



# Viva Aztlan Festival Starts Friday

The beauty and traditions of Mexican Folkloric Dance will arrive as curtains open to welcome dance groups for the Annual "Viva Aztlan Dance Festival" to be held March 17 and 18 at the Municipal Auditorium in Lubbock, Texas.

Taking part in the Festival for the first year will be the Midland Hispanic Culture Center who will be taking twenty one of their members to compete in the Children's Division. Their performance will be at 9 a.m. in the morning on Saturday March 18th.

The festival sets out to show the richness of a diverse Texas by showing the many dances traditionally danced in Hispanic celebrations and expressing the feelings and emotions of Chicanos.

More than 500 young persons ages 3 and up will take to the stage to compete for awards to be presented during the Festival. On Friday, the festival will feature individual competition on Friday which will include judging on both dancing and essays submitted. Texas Tech University has pledged two \$500 scholarship for the award winners. On Saturday the Festival will feature whole folkloric groups from Texas New Mexico and Chicago vieing for awards. Awards will be given include the Best Company, the Best Technique and Form,

Best Choreography, Best Costumes, and Best Male and Female Dancers and many more awards for a children's division and A,B or C division adult groups. And an all-star company consisting of a male and

4th of July or the Lubbock Arts Festival takes many hours of work in order to perfect the intricate steps, hand make the colorful dresses and learn the different styles of dances.

Activities will begin on Friday with workshops for the dance companies conducted by reknown instructors who have studied in Mexico and have years of experience in teaching dance.

The event will consist of three competition sessions, Friday starting at 12 noon for individuals, Saturday starting at 9 am for Children's groups and Saturday starting at 1:30 for adult groups and the Municipal Auditorium in Lubbock. Evening sessions will also be held Friday and Saturday starting at 8 PM.

Tickets for the general public are priced at three dollars per person, per day; \$10 per day reserved and other ticket packages that include receptions and workshops. General admission seating is first come first serve. For ticket information call 806-763-3841. The event is being made possible in grant from the Lubbock City Council as recommended by the Lubbock Arts Alliance, Southwestern Bell Telephone Co., Texas Tech University, and through the generosity of various Lubbock businesses.



female dancer from each company will also be recognized.

The event is meant to make people realize that the dances normally seen during the Fiestas held to commemorate holidays such as el Diez y Seis de Septiembre, Mexican Independence Day, Cinco de Mayo and also featured at the the Fiesta stage during the

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

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# ELEITOR

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## Dura Y Larga Campaña Por La Presidencia Espera A Bush Y Gore

Por Orlando Lizama

Washington, - El demócrata Al Gore y el republicano George W. Bush libraron una larga y dura campaña por la presidencia de EEUU, vaticinaron hoy expertos políticos después de que ambos aseguraran su candidatura en las primarias realizadas el martes en seis estados del sur del país.

### Comentarios de Bidal

by Bidal Agüero

It was a good race in the Precinct 3 election and it was rather surprising that there was not a run-off. Our congratulations to Gilbert Flores and hope you do good in November. For those of you who did not vote and if you live in Precinct 4, you can exercise your right to vote on April 11.

It's going to be a big Friday and Saturday in Lubbock as 10 Mexican Folkloric Ballets will show their expertise in dancing. The Viva Aztlan Festival will come to Lubbock for the fifth year at the Municipal Auditorium. Reserved tickets are still available at the door. The event committee asks your support in buying reserved tickets. Fundraising has been short this year so it is essential that as many people as possible make it to the event.

\*\*\*Pico de Gallo\*\*\*

In another month, elections will be held again to pick members for the Lubbock City Council and the LISD school board.

Let's hope that there is more than one candidate in each position and we'll have a choice.



Estamos a medio camino para poner fin a la era Clinton-Gore en Washington D.C.", agregó al comprometerse a "reformar las instituciones del Gobierno estadounidense".

Poco antes, Gore había desafiado a Bush a realizar un debate en las próximas semanas y a controlar los fondos utilizados para la campaña publicitaria.

Pero Bush rechazó de plano el desafío alegando que era demasiado pronto para comenzar los debates nacionales y añadió que su rival no tenía "credibilidad" en el tema de la reforma a la financiación de campañas.

"Esta será una campaña muy dura y muy larga", vaticinó Ann Richards, ex gobernadora demócrata de Texas, convertida ahora en experta en asuntos políticos.

"La lucha será muy pareja, tal vez el gobernador tenga alguna ventaja", manifestó Ari Fleischer, uno de los dirigentes de campaña de Bush.

Después de que sus respectivos rivales renunciaron a continuar la lucha tras las primarias del martes pasado, Bush y Gore arrasaron con los votos en los estados de Florida, Texas, Luisiana, Misisipi, Oklahoma y Tennessee.

Gore rebasó la cifra de 2,170 delegados que necesitaba para confirmar su candidatura demócrata y al concluir la noche

tenía más de 2,500 de los 4,336 demócratas que participarán en la convención presidencial de agosto próximo.

Bush, tras eliminar como rival al senador John McCain y sólo enfrentado al reto simbólico de Alan Keyes, había asegurado el respaldo de 1,100 delegados, superando los 1,034 que le confirmaban la candidatura.

"Cuando presenté mi candidatura presidencial, me comprometí a volver a casa con la candidatura de mi partido. Esta noche puedo decir misión cumplida", indicó Bush en un acto de celebración en Austin, capital de su estado.

Gore celebró la victoria en Tallahasse (Florida) e indicó que su candidatura significa la opción de darle continuidad a los logros económicos del gobierno del presidente Bill Clinton.

Bush y Gore deberán ser ratificadas en agosto próximo durante las convenciones presidenciales de sus partidos.

Los demócratas enviarán 4,336 delegados a su convención de Los Angeles del 14 al 17 de agosto, mientras que los republicanos tendrán una representación de 2,066 delegados en su reunión de Filadelfia, del 31 de julio al 3 de

agosto.

La incertidumbre de las primarias había llegado a su fin la semana pasada, cuando Bush y Gore barrieron en las primarias del "supermartes" en más de una docena de estados.

Esos triunfos contundentes provocaron la retirada del demócrata Bill Bradley y el republicano McCain, quienes hasta entonces parecían ser adversarios temibles.

Sin embargo, Bush todavía tiene que procurar la paz con el grupo político de McCain, quien ha dicho que seguirá impulsando sus iniciativas reformistas, incluidos cambios en el sistema de financiación electoral.

Bradley, un ex senador y ex jugador del baloncesto profesional estadounidense, dio su apoyo a la candidatura presidencial de Gore después de anunciar que renunciaba a seguir luchando.

Las primarias continuarán el 6 de junio, pues los militantes republicanos y demócratas seguirán sus esfuerzos por ser elegidos como delegados a la convención presidencial, donde se definirán los programas de gobierno de sus respectivos partidos.

## News Briefs

### Catholic Diocese of Lubbock presents Youth Rally 2000 Jesus is Yours 2

Keep, Are you compatible?, is the theme for this year's rally. It will be held at the Lubbock Civic Center in the Exhibit Hall on March 25, 2000.

Registration deadlines are March 17 for \$25, thereafter, registrations will not be accepted in the office, only at the door at \$30. The price includes keynote speakers, workshops, dinner, mass, dance. The keynote speakers are

Fr. Tony Ricard, Steve Dooley, and Leroy Benhke. The workshops will be addressing issues like violence, peer pressure, self-image, catholic identity, prayer and many more. The mass will be officiated by Bishop Placido Rodriguez. For more information contact the Youth Office at 792-3943.

### Gore Leads Among Women, Bush Among Men

Washington, Vice President Al Gore enjoys more support among female voters than Texas Gov. George W. Bush, but if the presidential election were held today, Bush would win, a Gallup poll predicts.

