

Hispanic Banks Continue Dynamic Growth

By Melita Garza and John Schmeltzer

Hispanic banks are almost double the size of their closest non-white-owned rivals, according to the most recent Federal Reserve Board statistics.

Since 1989, the assets of Hispanic-owned banks in the United States have grown 45 percent, to \$22.4 billion from \$15.4 billion. They operate more than 200 branches across the country and employ more than 12,000 people.

In comparison, Asian American-owned banks have grown 130 percent to \$12.9 billion in assets from \$5.5 billion since 1989, while African American-owned banks have grown only slightly, to \$3.7 billion in assets from \$2.8 billion.

Hispanic banks generally are larger than their non-white-owned competitors. While Hispanic and Asian-American banks each operate 190 branches, Hispanic banks employ more than twice as many people -- 11,921 compared to 5,634. African American banks operate 89 branches and employ 2,349 people.

"I really think Hispanic banks are going to take off," said William Cunningham, president of Creative Investment Research, a Washington-based firm that tracks minority-owned banks. "There are reasons to go to a Hispanic bank that don't exist in some of the other ethnic groups. They speak Spanish, and that will pave the way."

That's why Puerto Rico-based BanPonce Corp. sees its future in statehood. Already the largest Hispanic-owned bank in Puerto Rico, BanPonce, the holding company for Banco Popular de Puerto Rico, now wants to become the largest Hispanic-owned bank on the mainland.

Hugh McColl, chairman and chief executive officer of Charlotte, N.C.-based NationsBank Corp., has said he wants to be the nation's first coast-to-coast bank.

Banco Popular, however, already is. It has branches in New York, New Jersey, Illinois and California. And it has launched an aggressive expansion drive aimed at tapping the nation's burgeoning Hispanic population, which now numbers more than 32 million, including 3.8 million in the commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

"We're going to be the largest Hispanic bank," said Jorge A. Junquera, senior executive vice president of the Banco Popular, already the nation's 45th largest bank with assets of \$16.7 billion.

It dropped the pretense of being an Anglo bank in Chicago by changing the name of a bank it owned there, Pioneer Bank, to Banco Popular, Illinois and acquiring Seminole National Bank in Orlando, Fla. It is negotiating to acquire another bank in Texas.

It is also preparing to offer its customers a Mastercard, and for customers without a credit history, it will offer a secured card, which could be a boon in a community where most people still buy with cash. A secured card is linked to a security deposit or savings account at the bank.

Banco Popular's timing couldn't be better.

Ernest J. Ojeda, owner of Tupals Management Co., which has four McDonald's restaurant franchises in Chicago, spent years trying to tap into this market before succeeding.

Repeatedly the investor group he

heads was outbid by other banks as it attempted to purchase an existing bank. Finally, it opted for starting a de novo bank, Pan American Bank, which is located in Chicago's vibrant Mexican-immigrant Pilsen and Little Village neighborhoods. State and federal regulators helped clear the way.

But while the Hispanic market is growing in population and income, competition already is intense.

Competitors range from the check-cashing stores that also wire money to relatives in Mexico or Central America to tiny savings and loans that survived the S&L crisis of the 1980s to large banks trying to comply with federal regulations that require them to do business in inner-city neighborhoods.

But S. Michael Polenski, president of Banco Popular, Illinois, said even Hispanic banks face a difficult education campaign with potential Hispanic customers.

Many Mexican immigrants haven't worked with banks in the past, while in some Central American and South American countries banks are viewed only slightly less suspiciously than the government, he said.

Cunningham said even that shouldn't markedly slow the growth of the Hispanic-owned banks: "Once they go out and push the advantage they have, I think everyone will be surprised at the response they get."

(Melita Garza covers ethnic affairs and John Schmeltzer covers banking and economic issues for the Chicago Tribune.)

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News Briefs

Clinton Defends Welfare Plan

President Clinton ran into some criticism of his welfare proposals Tuesday on a visit to New York where he was also raising more than \$1 million to help elect Democrats to the Senate.

At a roundtable discussion at the Riverside Church near Harlem on Manhattan's West Side, Clinton defended his efforts to get people off welfare rolls by offering tax credits and other incentives for businesses that hire welfare recipients.

Earl Graves, chief executive officer of Black Enterprise Magazine, reflected some frustration at Clinton's decision last summer to sign a Republican-backed welfare law that ended a 61-year federal entitlement to welfare. He said the law was "designed to destroy" the government's social safety net.

"It is unrealistic and unfair to expect the private sector in general and black-owned businesses in particular to sacrifice profit margins in order to do the government's job," Graves said. "Unlike the federal government, we can go out of business."

Clinton bristled at the criticism and heatedly defended his proposals in support of his second-term goal of getting jobs for one million welfare recipients in the next four years. He said government was still providing a safety net.

"Let me say, with all due respect, I don't think it's that simple," he said. "I don't think it's accurate to say that this bill destroys the safety net for poor people."

Nilda Roman, who has been on welfare for the last three years, complained of a lack of training for employment for poor people like herself and spoke of the demeaning way they are treated. "It's the way we're treated when we get there," she said. "I've seen the women clean the toilets. It's horrid and it's demeaning."

In later remarks at an awards lunch for the Business Enterprise Trust, Clinton said getting jobs for one million on welfare could be done if a commitment was made by the country's 826,000 businesses with more than 20 employees, 1.1 million non-profit organizations and 135,000 churches with more than 200 members to hire the underclass.

"Just look at the sheer numbers of employers out there -- we can do this million people in a snap and help to break the back of the isolated underclass of America," he said.

"Let New Law Work" Urges Fatherhood Leader

A press release from The National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) says Dr. Wade F. Horn, President of the NFI and former U.S. Commissioner for Children, Youth and Families, told a House Ways and Means Subcommittee that "now is not the time to revise the welfare reform legislation. Rather we need to give the recently enacted reforms time to work and to rigorously evaluate its impact on low income children and families."

Testifying before the Subcommittee on Human Resources, Horn urged the President to "resist the impulse to open up the welfare reform legislation before it has even been fully implemented by the states."

Horn pointed to early successes: "In states that have been most aggressive in implementing the welfare reforms the decline in welfare caseloads has been dramatic ... in all, twenty two states have seen their caseloads drop by 20 percent or more."

Calling "out-of-wedlock childbearing as the most common route onto welfare," Horn predicted that the new welfare reform law will help to further reduce the number of children being born to unmarried women. Horn cited New Jersey and its family cap provision (that denies additional cash benefits to women who conceived an additional child while on welfare) as further indication that reform is working. In Camden, New Jersey's most welfare-dependent city, births to welfare mothers between 1992 and 1994 dropped a startling 21.2 percent.

Government Cuts Off Disabled Immigrants

Associated Press reports that the federal government is notifying hundreds of thousands of low-income elderly and disabled legal immigrants that they are losing Supplemental Security Income benefits.

Letters going out to the immigrants result from last year's welfare overhaul requiring cuts in assistance that take effect in August and September.

Immigrant-advocacy groups are worried. "One of our greatest fears is that the United States will have a rash of suicides among the very old and disabled immigrants who are left without any source of income or medical care," Catholic Charities official Sharon Daly told a House subcommittee this week.

Between now and the end of March, the Social Security Administration is mailing out 900,000 letters informing legal immigrants of their status under the Supplemental Security Income program.

Nearly one in four elderly noncitizens received SSI in 1994, compared with one in 25 of the elderly born in this country.

"It shows how the immigrants are really coming here and using the U.S. as a retirement program," said Rep. Clay Shaw, R-Fla., chairman of the House Ways and Means human resources subcommittee.

Welfare-to-Work on Slow Track

The New York Times reported this weekend that while the Administration is trying to fast-track welfare-to-work programs, companies are implementing the jobs program at a slow pace.

Robert Shapiro, CEO of Monsanto, the nation's fourth-largest chemical maker, was listening in August when President Clinton challenged every boss who had ever grumbled about public assistance to "try to hire someone off welfare, and try hard." He called in his company's personnel planners and directed them to find jobs-careers even-for welfare recipients. While they were at it, Shapiro said, they should lean on the firms that supplied his company with goods and services to do the same.

In his State of the Union address, Clinton singled out Monsanto and four other companies for their commitment to put welfare recipients to work.


So far, Monsanto has hired five welfare recipients, and its contractors and suppliers have found jobs for roughly 20 more. Until it completes an assessment of its fledgling program, the company is not sure how many more of the nation's dependent poor it will be able to take on. But the number, in any event, will remain limited.

Monsanto's accomplishment may seem modest, even disappointing. But in the view of the Clinton administration and independent analysts, the company deserves credit for making a careful, deliberate commitment to the lives and career prospects of a handful of welfare recipients. Monsanto and other companies like it, they say, are likely to measure their ability to rescue welfare recipients from dependence in twos and threes, not in dozens or hundreds.

Monsanto's experience underscores one of the difficult truths of welfare reform: Putting millions of recipients to work will require more than financial incentives, more than presidential exhortations, more than extensive training and placement programs. It will require considerable patience because progress will be measured in tiny steps, not great leaps.

"It's like eating an elephant one bite at a time," said Blair Forlaw, whose nonprofit organization tries to match jobs and companies in St. Louis with the prospective workers who seek

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Se Reveló Nexos De Capos Con Los Salinas

Por JOSE MANUEL NAVA
WASHINGTON, DC, 18 de febrero. - Los gobiernos de México y Estados Unidos darán a conocer esta semana su primera evaluación conjunta de la narcocrisis que afecta a los dos países, lo que constituirá la primera visión en común del problema y ello será una importante victoria político-diplomática para México.

