figure here, legitimately feared for his health," said a source close to the quarterback. "So, given those two diametrically opposed sentiments, I guess this was inevitable. But I'm sure that having to do this is like a punch in the gut to Jerry."

It's also a haymaker right to the Dallas salary cap for 2001.

Because the Cowboys released Aikman before June 1, the date on which the impact on a team's salary cap can be somewhat lessened, all of the pro-rated signing bonus dollars on a contract than ran through 2007 accelerates into this year. That means Dallas will be charged a whopping \$10.062 million for Aikman against their 2001 cap. That amounts to 15 percent of the team's \$67.4 million for a player no longer with the team.

Aikman's release thus leaves the Cowboys without a quarterback and soon to be minus a few more players as well. League sources told SportsLine.com on Wednesday night that Dallas is now about \$8 million-\$9 million over the cap because of the Aikman maneuver. The Cowboys will have 24 hours to come into compliance with the league limit. Even before Wednesday, the team had restructured the contracts of several veterans.

Dallas officials on Wednesday night were already in contract talks with agent Marvin Demoff, who represents Banks, the five-year veteran released by the Baltimore Ravens last week. Banks, 27, visited with Dallas officials on Tuesday in what both sides felt was a very good meeting. Current offensive coordinator Jack Reilly is familiar with Banks, having coached him during his 1996 rookie season with the St. Louis Rams.

The Cowboys might also consider re-signing Randall Cunningham, who played for the team last season, but who achieved enough predetermined performance benchmarks to void out the final two years of his Dallas contract.

It has been speculated for weeks that Aikman will continue his career with San Diego,

where he would be reunited with former Dallas offensive coordinator and longtime friend Norv Turner, in his first season as the Chargers offensive boss. Aikman did little to quash those rumors just after his release became public late Wednesday afternoon, noting that San Diego "is a possibility."

Aikman had dinner with Turner last weekend in Del Mar, a suburb of San Diego.

One Chargers assistant told SportsLine.com on Wednesday morning that the Chargers were not yet in a hurry to sign free agent quarterback Doug Flutie, who visited the team on Monday and Tuesday, because club officials wanted to see how the Aikman situation was resolved. "But when I told you that," said the coach on Wednesday night, "I had no idea it would happen so quickly. Now that it has, I'll be stunned if (Aikman) doesn't end up out here."

Assuming he is healthy, Aikman could play a year or two while the Chargers groom likely No. 1 pick Michael Vick to be the starter.

Because he is a vested veteran, Aikman can reject any waiver claim. But that is academic, since no team would claim him anyway and assume his current contract.

San Diego, or any other team that is interested in Aikman, likely would subject him to a strenuous physical exam as well as a neurological review to determine if there has been a cumulative effect from all the concussions. Steinberg had indicated in the past that doctors felt Aikman probably could continue his career.

It is, without doubt, a career that will land Aikman in the Hall of Fame.

While his critics contended that he was a mechanical quarterback, one surrounded by a brilliant arsenal of playmakers but perhaps incapable of raising the level of those around him, Aikman was the triggerman for a potent attack that carried the Cowboys to an unprecedented three Super Bowl victories in a four-season span.

In 12 seasons with the Cowboys, the dispassionate Aikman played in 165 regular-season games, all as a starter. He completed 2,898 of 4,715 passes for 32,942 yards, with 165 touchdown passes, 141 interceptions and a passer rating of 81.6.

Tech Fires Dickey & Hires Knight

A source close to the athletic department at **Texas Tech University** told SportsLine.com on Wednesday that the school will fire current coach **James Dickey** at season's end and is interested in offering its head coaching position to **Bob Knight**.



According to a source, if Texas Tech has its way, **Bob Knight** will be guiding its program next season.

Texas Tech (9-18) plays Oklahoma State in the first round of the Big 12 Tournament on Thursday in Kansas City, Mo. Athletic director Gerald Myers told Dickey last week his future with the school would be reviewed after the season. A source said Dickey's buyout could be more than \$750,000. Myers did not return calls from SportsLine.com Wednesday afternoon.

"I don't think anybody's satisfied with the season," said Myers last week when discussing Dickey's future. "Not the coach, the fans, anybody."

Television station WFIE in Evansville, Ind., citing an unnamed source reported Wednesday night that Knight would be the next coach at Texas Tech. SportsLine.com had no confirmation of Knight's interest in the position, should it open and should it be offered.