The poll, commissioned by USA Today and CNN, said the Republican candidate - who on Tuesday garnered sufficient delegates to ensure his party's nomination - was the choice of 56 percent of male respondents and 44 percent of females.

Gore, who after his victory in Tuesday's primaries is certain to become the Democratic candidate, is the choice of 50 percent of the women and 35 percent of the men.

If the election were held today, Bush would receive 49 percent of the votes and Gore 43 percent.

The poll has a five percent margin of error.

When Gallup interviewers asked voters with which candidate they would prefer to have dinner, 54 percent of the men chose Bush, while 47 percent of the women picked Gore.

Asked which of the two they would pick to baby-sit their children, 43 percent of the men said Bush, while 49 percent of the women chose Gore.

### Border Area's Health Needs Transcend Boundaries

San Antonio, Texas, - The extent of health and environmental problems along the U.S.-Mexico border has reached such crisis proportions that authorities should put aside the concept of borders and work together to solve them, political leaders said Monday at a health conference.

U.S. and Mexico border officials meeting Sunday at a health conference told the San Antonio Express News that one way to combat the region's problems would be to view the cities on both sides of the border as a single, powerful metropolis.

Given their geographic proximity, the cities along the southern 3,000 kilometer (1,864-mile) U.S. border share many of the same problems and challenges, specifically in the areas of health, education and housing.

They said that free trade has helped fuel explosive population growth along the border, but at the same time has aggravated existing problems in the area.

The conference, titled "Border Health: Making a Difference" and organized by the International Consortium for the Environment, brought together mayors from cities such as Ciudad Acuña and Del Rio, as well as representatives from Nuevo Laredo, Matamoros and San Antonio.

The conference, which ends Wednesday, will examine issues such as air and water quality, the advantages and disadvantages of industrial development, the role of government, and the challenges to public health in the region.

Ignacio Mendoza, director of Matamoros' public health office, notes that the border population explosion has created many jobs on one hand, but a housing and public services crisis on the other.

The colonias, or slums, that sprout near factories are the most affected by the area's rapid pace of economic activity, Mendoza says.

As an example, he cites the scarcity of electricity, safe drinking water and plumbing that thousands of colonias dwellers face, while those services are freely available to residents across the border.

Mendoza believes local governments have the responsibility to respond also to the problems caused by precarious living conditions and contagious diseases. Government authorities on both sides of the border should forge new alliances to help correct the socioeconomic problems afflicting the area's population, he said.

Ronald Kendall, head of Texas Tech's Institute of Environmental and Human Health, agrees, saying that the new relationship between the area's governments and academic agencies would be the first step toward finding solutions to the problems affecting the border.

The United States' southern border is one of the nation's poorest areas. A large portion of the population lives in extreme poverty. Dropout rates are among the nation's highest, and so is the incidence of infectious diseases.

### Radio Marathon Raises \$200,000 200,000 DOLLARS For Elian

Miami, - A radio marathon has raised 200,000 dollars for the legal fund of the Miami relatives of Elian Gonzalez, the 6-year-old Cuban shipwreck survivor whose great-uncle is seeking to prevent the boy from being sent back to his father in Cuba.

Armando Gutierrez, spokesman for the Miami relatives, said seven Spanish-language stations took part in the effort, which ran from Friday night through Sunday night.

The boy was rescued clinging to an inner-tube off the Florida coast last Nov. 25. His mother and ten other would-be immigrants drowned when the overcrowded vessel in which they had left Cuba capsized.

Elian was given in temporary custody to his great-uncle, Lazaro Gonzalez, a Miami resident. Lazaro has filed a suit in federal court seeking to prevent the Immigration and Naturalization Service - which has ruled that Elian belongs with his father - from sending the boy back to Cuba.

The Miami relatives say Elian should be granted political asylum and allowed to remain in the United States because he would suffer persecution if returned to the island. Much of the Cuban exile community in Miami, which tends to be virulently anti-Castro, supports Elian's permanence in the United States.

A team of seven lawyers is representing the Miami relatives. They have said they are working ad honorem.

Federal Judge Michael Moore, who is hearing the case, is expected to make a ruling in the coming days or weeks.

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El Editor 763-3841

# Es Hora De Poner Fin A La Charada De La Certificación

Por Miguel Diaz

La revisión más reciente hecha por Washington de los esfuerzos de otras naciones para combatir al narcotráfico ha demostrado una vez más que este ejercicio no cumple sus objetivos prometidos y que socava otras metas de cursos de acción de Estados Unidos, especialmente en la América Latina.

A pesar de este historial, el proceso se las arregla para sobrevivir año tras año, proporcionando por ese medio un testimonio al poder burocrático de permanencia y a la hipocresía de nuestros dirigentes electos.

Veintiséis países fueron revisados hace poco por el Departamento de Estado de Estados Unidos en cuanto a su cooperación con esta nación en la lucha contra los narcóticos. De estos, sólo dos -- Afganistán y Myanmar -- no fueron certificados. Según la ley, esto significa que toda la ayuda estadounidense a estos países cesará y que Estados Unidos tendrá que votar contra la ayuda multilateral para estos países.

Otras cuatro naciones -- Camboya, Haití, Nigeria y Paraguay -- fueron también juzgados como 'no cooperativos', pero las sanciones fueron dispensadas en nombre de los intereses de seguridad nacionales de Estados Unidos. Los 20 países restantes -- incluyendo Colombia y México -- fueron certificados.

El gobierno de Bush comenzó el proceso anual de revisión a

finés de la década de 1980, primordialmente para tratar con los países que Estados Unidos consideraba apáticas hacia la lucha contra el cultivo de plantas de narcóticos -- Perú y Bolivia. En aquel momento, los elaboradores de cursos de acción creyeron que si Washington avergonzaba y castigaba mediante sanciones económicas a las naciones que producían narcóticos y comerciaban con ellos, las mismas llegarían a ser más 'cooperativas'. Todos estuvieron de acuerdo en que, a fin de que el proceso funcionara, tenía que verse como que era equitativo.

Cualquier semblanza de eso se perdió cuando Estados Unidos se hizo de la vista gorda hacia los fracasados intentos de México por frenar el narcotráfico a principios de la década de 1990, por temor a socavar los tratos económicos cada vez mayores con ese país. Además, se ha visto a dicho proceso como hipócrita, ya que Estados Unidos no se evalúa a sí mismo.

Este circo anual sería un aspecto secundario entretenido si no ocasionara daño. Sin embargo, el proceso afecta cualquier intento por parte de Estados Unidos por desarrollar una relación de trabajo más respetuosa y productiva con Latinoamérica. Hace eso porque aquellos países sujetos a esta revisión consideran que este ritual es autoritario y condescendiente.

En un intento para enfocarse en estas preocupaciones, hubo

una propuesta hace pocos años para que el trámite fuera multilateral, haciendo que una organización independiente -- la Organización de Estados Americanos -- asumiera el papel de juez. Esta iniciativa dejó de levantar vuelo, sin embargo, por falta de cooperación por parte de Estados Unidos.

Se puede ir un paso más allá y argumentar que Estados Unidos no se ha servido bien a sí mismo al enfatizar el asunto de los narcóticos a costa de otros objetivos de cursos de acción, tales como el fortalecimiento de la democracia y la gobernabilidad en estas naciones. Uno se pregunta, por ejemplo, si Estados Unidos habría sido más crítico en cuanto a la conducta autoritaria del presidente Alberto Fujimori en Perú, de no ser por la cooperación de Lima en el frente de los narcóticos.

Pocos dudan que la descertificación del gobierno colombiano encabezado por Ernesto Samper a mediados de la década de 1990 llevó al derrumbe económico y al fortalecimiento de las filas rebeldes, de las que muchos creen ser responsables por el empeoramiento de los problemas del narcotráfico en Colombia.