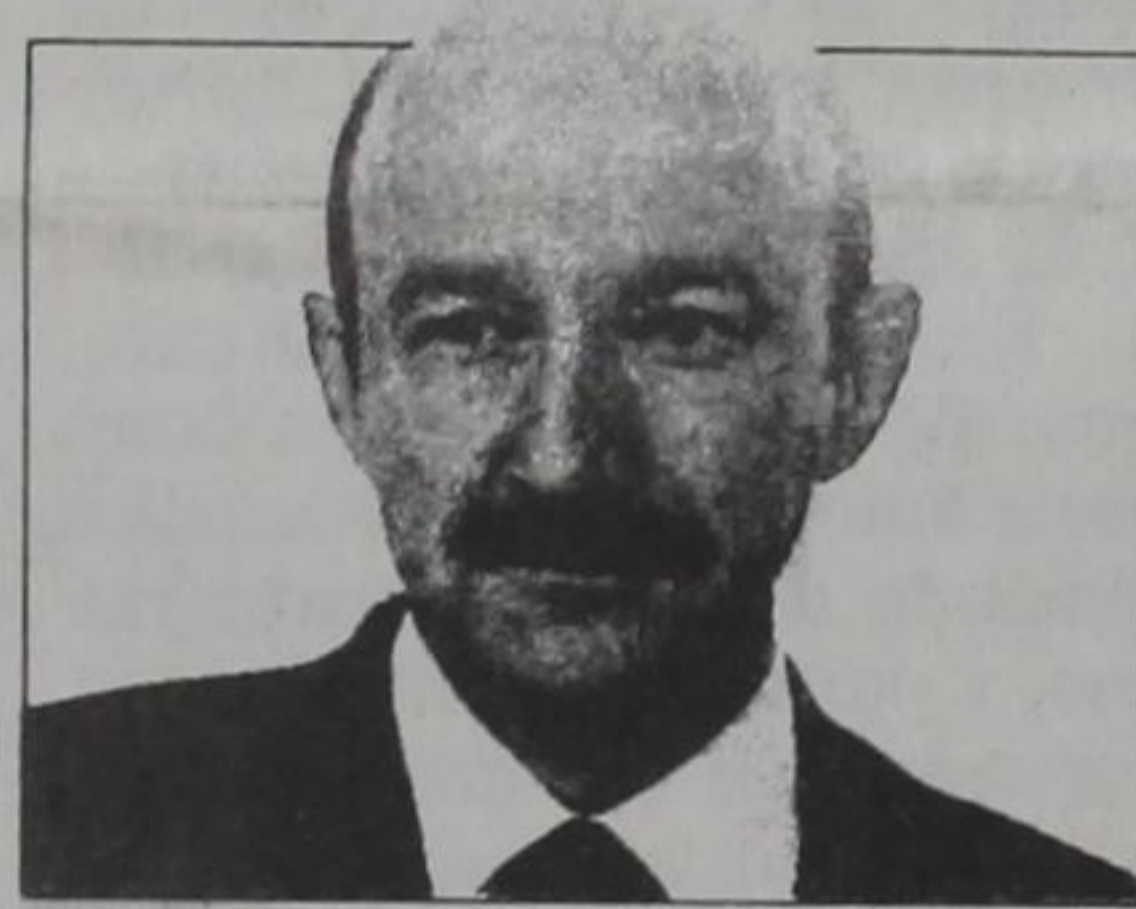
Mientras tanto, en Houston la juez Nancy Atlas, encargada del proceso a Mario Ruiz Massieu, prohibió el acceso de los abogados de la defensa y la fiscalía a las copias de información clave reunida antes del juicio, en un apresurado esfuerzo por detener filtraciones a la prensa como las que permitieron la publicación en México de documentos que vinculan a mafias del narcotráfico con al ex subprocurador, con el ex Presidente Carlos Salinas, su hermano Raúl y otros funcionarios.

Respecto a la evaluación conjunta, se informó que ésta contendrá, por primera vez, un reconocimiento formal de la Unión Americana sobre el impacto crucial del consumo para la proliferación de la plaga de las drogas, objetivo largamente buscado por México en el a menudo abrasivo debate sobre cooperación bilateral en el combate contra el narcotráfico.

"Este es un paso muy importante para nivelar el campo de juego en materia de cooperación antinarcoóticos", afirmó un funcionario mexicano en referencia a la contribución que hará esa evaluación para cambiar la dinámica de la cooperación bilateral anti-drogas, con lustros de confrontación y recriminaciones mutuas, a una nueva era de responsabilidades compartidas y formalmente reconocidas.

El documento, realizado con aportaciones de la Oficina de Política Nacional Antinarcoóticos y del Departamento de Estado, por el lado estadounidense, y el Instituto para el Combate a las Drogas (INCD) y la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, por México, constituirá el primer estudio formal bilateral donde ambas naciones podrán basar su respectivas políticas antinarcoóticos persiguiendo un objetivo común.

Más allá de su valor práctico, posiblemente la aportación más importante de dicha evaluación será el reconocimiento formal de Estados Unidos de que no sólo como país productor, sino como el más voraz consumidor de narcóticos en el



Carlos Salinas.

mundo, desempeña un papel central en la narcocrisis que afecta a México, Estados Unidos y a otras naciones del continente y el mundo.

El documento será dar a conocer en medio de nuevas revelaciones sobre la supuesta implicación de la familia Salinas de Gortari e incluso del eliminado candidato presidencial Luis Donald Colosio en actividades de cuando menos protección a narcotraficantes y mientras Washington se alista a iniciar el juicio de incautación de la fortuna de Mario Ruiz Massieu, ex subprocurador general de la República que, sospecha el gobierno, fue amasada con fondos provenientes de los cárteles de las drogas.

El documento también saldrá a la luz pública a tan sólo dos semanas de que el Presidente Bill Clinton emita las llamadas certificaciones sobre la campaña antidrogas de una veintena de países, entre los que se encuentra México, como nación productora y fuente de narcóticos hacia el mercado estadounidense.

En la medida en que la evaluación bilateral representa una importante victoria para México, también representa riesgos políticos para la administración Clinton, particularmente para el zar antidrogas, el general Barry McCaffrey, por el momento tan sensible en el que el estudio será hecho público, como por la posible interpretación que se le dé en el Congreso.

McCaffrey, quien presentará el documento en una conferencia de prensa acompañado de funcionarios mexicanos en el Centro de Prensa Extranjera de esta capital, se arriesga a que sectores extremistas en el Congreso, entre ellos el presidente del Comité de Relaciones Exteriores del Senado, Jesse Helms, interpreten la evaluación como una concesión inaceptable de parte de Washington a México, precisa-



mente en momentos en que los carteles de las drogas tienen en el vecino del sur una visibilidad y poder sin precedente.

La oficina de McCaffrey informó que se ha mantenido en contacto permanente con "legisladores clave" del Capitolio durante el desarrollo de la evaluación bilateral y, por lo tanto, confía en que recibirá el apoyo legislativo una vez hecho público. El documento no requerirá de acción parlamentaria, pero el apoyo político del Congreso será crucial para su viabilidad.

De acuerdo con fuentes bien enteradas, el documento es producto de intensas consultas bilaterales que incluyeron las últimas dos reuniones del Grupo de Contacto de Alto Nivel Antinarcoóticos y reuniones efectuadas aquí el mes pasado por el subsecretario de Relaciones Exteriores, Juan Rebolledo, el principal contribuyente del Gobierno mexicano al enfoque político y diplomático de la evaluación, según informaron las mismas fuentes.

Coincidentemente, el Departamento de Estado dijo desconocer si el gobierno mexicano había solicitado oficialmente a Washington información sobre la filtración de declaraciones de testigos de cargo en el proceso de incautación de nueve millones de dólares contra Mario Ruiz Massieu y que implican a la familia Salinas de Gortari, incluyendo al ex Presidente, en actividades de narcotráfico.

El vocero de la dependencia, Lynn Davies, señaló que no está al tanto de que las autoridades mexicanas hubieran presentado una solicitud sobre información de los pormenores de la filtración de documentos que están supuestamente sel-

Comentarios de Bidal

Por Bidal Agüero

LULAC members throughout the State are celebrating LULAC week and here in Lubbock, members are having receptions for various members of the Lubbock population and will top it all off



with a banquet to be held Saturday at the Four Points Sheraton starting at 6 pm. Featured speaker for Saturday will be Leo Quirino who is Economic Development Director for the Greater Dallas Chamber of Commerce.

Leo was formally from Lubbock, living here from 1968 to 1980 and worked both here and in Dallas for IBM and attended Texas Tech.

He and I go back a little and I can only tell you that he definitely is concerned about our community.

Leo told us in an interview today that he will focus on 3 areas during his speech: 1. Education 2. Economic Development and 3. and most important, the Family.

"As Latinos we know that the familia is the center of our life and we must examine what part of our conscience must be addressed in order to developed it to better serve our communities," said Quirino.

LULAC has throughout the years been a great service to our community and we commend them for their outstanding work and for their devotion toward a better education for our youth. We encourage everyone to attend.

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A Doctor's Death By A Clash of Cultures?

By Barbara Renaud Gonzalez

In the middle of news spinning through the United States and Mexico -- the early payment of the Mexican debt, the overdue consideration of dual nationality and the twists and turns of immigration reform -- one item was overlooked because it is at the center of it all.

It is the case -- high profile only in San Antonio, Texas, where it occurred -- of Dr. Eli Montesinos of Monterrey, Mexico, who died as a result of an altercation with a security guard, James A. Smith, at a Dillard's department store, on the prophetic first day of the year. At issue, apparently, was whether the doctor was entering the store before or after closing time. Matters escalated from there. Each side blames the other.

Mexicans have good reason not to trust anyone who reminds them of the police. But San Antonio is the kind of city that is more Mexican than gringo, the city that made Henry Cisneros a mayor.

In a foretelling of things to come, the Montesinos family is proceeding with a civil suit.

The doctor's widow has asked the Mexican government to intercede so that justice is served.

"Think about what you say, remember," my mother would admonish me every time we traveled from Texas to visit her hometown of Tampico, Mexico. My cousins there had maids they called criadas, the creatures who did all the housework.

Unlike me, my cousins went to private schools. My grandmother, who had fantasies about her wealth before the Mexican revolution took it all away, had very definite ideas about what class she belonged to.

