

# el Escondito

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"El Respeto a Derecho  
Ajeno es la Paz"  
Lic Benito Juarez

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## Latinos and African Americans: 4 out of 10 Texans, 7 out of 10 Prisoners

**L**atinos incarcerated nearly twice as much as Whites. African Americans are incarcerated at 5 times the rate of Whites in Texas. Overrepresented in prisons, both under-represented in Drug Courts.

"This report shows that we have to invest early in education, healthcare, and programs that serve people in their communities, rather than invest in prisons," said Gary Bledsoe, state director of the Texas NAACP. "We must shift some of the funding away from locking people up and begin to send a direct message that in this nation, in this state, each person is accorded the same opportunities for success without regards to race," added Bledsoe.

For Latinos in Texas, the data points to a rapidly increasing presence among Texas's incarcerated population. In 2002 Latinos composed the greatest share of new prison admissions (33.9% Latino, 32.8% African American, 32.7% whites), but the smallest share of those being released from prison (26% Latino, 40.5% African American, 32.2% whites). Additionally Latinos were a higher proportion of those incarcerated in

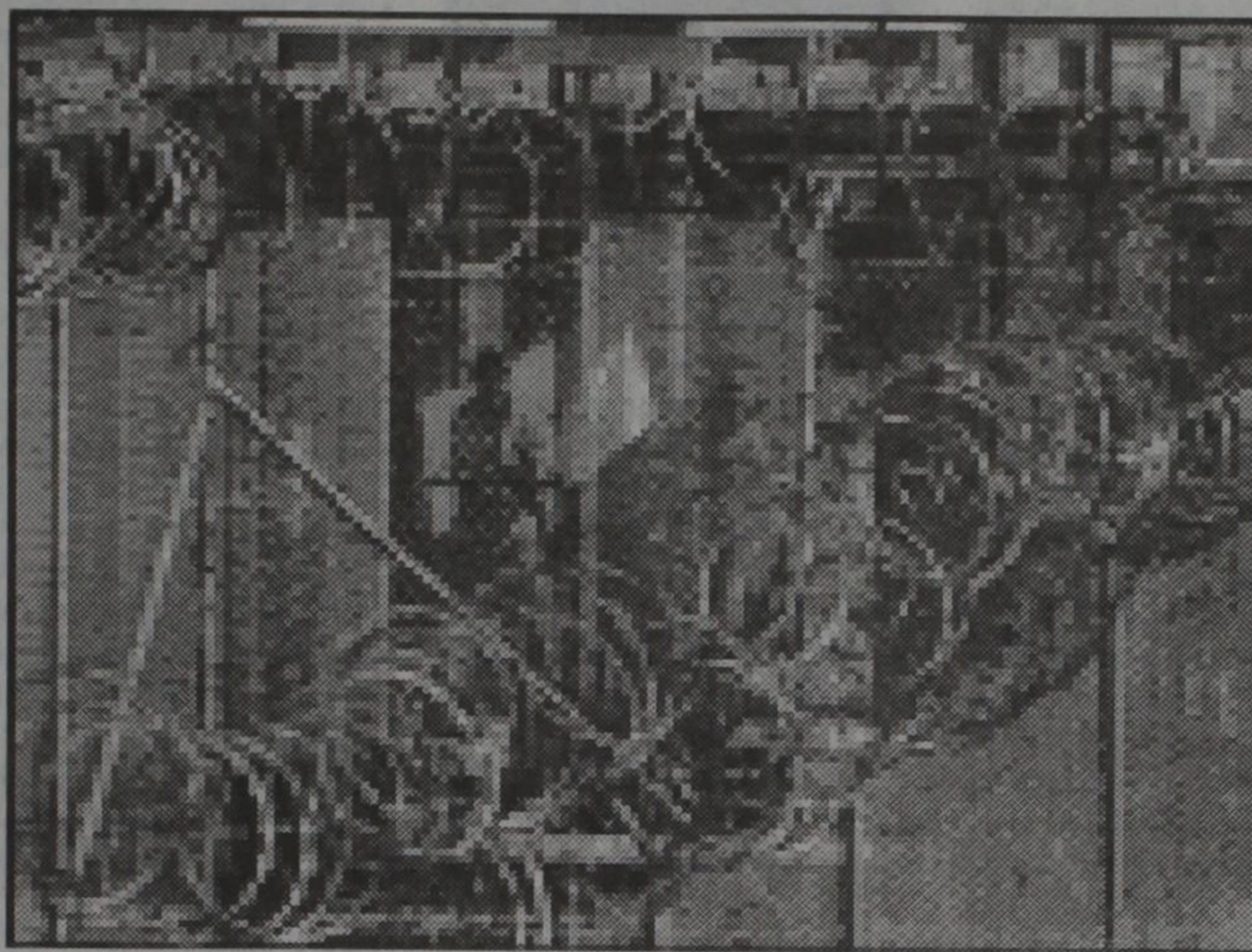
state prisons than in jails where sentences are normally shorter.

"We need to be smart on crime, rather than tough on crime," said Ana Yanez-Correa of LULAC, who is sponsoring a Legislative Mobilization day on February 28th at the state capital in Austin to fight for more support for criminal justice reforms, and more spending on treatment and community programs as opposed to prisons. "Our legislators should support pro-family criminal justice police that unite families, save taxpayers' money and improve the safety of our communities," she added. Others agree.

"A twelve-fold increase in imprisonment for drug offenses hasn't made us safer," said Will Harrell executive director of the Texas ACLU "While Whites and African Americans generally use drugs at similar rates, we do not dole out justice similarly in Texas."

Some of the key findings from the policy brief are:

A small reduction of the average sentence from 4.5 years to 4.0 years could cut the prison population by 18,000 people per year, which would save the state \$114 million per year. (Continued on page 5)



A recently released policy brief titled: Race and Imprisonment in Texas: The Disparate Incarceration of Latinos and African Americans in the Lone Star State, the Justice Policy Institute highlights startling ethnic and racial disparities in the use of prison in Texas.

The policy brief reports that African Americans and Latinos make up over 70% of the state's prison population, while comprising around 40% of the general population.

African Americans are locked up at a rate 5 times that of whites (3,734 per 100,000), while Latinos (1,152 per 100,000) are locked up at a rate nearly twice that of whites (694 per 100,000).

The policy brief reports that lost economic productivity due to incarceration in the African American community in Texas exceeds \$1 billion dollars.

## Comentarios

by Bidal Agüero

It was enjoyable and enlightening to hear my friend Robert Montemayor

this past week as he addressed the LULAC "Bring Out your Best Banquet". It was rather hard for me to accept that it has been some 30 years since Robert and I were at



photo by John Cervantez

Texas Tech exchanging bars and arguing how to best overcome the obstacles put before us as we struggled to compete in a University atmosphere that we actually did not fit into.

Since then Robert has gone on to become a part of the corporate world that we were criticizing and as a successful business executive has maintained his identity as a Latino who realizes the need for Latinos to start being accepted and appreciated for their contributions.

As stated in his recently published book Right Before Your Eyes, "From 1990-2002, the purchasing power of the Hispanic population grew by 57% and within five years, will surpass the \$1 billion mark. And yet, until now, the Latino phenomenon in America has been met with little more than lip-service, tantamount to a shrug."

"If America is to remain globally competitive, it must engage its energetic and youthful Hispanic community, and convince its members to take a more active role in rectifying the business, economic, social and political deficiencies that have historically disaffected Latinos. But in order for America to succeed, we must see inclusive leadership among Hispanics at the executive levels of government and corporate America. After all, one of the great strengths of this country is its promise of representative government, inclusiveness is an undeniable standard of that system, and the underpinning of shared destiny.

Robert went on to explain during his presentation that Latinos must rise to the opportunity and begin to accept challenges of being placed in important roles and how we must begin to realize that we must actively demand change. He ended his presentation as he ends his book: "There is a call for Hispanic Americans, imploring Latino leadership at all levels to come together, despite county of origin, despite income class, despite race, to set aside political differences, personal agendas and jaded cynicism. There is much to do. It is not about wallowing in self-pity or banking on the rest of America to throw a safety net. It is about taking responsibility. It is about earning respect. It is about unshakable pride. Sweeping changes are coming. Do you hear the call? Will you answer it? Because it is about you, about us, about this great county, the United States of America."

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## Democratas del Senado Dicen Que Propuestas de Bush Perjudica a Jubilados Hispanos

Rosa Ramirez

**L**as familias hispanas, de manera desproporcionada, sentirán el impacto del plan propuesto del presidente Bush cuyo fin es crear cuentas privadas de Seguro Social, ya que esta población depende de tales beneficios mucho más que otros grupos, indica un informe que sacó publicado el 17 de febrero el Comité de Políticas del Partido Demócrata en el Senado.

El comité, que consiste de legisladores opuestos al plan de privatización de Bush, emitió el informe a dos semanas y media del inicio de la gira del presidente por todo el país para recaudar apoyo público por los cambios que propone, y a casi un mes desde que empezó a cabildar el Congreso.

El informe, titulado en inglés "Privatizing Social Security: Benefit Cuts and Debts for Our Families" (La privatización del Seguro Social: Recortes de beneficios y [acumulación de] deudas para nuestras familias), indica que los hispanos se benefician más que otros del sistema actual por lo que tienden a ganar menos y depender más de una fórmula de beneficios "progresiva", lo cual hace posible que los que ganan menos como promedio reciban más en beneficios del Seguro Social, según el informe.

El 41 por ciento de los hispanos depende del Seguro Social como única fuente de ingreso en los años de jubilación, señala la Administración del Seguro Social. El 76 por ciento depende de los beneficios para cubrir el 50 por ciento o más de su ingreso total.

El congresista Xavier Becerra (demócrata

privado ni de rentas vitalicias.

Otros conferencistas ayudaron a fortalecer su caso.