Ironicamente, Washington está proponiendo ahora ayuda por valor de \$1,600 millones a Colombia, ostensiblemente para ayudar al gobierno a hacer frente más completamente a su problema con el narcotráfico.

No me entiendan mal: La lucha contra los narcóticos tiene

su lugar. Pero al combatir el problema, puede ser más inteligente para Estados Unidos el ayudar primero a hacer frente a los defectos de gobernabilidad y democráticos a que se enfrentan estos países.

En resumen, es hora de que Washington ponga fin a la farsa de la certificación. No es verosímil, y es hasta bochornoso. Aún el zar antidroga de Estados Unidos, Barry McCaffrey, puso en tela de juicio hace poco los méritos de este proceso.

Pero la triste verdad es que Washington no lo hará, por lo menos no en este año de elecciones, porque nadie quiere que se le considere como 'blando' en materia de narcóticos. En pocas palabras, nuestros dirigentes electos necesitan del proceso de la certificación como cobija política. Después de todo, ¿qué es más fácil políticamente que culpar a otros del problema de los narcóticos? Es de esperar que el próximo presidente -- sea demócrata o republicano -- tendrá la sabiduría y el valor necesarios para decir al pueblo estadounidense que este enfoque ha fracasado y para poner un fin rápido al mismo.

(Miguel Diaz, residente en Washington, DC, ha trabajado como economista latinoamericano en un banco de inversiones de Nueva York y presta servicios como miembro de la junta de directores del Consejo Hispano de Relaciones Interamericanas.)

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## The Other Vote

### Homeless Voter: Picking the Cleanest of the Dirty Socks

BY RAENDI BEAMER, PACIFIC NEWS SERVICE

I've never voted before, but I went and voted Tuesday, Mar. 7. Is that a good thing, a bad thing, or just like picking out the cleanest of your dirty socks to wear for the day?

There was absolutely nobody on that ballot I wanted to vote for. Most other people I talked to said they felt the same way. What has this world come to when nobody -- not me, not 90 percent of the people I talked to -- liked any of the candidates? We were just picking out the cleanest of the dirty socks.

For the very few homeless people that do vote, the issues are pretty obvious. About half of the people in San Francisco actually register, but only a small percentage actually vote. Do we hear opinions from the ones who are actually affected? We don't need another Mayor Willie Brown or former Mayor Frank Jordan to take away the little housing that is left, or Government Assistance.

It's a Catch-22. In San Francisco, without a job, you can't afford housing, and you can't afford it even with Government Assistance. But without housing, you most likely can't have a job -- you can't get clean enough for most restaurants, offices, corporations. Anyways, we don't need someone (like Willie) trying to move the homeless around, jail them, take their carts away until they "disappear."

OK, voting. It was my first time, and I found it kind of weird -- the issues and propositions that were on there, so much prejudice, so much discrimination. Like putting 14 year olds in adult prisons, like not allowing certain people to get married -- what's that? If two people are happy and make a commitment to each other, why not? They'll give a marriage license to just about any male/female couple and the craziest stuff happens. But to a real couple, telling them they can't have companionship that's legally real?

And whose idea was it to put a 14-year old in adult prison? You know, I'm just picturing it. I've been there, not in prison but in jail. As an 18, 19, 20, 21 year old, I barely made it through jail. But prison? I don't care how deep a crime is, and these days we've got the very worst of them, but a 14 year old -- think about it, we were all 14 once and did stupid things. I don't know if any of you reading this have ever been to County Jail, but a child that young needs to have counseling, rehabilitation, love, healthy surroundings. Just locking them up, if they survive, will make them harder instead of better.

Voting was very strange because of the propositions on the ballot. Aren't there more important things to concentrate on than who loves whom (Prop. 22, the measure to restrict same-sex marriage), or giving a child a chance at life (Prop. 21, the measure to create stiffer punishment for juvenile offenders) or refusing to give General Assistance to those who are trying to make a better life for themselves (Prop. E, the measure to convert cash payments for the needy to vouchers)?

There are things, people in your backyard that you choose to ignore. People should realize that a lot of homeless people, like myself, just want to get out of this gutter we live in. We're not here because we like it; we're here because society put us here and then turned their backs on us.

But I've gotten way off on a tangent. The subject is voting.

Well, as a young person my first time voting, I could say I found a lot of unnecessary propositions. I voted for Senator and President -- other names were just names. Not having heard anything about them, I skipped them.

Probably like the ones who are counting will skip my vote and me -- not just me, but most people with my perspective.

## BROTHER AMADOU

EDITOR'S NOTE: The writer, Lance Johnson is a 24-year-old college student living in the Bronx, New York.

"Dear Amadou, I'll see you when I get there, brother." These words seeped from my soul into a black marker and onto a message board dedicated to the young man slain on his Bronx doorstep. He will forever remain a part of me. Our stories are one and the same. He is my brother because like him, I am young, I am male and I am black.

I also know, with more clarity than ever, that the bullet-riddled man lying in the vestibule of his home could very well have been me.

I stood in the tiny entrance of 1157 Wheeler Avenue, the place Amadou once called home, amidst scattered plaster and wood fragments and huge bullet holes. Feeling death all around me, I was struck with a great sense of grief. Time froze as I envisioned the chilling details of Amadou's demise: his body trembling from fear, the flashes of light, guns blazing, bullets flying and as the smoke cleared, his wallet beside his lifeless body.

Ever since the Diallo shooting, I have felt trapped. Cornered, not as Amadou was in the vestibule as the four officers rained gunfire on him, but cornered in a society that will never understand me, or simply refuses to try -- no matter how hard I try. No matter how non-threatening, college-educated or "positive" I presume to be, I will always be judged by the shade of my skin. A shade my mother tells me to love unconditionally.

Young African American and Hispanic men are too often targeted by police officers because of their own misguided perceptions. In the last few years several cases have highlighted this alarming fact.

In 1998 three young black men and one young Hispanic man were traveling in a van on the New Jersey Turnpike when state troopers stopped them for speeding (many blacks believe the more accurate charge would be "DWB" -- driving while black). What happened next varies, according to which story you hear, the troopers' or the young men's version. What we do know is that 11 shots were fired, all from the troopers' guns. The four men were found inside the van, suffering from gunshot wounds. No weapons were found in the van.

Also in 1998, a family football game turned deadly when a police officer lost his cool. Anthony Baez, a young Hispanic man, was choked to death in front of his house by an NYPD officer. Baez's crime: hitting a squad car with a football, certainly not an offense punishable by death.

In 1997 Abner Louima, a black Haitian immigrant, was raped with a stick in an NYPD police precinct. His assailant, Officer Justin Volpe, carried a gun and a badge.

And just last year Amadou Diallo was standing by his own front door, "looking suspicious." When he reached for his wallet, the NYPD signed his death warrant. Forty-one bullets later and no one is held accountable.

When will it end?

My greatest fear is that I will become a victim of some ignorant cop's preconceived notions -- that I'll be mistaken for a rapist, robber or drug dealer because I fit the description. I thirst for the day when I fit the description of a man, when I don't cringe in the presence of police officers, when I can walk the streets assured in my innocence.

Since my journey to Wheeler Avenue, I have experienced a recurring nightmare. In it, I am trapped in the vestibule, huddled beside Amadou as bullets explode through the doorway. We clutch each other tightly as the bullets dance off the walls, creating a cloud of thick smoke over our heads. Suddenly the gunfire stops and Amadou is no longer there. Somehow, he is out of harm's way and I am left to fend for myself.

"Dear Amadou, I'll see you when I get there, brother." The "there," in the message I left on the wall in the vestibule of 1157 Wheeler Avenue, refers to "heaven." I pray Amadou is in heaven, peacefully resting assured that justice will be his in the end.