I was nothing more than a pocha, my mother would scold, with norteamericano pretensions of democracy -- that everyone is created equal.

I don't know what happened in San Antonio on that first day of this year. But I have seen the kind of confrontations ignited by the U.S. experience of race and the Mexican experience of class that can escalate from words to violence.

Mexicans like to say that they are not racist like the americanos. After all, they out-

lawed slavery more than 40 years before the 13th Amendment and probably lost Texas for that same reason.

Mexicans are proud to be mestizos. Eighty percent of them have some formula of Spanish, Indian or African heritage. The melting pot is racial, but the minority of criollos -- European and Spanish whites -- dominate. The result is that more than 40 percent of Mexicans are poor, and the poorest of all are its 11 million Indians.

On this side of the border, my fellow North Americans believe that we are a society of equals where everyone can reside somewhere in the middle class. We are proud of our disdain for stuffy titles, aristocrats and the wanna-be snobism that is so important to Latin America. We have our Henry Cisneros, Colin Powell, Hillary and everyman's Ross Perot.

Our melting pot is cultural and the majority white culture has prevailed. This racial domination was simpler due to the proportionately smaller numbers of Indians, blacks and Latinos for much of U.S. history.

I am telling you how we see ourselves and each other. Dr. Montesinos and professionals like him are used to the deference accorded their status, proved by their ability to shop at what they consider a luxury store in the United States.

Smith and white men like him also come from a place where people who look like him rule. They were not raised for a time when Mexicans would resist or question any order that they choose to give.

In Dr. Montesinos' elite world, poverty is so common that people like him have learned to look right through it.

In the U.S. past, to men with names like Smith, a Mexican doctor is a Mexican first and therefore inferior.

Maybe Mexicans and Americans have more in common than we think. Class and race are the legacies we each have of conquest and slavery -- distinct, but with the power to affect us when we least expect it. No one is exempt. I dream of being more than both.

(Barbara Renaud Gonzalez, of Dallas, Texas, is a free-lance writer.)
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Sittin' Here Thinkin' Sequels

by Ira Cutler



"Is it just me," Arthur Bupkiss asked. "Or have you guys noticed that no one ever gets tried just once anymore?"

Arthur Bupkiss sat with the guys in their corner booth, coffee cups all over, the remains of eggs and cigarettes and toasty very much in evidence. Arthur was in a philosophical mood and, as the intellectual leader of this diner gang, he was holding forth.

"Of course, I thought about it because of OJ and all these trials and re-trials that keep happening. Simpson I and II, Menendez II and the two trials of the cops that beat up Rodney King. Then I thought that maybe this was just a California thing -- you know how they are out there -- but it isn't. In New York they just tried Bernard Goetz again, years after he shot those guys on the subway. And now this black kid they say killed the Hassid in Crown Heights is being tried again, even though he was acquitted once."

"I always thought they could only try you once," Vinnie said. "I've even seen movies where the whole story is that they can only try you once and, you know, the guy gets away with it, but then there is this plot twist and justice wins out somehow, anyway."

"Yeah, I saw that one," Larry said. "Personally, I think it all comes from the movies. You know, like when they get a movie that is a hit they make sequels, like Rocky V and Friday the 13th XXV and like that. They keep trying these guys for the ratings."

"Look, the rule was always that if a jury lets you go, it's over," Arthur said. "Now they get to try guys at least twice. I say there is something wrong when the prosecutors can keep bringing you to court until they get their case together and can find a jury that will go along with them. It's almost like the first trial is just a rehearsal."

"With OJ," Larry said, "I bet there would have been a third case, been a federal civil rights case -- you know, accusing him of depriving Nicole and Ron Goldman of their civil right to be alive -- if he had won the civil case. That Janet Reno would probably love to nail OJ."

"This is like if it was football and they suddenly gave you five downs or baseball and all they gave you is two outs," Vinnie said, indignantly. "They are changing the rules here!"

"Well, you have to understand that there are criminal trials and civil trials and federal civil rights trials and they are all different, Arthur," Mel said.

"I know that, Mel," Arthur said, frustrated. "But that's not my point."

"And, wait," Mel said. "Remember that this is just a Big Trial thing. Ninety nine percent of these guys get no trials at all. Their lawyer, who never met them, says to the prosecutor, who only glanced at the file, that he will plead guilty for a five year rap or ten years or whatever and the judge signs it and it is over. Bingo, five minutes, no trial, no jury, no television."

"Sure," Larry said. "You know how many cases they handle a year down there in New York? Millions, probably. They can't all have trials or we'd all be on the juries all the time. Nothing else would ever get done."

"I think all of those guys were guilty the first time anyway, except maybe OJ and Bernie Goetz," Vinnie said, changing sides again. "If a guy is guilty, they can try em a hundred times, for all I care."

"Did they get the Menendez guys the second time?" Mel asked. "I forget."

"I think they got at least one of them," Larry said. "But they only got some of the cops that did the Rodney King beating. Some of the other cops walked. Man, you remember that video?"

"Now Ron Goldman's father says OJ can keep the money if he confesses," Arthur said. "You see that?"

"It would be something if he confessed," Vinnie said. "You know, just in order to save the money that he probably doesn't have anyway? But could they try him again and use it against him?"

"Beats me," Arthur said. "They'll probably try him in municipal traffic court next time, for the slow speed chase."

"Well, I think the best one," Mel said. "Is that now they found DNA evidence that makes it look like Sam Sheppard -- you know, the doctor they based 'The Fugitive' on? -- was innocent after all. They convicted him in 1954, and it was as big a trial as OJ. Then they acquitted him in 1996 and now even he is probably going to get another trial, even though he has been dead since 1970."

"Hey," Arthur said. "Here's another one: is it just me or do you guys get the feeling that things never seem to end anymore?"

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

Gang Leader Sentenced to Life

By LARRY NEUMEISTER

NEW YORK - A leader of the Latin Kings gang who was convicted of ordering the killing of three gang members from his prison cell has been sentenced to life in prison in solitary confinement.

U.S. District Judge John S. Martin said he does not support the death penalty but if he could have, he would have sentenced Luis Felipe to death "as the only foolproof means of preventing" him from ordering more.

"This defendant has absolutely no regard for human life and he obviously enjoys a god-like role in determining who should live and die," Martin said as he sentenced him Friday.

Felipe, 34, was sentenced to life in prison plus 45 years for his role in the murder and attempted murder of three people. Federal sentencing guidelines do not allow for capital punishment in conspiracy cases.

The judge said Felipe, also known as "King Blood," should be barred from using the telephone, having contact with other inmates and receiving visitors other than relatives who get court approval, restrictions usually made by the U.S. Bureau of Prisons.

Felipe said the isolation would kill him "day by day."

"Why don't you give him a gun and let him shoot himself. He's being tortured," said Felipe's lawyer, Lawrence Feitel. He said he would appeal the restrictions.

During sentencing, the judge said Felipe's "murderous conduct" forfeited any right to human contact. He said trial evidence proved Felipe used prison visits and letters to order three gang members to execute three others, including William Cartegena, a former high-ranking member of the gang.

Witnesses testified that gang members directed by Felipe took Cartegena to an abandoned Bronx apartment and strangled him, cutting off his head, his hands and his gang tattoo before setting his body on fire in a bathtub.

The judge said he could find no other case where an inmate so successfully used prison privileges to kill.

The Latin Kings were formed in the 1940s as a non-profit organization supporting Hispanic heritage by inmates in Chicago jails.

The Cuban-born Felipe created the New York-chapter from his upstate prison cell in 1986 and it had grown to about 2,000 members before prosecutors capped a two-year probe by charging about 50 members or their associates.

La Muerte De Un Medico ¿Por Un Choque De Culturas?

"Piensa sobre lo que digas, recuerda," me amonestaba mi madre cada vez que viajábamos desde Texas para visitar su ciudad natal de Tampico, en México. Mis primos de allá tenían sirvientas a quienes llamaban "criadas," las criaturas que hacían todo el trabajo de la casa.

A diferencia de mí, mis primos iban a escuelas privadas. Mi abuela, que tenía fantasías de su riqueza antes de que la revolución mexicana se la quitara toda, albergaba ideas muy definidas acerca de la clase a que pertenecía.

Yo no era más que una "pocha," regañaba mi madre, con pretensiones norteamericanas de democracia -- de que todos somos creados iguales.

No sé lo que sucedió en San Antonio aquel primer día del año. Pero he visto la clase de enfrentamientos encendidos por la experiencia racial estadounidense y la experiencia mexicana de clase que puede aumentar de las palabras a la violencia.

A los mexicanos les gusta decir que no son racistas como los americanos. Después de todo, ellos prohibieron la esclavitud más de 40 años antes de la 13ª Enmienda, y probablemente perdieron a Texas por esa misma razón.

Los mexicanos se enorgullecen de ser mestizos. El

ochenta por ciento tiene alguna fórmula de herencia española, indígena o africana. La mezcla nacional es racial, pero la minoría de "criollos" -- blancos europeos y españoles -- domina. El resultado es que más del 40% de los mexicanos son pobres, y los más pobres de todos son sus 11 millones de indígenas.

De este lado de la frontera, mis compatriotas norteamericanos creen que somos una sociedad de iguales, donde todos pueden residir en alguna parte de la clase media. Nos enorgullecemos de nuestro desdén por los títulos pomposos, los aristócratas y el elitismo de los que pretenden ser algo que no son, que son tan importantes para la América Latina. Tenemos a nuestros Henry Cisneros, Colin Powell, Hillary y el Ross Perot de todo el mundo.

Nuestra mezcla nacional es cultural y la cultura blanca mayoritaria ha prevalecido. Este dominio racial se debió sencillamente a la cantidad proporcionalmente menor de indígenas, negros y latinos durante gran parte de la historia de los Estados Unidos.

Les hablo sobre cómo nos vemos a nosotros mismos y unos a otros. El Dr. Montesinos y los profesionales como él están acostumbrados a la deferencia que se rinde a su con-

dición, evidenciada por su capacidad de ir de compras en lo que ellos consideran una tienda de lujo en los Estados Unidos.

