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Bush Tills California's Latinos for GOP

By Raymond Rodriguez

California's Republican leaders know one thing for sure: If they cannot attract a large segment of the emerging Latino voting bloc, they are doomed to remain the minority party in California.

When President George Bush received an invitation to address a Town Hall meeting of Southern California Latino business leaders in Ontario, Calif., this month, he demonstrated how it can be done: He showed up. Four thousand Latinos, brought together by a coalition of Hispanic business groups, showed up, too. His presence alone signaled his interest in and respect for the Latino community. In his Western quest to woo more Latinos into the Republican fold, he hit a home run.

The state's Republican Party is still climbing out of the political pit dug for them by former Gov. Pete Wilson, who locked arms with anti-immigrant fanatics and English-only, anti-bilingual education crusaders in 1994 to prey on voters' fears and win re-election. But he cost his party dearly by enraging Hispanics with his rhetoric.

At present, there are only two major Republicans who can claim sizable political appeal in California's Latino community: They are the former mayor of Los Angeles, Richard Riordan, and President Bush.

If the Republicans are smart, they will create many more opportunities for the president to touch base with the Latino community.

Beneath what appears to be a peaceful surface (to those who aren't political junkies), there is a fermenting process going on within various Latino groups. There is a growing sense of political discontent with the system as it's working in California.

They know the numbers. Latinos now constitute 17 percent of its registered voters, a political force that will explode in this decade.

Although California Gov. Gray Davis won 78 percent of the Latino vote in 1998, there is concern that he has not done enough to repay his debt to Latino voters. He and his supporters find this hard to understand. Among his actions in behalf of the community, he cites the derailment of Proposition 187,

which denied undocumented immigrants their most basic needs - critical health services and access to public education for their children. In two major trips to meet with Mexican leaders, he did and said the right things. He hosted Mexican President Vicente Fox and appointed a Latino to the state supreme court. He signed recent legislation to allow qualified undocumented immigrants to attend college in California without having to pay expensive, out-of-state tuition.

Still the state's Latinos -- traditionally loyal Democrats -- feel unfulfilled. They want a bigger share of the political pie. They want to be involved in the top-level decision-making. They want a larger share of appointments. They want to be partners rather than to be treated as tokens, as window dressing.

The appointment of one supreme court justice is not enough. Why not two? Oh, yes, and when was the last time Latinos saw Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante involved in capitol activity of great significance?

Taking advantage of this discontent and doing all they can to agitate it, Republicans can implement an effective strategy. In their respective states, Bush and Riordan have strong appeal among Latinos. The president's advisors know that Riordan, in his quest to become governor this year, has an opportunity to draw a substantial Latino vote.