## El Editor Newspapers

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Editor/Publisher: Bidal Aguero

# It Is Time To End The Certification Charade

By Miguel Diaz

Washington's most recent certification review of other nations' drug-fighting efforts has demonstrated once again that this exercise fails to meet its intended purposes and undermines other U.S. policy objectives, particularly in Latin America.

Despite this track record, the process manages to survive year after year, thereby providing a testament to its bureaucratic staying power and the hypocrisy of our elected leaders.

Twenty-six countries were recently reviewed by the U.S. State Department for their cooperation with the United States in the fight against drugs. Of these, only two -- Afghanistan and Myanmar -- were not certified. By law, this means that all U.S. aid will cease and that the United States will have to vote against multilateral aid for these countries.

Four other countries -- Cambodia, Haiti, Nigeria and Paraguay -- were also judged to be uncooperative, but sanctions were waived in the name of U.S. national security interests. The remaining 20 countries -- including Colombia and Mexico -- were certified.

The Bush administration began the annual review process

in the late 1980s, mainly to deal with two countries -- Peru and Bolivia -- which the United States deemed apathetic toward combating drug cultivation.

At the same time, policymakers believed that if Washington shamed and punished drug-producing and trafficking countries through economic sanctions, they would become more "cooperative." All agreed that for the process to work, it had to be seen as fair.

Any semblance of that what lost when the United States turned a blind eye toward Mexico's failings in curbing drug trafficking in the early 1990s for fear of undermining the increasing economic dealings with that country. In addition, the process has been seen as hypocritical, as the United States does not review itself.

This annual circus would be an entertaining sideshow if it caused no harm. However, the process undermines any U.S. efforts to develop a more respectful and cooperative working relationship with Latin America. It does so because those countries subject to this review find the ritual heavy-handed and patronizing.

In an attempt to address these concerns, there was a proposal a few years ago to

multilateralize the process by getting an independent organization -- such as the Organization of American States -- to assume the role of judge. This initiative failed to get off the ground, however, for lack of U.S. cooperation.

One could go a step further and argue that the United States has not served itself well by emphasizing the drug issue at the expense of other policy objectives, such as the strengthening of democracy and the governability in these countries. One wonders for example, whether we would have been more critical of President Alberto Fujimori's authoritarian behavior in Peru, if it wasn't because of Lima's cooperation on the drug front.

Few doubt that the decertification of the Colombian government led by Ernesto Samper in the mid-1990s led to economic collapse and strengthening of rebel ranks that many believe responsible for the worsening of that country's drug problems. Ironically, Washington is now proposing \$1.6 billion in aid to Colombia, ostensibly to help the government deal more comprehensively with its drug problem.

Fighting drugs has its place. But in dealing with the problem, it may be smarter for the United States first to help tracking the governability and democratic shortcomings these countries face.

In sum, it is time for Washington to put an end to the farce of certification. It is not credible, even embarrassing.

Even U.S. drug czar Barry McCaffrey has recently questioned the merits of the process.

But the sad truth is that Washington won't do it, at least not this election year, because no one wants to be painted as being soft on drugs. In short, our elected leaders need the certification process for political cover. After all, what is politically easier than blaming the drug problem on others. Hopefully, the next president -- whether Democrat or Republican -- will have the wisdom and courage to tell the American people that this approach has failed, and to put a quick end to it.

(Miguel Diaz, a resident of Washington, D.C., has worked as a Latin American economist for a New York investment bank and serves as a board member of the Hispanic Council of Inter-American Relations.)

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titular de largo tiempo Robert Dornan en 1996 en el antiguo distrito fuerte republicano, dice que ella espera reunir un fondo de campaña de \$2 millones para su elección.

Estará oponiéndose la maestra latina de escuela Gloria Matta Tuchman, quien co presidió con Ron Unz la iniciativa contraria a la educación bilingüe que tuvo éxito en California en 1998. Matta Tuchman ganó el 63 por ciento de la votación republicana primaria, derrotando a su rival.

Una marca record de cuatro hispanos ganaron primarias congresionales republicanas. Uno que aspira a un escaño en la Cámara es Rick Rodriguez, que renunció a su empleo como conductor de noticias en la afiliada de ABC-TV en Fresno, California, para postularse. Se enfrenta al titular de cinco períodos, el demócrata Calvin Dooley. Ambos se postularon sin oposición en las primarias, en las que Dooley atraído a 37,000 electores y Rodriguez a 32,000.

Viola Gonzales, directora ejecutiva del Foro de Asuntos Latinos, con sede en San Francisco, señala que una marca record de 28 escaños en la Asamblea de California, que tiene 80 miembros, tiene por lo menos un candidato hispano postulado para noviembre. Once republicanos y 21 demócratas están compitiendo. Esto, agregado a la batalla entre Gore y Bush por los votos latinos, pone a los latinos en el asiento del conductor -- impulsando a un programa de trabajo en vez de estar sentados a la orilla del sistema para apoyar a Solís.

Esta última da crédito a Sánchez y al ex representante Esteban Torres, además del respaldo sólido del partido estatal y a la ayuda de respetados dirigentes sindicales como Dolores Huerta, de los Trabajadores Agrícolas Unidos (UFW en inglés) y Al Ibarra, de los Trabajadores Automovilísticos Unidos (UAW en inglés), por ayudar a edificar su impresionante victoria.

El Partido Republicano está enfocando abiertamente al distrito de Orange County de Loretta Sánchez como uno de los que intentará recuperar en noviembre, pero ella dice estar "confiada aunque cautelosa."

Sánchez, quien derrotó al



El Editor, Lubbock, Tx, March 16, 2000

## Daley: Don't Throw Away Census Forms, They Are Not Trash

Washington, - U.S. Commerce Secretary William Daley urged Americans on Wednesday to complete and return the recently mailed Census 2000 forms.

Daley stressed the need to return the 120 million forms sent out by the Census Bureau - which falls under the control of the U.S. Commerce Department - to include all U.S. inhabitants in the count.

In remarks before the National Press Club, Daley asked the public not to throw the forms away, emphasizing that they are not trash.

He also explained that 200 billion dollars in federal funds for education, health care, day-care centers, highways and other public services are at stake as a result of the Census data.

Daley blamed the relatively low response, and resulting undercount, in the 1990 census for the loss of millions of dollars in public funds for education, housing, health and economic development.

The loss was particularly hard on ethnic minorities and the poor people of the United States.

A study published last week warned that if the low response to the 1990 census was repeated, 26 states and the District of Columbia stood to lose at least 9.1 billion dollars in social program funds.

Daley insisted that there were no valid excuses for disregarding this civic duty, since the forms could be returned by the public to the Census Bureau - in their abridged version - by return mail or over the Internet.

The abridged version of the census contains only seven questions and is the "briefest in

the past 180 years," Daley said, adding that he would return his form via the Internet.

One in every six households probably received the long forms, which include 34 questions on employment, education and ethnic origin of the nearly 275 million inhabitants of the United States.

In accord with the Constitution, the census has been taken every 10 years since 1790. The allocation of public funds and the establishment of new electoral districts are based on census results.

The results of the first census of the millennium - regarded as the largest peacetime mobilization in the history of the United States - will be interpreted by computers and the use of scanners.

Daley said that he wanted to stress that the census is the most important work the federal government has done this year. "We have opened 500 offices and hired thousands of census takers," he said.

The census takers, who will call on households which fail to return their forms "are our census heroes ... because they view this as more than a job (and as) a civic responsibility," he added.

He admitted that avoiding errors such as those made in the 1990 census - when 4.5 million people were omitted from the count - would not be easy due to facts such as changes of address, different working hours and high number of homeless and undocumented people.

The Census Bureau invested more than 6.8 billion dollars - including 167 million dollars in advertising to encourage minority participation - in the Census 2000.