James A. Smith y los hombres blancos como él vienen también de un lugar donde rige la gente que luce como él. Ellos no fueron criados para una época en que los mexicanos resistirían o pondrían en tela de juicio cualquier orden que ellos decidieran dar.

En el mundo de los grupos selectos del Dr. Montesinos, la pobreza es tan común que las personas como él han aprendido a mirar directamente a través de ella.

En el pasado estadounidense de los hombres con nombres como Smith, un médico mexicano es primero un mexicano, y por lo tanto inferior.

Puede que los mexicanos y los estadounidenses tengan más en común que lo que creemos. La clase y la raza son los legados que tenemos cada uno de nosotros de la conquista y la esclavitud -- distintos, pero con el poder de afectarnos cuando menos lo esperamos. Nadie está exento. Sueño con ser algo más que ambos.

(Barbara Renaud Gonzalez, de Dallas, Texas, es una escritora por cuenta propia.)

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Federal Death Penalty At Odds With Puerto Rico's Constitution And Public Sentiment

By Lance Oliver

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico -- Seventy years after Puerto Rico's last execution, a defendant here may face the death penalty for crimes he is accused of -- despite the fact that capital punishment is banned by the Puerto Rico Constitution.

If Ian Rosario Montanez is executed, it will be the work of the federal government, not local authorities. U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno recently gave federal prosecutors in Puerto Rico the go-ahead to seek the death penalty for Rosario, one of five young men accused of a bank robbery that left a security guard dead and another employee wounded in December 1995.

Before the trial has even begun, the mere possibility of a Puerto Rican prisoner being sentenced to death has upset many people on the island. Unlike the situation in the mainland states, public opinion in Puerto Rico is predominantly against capital punishment.

So while a state official

would be unlikely to challenge the federal government's right to execute a prisoner, some Puerto Rican officials see Reno's decision as an affront to local laws and public sentiment.

"The (Puerto Rico) Constitution is not just the law," says Sen. Eudaldo Baez Galib. "It is the spirit and the morality of the community."

Ignoring the Puerto Rico Constitution's ban on capital punishment would be immoral, according to Fermin Arraiza, president of the local bar association. "This is the will of Puerto Rico."

Debate over the issue has inevitably taken on political overtones. Statehooders do not question the federal government's right to prosecute and condemn prisoners in Puerto Rico, but pro-commonwealth activists such as Baez, who want Puerto Rico and the United States to be viewed as equal partners, see the Justice Department's decision as an infringement.

Rosario, the suspect at the

center of the controversy, is accused of robbing a Banco Popular branch at Plaza Carolina, one of the island's biggest shopping malls, with three other men and one juvenile. A security guard at the bank was shot in the head and killed and another employee was injured. The robbery set off a panic in the busy mall, and others were injured as they fled the scene of the shooting.

Bank robbery resulting in death was one of 40 federal crimes made punishable by death in an anti-crime bill passed by Congress and signed by President Clinton in 1994. The bill was better known for applying the death penalty to carjacking involving a death and drug-related contract killings.

In addition to Rosario, eight others now awaiting trial, including the three of his alleged accomplices who were adults when the robbery occurred, could face the possibility of the death penalty for the federal crimes they are

charged with.

The most sensational case involves the carjacking-murder of a young mother who was taking her infant to the pediatrician when she disappeared. The baby was left on a doorstep and the woman's body was found days later, decapitated. Four people were charged in the gruesome killing.

Even if one or more of these defendants is eventually convicted and sentenced to death, executions will still not return to Puerto Rico. The sentence would have to be carried out in a state where executions are legal and the means -- electric chair, gas chamber or other -- are available.

Still, if a Puerto Rican prisoner is put to death someday at some distant site, many on the island will feel that the local constitution was violated, at least in spirit if not in letter.

(Lance Oliver, of Guaynabo, Puerto Rico, is a free-lance writer.)
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Sports Deportes Sports Deportes

Ex-Player Sues Texas Tech

Belle: I Never Bet On Baseball

By RICK GANO SARASOTA, Fla. - Albert Belle didn't talk much after reporting to the Chicago White Sox on Wednesday. He did, however, issue a written statement saying he didn't gamble on his own sport.

"I want to make one thing clear: I have never bet on baseball," Belle's statement



Hot commodity: Belle (left), with Frank Thomas, discovered his true market value.

said, adding these will his last comments on the subject.

"I was never asked during the deposition if I bet on baseball," Belle said. "Each year, major league baseball officials speak to all of the major league teams and emphasize that betting on baseball is forbidden by major league baseball's rules. I have always faithfully adhered to those rules."

Belle, who until now had spent his entire big league career with Cleveland, chatted amiably with reporters about golf and shook hands by his locker. He promised to answer baseball-related questions on Thursday.

Belle, the game's highest-paid player after agreeing to a \$55 million, five-year deal, said during a deposition that he lost as much as \$40,000 gambling on sports other than baseball.

Major league baseball is investigating and acting commissioner Bud Selig is awaiting

ing a report from Kevin Hallinan, the sport's security head.

Gambling on baseball is against major league rules, punishable by a one-year suspension. A player who bets on games involving his own team is subject to a lifetime ban.

The outfielder, whose outbursts have often overshadowed his performances on the field, is being sued by a teenager over a 1995 Halloween confrontation in the Cleveland area.

The teen-ager's guardian claims Belle injured the boy while chasing him in his truck on Oct. 31, 1995. The suit seeks \$300,000 in damages.

Belle, who hit 98 home runs the last two years with the Indians, became the only major league player to have 50 homers and 50 doubles in a season when he led Cleveland to the World Series in 1995.

But he has been suspended five times in six years for various outbursts, including charging the mound, throwing a ball at a fan and berating a reporter.

"I believe Albert Belle to be a good man," White Sox manager Terry Bevington said. "I don't listen to what other people say or what they don't say."

Bevington brushed off the gambling.

"I've never known much about it," he said. "I have never had a big concern about it and I don't have one now."

Belle's former Indians teammate Tony Pena, who's also in the White Sox camp, said the outfielder is misunderstood.

"He's smart. People think he's stupid but he's not," Pena said. "I think he's a great human being."

Belle said he released the statement so he could ensure a fresh start with the White Sox, clear up what he called inaccurate reports and not be a distraction with his new team.

The full squad is due in camp Thursday.

By MARK BABINECK LUBBOCK, Texas - Texas Tech coaches used defensive lineman Stephen Gaines for his playing ability, then discarded him once he lost his senior season to academic ineligibility, the player contends in a federal lawsuit.

Gaines, who played for the Red Raiders in the 1990, 1992 and 1993 seasons, sued the school, two coaches and a former counselor Tuesday on numerous counts, including racketeering, fraud, forgery and negligence.

The suit also contends Tech breached fiduciary duty to

Gaines, meaning that the school took on a measure of responsibility for his welfare with promises of trust made while he was a minor.

The lawsuit did not detail specific damages, although it said they are "believed to be in excess" of \$1.25 million, plus court costs and possible punitive damages.

"Stephen clearly, like any student at the age of 17 years, had no clear understanding what it is to make a commitment when everything in his whole life was promised by (Tech coach) Spike Dykes and promised by these recruiters,"



Spike Dykes attorney Christopher A. Kalis said Wednesday

Dykes declined to comment, citing NCAA rules prohibiting school officials from discussing matters under investigation. The NCAA has been looking into possible violations in the men's basketball and football programs for nearly a year.

Tech general counsel Pat Campbell and defendant Ronn Reeger, a former Tech academic counselor, did not return phone calls to The Associated Press on Wednesday.

The AP was unable to reach fellow defendant Rhudy Maskew, an assistant coach.

Gaines played five games in his freshman season in 1990, then was sidelined a year by academic problems. The lawsuit alleges that Tech coaches circumvented NCAA rules while getting him reinstated.

Outside of his "B" semester, the lawsuit reveals he was a failing student in most of his other Tech courses.

Over the past year, Gaines has been the focus of several Houston Chronicle stories in which he accused Tech and its coaches of forging documents, providing him test answers and arranging for classes to ease his way through school.

The lawsuit includes many of the same accusations, including:

-Tech officials wired money to Gaines while he attended Navarro College.

-Reeger set Gaines up with a semester's workload of four physical education classes taught by a "friendly" professor. Gaines made B's in the classes, even though he says he attended five times and took no tests.

-Maskew enrolled Gaines in a correspondence course at Southeastern College of the Assemblies of God in Lakeland, Fla., by forging Gaines' signature. Reeger and Maskew then provided him answers to the "Old Testament Survey" course.

While enrolled at South Plains College in June 1994 in an attempt to gain eligibility for a final year of football, Gaines said he tore ligaments in his right knee. The lawsuit contends Tech trainers misdiagnosed the injury as a sprain.

Gaines also seeks damages related to his knee injury.

Last week, members of Tech's Faculty Senate discussed alleged attendance problems by football players. The Chronicle then reported Sunday that unidentified sources close to star tailback Byron Hanspard said he and others scored a 0.00 grade point average last semester.

A junior, Hanspard left Tech for the NFL after the Red Raiders' appearance in the Alamo Bowl.

USA Boxing Knocks Norton Jr. Bid

By JAIME ARON DALLAS

USA Boxing on Tuesday knocked out Ken Norton Jr.'s bid to enter a Golden Gloves tournament, saying it would set a bad precedent to allow a professional football player to compete in the amateur event.

Federation rules say pros from any sport cannot fight, but the San Francisco 49ers linebacker and son of former heavyweight champion Ken Norton Sr. hoped an exception would be made for him.

His appeal was based on the fact he was entering a novice division of this week's Dallas tournament that does not advance to the state tournament.

"If you bend the rules for one guy, where do we stop?" USA Boxing spokesman Steve Ross said. "Personally, I think we get in dangerous territory if he would be let into this tournament."