However, the *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal* has reported that Knight talked with Texas Tech about taking over as coach. According to the newspaper's sources, Tech president David Schmidly and Myers were in Naples, Fla., earlier this week to discuss with Knight the possibility of replacing Dickey.

Myers, 63, and Knight have been good friends for years. The winningest basketball coach in Texas Tech history, Myers got Indiana to come to the school's Lubbock, Texas, campus to open the plush United Spirit Arena in 1999.

Knight, 60, was fired from Indiana on Sept. 10, 2000 after a Hall of Fame career where he won 763 games and three national championships. He has repeatedly said he is interested in returning to coach college basketball. Knight, sources close to him say, wants to set the all-time record for career wins. He trails former North Carolina coach Dean Smith by 116 victories.

Dickey is 154-108 in nine seasons as head coach at Texas Tech and has three years remaining on his contract. His program has slipped from a 30-2 record in 1996 to its current 9-18 record. Attendance at the 15,000 seat United Spirit Arena fell to just 9,557 this year.

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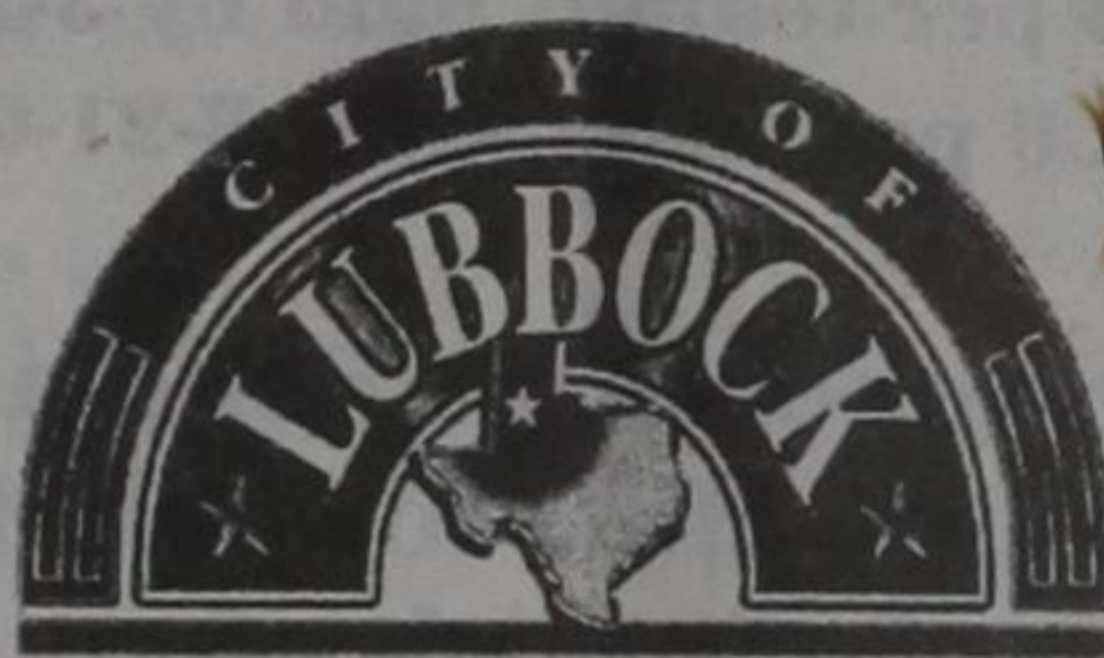
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- 7:20 - 7:35 pm Daniel's Compania de Baile Artistica-San Antonio, Tx
- 7:40 - 7:55 pm Ballet Folklorico Guadalupano-Muleshoe, Tx
- 8:00 - 8:15 pm Mexicano 2000 Folklorico Dance School-Dallas, Tx
- 8:20 - 8:35 pm Ballet Folklorico Nuestra Herencia-Lubbock, Tx
- 8:40 - 8:55 pm Roswell Folklorico-Roswell, NM

Saturday, March 17, 2001 Adult's Competition

- 3:00 - 3:25 pm Daniel's Compania de Baile Artistica-San Antonio, Tx
- 3:30 - 3:55 pm Ballet Folklorico Paso del Norte-El Paso, Tx
- 4:00 - 4:25 pm Mexicano 2000 Folklorico Dance School-Dallas, Tx
- 4:30 - 4:55 pm Ballet Folklorico Nuestra Herencia-Lubbock, Tx
- 5:00 - 5:25 pm Roswell Folklorico-Roswell, NM