By MELANIE FELICIANO

As more Americans receive their U.S. Census forms this week, many Latinos will be checking more than one box in the Ethnic and Racial categories. Some will answer the questions with ease, others will hesitate because their heritage isn't as definable as the government would like.

Click to see a larger version of questions 7 and 8 on the census form.

New Mexico native Paul Arguello is outraged that he either must deny his Spanish heritage or force himself into one of the census form boxes, none of which also describe his mixed French, Navajo and Cherokee Indian heritage.

"We feel it's an insult," said Arguello, who said he speaks for many of his neighbors in Clayton, N.M. "Granted, the majority of people can check a box, but there are others who can't."

In 1997, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) decided that people would be able to select more than one racial category to indicate mixed racial heritage. People also have the option to write in their ethnic identities. This new flexibility in answering census questions was in response to increasing criticism from many who believed that choosing from only four racial categories - American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, Black, and White - did not reflect the increasing diversity of the nation's population.

However, for Latinos, the difference between race and ethnicity poses a unique problem. Many can easily identify themselves as Cuban, Puerto Rican or Mexican, but they cannot categorize their racial makeup as White, Black, American Indian or "some other race."

With Census 2000, the list of combinations leads to a total of 63 possible categories.

"The OMB decided Hispanic was an ethnicity not a race," said Johanna Silva, a U.S. Census representative in San Francisco. "Civil rights organizations have had a lot of input in the race and ethnicity question. It's not a preference issue, it's tied to funding and it's opening itself up to be more inclusive."

According to the Census, people of Hispanic origin or

people who identify as "Spanish" or "Latino" include Mexican, Mexican-American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Spaniard, or from the Spanish-speaking countries of Central or South America or the Caribbean.

While Arguello feels he is none of the above, especially because his family hasn't spoken Spanish for generations, his last name suggests otherwise to statistics collectors.

"My son is still going to receive music club membership offers in Spanish because his surname is Arguello," he said, adding that he understands corporations use racial statistics for target marketing. "I don't see why our government has to function the same way."

Race, according to the Census Bureau, is key to implementing any number of federal laws like the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, and determines distribution of federal funds to numerous organizations across the country. These include historically black colleges, schools needing improved bilingual education programs, and agencies that provide

services to particular racial or ethnic groups, such as screening for hypertension or diabetes among Mexican Americans.

"It's important we know if brown people are getting their fair share of the money that goes to starting businesses, buying homes, getting college loans, etc.," said Angela Padilla, a Census representative in Denver. "I knew two Latina engineers who had a hard time getting money to start their business based on the fact that they were Hispanic and women."

Some people may be more apt to identify with a racial or ethnic group according to how recently they or their parents immigrated to the United States.

"As you become more meshed into society, labels don't mean as much," said Pat Rodriguez, a Census representative in Denver who has been with the bureau for 22 years.

"Not everyone's going to be happy about how the questions

are worded," she said, although an official Hispanic advisory committee and civil rights groups helped formulate the questions.

If Arguello had received the long version of the census form, which goes out to one in six households, he would have been able to tell the government all about his multicultural ancestry in New Mexico.

Regardless, Arguello, 39, said with every census, he feels the questions are ludicrous and aim to further racially divide the nation.

"There's this thought that la raza has been misrepresented," said Arguello. "I have found living where I have lived that people of color are represented more by their actions more than by their color."

"I don't mind putting down my heritage. I just don't like the names they gave us to pick from...and the census will not reflect the country because the boxes are wrong."

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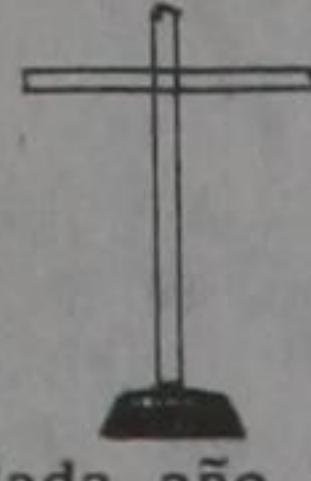
Paid for by the Gilbert Flores Campaign, Robert Lugo, treasurer

Resulta que a los papás de Pablito se les olvidó llenar el formulario del Censo y no se dejaron contar. Lo que significa que Pablito tampoco cuenta. Y si más padres como los de él no llenan el Censo, lo más probable es que las comunidades donde viven no recibirán los programas y servicios que más necesitan. Y nadie quiere eso, ¿verdad? El Censo 2000 es sencillo y confidencial. Y es para todos, ya sean ciudadanos o no. Así que cuando reciba el formulario, llénelo y envíelo. Hay que darle una voz a Pablito y a toda la comunidad.

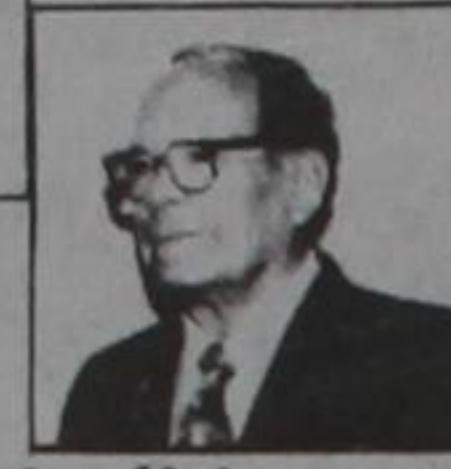
*Pablito no existe*

**United States Census 2000**

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### LAS SIETE PALABRAS (Primer Palabra)

Lucas 23:34

Cada año las iglesias cristianas hacen memoria de la última semana que Cristo anduvo en la tierra. De su pasión, de sus últimas obras, palabras y milagros. Y luego de la última cena con sus discípulos la noche antes de ser crucificado. Como también de las palabras últimas que pronunció cuando estaba en la cruz del Calvario. Conocidas del pueblo de Dios como "LAS SIETE PALABRAS". Esto ha sido siempre una verdadera inspiración, para la cristiandad, así como un manantial incansable, perpetuo de gozo y de gracia espiritual. Así pues con la ayuda de Dios vamos a comenzar por las siguientes siete semanas estudiar el contenido de las últimas siete palabras que Cristo pronunció pendiente de la cruz del Calvario. Esperando de toda su divina asistencia y del Espíritu Santo el cual nos ha sido prometido, para dirigir nuestros pensamientos y palabras a toda verdad y justicia. Y para mayor gloria de Dios y de nuestro Señor Jesucristo. Ahora pasaremos a tratar en seguida el contenido de la primera palabra de nuestros Señor Jesucristo en la cruz.

"PADRE PERDONAOS PORQUE NO SABEN LO QUE HACEN"