Ross said the decision was made upon the recommendation of its corporate counsel, C.

Brian Renfro.

The USA Boxing rule restricting participation of professional athletes is clear:

"Any boxer who receives compensation to compete or participate in any professional competition or exhibition in any sport is considered a professional and has rendered himself/herself ineligible to participate as an amateur."

Dallas tournament officials had not been informed of the ruling and did not comment. Messages left for Norton's attorney also were not returned.

The 6-foot-2, 245-pound Norton signed up Sunday for the super heavyweight novice division.

Norton - at 30 one of the oldest of the tournament's 350-plus contestants - was among four entrants in his class. He was to have fought a first-round bout Thursday or Friday, with the finals being Saturday night.

Rickey Henderson May Be Traded

PEORIA, Ariz. - When, or if, Rickey Henderson shows up for the San Diego Padres' first full-squad workout Thursday, an already delicate situation figures to be reach its sternest test.

Henderson, the 38-year-old left fielder, enter camps as trade bait because the Padres have committed themselves to Greg Vaughn with a \$15 million, three-year contract.

"He's going to be judged a lot on how he handles this situation," Padres general manager Kevin Towers said. "He was just great to be around last year, and hopefully he won't change things because of this delicate situation. The last thing we want is for clubs to see there's a potential

problem."

Towers had hoped to meet Henderson for dinner on Tuesday night, but Henderson called and said he wasn't going to be flying into Phoenix, where he lives now, until late that night.

"He was apologetic," Towers said. "He just had some business to take care of."

Henderson, who developed a reputation for showing up late to camps when he was with Oakland, showed up on time last year, his first with the Padres.

Although Henderson hit a career-low .241 for the Padres in '96, he had a .410 on-base percentage and scored 110 runs.

Towers said there has been

interest from other teams in Henderson, baseball's career steals leader. But Towers doesn't think a trade will happen until well into the exhibition season, because other clubs will want to explore their own options first.

"We're probably looking at the middle of March before something happens," Towers said.

Henderson had not reported to camp as of late Wednesday afternoon, but he certainly wasn't the only one. Others included second basemen Jody Reed and Quilvio Veras.

Manager Bruce Bochy said it didn't matter to him if he saw them at camp Wednesday, so long as they are at a workout Thursday morning.

Groups Mull Olympic Dispute

By LARRY SIDONS PHILADELPHIA - The U.S. Olympic Committee and the federation that controls amateur boxing in America moved

Friday to resolve a dispute over repayment of more than \$3 million in Olympic grants.

The USOC's executive committee told executive director Dick Schultz to resolve the differences with USA Boxing, which wants a drastic cut in the amount of money to be repaid.

"The timetable is up to boxing," Schultz said. "We

want to look at this in a way that allows us to resolve it quickly and also allow boxing to meet its goals."

Bill Hybl, the USOC's president, said there was "reason for optimism" that a compromise could be reached. Schultz said that could include a time-payment scheduled "so the sport can be within its cash flow."

The USOC audit reportedly found a pattern of double billing and charging sponsors for the same expense.

continued on page 4

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A LITTLE CHISME

by Little Judy

Yes, kids, I'm sitting up here at 30,000 feet on my way out west to sunny Los Angeles for the annual convention held this year at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel. I'm looking forward to a week of showcases by new and established artists, seeing some old friends, making some new ones, hanging out with the LA writing staff, and trolling for bochinche (I brought my Cyndi Adams wig!) Luis, Gaye Ann, Marcela, NelsonJose and I will all be there and I promise to write in every day with news. Check back here for a schedule of live chats, which we will try to do on America On-Line at the Hispanic On-Line channel (we'll keep you posted).

Tres Equis Goes Hollywood

Got a chance to hang out with the fellas, Tres Equis, at Les Poulets last week. Singer/songwriter/remix whiz Kenny Reyes told me that the group is involved in two film projects. The first is "Latin Lingo" produced by vision Scope Productions based on a story by Calixto Chinchilla and John R. Peralta. The comedy deals with

(quoting from the press release) "... the exploits of Giovanni Nelson Hernandez (played by John R. Peralta), a self-centered, egotistical, Latino teen who makes a name for himself as a notorious womanizer..." (gee, I think I dated him ...)

Along with Tres Equis, there will be cameo appearances by Kinito Mendez, La Banda Gorda, and the ever-huggable James "Da Barba" from DLG.

The second film project that Tres Equis is involved in is called "MSR" which is produced by Joseph Medina ("Nueba Yol"), with Stewart Young as executive producer. Also appearing in the movie are Proyecto Uno, Sandy y Papo and Illegales. This film is due out in the early fall.

The group is also working on an English release of their most recent album "La Jungla Latina", an excellent contemporary mix of style and sound (which is, when one considers it, what New York is all about.) In addition, Kenny worked on the remixes for Tito Nieves' next release (in English) titled "Then and Now".



Jerry Rivera Sports New Look in NY Appearance

I've gotten lots o' mail from fans out there (yup, particularly you young ladies) asking me to write more about Jerry, so here's a start! El Bebe de la Salsa performed last Saturday night in front of a delighted crowd (which, we hear, included actress Rosie Perez). Jerry's been given somewhat of a makeover, with longer hair and funkier clothes, to go along with the funkier arrangements heard on his Grammy-nominated album, "Fresco". After the Grammys (February 26th), Jerry is set to go on tour throughout Latin America, including Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, and Ecuador.



Miguel Bose Releases First Single from Laberinto II

The new single is called "Esta Mundo Va" (maybe you've caught the video on Telehit) and, as always, the music is lush and interesting. The new album is actually an enhanced version of "Laberinto" with three new songs and a different cover. Miguel discusses the project in [the interview](#) I had with him

last fall.

New Releases: Brenda K. Starr & Yorman d'Leon

How fabulous is this? Two new CDs, with two "new" artists that I love! I am sure you are already familiar with Brenda K. Starr from her freestyle/dance days, where she was best known for the Grammy-nominated "Still Believe". Well she's back with an excellent salsa album called "Te Sigo Esperando" available on the "Parcha" label. As producer Humberto Ramirez told me in his [interview](#) last month, he had free reign in the studio and the result is danceable, swinging salsa sung by a female singer who can sing, baby! Brenda is the first of the new female singers to really challenge La Princesa (remember that there are others waiting in the wings, so stay tuned for an exciting and interesting year courtesy of The Ladies).

Meanwhile, there's another youngster joining the ranks of newcomers Michael Stuart and Luis Damon. His name is Yorman d'Leon and he's only a newcomer as a soloist. C'mon, doesn't that name sound a little familiar? Yup, it's Oscar's kid and he's been "working in the family business" as it were for quite some time now. If you've seen Oscar perform...and if you haven't you oughta...Yorman sings coro, plays percussion, and does that goofy little dance where he moves his head like a snake (it's much more appealing than my description may conjure up.) Well, he's just released his debut album on the RMM label called "Camino Hacia El Futuro" and it's produced by Ricky Gonzalez, who's been doing fine work as both producer and arranger (among his credits: Danny Rojo, Gilberto Santa Rosa, Ray Sepulveda). Arranging chores are performed by Ricky, Cuto Soto, and Ramon Sanchez. The songs are by a variety of writers including Chein Garcia-Alonso, Danny Rojo, Ricardo Arjona (two covers of this rock/pop songwriter's work), and Aris Martinez. It's fresh and it swings. Love it! Until next time, Besos!

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Salma Hayek Califica Como Nuevo Sex Symbol

Roma— El suplemento semanal "Donna" (mujer), del periódico italiano "La Repubblica", en su edición de ayer afirmó que la actriz mexicana Salma Hayek es el nuevo símbolo-sexi de Hollywood.

Señaló que Hayek "ha entrado en aquella minúscula lista de mujeres por las cuales no se pensaría dos veces para traicionar a la esposa o a la amante" y es por ello que tituló su nota "Bella para traicionar".

La autora del artículo, Silvia Bizio escribió que "una mujer así debería ser ilegal", al reproducir un comentario de un periodista que asistió a una rueda de prensa donde la actriz mexicana presentó su nueva película "Fools Rush".

Y lo más agradable es que salió bien librada en su primer semana de exhibición en los cines al ocupar el quinto lugar en taquilla con 10 millones recabados, muy por encima de la producción de Disney "The Darn Cat", estrenada también el viernes pasados y que tan sólo logró 6.5 millones de dólares.

El gran atractivo de Salma, no es sólo su inigualable bel-

leza sino también su gran simpatía, la misma que, en esta nueva película, explica

porqué el protagonista masculino deja todo por ella, que hace el papel de Isabel, agregó la nota.

Publicó que con sólo 15 años Salma se trasladó de Coahuila, Veracruz, México, donde nació para estudiar actuación, y que en pocos años se ha transformado en una auténtica estrella.

Enfatizó por otra parte que "Salma Hayek, la primera latina que se ha transformado en estrella de Hollywood desde Dolores del Río, ha demostrado ser una actriz capaz de transmitir muchísimo más que una simple carga erótica en sus películas".

Entrevistada por este suplemento Salma dijo que no piensa haber cambiado mucho por vivir en Estados Unidos, "sigo siendo supersticiosa. Cuando tengo un día importante, por ejemplo, pongo mucho cuidado para no levantarme de la cama con el pie izquierdo".

A la pregunta de si su padre aceptaría que se casara

con un estadounidense, la actriz mexicana señaló "sería feliz con que me casara, punto y basta" porque me quieren ver casada y con hijos. "Mis padres tienen la obsesión de un nieto", dijo.

Salma sin embargo, no se siente lista para el matrimonio, "me casaré hasta que encuentre el marido perfecto", dijo y agregó que sabe que esto no es fácil porque "soy muy independiente y es demasiado fácil liberarse de mí".

Comentó que desde niña soñaba con ser actriz, "desde que era muy pequeña iba al único cine de mi ciudad, que se caía a pedazos, con un calor insostenible y con ratones que corrían entre los pies".