El senador Jeff Bingaman (demócrata por Nuevo México) agregó que los hispanos de la tercera edad tienen muchas menos posibilidades de obtener ingresos de otras fuentes, incluyendo de dividendos, ahorros e intereses. "Más del cincuenta por ciento de las mujeres hispanas de 65 años o mayores depende 100 por ciento del Seguro Social como su ingreso", dijo.

Gabriela Lemus, directora de políticas de la Liga de Ciudadanos Latino Americanos Unidos (LULAC por sus siglas en inglés) añadió, "Sin el Seguro Social, el número de personas pobres aumentaría, lo cual agrega mayores cargas a las familias a la vez que disminuye su sentido de independencia".

LULAC y el Concilio de Trabajo para el Progreso de Latino América están entre varios grupos de abogacía hispanos que se oponen al plan del presidente.

El plan permitiría que los individuos menores de 55 años inviertan 4 por ciento de sus ingresos sujetos al impuesto del Seguro Social en cuentas de jubilación privadas.

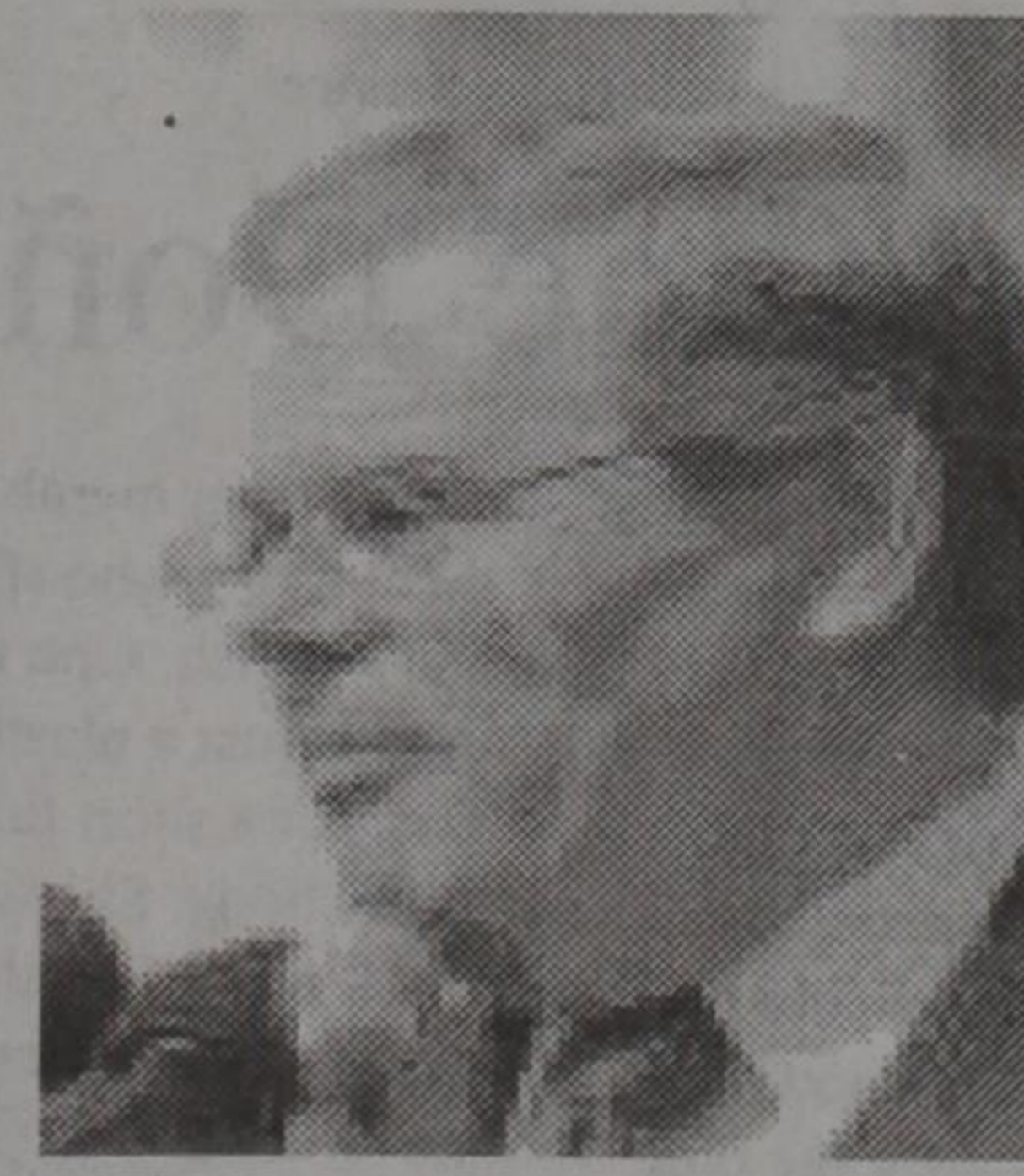
Según la administración, para el año 2042, cuando los trabajadores actualmente

de 25 años comiencen a jubilarse, estaría en la bancarrota el sistema de hoy.

Aquellas personas actualmente jubiladas o por jubilarse no serían afectadas por los cambios en el sistema, enfatiza la Casa Blanca.

Los críticos de la privatización del Seguro Social señalan que el presidente exagera la severidad del problema y emplea la palabra "crisis" con demasiada facilidad, como táctica para asustar al público.

El representante Bob Menéndez, (demócrata por Nueva Jersey), pregunta:



## Hispanic Caucus flunks House education Plan

By Jason Embry

**T**exas House leaders' plan to reform the state's education system is unfair and inadequate, members of the Mexican American Legislative Caucus said Wednesday.

About 35 members of the House, almost all of them Democrats, gathered to denounce the bill in the loudest statement of opposition since Republicans filed it two weeks ago.

"What we're really doing is in essence rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic and really not making any substantive changes or substantive improvements in our education system," said Rep. Pete Gallego, D-Alpine, the caucus chairman.

Backers of the bill say it would increase overall education spending by more than \$3 billion over two years, which would be in addition to the estimated \$1.2 billion needed just to cover enrollment growth. But caucus members say that they've run their own numbers and that the bill would not provide enough money even to make up for the cuts that lawmakers made two years ago, which included reductions in spending on teacher health insurance, technology and textbooks.

"It's disingenuous to say we're going to get more money when, in fact, we're just going to go back to zero," said Rep. Eddie

Rodriguez, D-Austin.

The Public Education Committee has heard testimony on the bill for the better part of two weeks. House Speaker Tom Craddick, who hopes to have a bill to the floor of the House by early March, defended the amount of money it puts into education.

"I don't know that the school districts are ever going to think that there's enough money in there," he said. "But the state's got to look at what they can afford to do and what takes care of us at the courthouse."

The Mexican American caucus attacked the bill for not including an across-the-board pay increase for teachers and for spending too little money to help economically disadvantaged students. Gallego said the group does not have its own proposal for how much new money should go into education because members first want to determine how much the schools need.

The group also pounced on a Republican proposal to put a 35 percent cap on how much of its local property tax money a school district with high property values must send to the state. About two dozen districts would be likely to see significant funding increases because they would be able to keep more of their money with the cap in place.

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"Si es verdaderamente una crisis, ¿por qué no figura en su presupuesto?"

Los que apoyan las cuentas privadas dicen que el plan permitiría que los trabajadores menores "se hicieran dueños" de su jubilación para crear una cantidad más grande de seguro de jubilación.

Dirigiéndose a Hispanic Link, Berna Brannon, analista del Instituto Cato, un grupo de políticas públicas en Washington, D.C., dice que los críticos primordialmente enfocan los beneficios garantizados del plan actual de Seguro Social y no contemplan la inversión a largo plazo.

"Suponen que las cuentas no les traen nada. Y es necesario ver todo el panorama", dice.

Los opositores responden que nunca se diviso que el sistema fuera un programa de inversiones y que existen riesgos del mercado bursátil que les podrían costar caro.

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## Senate Democrats Claim Bush's Social Security Proposal Hurts Hispanic Retirees'

By Rosa Ramirez

**H**ispanic families will disproportionately feel the impact of President Bush's proposed plan to create private Social Security accounts, largely since this population relies on such benefits more than other groups, a report released Feb. 17 by the Senate Democratic Policy Committee claims.

The committee, comprised of legislators opposed to Bush's privatization plan, released the report two and a half weeks into Bush's scheduled tour across the country intended to draw public support for his proposed changes, and nearly a month after he began lobbying Congress.

The report, "Privatizing Social Security: Benefit Cuts and Debts for Our Families," notes that Hispanics benefit more than any others from the current system because they generally have lower earnings and depend more on a "progressive" benefit formula, which makes it possible for lower-wage earners on average to receive more in Social Security benefits, the report said.

Forty-one percent of Hispanics rely on Social Security as their sole source of retirement income, according to the Social Security Administration. Seventy-six percent rely on the benefits for 50 percent or more of their total income.

Congressman Xavier Becerra (D-Calif.), a member of the House subcommittee on Social Security, is a leading critic of the privatization proposal. "Social Security is probably the most important program for

Hispanic families," he said during a Capitol Hill press conference releasing the report.

The report claims that 49 percent of the nation's elderly and 56 percent of Hispanic seniors would fall into poverty under Bush's plan.

Without Social Security, the poverty rate for Hispanics would increase significantly, the authors say. As an example, the report shows that 85 percent of Hispanics 65 years or older do not receive income from any private pension or annuities.

Other press conference speakers helped build their case.

Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.) added that Hispanic seniors are much less likely to obtain income from other sources, including dividend, savings and interest.

"More than half of Hispanic women aged 65 and older depend on Social Security for 100 percent of their income," he said.

Gabriela Lemus, policy director for the League of United Latin American Citizens, added, "Without Social Security, the numbers would definitely increase, placing additional burdens on their families and diminishing their sense of independence."

LULAC and the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement are among several Hispanic advocacy groups opposing the president's plan.

The plan would allow individuals under 55 to invest 4 percent of their income that is subject to Social Security payroll tax into private retirement accounts.