Lucas 23:34

Es un hecho conocido por propios y extraños, que las palabras de nuestro Señor Jesucristo siempre cautivaron la atención de sus oyentes. Por el alto significado que tenía cada una de ellas para aplacar los anhelos del alma. Todos estamos de acuerdo en la declaración de su auditorio... nunca hombre habló como él lo hizo. Y siendo que el Señor había aconsejado a sus discípulos que deshecharan toda mala palabra de sus labios; Ahora que está en su agonía son de más importancia y más profundas, para los que nos consideramos discípulos suyos, el significado de cada una de ellas. Ya que expresan el sentir vivo que acompañaba al Maestro en los últimos instantes de su vida sobre la tierra. Y como costumbre muy antiguo era ésto; pues leemos que Jacob al morir, reunió a sus hijos y les dió su rica bendición. Y que José hizo lo mismo en Egipto. Que Moisés se despidió de su pueblo antes de subir al Pisgah, con un elocuente discurso. Que Josué el valiente conquistador de Canaan, congregó al pueblo en víspera de su muerte para llamarles al cumplimiento del deber. Que David se despidió de los suyos dejando presiosos encargo de debieran cumplir todos. Todos estos hombres, y aún todo cristiano fiel, al morir y al decir adios a este mundo, hablan con tono de fe de una vida superior, dirigiendo palabras posteriores a este mundo para clavarlas en la eternidad. Pues el Divino Jesús también lo haría desde la cumbre del Calvario, también habla, pero sus palabras ahora revestirán solemnidad, grandeza y majestad. Su sermón allí ahora es más intuitivo, más surgente y más sublime. Como vemos que sus enemigos se sorprendieron al escuchar su sabiduría, al grado de decir ellos, "Nunca hombre ha hablado como éste." De igual manera nosotros con más propiedad después de 2000 años, al recoger las palabras de sus labios moribundos, diremos, diremos con el lenguaje de la fe, "¡Nunca ha hablado hombre como éste en el momento de la muerte!" Al fin llegamos a la cruz. Despues e ser azotado y herido y llevando una corona de espinos punzantes, la maldición de la tierra. Cumpliéndose así un sinúmero de profecías dichas desde Gén. 3: 17-18. Is. 53:4-5. Sal. 22:1-19 y otras muchas. "En Moisés los profeta y los Salmos" Luc. 24:44. ¡Su cruz! ¡su cruz!, Durante su misión en esta tierra siempre habló de ella con estremecimiento.

Y ahora que sube al Calvario se inclina a tierra, y poniéndo las espaldas todas ya heridas y sangrientas según Mar. 15:15 y extendiendo sus brazos, y esto voluntariamente, presenta sus manos para que sean por los verdugos atravesadas por agudos y toscos clavos. Sigue lo mismo con sus pies, para que se cumpliese la palabra profética de David, "¡Traspazaron mis manos y mis pies" Sal. 22. Jesús era tan humano como nosotros sentía como nosotros, ¡Y a Jesús le dolieron los clavos! ¡Qué destrozo tan cruel de sus manos divinas! Su sangre brotó de sus manos y pies, y sufriendo las convulsiones de sus miembros. ¡Qué violenta tensión de todos sus órganos! Y deseando que la víctima fuera pronto levantada. Entonces el Cordero que hasta aquel momento había enmudecido y no había abierto su boca, viendo el cuadro, aquel cuadro de martirio y afrenta, y no podiendo contenerse, siente que hay un nudo en su garganta; y queriendo hablar mueve su lengua, pero todos sus miembros están en desastre. ¿Qué dirá al mover sus labios? ¿Qué va a decir? ¿Hablará maldición? ¡No, jamás! oíd lo que dice: "Padre perdonálos, porque no saben lo que hacen." ¿Es posible ésto? Sí, oídlo. Luc. 23:34 nos dice que "decía" Esto quiere decir que repetidas veces lo decía. No hay ayes no protesta ni maldiciones. Sino que su dunc voz se oye para decir aquella dulce palabra que tanto había estado en sus labios, palabra de PERDÓN Y ahora que nuestro Señor está para entrar al lugar santísimo para interceder por su pueblo como nos dice Heb. 9:24-26 en verdad que las primeras palabras que brotan de sus labios, son de intercesión para los que le maritan. Pues la enseñanza que él había enseñado a sus seguidores con respecto del perdón, no era una puramente enseñanza

verbal u oral, sino necesaria genuina y verdadera. Mt.5:44 Muy de acuerdo estuvieron sus últimas palabras con su conducta y enseñanza, pues él enseñó; perdonad y seréis perdonados. "Porque si perdonáis a los hombres sus ofensas, os perdonará a vosotros vuestro Padre Celestial. El estaba dispuesto a perdonar aunque estaba en manos de soldados ingratos, que con sus manos feroces que se apoderaban de él, arrancando violentamente sus vestiduras y dirigiéndole palabras ofensivas. ¡Oh, qué cuadro aquél que se había vestido de gloria en el monte de la transfiguración, ahora es desnudo por manos criminales. El que había recibido las eternas alabanzas de los ángeles y vestido de gloria en el monte, ahora escucha los discursos licenciosos y miradas inguruosas y la insolencia de la burla. Pero aún así, los labios de las víctimas se abren una vez más. No son los labios de un juez severo, no como rey, sino como sacerdote que intercede por los suyos para decir: "Padre perdonálos porque no saben lo que hacen." Y el texto sagrado especifica, "decía" lo que indica que repetía la misma intercepción. Por lo que vemos que una de las más gratas enseñanzas que encontramos en la Biblia y que nos anima a vivir la vida cristiana, en este pasaje contenido; no puede menos que ayudarnos a entregar nuestra vida al Señor. Que semejante a la muerte de Esteban años más tarde, que en medio del martirio produjo la inspiración santa de cómo mueren las almas cristianas. Y aunque ase casi 2000 años, pero la palabra de perdón sigue teniendo el mismo poder hoy. En Luc.24:47 dice que mandó a sus discípulos que: "Se predicas en su nombre el arrepentimiento y remisión de pecados en todas las naciones, comenzando desde Jerusalén." "Porque en ningún otro hay salud porque no hay otro nombre dado a los hombres dado a los hombres debajo del cielo en que podemos ser salvos" Hch.4:12 "Y toda lengua confiesa que Cristo es el Señor a la gloria de Dios Padre." Fil.2:11 "Porque no tenemos un Pontífice que no se pueda compadecer de nuestras flaquezas; mas tentado en todo según nuestra semejanza, pero sin pecado." Heb.4:15 Y Jn. 3: 16 nos dice: "De tal manera amó Dios al mundo, que dió a su Hijo unigénito, para que todo aquel que en él cree, no se pierda mas tenga vida eterna." Allí tenemos la manera de que nuestros pecados sean perdonados. Porque el hombre no ha podido, y ni puede con sus pecados. El pecado puede más que el hombre. Y el hombre no puede perdonarse sus pecados, ¿qué piensas hacer con ellos? te llevarán a condenación eterna si no los traes a Cristo que te los perdone. Ven hoy, a Cristo y aceptalo como tu Salvador personal. Es mucho mejor que vengas hoy para ser perdonado, y no después para ser condenado. Hoy es el día de salvación. "Amén."

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### Preparan En Texas Homenaje a Lider Sindicalista Cesar Chavez

El Paso (Texas) -- Las autoridades de Texas anuncian martes que tienen todo listo para homenajear a fin de mes al

fallecido líder sindical César Chávez.

Las actividades incluyen una marcha y servicios religiosos en los que se dará a conocer la obra del fundador del Sindicato de

Trabajadores Agrícolas y sus logros en favor de los campesinos.

La senadora estatal de Texas Norma Chávez dijo que en los eventos conmemorativos en honor del líder hispano participarán cientos de trabajadores agrícolas de la franja fronteriza.

Agregó que durante las actividades se develará un busto del activista en la Universidad de Texas en El Paso.

Miembros del Comité Organizador del Día de Asueto en honor a Chávez afirmaron que los trabajadores de Texas tendrán un día de descanso gracias a que la legislatura estatal aprobó el 31 de marzo como día festivo opcional.

La ley fue promovida por la legisladora Norma Chávez y el senador estatal de Corpus Christi, Carlos Truan.

"Es importante que aprovechemos la oportunidad de celebrar la vida de un verdadero héroe", opinó la senadora Chávez quien no está relacionada al activista de los derechos de los campesinos.

"Queremos hacer lo que los libros de Texas no hacen. Queremos educar a los niños y la comunidad acerca de la importancia de Chávez", agregó.

Los festejos se iniciarán el 24 de marzo y concluirán el 31 del mismo mes.

### Cesar Chavez Celebration



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### FREE CANCER SCREENINGS

Community Health Center of Lubbock's Cancer Screening Extravaganza

Early detection is important in most types of cancer. Community Health Center of Lubbock is offering free cancer screenings on Wednesday, March 22, and Thursday, March 23.