Indicó que espera que su éxito en Hollywood contribuya a cambiar las cosas para los actores latinos y que está muy nerviosa por su nueva película "porque pienso que podrá demostrar que el público está listo para aceptar a actrices como yo".

"Es una gran oportunidad sobre todo por el tema de la película, la idea de estar verdaderamente unidos, como en una comunidad".

Ali Movie Awesome, Stylized

By TED ANTHONY

NEW YORK - Take two of the most fearsome boxers of the 1970s - of all time, really - and plunk them down in Zaire to marinate. Add Don King, George Plimpton and Norman Mailer. Now throw in James Brown, Zairian President Mobutu Sese Seko and an African cast of hundreds.

The result, awesome in the true sense of the word and more than two decades in the making, is "When We Were Kings," a stylized documentary about the Muhammad Ali-George Foreman "Rumble in the Jungle" in 1974.

It was well worth the wait. Leon Gast's film - nominated for an Academy Award - is, like most superior movies about sports, not about sports at all. Rather, it is a telling glimpse not only into the mentality of boxers but into the nexus of music, culture and attitude that formed the relationship between Africa and the U.S. Afrocentric movement of the 1970s.

Gast, who went to Zaire to document the event billed as the "Afro-American Woodstock," ran into problems when the fight was delayed for six weeks after Foreman cut his eye. But he stayed with it - and with Ali in particular - and in the process recorded uncensored "off" moments that made for a great film.

The scenes of Ali lend even more weight today to something most knew in the 1960s and 1970s: that he was far more than an athlete. He was an informed, principled man whose caricatured bombast both hid and accentuated a deep commitment to racial, religious and political justice.



Political turmoil, lawsuits and other production obstacles kept Gast's 250 hours of footage from reaching the screen. But he and his producer, David Sonnenberg, finally hooked up with director Taylor Hackford, who collaborated with Gast during the formidable editing process.

Though the training scenes are engrossing and the boxing scenes thrilling, perhaps some of the film's best moments come during Ali's frequent interactions with Zairians. They worship him, and he plays to the crowd, leading it in joyous cheers of "Ali bomaye!" ("Kill him, Ali!"). Everyone has a good time.

One of the more intriguing aspects of the film is the very different persona George Foreman offered. Now a smiling, rather rotund, chip-scarfing guy quite able to poke fun at himself, Foreman in 1974 was a lean, intimidating, remote man who many thought would beat Ali to a pulp.

Ali comes through as only Ali can: A fierce man who is good-humored at heart and who - unlike most of today's trash-talkers - backs up what he says. It's wonderful to see him in his late prime again; he is irrepensible, refreshing and vital even in an era when people already were dismissing him as a has-been.

From the vantage point of 1997, Ali - with his rhyming and in-your-face posturing - clearly takes his place in the direct ancestry of rap. He was, and remains, inimitable, and we'll leave you with his best line:

"You think the world was surprised when Nixon resigned? Wait until you see me kick Foreman's behind."

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Se proyecta que continúe el crecimiento de bancos hispanos

Por Melita Garza y John Schmeltzer

Los bancos hispanos son casi el doble del tamaño de sus rivales que no son propiedad de blancos, según las estadísticas más recientes de la Junta de la Reserva Federal.

Desde 1989, los activos de los bancos de propiedad hispana en los Estados Unidos han aumentado un 45 percent, hasta \$22,400 millones desde \$15,400 millones. Estos administran más de 200 sucursales en todo el país y emplean a más de 12,000 personas.

En comparación, los bancos propiedad de asiático-americanos han crecido un 130% hasta \$12,900 millones de activos, desde \$5,500 millones en 1989, mientras los de propiedad afro-americana han aumentado sólo ligeramente, hasta \$3,700 millones desde \$2,800 millones.

Los bancos hispanos por lo general son mayores que sus competidores propiedad de personas no blancas. Aunque los bancos hispanos y asiático-americanos administran cada uno 190 sucursales, los bancos hispanos emplean a más del doble del personal -- 11,921 comparado con 5,634. Los bancos afro-americanos administran 89 sucursales y emplean a 2,349 personas.

"Realmente creo que los bancos hispanos van a despejar," dice William Cunningham, presidente de Creative Investment Research, una firma con sede en Washington que observa los bancos propiedad de personas minoritarias. "Hay razones para ir a un banco hispano que no existen en algunos de los otros grupos

étnicos. Hablan el español, y eso allana el camino."

Esa es la razón de que BanPonce Corp., con sede en Puerto Rico, vea que su futuro está en los estados continentales. BanPonce, que ya es el mayor banco de propiedad hispana de Puerto Rico, y la empresa matriz del Banco Popular de Puerto Rico, ahora desea llegar a ser el mayor banco de propiedad hispana en el continente.

Hugh McColl, presidente y funcionario ejecutivo principal de NationsBank Corp., con sede en Charlotte, Carolina del Norte, ha dicho que él quiere ser el primer banco de costa a costa en el país.

El Banco Popular, sin embargo, ya lo es. Tiene sucursales en Nueva York, Nueva Jersey, Chicago y California. Y ha lanzado una campaña de expansión agresiva, encaminada a servir a la cada vez mayor población hispana de la nación, que ahora asciende a más de 32 millones de personas, incluyendo a 3,800,000 en el Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico.

"Vamos a ser el mayor banco hispano," dice Jorge A. Junquera, vice-presidente ejecutivo principal del Banco Popular, que ya ocupa el cuadrágésimo quinto lugar entre los bancos de la nación, con activos de \$16,700 millones.

Descartó la pretensión de ser un banco anglo-americano en Chicago al cambiar el nombre de un banco que poseía allí, Pioneer Bank, a Banco Popular de Illinois y al adquirir el Seminole National Bank de Orlando, Florida. Y está negociando para adquirir otro banco en Texas.

También está preparándose para ofrecer a sus clientes una

tarjeta Mastercard, y para los clientes sin historial de crédito, ofrecerá una tarjeta asegurada, lo cual podría ser una ventaja en una comunidad donde la mayoría de las personas todavía compra en efectivo. Una tarjeta asegurada está enlazada con un depósito de seguridad o una cuenta de ahorros en el banco.

La oportunidad del Banco Popular no podría ser mejor.

Ernest J. Ojeda, propietario de Tupals Management Co., que tiene cuatro franquicias de restaurantes McDonalds en Chicago, pasó años tratando de entrar en este mercado antes de tener éxito.

El grupo de inversionistas que él encabeza fué derrotado en las licitaciones reiteradamente por otros bancos cuando trató de comprar un banco existente. Por último, optó por abrir un banco nuevo, Pan-American Bank, que está situado en las vecindades méxico-americanas vibrantes de Pilsen y Little Village, de Chicago. Los reglamentadores estatales y federales ayudaron a allanar el camino.

Pero aunque el mercado hispano está creciendo en población e ingresos, la competencia ya es intensa.

Los competidores fluctúan desde las tiendas que cambian cheques y también envían dinero electrónicamente a los parientes de México o la América Central, hasta las minúsculas organizaciones de ahorros y préstamos que sobrevivieron a la crisis de esos negocios en el decenio de 1980, hasta los grandes bancos que tratan de cumplir con los reglamentos federales que les exigen hacer negocios en las vecindades de las ciudades interiores.

Pero S. Michael Polenski, presidente del Banco Popular, Illinois, dice que aún los bancos hispanos enfrentan una difícil campaña de enseñanza con los posibles clientes hispanos.

Muchos inmigrantes mexicanos no han trabajado con bancos anteriormente, mientras que en algunos países de las Américas Central y del Sur se ve a los bancos con una sospecha ligeramente menor que al gobierno, dice él.

Cunningham dice que eso, no obstante, no debería desacelerar marcadamente el crecimiento de los bancos propiedad de hispanos: "Una vez que salgan e impulsen la ventaja que tienen, creo que todo el mundo se sorprenderá de la reacción que obtendrán."

(Melita Garza y John Schmeltzer informan sobre asuntos étnicos y finanzas en el "Chicago Tribune.")

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Pope's Postponed Cuba Trip Doesn't Dampen Hopes

By YARA I. ALMA-BONILLA

The Cuban-American community's enthusiasm for Pope John Paul II's visit to Cuba hasn't wavered in spite of the trip's postponement to January 1998.

"Our expectations have not diminished at all," Jose Cardenas, Washington director of the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF), has assured Hispanic Link.

The image of Fidel Castro standing next to the head of the Roman Catholic Church last November following a 35-minute papal audience inspired deep pain and anger inside the Cuban-American community.

Still, the community has profound confidence in the Pope, according to various Cuban-American leaders and individuals. They trust the impact of the Holy Father's message of faith on the people living under Castro's regime. Many hope the Pope's visit will provide the last push to get Castro out.

Castro wanted to use the papal visit -- initially expected this year -- as a token that stood for his intent to reform, "to show that he's in the process of making some change," Cuban-American Congressman Robert Menendez, D-N.J., says. But, "Castro would like the trip to be postponed as much as possible," the foundation's Cardenas explains. "It is in Castro's interests for the Pope not to go at all."

Guarione Diaz, director of the Cuban American National Council (CANC), agrees, adding that the date change, announced Jan. 4, wouldn't affect the consequences of the Pope's visit on Cuba nor does it signal now an alteration in Vatican policy toward Cuba since the November announcement. The change in date "just has to do with the the pope's health," he says.

Menendez, who has advised President Clinton on Cuban policy, thinks Castro hopes the church hierarchy will continue its "high-profile criticism of the embargo." The church has maintained its criticism of the embargo on Cuba. But it has also balanced that posture allowing the governor of Vatican City, Venezuelan Cardinal Rosalio Jose Castillo Lara, to denounce the Cuban government. Castillo Lara said soon after the November announcement that the papal visit would not "whitewash" 30 years of repression.

The Cuban government confiscated all private schools in 1961, including 350 Catholic schools. Soon after, it also threw two thirds of the Catholic clergy out of the country.