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por California), miembro del subcomité de la Cámara de Representantes sobre el Seguro Social, es crítico principal de la propuesta de privatización. "El Seguro Social es probablemente el programa de mayor importancia para las familias hispanas", dijo durante una rueda de prensa en el Capitolio para emitir el informe.

El informe indica que el 49 por ciento de los de la tercera edad y el 56 por ciento de las personas mayores hispanas a nivel nacional caerían en la pobreza bajo el plan de Bush.

Sin los beneficios del Seguro Social, el índice de pobreza para los hispanos aumentaría de manera significativa, comentan los autores. Como ejemplo, el informe muestra que el 85 por ciento de los hispanos de 65 años o mayores no recibe ingresos de ningún plan de pensiones

# The 'P' Word Creeps into the Social Security Debate

By José de la Isla

I was shocked to hear the p-word on the air, especially during an intended serious commentary about Social Security reform.

Here goes-here's what I heard on NPR.

Former Clinton administration Undersecretary of Commerce Ev Erlich, no fan of President Bush's Social Security vision, said Democrats now need to present theirs. It's a mistake simply to defend the current system, he warned.

Why? Because most retirees are going to be whites and most future young workers are going to be Hispanics, he explained.

Then he went on: "To put it in crude even if exaggerated terms, white people expect their benefits to be paid by their domestic workers."

There you have it - white, better-off retirees dependent on young Hispanic workers, who are the functional equivalents of domestic workers.

So what does this mean?

Here's Erlich's statement: "If I were a Republican, I would be talking about privatization in Spanish. Sure, it's to come out and say 'Don't be a pendejo and pay off the Anglos' benefits."

I have to admit that in my 30 years of public policy work, I never imagined something as crucial as Social

Security hinging on the p-word. Maybe Erlich doesn't know the legend about the word that goes back five centuries to the time of the Spanish conquest.

It seems that in the early 16th century, conquistadores on the northern frontier learned about a particularly fierce tribe. They were perplexed about what to do. Groups allied with the conquistadores said the other tribe was extremely treacherous, unpredictable and unusually deceptive.

They were warned, but to no avail.

On the day of the advance, the soldiers, ready for war, were welcomed with food by beautiful women and elders willing to share. The young people were the last to appear, and they were friendly enough.

Little did the Spaniards know that the tribal elders, tired of everyone trying to penetrate their stronghold, had decided to convert the intended conquerors. They gave from their abundance, welcomed the strangers into their families and had them marry their single girls.

After many children were born, the lust for adventure began again. The soldiers left to continue on the road to acquisition and glory. Defenseless women and children were left behind. The old people had died or they went away to live as dependents on their sons and daughters. The soldiers, after their last adventure, had no homes to return to.

From that time forward, a man seeking to capture a woman's heart with no intention of making a permanent place is said to be out on a conquista. And those who are the victims of the consequences, are called by the tribe's name, which over time came to mean "falling for the gambit," "self-deceived," "doing yourself in," and "out-smarting yourself." Anyone who offers too much and gets back too little is referred to as descended from the Pendejo tribe and is called a "pendejo."

I'm sure former undersecretary Erlich didn't know this etymology when he used the word. He meant it more as a substitute for the more graphic English word asshole.

I think he was trying to say that treachery doesn't make for good progress. But all sides on the Social Security policy debate are acting like pendejos, just as in the legend.

No retirement scheme is viable unless there is income, which means our work force must function at a whole new level. By extension, that means new levels of education and training for everyone who works or intends to - young and old, men and women, domestic and transnationals.

And if we need more people for that, we should be mature enough

to admit it.

Perhaps we should even consider a new classification of citizenship, one that takes into account North American (U.S., Canada and Mexico) origins or from all the Americas, for that matter.

This is old hat. In the 1970s, a pension expert before the Select Committee on Immigration and Refugee Policy testified on the coming Social Security crisis projected for 2030. He said, "We can solve the problem whenever we want in whatever numbers we want."

He added, "Mexican immigration, almost single-handedly, could do the job."

The real issue is how are we going to earn contributions to put into Social Security, not how are we going to divvy it up. Are we able to improve education standards and worker skills so that our labor force produces, earns and contributes more? The issue is not about who hoodwinks whom. Nor is the debate about characterizing the work of someone as trivial because they are domestic workers. Whoever leads you down that path is the real pendejo in this debate.

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# Guest Column Regaining My Humanity

By Camilo Mejia

I was deployed to Iraq in April 2003 and returned home for a two-week leave in October. Going home gave me the opportunity to put my thoughts in order and to listen to what my conscience had to say. People would ask me about my war experiences and answering them took me back to all the horrors—the firefights, the ambushes, the time I saw a young Iraqi dragged by his shoulders through a pool of his own blood or an innocent man was decapitated by our machine gun fire. The time I saw a soldier broken down inside because he killed a child, or an old man on his knees, crying with his arms raised to the sky, perhaps asking God why we had taken the lifeless body of his son.

I thought of the suffering of a people whose country was in ruins and who were further humiliated by the raids, patrols and curfews of an occupying army.

And I realized that none of the reasons we were told about why we were in Iraq turned out to be true. There were no weapons of mass destruction. There was no link between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda. We weren't helping the Iraqi people and the Iraqi people didn't want us there. We weren't preventing terrorism or making Americans safer. I couldn't find a single good reason for having been there, for having shot at people and been shot at.

Coming home gave me the clarity to see the line between military duty and moral obligation. I realized that I was part of a war that I believed was immoral and criminal, a war of aggression, a war of imperial domination. I realized that acting upon my principles became incompatible with my role in the military, and I decided that I could not return to Iraq.

By putting my weapon down, I chose to reassert myself as a human being. I have not deserted the military or been disloyal to the men and women of the military. I have not been disloyal to a country. I have only been loyal to my principles.

When I turned myself in, with all my fears and doubts, it did it not only for myself. I did it for the people of Iraq, even for those who fired upon me—they were just on the other side of a battleground where war itself was the only enemy. I did it for the Iraqi children, who are victims of mines and depleted uranium. I did it for the thousands of unknown civilians killed in war. My time in prison is a small price compared to the price Iraqis and Americans have paid with their lives. Mine is a small price compared to the price Humanity has paid for war.

Many have called me a coward, others have called me a hero. I believe I can be found somewhere in the middle. To those who have called me a hero, I say that I don't believe in heroes, but I believe that ordinary people can do extraordinary things.

To those who have called me a coward I say that they are wrong, and that without knowing it, they are also right. They are wrong when they think that I left the war for fear of being killed. I admit that fear was there, but there was also the fear of killing innocent people, the fear of putting myself in a position where to survive means to kill, there was the fear of losing my soul in the process of saving my body, the fear of losing myself to my daughter, to the people who love me, to the man I used to be, the man I wanted to be. I was afraid of waking up one morning to realize my humanity had abandoned me.

I say without any pride that I did my job as a soldier. I commanded an infantry squad in combat and we never failed to accomplish our mission. But those who called me a coward, without knowing it, are also right. I was a coward not for leaving the war, but for having been a part of it in the first place. Refusing and resisting this war was my moral duty, a moral duty that called me to take a principled action. I failed to fulfill my moral duty as a human being and instead I chose to fulfill my duty as a soldier. All because I was afraid. I was terrified, I did not want to stand up to the government and the army, I was afraid of punishment and humiliation. I went to war because at the moment I was a coward, and for that I apologize to my soldiers for not being the type of leader I should have been.

I also apologize to the Iraqi people. To them I say I am sorry for the curfews, for the raids, for the killings. May they find it in their hearts to forgive me.

One of the reasons I did not refuse the war from the beginning was that I was afraid of losing my freedom. Today, as I sit behind bars I realize that there are many types of freedom, and that in spite of my confinement I remain free in many important ways. What good is freedom if we are afraid to follow our conscience? What good is freedom if we are not able to live with our own actions? I am confined to a prison but I feel, today more than ever, connected to all humanity. Behind these bars I sit a free man because I listened to a higher power, the voice of my conscience.

While I was confined in total segregation, I came across a poem written by a man who refused and resisted the government of Nazi Germany. For doing so he was executed. His name is Albrecht Hanshofer, and he wrote this poem as he awaited execution.

GUILT

The burden of my guilt before the law weighs light upon my shoulders; to plot and to conspire was my duty to the people; I would have been a criminal had I not. I am guilty, though not the way you think, I should have done my duty sooner, I was wrong, I should have called evil more clearly by its name I hesitated to condemn it for far too long. I now accuse myself within my heart: I have betrayed my conscience far too long I have deceived myself and fellow man. I knew the course of evil from the start My warning was not loud nor clear enough! Today I know what I was guilty of...

To those who are still quiet, to those who continue to betray their conscience, to those who are not calling evil more clearly by its name, to those of us who are still not doing enough to refuse and resist, I say "come forward." I say "free your minds."

Let us, collectively, free our minds, soften our hearts, comfort the wounded, put down our weapons, and reassert ourselves as human beings by putting an end to war.

For more information on Camilo go to: <http://freecamilo.org/>

# La 'P' Sale en el Debate Sobre el Seguro Social

José de la Isla

Me impactó escuchar la palabra 'p' en la radio, en particular durante un comentario serio sobre la reforma al Seguro Social.

Aquí va: escuché lo siguiente en la Radio Pública Nacional (NPR por sus siglas en inglés).

Ev Erlich, subsecretario de comercio durante el gobierno de Clinton, quien no comparte la perspectiva de Bush sobre el Seguro Social, afirmó que ahora le toca a los demócratas presentar su visión del asunto. Es un error limitarse a defender el sistema actual, advirtió.

¿Por qué? Porque la mayor parte de los jubilados serán blancos y la mayor parte de los trabajadores jóvenes del futuro serán hispanos, aclaró.

Y añadió: "Dicho con crudeza, aún cuando exagera, los blancos esperan que sus empleados domésticos paguen sus beneficios".

Ahí lo tiene: pensionados blancos, en mejor situación económica, dependientes de los trabajadores hispanos jóvenes, equivalentes, en términos prácticos, a los empleados domésticos.