MARCH 22nd & 23rd, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

•Oral cancer

•Colorectal cancer (age 50 and older)

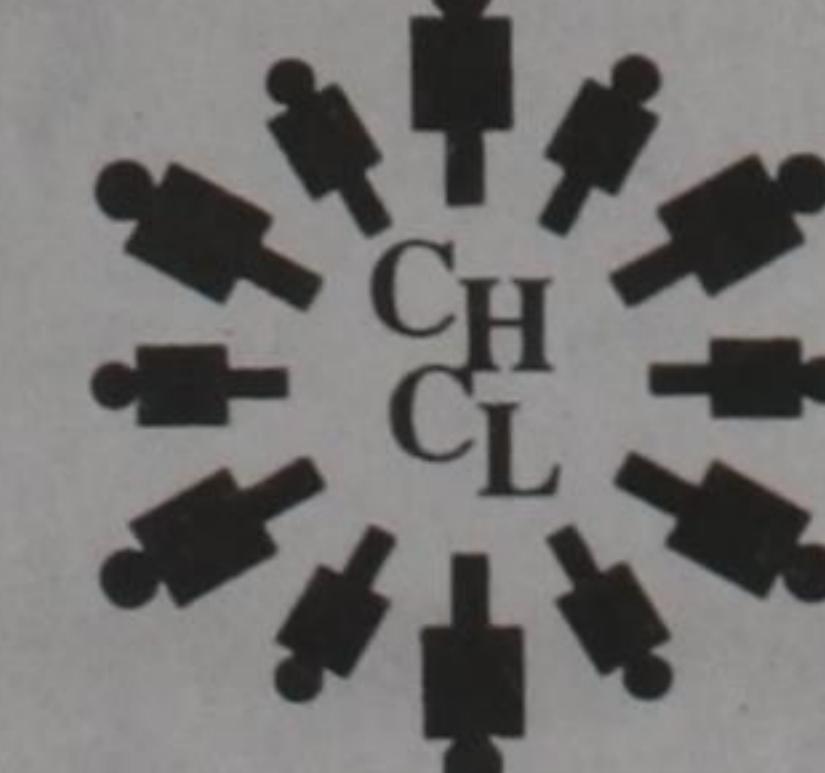
•Breast cancer (women only)

•Cervical cancer (women only)

•Prostate cancer (men ages 50-65)

•Testicular cancer (men ages 18-35)

Screenings will be held at the  
Community Health Center of Lubbock  
at 1318 Broadway



For registration or more information, call 765-2600 ext. 228.  
Medical service provided by Covenant Health System.

# Noticias Breves

## Bush y Gore, A Buscar Vicepresidente y Recaudar Más Dinero

por José A. Delgado

Washington, - Con sus candidaturas presidenciales aseguradas, el republicano George W. Bush y el demócrata Albert Gore comenzarán oficialmente la búsqueda de su vicepresidente y reavivarán los esfuerzos de recaudación de fondos.

Tras conseguir la mayoría de los delegados de sus respectivos partidos, Bush y Gore, además de seguir pendientes el uno del otro, podrán iniciar el largo proceso para seleccionar a su compañero electoral, un asunto que deberán tener aclarado para el verano.

Las listas extraoficiales dentro de ambos partidos son en este momento muy largas, pues ni Bush, gobernador de Texas, ni Gore, vicepresidente de Estados Unidos, quieren dar detalles sobre el proceso de selección de su compañero de fórmula.

Tradicionalmente, el aspirante presidencial busca en su "número dos" un equilibrio para su candidatura, añadir votos en algún sector o región que pueda ser determinante y, sobre todo, no hacerse daño.

La ex secretaria de Transporte Elizabeth Dole, el ex secretario de Defensa Richard Cheney, asesor de la campaña de Bush, y los senadores Richard Lugar (Indiana) y Chuck Hagel (Nebraska) son mencionados como posibles compañeros de Bush.

Pero también se incluye en la lista inicial republicana a los gobernadores de Nueva York, George Pataki; Pensilvania, Tom Ridge; Oklahoma, Frank Keating; y Nueva Jersey, Christie Whitman.

Dole y Whitman ayudarían a Bush a fortalecer su candidatura dentro del electorado femenino, un sector que en este momento domina el vicepresidente Gore, según una encuesta publicada hoy por el diario "USA Today".

Cheney y Lugar, por su lado, son expertos en política exterior, un área en la que Bush ha evidenciado debilidad.

El gobernador Ridge es uno de los principales candidatos, debido a su historial como veterano de guerra de Vietnam, sus cercanos vínculos a la familia Bush y la importancia electoral de su estado, indicó hoy el diario "The Dallas Morning News".

Hagel se menciona como una alternativa de consenso con el grupo electoral de John McCain, quien a pesar de que puso fin a su campaña presidencial insistirá en que el Partido Republicano adopte algunas de sus iniciativas reformistas.

"No debe descartarse a McCain", indicó el senador Hagel, otro veterano de la guerra de Vietnam, por entender que la negativa de su colega senador podría variar si Bush le propone ser vicepresidente y logran suavizar las tensiones surgidas durante las primarias.

"Todo el que sigue la política sabe que Bush-McCain sería nuestra boleta electoral más fuerte", dijo el congresista republicano Lindsey Graham, que fue codirector de la campaña del senador McCain en Carolina del Sur.

En el campo demócrata, la lista incluye al secretario de Energía, Bill Richardson; los senadores Evan Bay (Indiana), Dianne Feinstein (California), John Kerry (Massachusetts) y Bob Graham (Florida); al igual que los gobernadores de California, Gray Davis, y Carolina del Norte, Jim Hunt.

Según fuentes demócratas, Gore ordenó que comience la revisión del historial político y personal de los posibles candidatos a la vicepresidencia.

En el caso de Richardson, Gore tendría un candidato hispano, minoría que en esta década se convertiría en la más grande de EEUU, mientras que en Feinstein tiene una aspirante mujer y procedente del estado que más votos electorales aporta.

El senador Bay, de 44 años, ayudaría a Gore en los estados del medio oeste de EEUU y se dice que es uno de los favoritos del vicepresidente estadounidense.

Por lo pronto, Bush pretende reanudar sus recaudaciones de fondos, después de que se le han esfumado más de 63 de los 73

HISPANIC LEGISLATOR CRITICIZES REPUBLICAN MINIMUM WAGE PLAN

By Santiago Tavares

Washington, - Hispanics will benefit from a minimum wage increase and an accurate count of the population in the next Census, U.S. Rep. Robert Menendez (Dem.-NJ) said on Monday.

The legislator, who is number four in the hierarchy of the House's Democratic minority, criticized Republican leaders for opposing such measures.

"The minimum wage hike will benefit workers who are below the poverty line and cannot maintain their families," Menendez said in a telephone conference with Hispanic media.

The House Republican majority approved on Thursday a bill to raise the minimum wage by one dollar over a two-year period from the current 5.15 dollars an hour, but the proposal was tied to tax cuts for the business sector.

Last year, the Senate passed a law to raise the minimum wage by one dollar over three years, but President Bill Clinton promised to veto it together with the House's proposal.

The tax cuts hailed by Republican presidential hopeful George W. Bush will only benefit a very small sector of the population, which "unfortunately" does not include Hispanics, Menendez said.

The Hispanic legislator also criticized Bush and Republican representatives for rejecting the use of sampling in the Census to estimate the population in areas where residents might not answer the questionnaire.

Democrats argue that the sampling would permit better representation of minorities, while Republicans maintain that that method is vulnerable to political manipulations favoring the Democrats.

"The use of statistical sampling would correct some errors from the previous Census (1990), which excluded 1.2 million Latinos," the Hispanic legislator said.