Juan Clark, author of "Religious Repression in Cuba"



Associated Press

and sociology professor at Miami-Dade Community College, says Castro's government made political prisoners out of some priests and nuns. "The Cuban government discriminated against practicing Catholics by limiting their educational and professional opportunities." Thus, everyone with whom we talked believes Castro will not be able to manipulate the visit nor the repercussions of the Pope's message.

Castro believes, according to Menendez, that "his security apparatus will control the Cuban people after the visit."

But a papal visit usually includes meetings with human rights activists, traveling without restrictions, and masses in the open. Menendez reminded Hispanic Link.

Menendez, CANF, CANC and Cuban-American leaders are all counting on John Paul II's visit to undermine Castro's regime in the same manner the pope's trips to Nicaragua and Poland weakened those countries' socialist regimes.

(Yara I. Alma-Bonilla is a reporter with Hispanic Link News Service in Washington, D.C.)

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La Pena De Muerte Federal Se Enfrenta En Puerto Rico

Por Lance Oliver

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico -- Setenta años después de la última ejecución en Puerto Rico, un acusado de aquí puede enfrentarse a la pena de muerte por los delitos de que se le acusa -- a pesar del hecho de que la pena capital está prohibida por la Constitución de Puerto Rico.

Si se ejecuta a Ian Rosario Montañez, será obra del gobierno federal, no de las autoridades locales. La Secretaría de Justicia de los Estados Unidos, Janet Reno, dió recientemente a los fiscales federales de Puerto Rico la luz verde para procurar la pena de muerte para Rosario, uno de los cinco jóvenes acusados de un robo de banco que dejó a un guardia de seguridad muerto y a otro empleado herido en Diciembre de 1995.

Antes de que el juicio haya empezado siquiera, la mera posibilidad de que un prisionero puertorriqueño sea sentenciado a muerte ha enojado a muchas personas de la isla. A diferencia de la situación en los estados del continente, la opinión pública de Puerto Rico está predominantemente en contra de la pena capital.

De modo que, aunque sería poco probable que un funcionario estatal retara el derecho del gobierno federal a ejecutar un prisionero, algunos funcionarios puertorriqueños ven la decisión de la Secretaría de Justicia federal como una afrenta a las leyes locales y al sentimiento público.

"La Constitución de Puerto Rico no es sólo la ley," dice el Senador Eudaldo Báez Galib.

"Es el espíritu y la moralidad de la comunidad."

El pasar por alto la prohibición de la Constitución de

Puerto Rico con respecto a la pena de muerte sería inmoral, de acuerdo con Fermín Arraiza, presidente del Colegio de Abogados local. "Esta es la voluntad de Puerto Rico."

El debate ha tomado inevitablemente matices políticos.

Los partidarios de la estadidad no cuestionan el derecho del gobierno federal a acusar y sentenciar prisioneros en Puerto Rico, pero los activistas del Estado Libre Asociado, tales como Báez Galib, que quieren que Puerto Rico y los Estados Unidos se vean mutuamente como asociados iguales, ven la decisión de Justicia como una infracción.

A Rosario, el sospechoso en el centro de la controversia, se le acusa de robar una sucursal del Banco Popular en Plaza Carolina, una de los centros comerciales principales de la isla, junto a otros tres hombres y un joven. Un guardia de seguridad del banco fue muerto por disparos en la cabeza y otro empleado resultó lesionado. El robo desató el pánico en el congestionado centro comercial y otros resultaron lesionados mientras huían de la escena del tiroteo.

El robo de banco resultante en muerte fue uno de los 40 delitos federales que llegaron a ser punibles por muerte en un proyecto de ley contra la delincuencia aprobado por el Congreso y promulgado por el Presidente Clinton en 1994. El proyecto de ley fue mejor conocido por aplicar la pena de muerte por asaltos de autos que resultaran en muertes y por los asesinatos por contrato relacionados con narcóticos.

Además de Rosario, otros ocho que aguardan juicio ahora, incluyendo a sus tres presuntos cómplices que ya eran adultos cuando ocurrió el robo, podrían enfrentar la posibilidad de la pena de muerte por los delitos federales de que se les acusa.

El caso más sensacional involucra el secuestro de un auto con asesinato de una madre joven que estaba llevando a su hijo al peditaria cuando ella desapareció. El niño fue dejado en unas escaleras y el cadáver de la mujer fue hallado días más tarde, decapitado. Cuatro personas fueron acusadas en el horrible asesinato.

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Keynote Speaker	9:00-9:30 a.m.	" "	12:00-1:00 p.m.
Session I	10:00-10:45 a.m.	Fun Activities	1:00-2:30 p.m.
Session II	11:00-11:45 a.m.	Full Day	8:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

TOPICS

- Session I**
- A. Domestic Violence - Understanding the Dynamics of Violence
 - B. Breast Cancer and Hispanic Women
 - C. Diabetes in Hispanic Women/Family
 - D. Home Health Care for Hispanics
 - E. True Colors - "What color is your personality?"
 - F. Parenting - "Padres Con Poder"
 - G. All About Date Rape (Sessions for Young Women/and Mothers)

Session II
A, B, C, D, E, F, G

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News Briefs

them. "That's very different than throwing up your hands and saying, 'We need 17,000 jobs right away.' You have to have a place to start."

Under the terms of the welfare reform law, most able-bodied adults will be required to find work within two years of receiving benefits. States have some flexibility in administering the work requirements, but the upshot is pretty clear: According to Gary Burtless, a welfare reform analyst at the Brookings Institution think tank, implementation will require work to be found for more than 2 million aid recipients during the next five years.

White House Seeks Repeal of Law Limiting Medicaid Use

Clinton administration officials urged Congress on Monday to repeal a new law that makes it a federal crime to dispose of assets to qualify for Medicaid coverage of nursing home expenses, the New York Times reported.

Medicaid helps pay the bills for two-thirds of the 1.6 million people in nursing homes in the United States. Families can easily exhaust their assets on nursing home care because the costs average more than \$100 a day -- much more in urban areas like New York City.

Many elderly people give assets to their children. But the new law, added to a broader health insurance measure, makes that

illegal if the purpose is to qualify for Medicaid. It is not entirely clear which transactions may result in criminal charges. Critics cite this ambiguity as a serious defect in the law.

Moreover, Bruce Vladeck, administrator of the Federal Health Care Financing Administration, which supervises Medicaid, said there was no evidence that large numbers of elderly people had given away assets to qualify for Medicaid.

"A few people doing something egregious can create a public perception of a widespread problem," Vladeck said. "It's important not to exaggerate the importance of this."

Vladeck said Congress ought to repeal the criminal penalties, which took effect on Jan. 1. And he said that his agency would not press states to enforce the new restrictions on transfers of property by people seeking Medicaid.

The American Association of Retired Persons, the Alzheimer's Association, the National Senior Citizens Law Center, the American Bar Association and the bar associations of New York state and Ohio have all called for repeal of the law.

Under the law, a person who "knowingly and willfully disposes of assets" in order to become eligible for Medicaid may be fined \$10,000 and imprisoned for one year. In general, a person will not be subject to criminal penalties if he or she gives away assets more than three years before applying for Medicaid.

Some members of Congress say it is possible that some violators could be subject to much stiffer penalties, including a \$25,000 fine and imprisonment for five years.

Rep. Steven LaTourette, R-Ohio, recently introduced a bill to repeal the provision, which he described as the "Granny goes to jail" law.

LaTourette, a former county prosecutor, said, "The new law has scared and confused senior citizens" and might discourage eligible people from applying for Medicaid. Moreover, he said, "Adult children who assist their parents could also be subject to criminal penalties."

De La Primera

lados por orden judicial, pero indicó que si una solicitud es efectivamente recibida, será atendida de acuerdo con los procedimientos legales.

El Cartel de Tijuana

Al referirse a la narcoviolencia protagonizada por el cártel de Tijuana en la misma ciudad de Baja California, Davies señaló que "obviamente estamos muy al tanto de las actividades del narcocártel de Tijuana, que es una de las más grandes organizaciones de narcotraficantes en México".

Según dijo Davies, esa organización, comandada por los hermanos Arellano Félix, desempeña un papel muy prominente en el movimiento transfronterizo de narsticos, pero también en el contrabando de armas, violencia y corrupción de funcionarios públicos en Tijuana y sus alrededores.

El portavoz de la dependencia confirmó que existen una serie de procedimientos judiciales iniciados en cortes estadounidenses contra los líderes del cártel de Tijuana, pero dijo que por ser asuntos pendientes ante las cortes, "sería inapropiado hacer comentarios" al respecto.

La Juez Cierra Expedientes

En Houston, la juez Nancy Atlas, a cargo del juicio por presuntos nexos con el narcotráfico contra Mario Ruiz Massieu, pidió a los abogados del ex subprocurador mexicano no filtrar a la prensa ningún documento sobre el proceso.

La decisión se tomó debido a la publicación en México, durante el fin de semana, de documentos que vincularon a Ruiz Massieu, al ex presidente Carlos Salinas de Gortari y a su hermano Raúl, y otros funcionarios, con narcotraficantes.

Atlas determinó en una audiencia que a partir de ahora y hasta el juicio contra Ruiz Massieu, los abogados de ambas partes no tendrán acceso a copias de información clave reunida antes del juicio.

Explicó que las filtraciones se podrán evitar mientras no existan copias circulando por todas partes.

El juicio contra Ruiz Massieu está programado para el 10 de marzo en un proceso civil en el que el gobierno estadounidense pretende confiscar más de nueve millones de dólares de sus cuentas bancarias de Houston, argumentando que el dinero es producto de sobornos del narcotráfico.

El dictamen de Atlas se produjo luego de una solicitud de la fiscalía para sancionar al abogado de Ruiz Massieu, Tony Canales, a quien acusan de haber filtrado la información publicada en una revista mexicana.

Sin embargo, Canales negó que fuera él quien filtró a la prensa esas informaciones y acusó a funcionarios mexicanos de haberlo hecho.