¿Qué significa esto? Erlich afirmó lo siguiente:

"Si fuera republicano, hablaría de la privatización en español. Ciertamente, es como para salir y manifestar en público 'No sea pendejo y pague los beneficios de los anglosajones'".

Debo admitir que, en mis treinta años de trabajo en asuntos de interés público nunca imaginé que algo tan crítico como el Seguro Social dependiera de la palabra 'p'. Posiblemente Erlich no conoce la leyenda en torno a la palabra que se remonta quinientos años a la época de la conquista española.

Se cree que a comienzos del siglo XVI, los conquistadores de la frontera del norte tuvieron conocimiento de una tribu particularmente fiera. Estaban confundidos sobre cómo actuar. Los aliados de los conquistadores les aseguraron que los integrantes de esa tribu eran extremadamente traicioneros, impredecibles y excepcionalmente inclinados al engaño.

Se les advirtió pero no valió la advertencia.

El día de la avanzada, los soldados, prestos para el combate, encontraron mujeres hermosas y ancianos que los recibieron con alimentos y se mostraron deseosos de compartir con ellos. Los jóvenes fueron los últimos en presentarse, y se mostraron muy amistosos.

Lo que menos imaginaban los españoles era que los ancianos de la tribu, cansados de que todo el mundo tratara de penetrar su fortaleza, habían decidido convertir a los que pretendían conquistarlos. Compartieron su abundancia, recibieron a los forasteros en sus hogares y los animaron a contraer matrimonio con las jóvenes solteras de la tribu.

Después que nacieron muchos niños, el deseo de aventura renació en los conquistadores. Los soldados partieron con el propósito de lograr riquezas y gloria. Atrás quedaron las mujeres indefensas y los niños. Los ancianos habían fallecido o se habían ido a vivir con sus hijos o hijas. Los soldados, después de

su última aventura, no tenían hogares a los cuales regresar.

Desde ese momento se dice que el hombre que trata de ganarse el corazón de una mujer sin tener el propósito de establecer un hogar con ella sólo busca hacer una conquista. Y a las víctimas de las consecuencias se les conoce con el nombre de la tribu, que con el tiempo ha llegado a significar "ser víctima de una estratagema", "iluso", "vencerse" y "engañarse a sí mismo". A cualquiera que ofrezca mucho y reciba muy poco a cambio se le conoce como descendiente de la tribu Pendejo y es conocido como un pendejo.

Tengo la seguridad de que el subsecretario Erlich desconocía esta etimología cuando usó la palabra. Trató de usarla como un sustituto de la palabra más gráfica en inglés, asshole, con mayor cercanía semántica a cabrón en español.

Considero que trataba de decir que la traición no contribuye al progreso. Pero todas las partes involucradas en el debate sobre la política del Seguro Social actúan como pendejos, con el mismo sentido de la leyenda.

Ningún esquema para la jubilación es viable a menos que haya ingresos, lo que significa que nuestra fuerza laboral debe desempeñarse en un nivel completamente nuevo. Por añadidura, eso significa nuevos niveles de educación y adiestramiento para todos los que trabajan o tienen la intención de hacerlo: jóvenes y viejos, hombres y mujeres, nacionales o transnacionales.

Y si necesitamos más personas para lograrlo, debemos ser lo suficientemente maduros para aceptarlo.

Quizás hasta debemos considerar una nueva clasificación de ciudadanía, una que tome en cuenta el origen de los norteamericanos (Estados Unidos, Canadá y México) o el de personas de todas las Américas en relación a ese asunto.

Esto no es nuevo. En la década de 1970, un experto en pensiones testificó ante la Comisión Especial del Senado de los Estados Unidos sobre las Políticas Relacionadas con la Inmigración y el Refugio en torno a la crisis del Seguro Social proyectada para el año 2030. El indicó que, "Podemos resolver el problema cuando queramos y en cualquier cantidad que deseemos".

Y añadió, "La inmigración mexicana bastaría para resolver el problema".

El verdadero asunto es cómo vamos a conseguir las aportaciones para el Seguro Social, no cómo vamos a dividirlos. ¿Podremos mejorar los estándares educativos y las destrezas de los trabajadores para que nuestra fuerza laboral produzca, gane y aporte más? No se trata de quién embauc a quién. Tampoco se trata de calificar como trivial el trabajo de los empleados domésticos. Quienquiera que conduzca el debate por ese camino es el verdadero pendejo.

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# Exit One Ovary, Enter One Doña

By Marisella Veiga

Right after scheduling my first surgery here in Arlington, Va., for the last week in January, I booked a flight to Lexington, Ky., for an overdue visit to my brother Luis and his family. I wanted to see his two boys, Daniel, age four and a half, and Michael, about to turn three, just before the operation.

Afterwards wouldn't have worked. Restrictions on lifting would be in effect for the six-week recovery period. What good would Tia Mari be if she couldn't lift the boys to hug them or to tackle them? No good at all.

On the return drive to the airport, my brother and I discussed turning 50. He will do so in May. My turn comes in about two and a half years. I recalled that in Puerto Rico, one is considered a senior at that age.

This demarcation was horrifying when I learned about it in my 20s. Now it is a source of

delight. I will be recognized as a Doña for my life experiences and the wisdom gleaned from them.

I don't have children and I don't lament it. Neither my husband nor his adult children are Latino. My husband has been prepped, but his children will have to be told when Doña-hood arrives.

I imagine them listening politely for a few minutes to what it means. They may find the cultural difference interesting. It's a topic worth talking about, but living with it is another story. Respecting elders? Consulting them? Learning from their experiences and applying the wisdom in their own lives? Doubtful. Never.

I'll forgive them over and over. Because of their youth-centered culture, they will probably chalk it up to early senility.

Meanwhile, I look forward to turning 50. I will make plans to enjoy this position of increased respect, even though most non-Latinos will not recognize that it's mine. I will own it anyway.

The surgery for the removal of endometriosis was more complex than expected. My left ovary was removed as well, and I spent two nights in the hospital's gynecological ward. My five-year-old niece Andrea was kind enough to visit and brought some blue modeling clay. Immediately, I made two small sculptures - birds' nests filled to the brim with perfectly rounded eggs. A week later I realized I had completed a tribute to my missing producer of eggs.

My only conscious concern about fertility is that I could still become Mami when Tia Mari has been a better role for me. The other ovary, it turns out, adjusts and continues its work. Among the various pains and aches accompanying the recovery of a gynecological patient, I feel a vacancy on the left side of my body. What was there my entire life is gone: ¡Adios!

On required walks around the ward, I met my peers. They were dressed in similar gowns and walked slowly, carefully through the carpeted hallways. These women are my age or older, Doñas, to be sure, who have undergone surgery on their reproductive organs. We would greet each other and then disappear into our warm rooms. The nursing staff had plenty

of bilingual members, among them a few who speak Spanish and English. One woman came in to adjust a plastic object that was, for a short time, attached to my body. She was efficient and kind. When she left, she wished me the best and called me "Madre."

It's not quite the Doña title that I've been looking forward to, but it will do.

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**Immigrant's Lack of Financial Access:**

**A Barrier to Economic Development**

The Applesseed Foundation and its centers in Chicago, Nebraska, and Texas today unveiled a new national outreach effort aimed at helping Latino immigrants navigate the American financial mainstream. As part of that effort, Applesseed released its new, one-of-a-kind series on nine brochures - in English and in Spanish - that help Latino consumers understand the importance of and the methods to join that system. During a telephone news conference today, Applesseed, its volunteers on the project, and affected community members all spoke about the need to connect the immigrant community with banking services that offer greater personal safety and asset building opportunities.

"Not being able to get a bank account is a lose-lose for everyone involved," said Linda Singer, executive director of the national Applesseed Foundation. "If you're not in the banking system in America, you're not in the game."

The Applesseed brochures specifically address the concerns and needs of recent Latino immigrants struggling to find a safe place to store their money, to send money affordably to relatives back home and to save money to buy a car or home.

"Without a relationship with a bank or credit union, it is almost impossible for you to buy a home, to send your children to

school, or to break the cycle of poverty for your family," said Singer. "If you're not able to open a checking or savings account, you're at risk of being robbed - either a victim of crime or of predatory financial practices."

More than half of the estimated 17.5 million Latin American immigrants in the US do not have a bank account or access to mainstream financial institutions. The fact that many Latinos do not use mainstream financial services is a safety issue - with cash - carrying immigrants specifically targeted for violent crimes; it is a credit issue - with the unbanked not able to establish credit histories or credit scores; and it is a wealth-building issue - with the unbanked having to rely heavily on predatory pay day lenders and money transfer services.

"Cash was the only way that I knew to purchase anything," said Oscar Rios Pohirieth, a Nebraska community member who immigrated from Mexico.

"Unfortunately I was taken advantage of and I attribute that to the fact I didn't have my money in a safe place. When we come to America, we don't come with a lot of trust. We come from countries where the banking system can be corrupt. Here in the US, it is a matter of educating people - letting them know how to get into the system and that the system is

safe." Applesseed contends that Latino immigrants' lack of access to the mainstream financial system hurts not only individuals, but the community at large. Money that could be reinvested in families and local businesses is instead skimmed away by high fees and fringe financial services. It also prevents the banking community - and countless - industries - from tapping into a previously untouched pool of new customers. In 2003 alone, Latinos transferred more than \$40 billion across the border. The vast majority of that was done through expensive wire transfers and personal networks - not through banks.

"The goal today is to raise awareness about these issues," said Ann Baddour, a project leader with Texas Applesseed.

"Ours has to be a multi-faceted approach; we have to reach out to the immigrant community and let them know how they, as consumers, can benefit from accessing what the mainstream banking system in America has to offer. It's about building relationships and building trust. We also have to convince the banking industry that increasing access is a positive thing for them that will result in many loyal new customers. It's a message that is being received, and we see the market changing in positive ways."