Due to the lack of representation, Latinos lost millions of dollars in federal funds for education, elderly and child care programs, and also funds from private companies which would have been invested in their communities.

Some Democrats are not satisfied with the current administration. Illinois Rep. Luis Gutierrez, for instance, says Clinton signed the strictest immigration laws approved by Congress.

## Religious Leaders Hope Catholic Church Apology Bridges Divisions

By Macarena Hernandez

Although John Paul II's homily on Sunday drew criticism from religious leaders and other organizations, many are optimistic that this historical prayer of forgiveness will help bridge longstanding divisions between the Roman Catholic Church and other groups.

During the March 12 Mass at St. Peter's Basilica in Italy, the 79-year-old Pope John Paul II "humbly" asked for "forgiveness" for the errors committed by the Roman Catholic Church over the past 2,000 years.

"What the church is saying is that sons and daughters of the church, as the Pope said, acting in the church's name, committed sins and offenses against various peoples, and for this the Pope seeks God's forgiveness," said Father Gregory Coiro, media relations director for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

"There is no precedent for anything like this. I think that the Pope has led by example, so I hope that others would follow this example and examine themselves and see where they need to ask God for forgiveness," he said.

Dressed in a purple robe for Lent, the Pope asked for divine forgiveness for sins committed against other Christian faiths, women, the unborn, Jews and various ethnic and racial groups including indigenous people.

Throughout history, Catholics have been faulted for persecuting other Christian groups, participating in the slave trade of Africans, failing to take an active stance against the genocide of Jews during the Holocaust, and brutally forcing many indigenous peoples to convert to Christianity.

"The Pope's efforts to step forward will hopefully encourage the developing and strengthening relationships across denomination and ideological boundaries," said Michael Mata, professor at Claremont School of Theology east of Los Angeles.

But despite this invocation for pardon, many felt the Pope was not specific enough in his apology. Some Jewish leaders were hoping for at least a mention of the Catholic church's failure to use its authority to

condemn the Holocaust. Other groups, including gay activists, were critical of the Pope's message for not even being mentioned.

"Obviously when someone does something like that they are going to be faulted for not covering everything or being explicit," said Mata. "However, just the posture of seeking forgiveness hopefully will be taken by other leadership that for whatever reason has not been friendly toward the Roman Catholic community."

Mata, a third-generation protestant, said this was not a time to begin pointing fingers because even within the Latino community, Catholics and Protestants have failed to build a relationship. Although the Latino community is largely Catholic (about 65 to 70 percent according to some estimates), there is a fast-growing number of Latinos becoming members of Protestant churches.

"I think that with the Hispanic Protestant community, we've not been on friendly terms with Roman Catholics," said Mata. "For some segments of the Protestant community there is certainly a negative perspective of the Roman Catholic community."

Father Coiro hopes that the Pope's message of forgiveness is not lost in the criticism. Despite how long ago these sins may have been committed, an

apology is still in order.

"Although the people who were directly affected are no longer alive, because of the consequences of sin, their descendants continue to be affected. In this country, for example, people of African descent continue to suffer the negative effects of institutional racism," he said.

On the other hand, there were those who argued that the pope should not have delivered an apology because the act would make the Catholic church seem weak.

"I am not sure that there is anything one can say that would satisfy the critics of what the pope has done," said Father Corio.

During the Sunday Mass, the Pope also said the church forgave the "sins committed by others against (the Roman Catholic Church)."

Five Cardinals and two bishops assisted the pope with the Mass. During the ceremony, each prelate confessed to a different sin, which was then met with a request for divine forgiveness from the pope.

In the past, John Paul II has been outspoken about human rights violations, economic injustices of capitalism as well as communism, which was brought to light during a visit to Cuba in 1998.

"The pope started this years back. He wanted the church to enter the Jubilee year with the acknowledgement of sin and seeking reconciliation," said Father Corio. "I think for most people what the pope has done resonates with them and they will heed the pope's message and seek reconciliation for their own sins."

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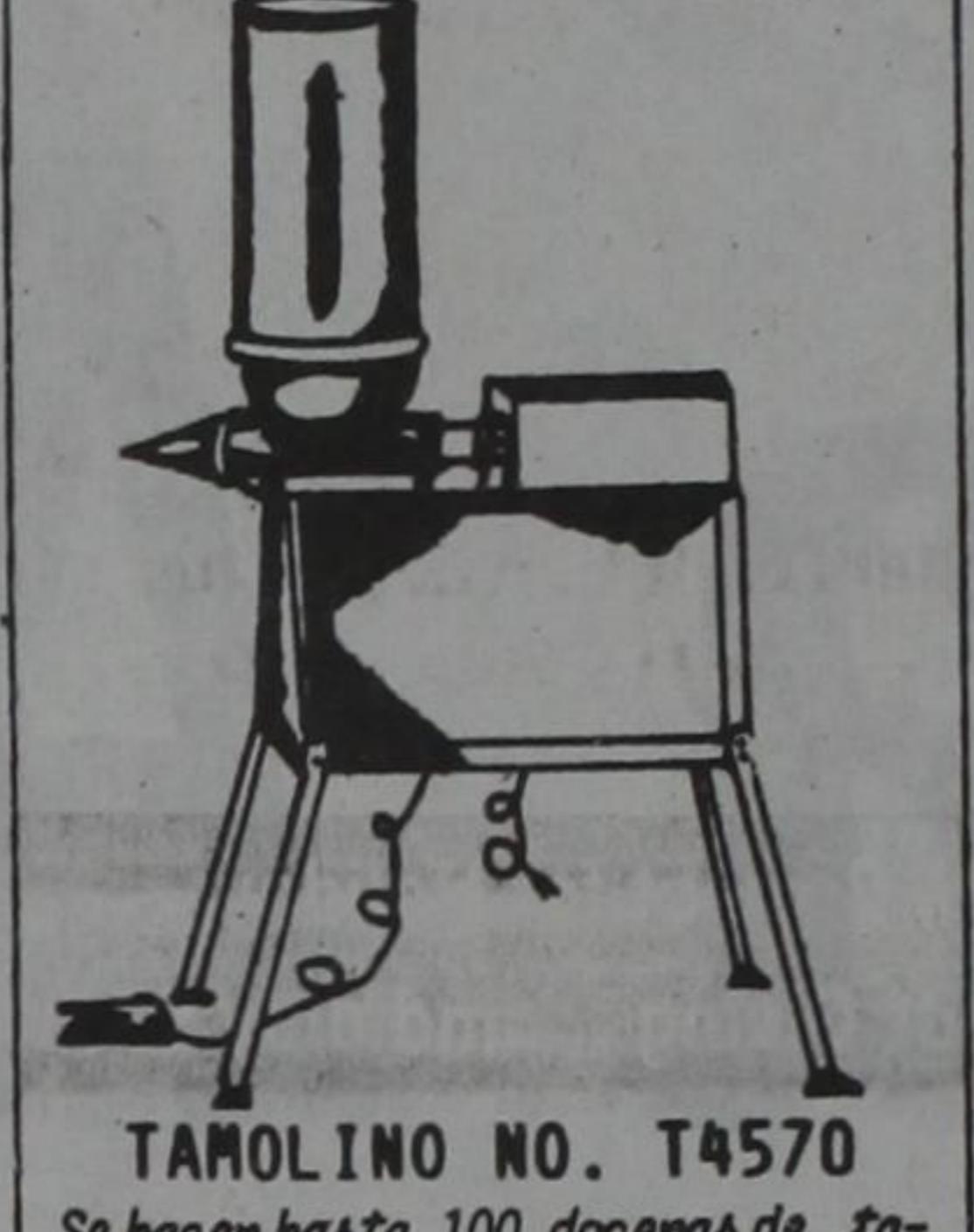
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