La revista mexicana citó documentos del Departamento de Justicia de Estados Unidos que se usan en la investigación sobre el ex subprocurador mexicano, además de que aseguró que los testigos del gobierno implicaron a Ruiz Massieu, a los hermanos Salinas y su padre, y a los dirigentes políticos asesinados Luis Donaldo Colosio y Francisco Ruiz Massieu, en una operación sobre millones de dólares en sobornos del narcotráfico, a cambio de protección.

La fiscal Susan Kempner indicó que la filtración del informe puso en peligro a los testigos del gobierno. "Uno de mis testigos no quiere seguir adelante", indicó.

Noticias cortas de Latinoamérica



Un Rayito De Luz

por Sofía Martínez

El séptimo y décimo mandamiento son "No hurtar" que es "no robar", y "No codiciar los bienes ajenos", esto es "No desear lo ajeno con la intención de apoderarse de ello por medios injustos."

Dios, primero y único dueño de todo, dió a Adán y Eva la posesión de la tierra y de todo lo que existe en ella, cuando les dijo: "cominen sobre los peces del mar, y sobre las aves del cielo y sobre todos los animales que se mueven en la tierra". (Gen. 1,28). en un principio todo era de todos; pero poquito a poco cada quien fue ocupando la que mejor le convino, cultivando un pedazo de tierra y teniendo así, primero el derecho sobre los frutos producidos, y después, sobre la misma tierra que había mejorado con su trabajo. Así fue introduciéndose el derecho de propiedad, esto es la legítima facultad de disponer de alguna cosa como propia.

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Fidel Castro

Visita de Felipe González a Cuba

La Habana - El ex presidente del gobierno español, Felipe González, visitará Cuba en el primer semestre de 1997, informó el viernes el Partido Socialista Obrero Español. El portavoz de Asuntos Exteriores del PSOE, Luis Yáñez, dijo que al final de la visita de 10 días, González se reunirá con el presidente cubano Fidel Castro. El viaje de González y una serie de contactos recientes destacan que los socialistas españoles desean mantener con Cuba relaciones fluidas.

Acéfalo el comercio exterior de Costa Rica

San José - El comercio exterior de Costa Rica quedó acéfalo con la renuncia del ministro José Rossi y de tres de sus más cercanos colaboradores, dijeron empresarios. "El sector exportador del país queda sumido en una total incertidumbre", dijo Samuel Yankelewitz, presidente de la Unión Costarricense de Cámaras y Asociaciones de la Empresa Privada. Rossi atribuyó las renunciaciones a desavenencias con el canciller Fernando Naranjo, a quien acusó de inmiscuirse en asuntos de Comercio Exterior.

Acusan a ejército guatemalteco de vulnerar paz

San José, Costa Rica - Un grupo centroamericano de defensa de los derechos humanos acusó al ejército de Guatemala de violar los acuerdos de paz suscritos en diciembre. El ejército ha estado incrementando su presencia en diferentes pueblos y carreteras, contraviniendo el acuerdo sobre el fortalecimiento del poder civil y función del ejército en una sociedad democrática, denunció la Comisión para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos en Centroamérica en San José.

Emisoras de Ecuador vetan a Bucaram

Quito - La Asociación Ecuatoriana de Radiodifusión ha catalogado de insultante un programa de radio del presidente Abdalá Bucaram. La AER asegura que no lo transmitirá de nuevo. Las cadenas de radio y televisión no son "para difundir injurias... no podemos constituirnos en responsables solidarios de injurias", dijo el presidente de la AER, Louis Hanna Musse, al diario *El Universo*. El gobierno de Bucaram dijo que la "Charla desde la chimenea" se difundirá, pese a la decisión de la AER.

Más préstamos del Banco Mundial a Latinoamérica

Washington, EEUU - El Banco Mundial espera hacer mayores desembolsos a países de América Latina en el corriente año fiscal, afirmó un funcionario de la entidad. El vicepresidente interino regional, Gobind Nankani, dijo que se espera que el desembolso llegue a unos 4.500 millones de dólares durante el año que concluirá el 30 de junio. En gran medida, el aumento se debe a la superación de cuellos de botella en proyectos que financia el Banco Mundial en Brasil, dijo.

Banco alemán anuncia más operaciones en la región

Davos - Dresdner Bank AG, el segundo banco comercial de Alemania, y su socio francés BNP, piensan invertir en Colombia, Venezuela y Perú, dijo el viernes un ejecutivo. Ernst-Moritz Lipp, de la junta de administración del banco alemán, dijo que las inversiones serán a través de compras de instituciones financieras. Algunos fondos ya han sido invertidos, agregó. Dresdner Bank y BNP ya están operando en Chile.

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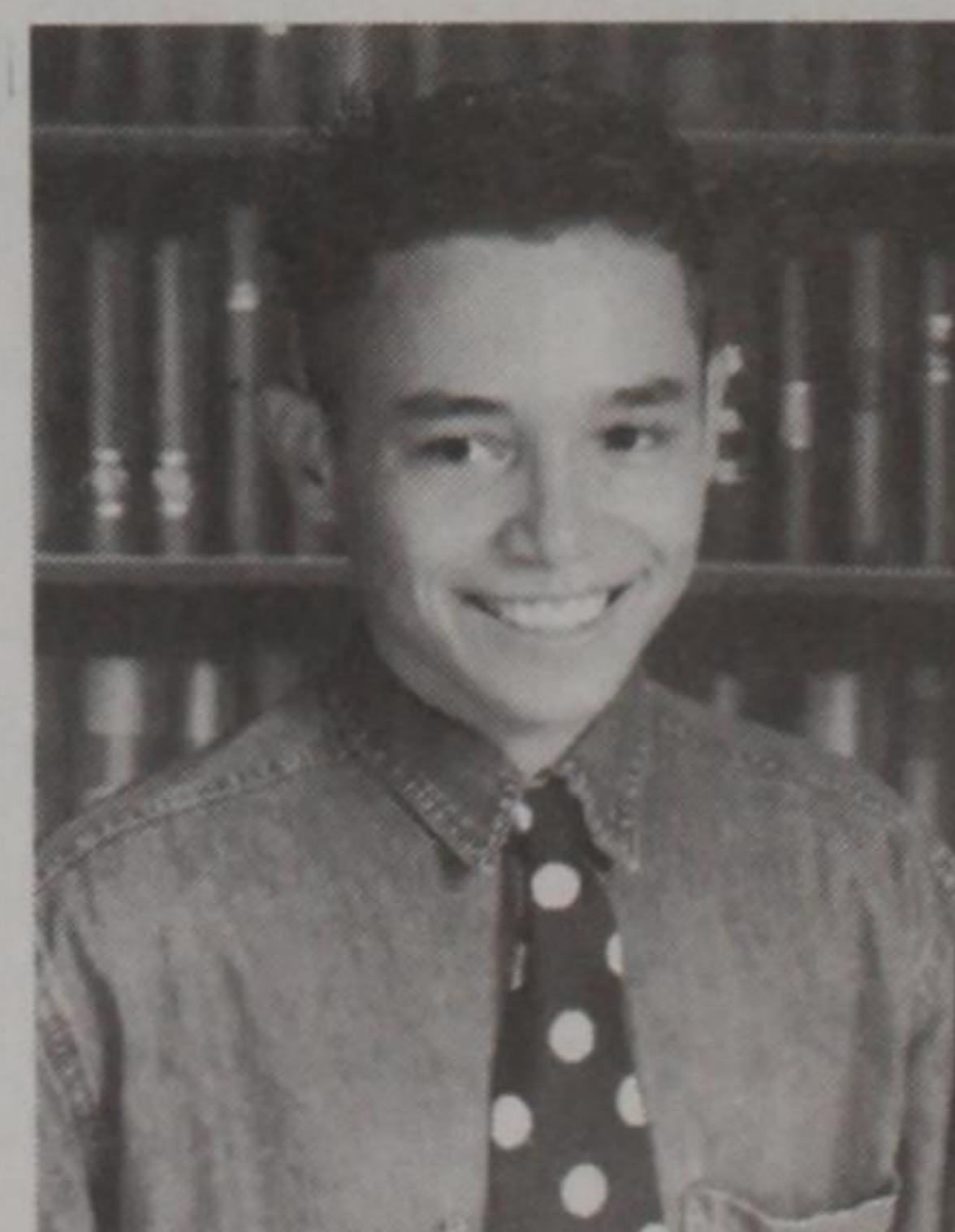
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From Page 3

Although that audit found \$3.18 million in questionable grants, the Colorado Springs Gazette Telegraph reported that a review panel last month recommended that the amount boxing should repay be cut to less than half that, at around \$1.3 million. Boxing officials had been hoping for an even lower amount.

There was no immediate word from USA Boxing. Neither federation president Gary Toney nor executive director Dave Lubs were available for comment. There was no answer at their hotel rooms here, where the USOC is holding its annual winter meeting.

The USA Boxing Foundation has \$4 million in assets, but USA Boxing would have to cut programs if the foundation money is used, officials say.

On other topics, the USOC panel received what Hybl said was a "basically positive report" on venue preparations for the Salt Lake City Winter Games in 2002. Schultz said there was "still a challenge" to resolve environmental concerns for the biathlon and cross-country sites but said a solution would be found.

Schultz also said the committee was looking for temporary housing for U.S. nordic athletes at the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan, so they would not have to commute two hours each way to their events.

The USOC discovered the misspending by boxing during a routine audit that began July 17.

Toney, a former accountant and auditor, said at the time that he became suspicious of USA Boxing's finances last spring, when then-executive director Bruce Mathis was fired for allegedly covering up a \$41,000 loss from a USA-Mexico duel meet in Las Vegas.

Boxing officials also say Mathis, without authorization, ordered USA Boxing's business manager to write him a check for \$6,600 for unused vacation time.

The audit also uncovered irregularities during the tenure of Mathis' successor, Jim Fox, who is now in charge of the USOC's broadcast division.

An internal audit ordered by Toney called for changes in USA Boxing's financial operations but it did not uncover the misspent USOC funds.