"The brochures that we released today try to - for the first time - address a great number of issues from the Hispanic consumer point of view," said Jose Marrero, designer of the brochures and an Applesseed consultant. "No other brochures in the country address these specific issues - nor do they address them in such a manner as to speak directly to the Hispanic immigrant consumer. These are unique - they are educational but they do not preach. They are informative, but they are not overwhelming. We want to be sure that every interested party - whether it is a consumer, a community organization, or a banking representative - knows these brochures are available to distribute to their friends or customers."

The new Bank on Your Future, Su Dinero Su Familia y su Futuro brochures address some of the most common concerns and questions raised by Latino immigrants in focus group studies conducted by some of the Applesseed centers. After significant research, Applesseed created these brochures to focus on issues such as how to establish and maintain credit; how to qualify for a car loan; how to open a checking account; and how to save money for the future.

Released today for the first time, downloadable and printable copies of each brochure are available at <http://www.applesseeds.net>



**Los Inmigrantes Cada Vez Son Más Instruidos**

Los inmigrantes en Estados Unidos suman más de 34 millones, lo que representa el 12 por ciento de la población, y, según un estudio que divulgó ayer la Oficina del Censo, los recién llegados tienen mayor nivel de educación.

Otro 11 por ciento de la población, esto es 30.4 millones de personas, son la "segunda generación", es decir personas que han nacido en Estados Unidos y uno de sus padres o ambos son extranjeros.

Aunque el flujo de inmigrantes ha crecido rápidamente en la última década -con un aumento del 2.3 por ciento tan sólo en el año de 2003 a 2004-, en proporción la presencia de extranjeros todavía no ha llegado al récord histórico del 14 por ciento que se registró en 1910.

Las cifras de la Oficina del Censo muestran por qué la inmigración es uno de los asuntos más controvertidos en el escenario político de EU: entre 1970 y 1979 el país aceptó 4.5 millones de inmigrantes; en la década de 1980 entraron 7.9 millones, y en la década de 1990 otros 12 millones.

Las proyecciones de la Oficina del Censo señalan que en esta década Estados Unidos recibirá a 14.2 millones de inmigrantes.

Los inmigrantes desde América Latina son el 53 por ciento del total, los de Asia el 25 por ciento, los de Europa el 14 por ciento, y los de África y otras regiones el 8 por ciento.

El oeste del país, con el 38 por ciento, es la región que alberga a más inmigrantes. seguido por el

sur con el 30 por ciento, el nordeste con el 22 por ciento y el medio oeste con el 11 por ciento.

El seguimiento que la Oficina del Censo hace de los inmigrantes en su aventura estadounidense, refleja que hay un rápido progreso en materia de educación, ingresos y situación socioeconómica entre los inmigrantes y sus hijos.

Los datos de 2004 muestran que entre los recién llegados el 27 por ciento tenía estudios de secundaria o títulos universitarios, pero entre los de "segunda generación" -los hijos de inmigrantes- esos logros educativos habían subido al 31 por ciento.

Entre los recién llegados, el 12 por ciento vivía en hogares con ingresos anuales inferiores a los 15 mil dólares, que marca en EU la línea de la pobreza. Ya en la segunda generación ese indicador de pobreza había bajado al 7 por ciento.

En el otro lado del indicador económico, el 44 por ciento de los recién llegados vivía en hogares con ingresos superiores a los 50 mil dólares al año, y en la segunda generación la proporción ha subido al 52 por ciento.

Un componente mayor del así llamado "sueño americano" -la casa propia- también se hizo presente en la estadística sobre los inmigrantes y sus hijos.

Los datos de 2004 muestran que entre los inmigrantes de primera generación el 56 por ciento era propietario de su casa, pero entre los hijos de inmigrantes la propiedad de la vivienda llegaba al 80 por ciento.

**US Accused of Backdrop on Anti-Immigrant Issues**

A national human rights organization accused the United States of dropping back 150 years in its democratic process since it allows bounty hunters nail undocumented immigrants in the Mexican-American border.

Ramírez labeled this way the "Minuteman" project, integrated by some 500 armed civilians whose purpose is nailing undocumented immigrants in the Arizona-Mexico border to hand them over to the Border Patrol.

After handing in an annual complaints report from immigrants who have suffered some sort of abuse from the authorities, Ramírez considered such program "not only deserves a protest from the Mexican government but also an investigation from the American States Organization (ASO)".

"We are wondering where the respect for the Constitution of the

United States is", if patrols of this kind are tolerated, an illegal wall on the border is built and law initiatives that make workers pass as terrorists are passed, he said.

The AFSC, a religious organization, handed in for the first time an annual report of abuses without specifying the number of denunciations or identifying the denouncers.

"Those ID's will not be disclosed to protect the integrity of the denouncers since we have some reprisals experiences", the coordinator of the AFSC Border Project informed.

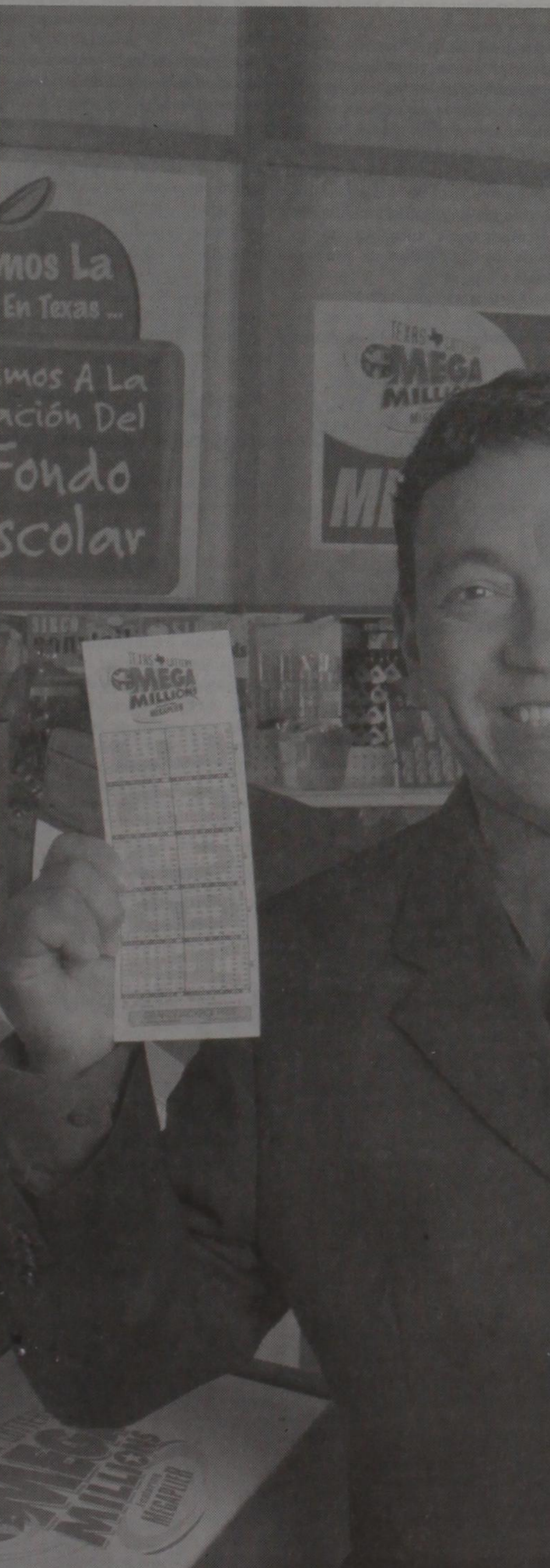
He also said "we don't have exact figures about denunciations since we have been waiting for the Homeland Security Department (HSD) to organize and work on these complaints".

The report "A study of the im-

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# María Celeste Arrarás Participa como Invitada Especial en "Nuevas voces de America" de Telemundo

Miami, FL - 23 de febrero del 2005 - "Nuevas Voces de América", el nuevo programa reality de Telemundo diseñado para identificar a la próxima súper estrella latina, destacará a la personalidad de la televisión hispana María Celeste Arrarás durante su edición del domingo, 27 de febrero. La presentadora de "Al Rojo Vivo" participará como estrella invitada para aconsejar a los participantes sobre cómo manejar a la prensa, un elemento importante en el entrenamiento de estos jóvenes quienes comienzan su carrera artística. El programa semanal se transmite todos los domingos a las 8p.m. (7/c).

Este domingo, cinco participantes serán eliminados, dejando a 15 finalistas en el programa. Los televidentes los verán preparándose para su primera presentación en el escenario, la cual será seguida por los comentarios y puntaje de parte de los jueces. Los dos participantes que tengan la puntuación más baja serán presentados a la audiencia quien votará por primera vez via te-



llefónica y a través de mensajes de texto para elegir quien se queda en el programa.

María Celeste se reunirá con los finalistas en los estudios de

Al Rojo Vivo, donde les enseñará valiosas técnicas que los ayudarán a manejar encuentros con los medios de comunicación. La reconocida periodista puer-

torriqueña, quien ha entrevistado a varias importantes personalidades, también compartirá con los finalistas sobre su propia experiencia con la prensa, habiendo estado ella en la silla de los entrevistados debido a su carrera, la cual la ha llevado a figurar en las portadas de numerosas revistas y periódicos.

Durante el episodio, María Celeste entrevistará a los participantes y cada uno de ellos se sentará en la silla caliente para una experiencia muy real.

Telemundo, cadena estadounidense de televisión en español, es la fuente esencial de entretenimiento, noticias y deportes para los hispanos. Transmitiendo una programación singular a nivel local y nacional para el segmento de la población de más rápido crecimiento en los Estados Unidos, Telemundo llega al 92% de los televidentes hispanos en 118 mercados a través de sus 15 estaciones, 36 afiliadas y casi 684 sistemas de cable. Telemundo es una propiedad de NBC Universal, una de las compañías de medios y entretenimiento más promi-



## Sanz rejects turning his private life into a "circus"

Spanish singer Alejandro Sanz stated today that he won't let his private life become "a circus" after the press spread rumors about marital problems and even a breakup with his wife, Mexican model Jaydy Michel.

The Iberian singer-songwriter rejected answering questions about this marriage in an interview held by Univision, the biggest Hispanic TV broadcaster in the United States.

"When you talk about your private life in front of the media, in the end your life becomes a circus and I won't allow it", emphasized in program Primer Impacto.

"Neither for me, nor for my daughter, nor for Jaydy"

The creator of hits as "Corazon partido" and "No es lo mismo", said that although "I'm incorrigible", his life has changed too much with the arrival of his daughter Manuela.

"Life changes a lot, mainly the time you spend with them (the children)", indicated the Spanish star who emphasized that daughters "use" their parents.

Sanz arrived to Miami to attend Thursday the XVII Annual "Lo Nuestro" award ceremony that honors the best in Latin music according to Univision.

## "I am not Juanes' female alterego", Julieta Venegas

Mexican singer Julieta Venegas refused being considered the "female alter-ego" of Colombian singer Juanes, who is experimenting with several music genres without sticking to pop.

In an interview published this Monday by the El Clarin newspaper, Venegas affirmed she never thought about comparing herself to Juanes despite the fact they both reached fame almost at the same time.

"Our paths have continuously crossed. When I was recording "Buenivento", the album before "Si", he was making "Un día normal", the Mexican singer stated.

The singer of "Andar conmigo" explained that while Juanes' career consolidated with his second album, she had to wait for her third one since the other two just opened the way for her.

"My work has been more personal, maybe irregular. I don't know if I have an established plan already", the singer of "Lento", and "Si", among others explained.

On the other hand, Venegas recognized the popularity of "Si" exploded and Grammy and Billboard nominations took her by storm.

"What's really exciting is how people embraced the album. I think nominations and awards are just a reflection of that. The album had such a big impact on people because it is a very personal work of mine, so it is like a surprise", Venegas said.

Quite popular in Argentina already, Venegas said such fame was aided by the singer Diego Torres who invited her to make a duet in his country, a proposal she accepted without even hesitating about it.



JULIETA VENEGAS

## Small-Space Garden Inspirations

TIGHT ON YARD or garden space? Don't let lack of room cramp your creativity. The Old Farmer's Almanac Gardener's Companion All-Seasons Garden Guide shows you how to create and maintain a variety of petite beds that will offer instant garden delight.

You can create a dazzling miniature bed in only a few square feet—under a tree, near the front door, or even in that sun-baked skinny strip between the house and the sidewalk. Small-space gardening offers immediate gratification. Plus, small gardens are easy to maintain, so there is more time to enjoy them.

Try this tip for stone wall plantings: Fill an old nylon stocking with soil so that it looks like a sausage and tie off the top. Set it into a deep crack between stones, with the knot toward the inside of the crack. Cut a slit in the end that faces out, and tuck a trailing plant—ivy, hanging petunias, or

portulaca—into the contained soil.

When planting vegetables (seeds or seedlings), thin them two to three inches apart in every direction. The same goes for annual herbs such as basil, cilantro, and dwarf dill.

Go vertical to add dimension and take advantage of every bit of space. Cucumbers, pole beans, and squash do well on trellises in a square foot of ground. Pink mandevilla or 'Blue Light' clematis vines on supports lift color up to eye level.

Put a border around your small garden, even if it's only a line of stones. It will make your garden stand out against its competing environment.

## HEALTH AWARENESS

### Una prueba sencilla podria prevenir el cáncer de colon

Un nuevo método para detectar el cáncer de colon podría ayudar a que más hombres y mujeres de más de 50 años de edad se sometan a este examen sin que tengan que practicarse la colonoscopia.

Síntomas Cuando hay síntomas, el cáncer colorrectal suele estar avanzado y las posibilidades de supervivencia son muy escasas.

Por este motivo, es fundamental un diagnóstico precoz basado principalmente en la pérdida de sangre en heces.

Algunos de los síntomas que puede presentar un paciente son:  
 • Cambio en los hábitos intestinales: diarrea, estreñimiento o estrechamiento de los excrementos. Se considera como norma que las diarreas son características de los casos de cáncer de intestino ciego y colon ascendente. Mientras que el estreñimiento lo es de los localizados en descendente y sigma.  
 • La diarrea se produce por el proceso de irritación y el es-

treñimiento debido a que el tumor está estrechando el intestino y no permite el paso de la materia fecal.

• Sensación de tener que evacuar y no se alivia al hacerlo.  
 • Sangrado rectal o en los excrementos.

• Debilidad, cansancio y disminución del apetito: estos síntomas se dan cuando el cáncer está muy avanzado.

• Masa tumoral: cuando el tumor está muy desarrollado puede detectarse la masa en una palpación.

• Dolor cólico: sensación de plenitud o molestia indefinida, a veces difusa y otras veces localizada. Cuando se produce un cuadro de obstrucción puede provocar dolor debido al estrechamiento que se produce en el intestino. También el dolor se ocasiona debido a las infiltraciones perirrectales de las estructuras nerviosas.  
 • Ictericia: coloración amarillenta de la piel y los ojos debido a una afectación hepática.

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### NCLR to Host Public Policy Reception & Texas State Lobbying Day

Austin, TX - The National Council of La Raza (NCLR), the largest national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the U.S., will host a reception in Austin for legislators, NCLR affiliates, and other Hispanic community leaders to kick off the upcoming session of the Texas Legislature and highlight state advocacy priorities for 2005. The reception will take

continued on page 5

# The 11th Annual Viva Aztlan Dance & Mariachi Festival

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 Memorial Civic Center Theatre  
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## African Americans & Latinos

From Page One

Latinos are underrepresented in drug courts. Despite the fact that drug courts have been shown to be an effective way to reduce drug use, recidivism and incarceration costs. Latinos represent only 14% of the drug court population in Dallas (versus 49% White, and 35% African American), and only 1% of the drug court population in the Jefferson County Drug Court (versus 34% White and 65% African American).

African American admissions for drug offenses drove the growth in drug prisoner populations. The number of people admitted to prison in Texas for a drug offense grew from 5,805 in 1986 to 11,722 in 1999—a 102% increase. But during that time, the number of White drug prisoner admissions increased by 671 (from 2,464 in 1986 to 3,135 in 1999), while the number of African American drug prisoner admissions increased by 4,837 admissions (from 1,352 to 6,189).

The impact of increasing use of drug imprisonment for Texas youth is concentrated among youth of color. Among young people (age 15-29), the drug prison admission rate rose 73% during the period (from 56 to 98

per 100,000 youth). While the young White rate declined by 9% (from 46 to 42 per 100,000 youth), the young African American rate rose by 360% (from 95 to 437 per 100,000 youth).

Researchers estimate that lost economic productivity due to incarceration in the African American community exceeds \$1 billion dollars (\$1.265 billion).

If certain categories of people went to drug treatment programs instead of county jails, communities could realize significant savings in county jail operating costs (Harris County, \$1.284 million, Dallas, \$1.240 million, Bexar, \$ 893,991, Travis, \$359,765).

"While this story is not unique to Texas, too many people from the Latino and African American communities are bearing the brunt of policies designed to arrest, detain, incarcerate and imprison," says Jason Ziedenberg, executive director the Justice Policy Institute and co-author of the report. "We must heed the call for investments in affordable higher education, health care for young people, and reforms to the Texas criminal justice system that continues to produce these startling figures.

# Seis Pasos para Conducir una Búsqueda de Empleo Exitosa

Para ayudarles a los que buscan empleo a realizar sus propósitos del año nuevo, TWC ha desarrollado

**ELABORE** un historial profesional. El primer paso para una nueva búsqueda de empleo comienza con tomarse el tiempo para examinar la experiencia de los empleos anteriores. Ocupe a un auditor a que le ayude en el desarrollo de su *curriculum vitae* o portafolio. El auditor le ayudará a los que busquen empleo, un empleo determinado por sus calificaciones, sirviendo como un recordatorio de cuales habilidades y éxitos deben ser destacados, y cuales perspectivas deben ser establecidas con el empleador potencial. Buscadores de empleo también deben tomar en cuenta que sus relaciones, tal como amigos y colegas, pueden ser capaces de presentar oportunidades nuevas de negocio.

**MATRICULESE** o regístrese en WorkInTexas.com, una guía en línea de empleo sin costo para empresarios y para los que buscan empleo, que brinda más de 340,000 puestos disponibles a nivel estatal y también es dis-

ponible en español para los hispanohablantes que buscan empleo. Usando un recurso en línea proveerá acceso rápido a miles de anuncios de empleo y también ofrece la habilidad de solo enfocarse en los puestos que coinciden con sus calificaciones. Mantenga la información de contacto al corriente en el sitio, y tome ventaja de los instrumentos disponibles para realizar la búsqueda de empleo como información sobre el salario, entrenamiento y recursos educacionales.

**PREPARESE** para la entrevista. Antes de comenzar la búsqueda actual, buscadores de empleo deben ser organizados. Desarrolle un sistema de archivar para guardar copias extras del *curriculum vitae* y ejemplos de trabajo pertinente. Ahora también es tiempo de ponerse en contacto con sus mentores, supervisores de empleos anteriores y otros contactos para ponerlos al corriente. Revise su información de contactos y pídale permiso de usarlos como referencia apropiada.

**LLAME**, conoza y familiarícese con el empleador. Después de pasar el primer proceso de ob-

servación, es tiempo para el segundo paso—la entrevista. Esté seguro de saber el "quien, que y cuando" de la entrevista, y obtenga direcciones por si acaso. Durante la preparación, practique contestar las preguntas con un amigo y esté seguro de destacar las habilidades que coinciden con las calificaciones del puesto. Tenga un buen entendimiento de la compañía y del puesto disponible, y recuerde de mantenerse relajado durante la conversación. El que la personalidad y el nivel cultural estén de acuerdo probablemente sean los factores que influyan la decisión del entrevistador. Después de la entrevista, envíe a cada entrevistador una carta de agradecimiento.

**CONTACTE** la empresa. Ya que tiene las oportunidades identificadas y el *curriculum vitae* en mano, es hora de contactar a la empresa. Siga las instrucciones específicas de la empresa sobre el proceso de aplicar; algunas requieren una carta de introducción y copia del *curriculum vitae*, mientras otras piden que llene una solicitud. De cualquier manera, la meta es proyectar una imagen pro-

fesional y, a la larga, conseguir una entrevista.

**ORGANIZE** su plan de trabajo. Revise toda su correspondencia cuidadosamente, busque errores de ortografía y esté seguro de que todos los párrafos estén bien organizados. Si tiene alguna duda, pregúntele a un amigo o miembro de familia a que revise los materiales de la solicitud.

"Encontrar un empleo nuevo, o hasta realizar una carrera, no tiene que ser una gran batalla", dijo Rath. "Los profesionales de TWC están disponibles a través del estado para proveer asistencia a cualquier persona en Texas que quiera lograr nuevas metas laborales".

La Comisión de la Fuerza Laboral de Texas es la agencia gubernamental responsable por supervisar y proveer servicio de desarrollo laboral a los empleadores y personas buscando trabajo en Texas. Los servicios principales de esta agencia y de Texas Workforce Solutions son financiados por el gobierno y generalmente gratis para todas las personas en el estado. Para recibir información adicional, visite <http://www.texasworkforce.org>.

## Anti-Immigration Issues

From Page 3

Impact of immigration law enforcement in border communities" has the objective of "initiating a serious dialogue about the immigration problem and the institutions involved in it".

He said there are currently 10 immigration operations in progress nowadays in airports, companies who offer their services to military bases, public transport and Hispanic neighborhoods.

"But none of these have a mechanism to make authorities responsible if any sort of abuse is committed", Ramirez affirmed.

He criticized how "the only policy from the HSD about it is the confusion policy. It is unclear, irresponsible and each agency has its own guidelines".

The AFCS' 2005 report denounces raids without a search warrant in Hispanic neighborhoods of the San Diego county.

The report also stated officers

"ask about aliens, detain people without informing their relatives where they are being taken or confiscate documents and later on deport the person as an undocumented alien".

"Besides frightening the Latin community and immigrants, some 62 undocumented immigrants were detained, most of them Mexican workers", he affirmed.

"Now we want the Congress to explain where the budget for such operation came from, if it was paid by our taxes and how they classify a terrorist or a worker", he said.

He considered that some of the proposals passed by the Congress, such as that of building parallel fences to other built on the border or preventing immigrants from having driver licenses "prove how decisions are being taken based on ignorance of our order way of living".

# LULAC Fights for Social Security & Calls for Reform Not Elimination

The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) is troubled about the Bush Administration's plans to privatize Social Security.

According to a recent survey by AARP Latinos are very concerned about a secure retirement and believe that Social Security should be reformed not eliminated.

"AARP's findings demonstrate that Hispanics overwhelmingly want to keep Social Security in its current form with modifications where necessary," said Dr. Gabriela Lemus, LULAC National Director of Policy and Legislation.

Sixty-two percent of Hispanics believe that private accounts will hurt Social Security.

The vast majority of Hispanics believe Social Security should be strengthened, not replaced. The

changes, however, should be made now.

According to the survey, nearly nine in ten Hispanics (85%) reported that changes should be made sooner rather than later to avoid more severe impacts on the community.

The Hispanic community has an enormous stake in this debate.

According to information from the U.S. Census Bureau, more than 75 percent of Latinos aged 65 or older receive income from Social Security, but only 15 percent have income from pensions or annuities and 28 percent have income from assets. Over three-quarters of these individuals are reliant on Social Security for half or more of their total income. Almost half rely on Social Security for 90 percent or more of their total income.

The overall numbers increase even more for non-married Hispanic men and women, particularly unmarried Latinas: 83 percent rely on Social Security for 50 percent or more of their total income.

The numbers are clear, the Latino population over 65 years of age is heavily

reliant on Social Security and according to the U.S. Bureau of Census, without it, 33 percent of older Hispanics would fall into poverty. As it stands, approximately 22 percent of older Latinos are living in poverty.

"Without Social Security, the numbers would definitely increase placing additional burdens on their families and diminishing their sense of independence," added Lemus.

Lastly, every dollar diverted to

private accounts will add a dollar to public borrowing. Current estimates state that the government would have to borrow anywhere from \$1 trillion to \$2 trillion to create private accounts.

It is estimated that in the first decade \$6 trillion would be added to the public debt.

"Unfortunately, it will be young Latinos and Latinas, among other young people, who will have to foot the bill," Lemus concluded.

The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) is the oldest and largest Latino civil rights organization in the United States. LULAC advances the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, health, and civil rights of Hispanic Americans through community-based programs.

## Bush's Social Security Proposal Hurts Hispanic Retirees'

From Page One

The administration contends that by the year 2042, when workers now in their mid-20s begin to retire, the current system would be bankrupt.

Those now retired or near retire-

ment age would not be affected by the changes, the White House emphasizes.

Critics of Social Security privatization contend that the president is inflating the severity of

the problem and using the word "crisis" too loosely, as a scare tactic.

Rep. Bob Menéndez (D-N.J.), asks the question: "If it's such a crisis, why isn't it in his budget?"

Supporters of private accounts say the plan would allow younger workers to "take ownership" of their retirement and create a larger amount of retirement insurance.

Speaking to Hispanic Link, Berna Brannon, analyst for the Cato Institute, a public policy

group in Washington, D.C., says that critics are focusing primarily on the guaranteed benefits of the current Social Security plan and are not looking at long-term investment. "They are assuming that the accounts bring them nothing. And you need to look at the entire picture," she says.

Opponents counter that the system was never intended to be an investment program and there are market risks that could cost them dearly.

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From Page 4

place on February 23, 2005 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Austin Marriott at the Capitol located at 701 E. 11th Street, Austin, TX.

The following day, February 24, NCLR Texas affiliates - 39 community-based organizations providing direct services to the Latino community throughout the state - will assemble in the state's capitol to engage policymakers in discussions on issues important to the Latino Community. NCLR and its affiliates will focus this year's advocacy efforts upon improving the state's juve-

nile justice system, expanding access to health care for Latino children and families, and increasing funding for public education programs that have a proven track record of success for Latino students in the state.

NCLR President and CEO, Janet Murguía, along with several key state legislators, will speak during the reception program. The honorary co-chairs of the reception, which is sponsored by ChevronTexaco, are the Texas Legislative Black Caucus, the Mexican American Legislative Caucus, and the Texas Senate Hispanic Caucus.

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# Aprueban el Voto de los Mexicanos en el Extranjero

La Cámara de Diputados aprobó ayer casi por unanimidad el proyecto de ley para que millones de mexicanos radicados en Estados Unidos puedan participar en las elecciones presidenciales a partir de 2006.

La trascendente reforma al Código Federal de Instituciones y Procedimientos Electorales, que por primera vez en la historia permitiría la realización de comicios extraterritoriales, fue adoptada por 391 votos a favor, 5 en contra, y 22 abstenciones. La reforma limita el voto para la elección de presidente.

No obstante que el resultado favorable fue abrumador, la fracción parlamentaria del Partido Acción Nacional (PAN), del presidente Vicente Fox, opuso a varios artículos y cláusulas del texto final.

Para la entrada en vigor de esta tentativa legislativa se requiere aún la ratificación del Senado, donde se espera que el documento sea sometido a revisión en el transcurso de los próximos días, a más tardar a finales de abril.

Los analistas estiman que los senadores también darán el aval a tal propuesta ya que, con la contundente aceptación de este martes, los diputados mostraron el evidente consenso político existente en los distintos partidos.

El Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE) ha anticipado que el proyecto debe ser convertido en ley durante la presente Legislatura, que termina el 30 de abril próximo, con el objeto de disponer del tiempo necesario para organizar el proceso electoral fuera de México.

La importante propuesta aprobada por la Cámara de Diputados permitiría que alrededor de cuatro millones de mexicanos radicados en suelo estadounidense acudan a las urnas en las próximas votaciones para Presidente de la República.

Pueblo migrante  
En el desenlace de la sesión de ayer, y tras de producirse el conteo positivo de votos, una treintena de líderes de la comunidad mexicana en Estados Unidos exhibieron mantas y cartulinas en las que se leía: "El Congreso apostó por los migrantes y se sacó la lotería", "Felicidades a las diputadas y diputados, el pueblo migrante sabrá pagarle a México", y "Nuestras remesas valen, pero vale más nuestro

voto". El delicado tópico fue planteado a debate ya avanzada la tarde luego de una discusión entre la directiva de la cámara y algunos legisladores acerca de una polémica serie de "fe de erratas" que la semana pasada se le hicieron al texto original.

Superada esta desavenencia, y para empezar la ronda de posicionamientos partidistas, la diputada María Elena Martínez Rivera, del Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), comenzó sugiriendo que la iniciativa presentada debería ser vista como "el puente para acercarnos a ese México que está más allá de nuestras fronteras, y como una vía para cimentar mejores relaciones con ese enorme depósito de capital humano que se nos ha ido".

Adelantó que, con su aprobación, se estaría incluyendo "en el proceso de consolidación de la democracia mexicana un elemento que faltaba, el elemento de la inclusión y la decisión de que también los mexicanos que están más allá de nuestras fronteras, integran la patria".

Principal impulsora de esa legislación, Martínez Rivera sostuvo que tal propuesta vendría a "reivindicar a nuestros migrantes", pero también lograría ubicar a México en el marco internacional que "hoy mismo se presenta en materia de votos nacionales en el extranjero".

En el mismo tono, la diputada Adriana González Carrillo, del Partido Acción Nacional (PAN), notificó que su grupo partidista se manifestaba a favor del voto de los mexicanos en el extranjero porque "ellos son protagonistas en la construcción de un país incluyente, plural y democrático, que busca el bien común de esta gran nación".

Recordó que, así como en el pasado se logró el reconocimiento de ese derecho a las personas que no tenían acceso a la educación, a los indígenas y a las mujeres, vio menester confirmar el compromiso adquirido con "nuestros hermanos mexicanos más allá de nuestras fronteras, nuestros queridísimos paisanos".

González Carrillo llamó a sus correligionarios a no frenarse ante las fronteras, para que "el paso que hoy damos juntos nos lleve a trabajar mano a mano, codo a codo por lograr consolidar la democracia en nuestro país".



Por parte del Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD) tomó la palabra el diputado Emilio Zebadúa González quien hizo notar que su partido siempre ha estado a favor del voto en el exterior y que, por tanto, "refrenda después de casi una década de consideraciones y de negociaciones, de impulsos y de obstáculos que han sido finalmente salvados junto con la voluntad democrática de quienes reconocen que la nación mexicana se extiende más allá de las fronteras geográficas de nuestro país".

No dudó en considerar que la iniciativa debatida refleja "la voluntad expresa de los mexicanos organizados en el extranjero, que han venido aportando ideas contribuyendo en el diseño eficaz del sistema que puede ser puesto en práctica en Estados Unidos, y otras partes del mundo".

Zebadúa González convocó a votar por un esquema ambicioso de reformas electorales, pero al mismo tiempo por "un compromiso con la congruencia democrática y con nuestra relación con los ciudadanos mexicanos que contribuyen día a día a definir lo que es México como nación".

Similares pronunciamientos fueron emitidos por los portavoces del Partido Verde Ecologista de México (PVEM), Partido del Trabajo (PT), y de Convergencia por la Democracia.

Disposiciones  
Sobre el dictamen adoptado en

la Cámara de Diputados, se contemplan medidas como: 1.— La credencialización de los mexicanos residentes en el extranjero, 2.— La posibilidad de hacer cam-

paña fuera del país, 3.— El voto en casillas instaladas en el exterior, 4.— El sufragio en elecciones presidenciales únicamente, 5.— El establecimiento de juntas del IFE por cada país y ciudad extranjera, donde se llevarían a cabo las elecciones, y 6.— Las autoridades electorales mexicanas tendrán la facultad de intervenir en caso de impugnaciones, delitos u omisiones presentadas desde el exterior.

En torno a los artículos transitorios para las elecciones del 2006, se establece la celebración de acuerdos entre el IFE y las autoridades extranjeras para realizar y facilitar la jornada electoral, y se instruye a la instalación de centros de votación por cada 15 mil ciudadanos registrados.

Paralelamente ordena la formación del catálogo general de electores en el extranjero para la elección presidencial de ese mismo año, la instalación de módulos de información en México y en el exterior a partir de junio próximo, y la realización de una campaña

de foto credencialización en consulados y embajadas, reservando la autonomía del IFE.

Para las elecciones concretas se considera además la instalación de casillas en consulados y embajadas, cuando no sea posible ponerlas en escuelas, oficinas y lugares públicos permitidos.

Del mismo modo autoriza la instrumentación de los actos preparatorios del voto a partir del año 2005.

En el dictamen se hace la observación de que las reformas y adiciones descritas han sido consideradas técnica, financiera y operativamente viables por los consejeros y funcionarios del IFE., responsable de coordinar las elecciones.

Finalmente, se recalca que la propia Cámara de Diputados previó, en el Presupuesto de Egresos de la Federación, los recursos financieros que son necesarios para que tal instituto realice las actividades preparatorias que en este año derivarían de la nueva norma.

## Berger y Fox Crean Comisión Arbitral

El presidente guatemalteco Oscar Berger y su colega mexicano Vicente Fox acordaron ayer crear una comisión de arbitraje que resuelva disputas generadas por las barreras comerciales que México impone a productos de Guatemala.

Luego de una reunión privada en la residencia presidencial de Los Pinos, Fox dijo que la comisión comenzará a funcionar en mayo y los primeros productos guatemaltecos que serán analizados son el azúcar, los textiles y el camarón.

"Los acuerdos de libre comercio son para hacer comercio, para eliminar barreras, son para desgravar y en este caso tenemos que prestar atención a resolver esos obstáculos o diferencias que pueda haber por el momento", dijo Fox.

Añadió que instruyó a su gobierno a dar prioridad a Guatemala en términos comerciales por encima de países lejanos o con los cuales no se tienen tratados en la materia.

"Le estamos confirmando al mundo que somos buenos vecinos, que somos hermanos", señaló Berger, quien cumple su segundo día de visita de Estado al país.

México y Guatemala son parte del Tratado del Triángulo del Norte, un acuerdo comercial que entró en vigor en 2001 y del que también forman parte El Salvador y Honduras.



Los mandatarios también fueron testigos de la firma de un memorándum de entendimiento para ampliar la colaboración en materia de combate a la delincuencia organizada y un acuerdo de cooperación académica y científica en materia de seguridad social entre ambos gobiernos.

Fox dijo que durante su encuentro abordaron temas como las vías de comunicación necesarias para conectar ambos países, la migración y el respeto a los derechos humanos de los migrantes; se-

guridad fronteriza y turismo.

Berger calificó la reunión de "absolutamente productiva" y dijo que en materia de seguridad sus gobiernos están decididos a enfrentar el crimen organizado y el narcotráfico de manera conjunta.

"América Latina está viviendo una crisis de violencia, pero nunca antes en la historia de México y de Guatemala había habido tanto acercamiento entre los encargados de darle seguridad a nuestros habitantes", dijo.

## Hispanic Print will Grow the Fastest in 2005

One of the most reputable sources on the advertising and media industry in the country, Ad Age Magazine, announced that Hispanic Print Media will grow the fastest in the next year, reaching a 12% increase, outpacing Hispanic broadcast media. This growth will help generate a whopping \$3.5 billion in total revenues for the Hispanic market.

Hispanic Media as a whole is expected to grow 11% in 2005, outpacing mainstream media by as much as 4%, according to Ad Age.

Included in the billion-dollar growth, Hispanic Print is expected to increase by 12% in 2005, after already showing steady gains in 2004 with multiple new Spanish-language publication launches all across the United States.

Next month, the National Association of Hispanic Publications, Inc. (NAHP, Inc.), whose members include Hispanic publishers and editors from over 150 publications nationwide, will be holding its 2005 National Convention from March 9 through March 12 at the Loews Hotel located in Philadelphia's Center City downtown district. The NAHP will present various opportunities for the public to learn more about this viable and thriving market.

The 2005 NAHP, Inc. Convention is expected to draw the largest number of Hispanic print professionals to meet with various members of the public and private sectors from community leaders to government officials, over the course of three days of workshops and networking opportunities.

For more information on the

NAHP, Inc. 2005 National Convention, including registration information and deadlines, visit the association's web site at <http://www.nahp.org> or you may contact Joe Carrillo, Chief Operations Officer, at [joc@nahp.org](mailto:joc@nahp.org) or at 202-662-7430.

About the National Association of Hispanic Publications, Inc. The National Association of Hispanic Publications, Inc. (NAHP, Inc.) is the largest organization representing Hispanic publications at the national level. NAHP Inc. works with more than 200 member and affiliated publications that share a combined circulation of more than 10 mil-

lion. Its member publications reach more than 50 percent of Hispanic households in 55 U.S. markets, every week. NAHP, Inc. provides professional tools to assist Hispanic publications to more effectively reach their readership. NAHP Inc. works hard at keeping the Hispanic community informed and educated about social issues, updating its readers about member publications, providing technical assistance and improving the quality of Hispanic publications at the national level. Please, visit our website for more information: <http://www.nahp.org> or call 202-662-7250.

### AVISO LEGAL

Estos juegos de raspar de la Comisión de la Lotería de Texas terminan el 2 de abril de 2005. Tienes hasta el 29 de septiembre de 2005 para redimir cualquier boleto de éstos juegos:

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| Juego #493<br><b>Triple Tripler</b><br>Probabilidades son de 1 en 4.66           | Juego #510<br><b>\$100,000 Payout</b><br>Probabilidades son de 1 en 3.39 |
| Juego #494<br><b>Cash Craze</b><br>Probabilidades son de 1 en 4.69               |  |
| Juego #498<br><b>Spicy 8's</b><br>Probabilidades son de 1 en 4.69                |  |
| Juego #503<br><b>Money Maker</b><br>Probabilidades son de 1 en 3.76              |  |



Las probabilidades mostradas aquí son probabilidades generales de ganar cualquier premio, incluyendo los premios iguales al valor del boleto. Los expendedores de la Lotería están autorizados para redimir premios de hasta e incluyendo \$599. Premios de \$600 o más deben ser cobrados en persona en un Centro de Reclamo de la Lotería o por correo con un formulario de cobro de la Lotería completado; sin embargo, premios anuales o premios de más de \$999.999 deben ser cobrados en persona en la oficina central de la Comisión de la Lotería de Texas en Austin. Llama a la Línea de Servicio al Cliente 1-800-37-LOTTO o visita la página de Internet de la Lotería en [www.tlottery.org](http://www.tlottery.org) para más información y la dirección del Centro de Reclamo más cercano. La Lotería de Texas no es responsable por el robo o la pérdida de boletos, o por boletos extraviados en el correo. Boleto, transacciones, jugadores y ganadores son sujetos también, y jugadores y ganadores están de acuerdo en cumplir con todas las leyes que se aplican al caso, las reglas de la Comisión, regulaciones, normas, directivas, instrucciones, condiciones, procedimientos y decisiones finales del director ejecutivo. Un juego de raspar puede seguir vendiéndose aun cuando todos los premios mayores han sido cobrados. Tienes que tener 18 años de edad o más para poder comprar un boleto de la Lotería de Texas. Sé Responsable. Recuerda, es solo un juego. La Lotería de Texas apoya la educación en Texas, contribuyendo a la Fundación del Fondo Escolar. © 2005 Texas Lottery Commission. Todos los Derechos Reservados.

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