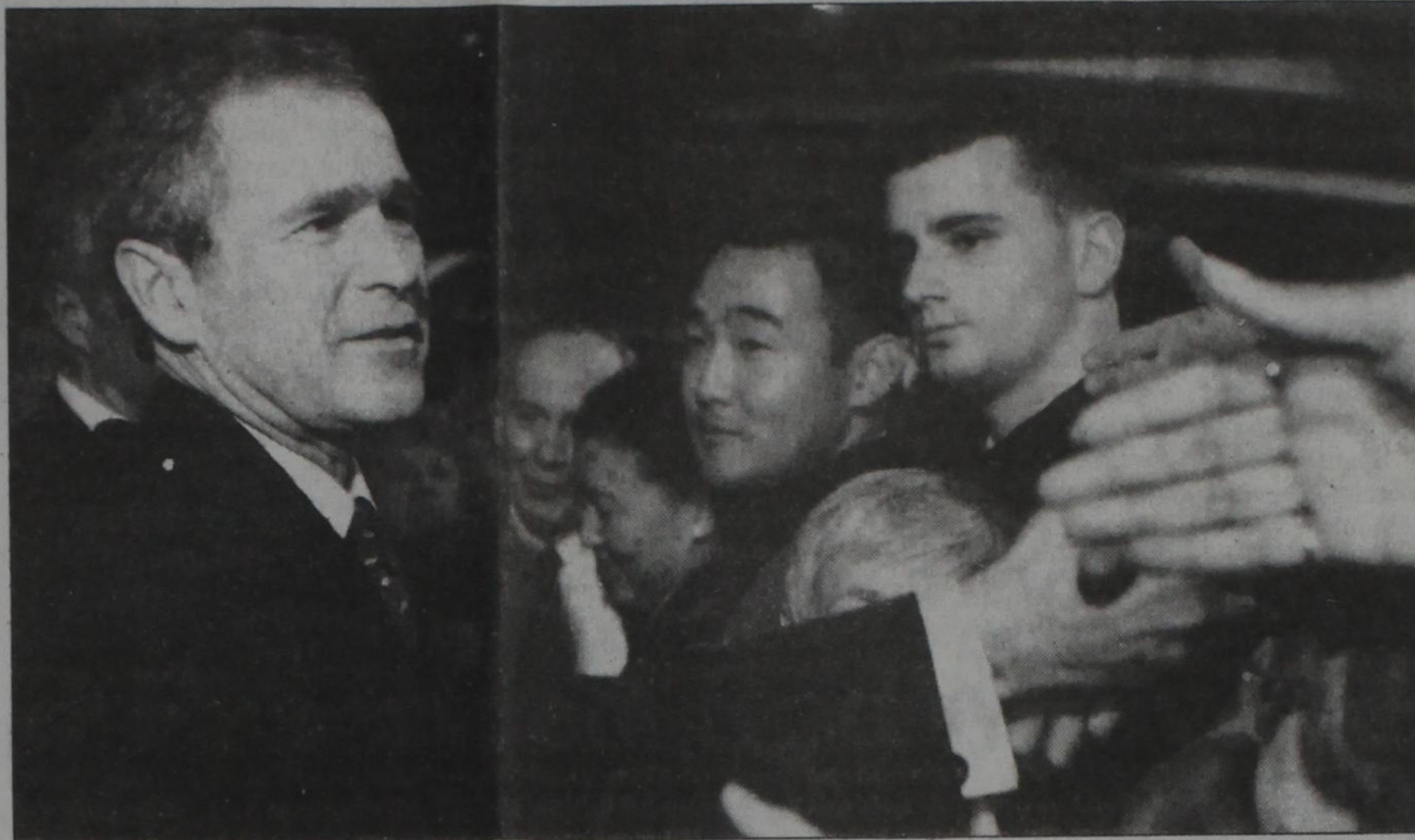
A quid pro quo situation could develop if Riordan wins the statehouse with Bush's help.

It was no coincidence that Riordan, Secretary of State Bill Jones and businessman Bill Simon Jr., all of whom are seeking to be the GOP's gubernatorial nominee, were highly visible during Bush's visit. All three have repeatedly emphasized their commitment to issues important to the Latino community. The GOP's public courtship of Latino voters is already under way.

One conclusion appears certain already. Before it's over, we will all have had our fill of mariachi music.

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Bush Cultiva a Latinos Californianos Para La Cosecha Republicana



Por Raymond Rodriguez

Los dirigentes republicanos de California están seguros de una cosa: que si no atraen a un gran segmento del bloque emergente de votantes latinos, están destinados a seguir siendo el partido minoritario de California.

Cuando el presidente George W. Bush recibió la invitación este mes de hablar a un grupo de líderes latinos del mundo de negocios en Ontario, California, demostró cómo se hace: se presentó. Cuatro mil latinos, reunidos por una coalición de grupos de negocios hispanos hace unas semanas, también se presentaron. Su sola presencia fue señal de su interés en y respeto por la comunidad latina y el enriquecimiento cultural que contribuye al país. En su deseo de conquistar a más latinos del oeste

al rebaño republicano, tiró a gol.

El partido republicano de estado de California sigue escavando para salir del hoyo político que les dejó el anterior gobernador Pete Wilson, quien se unió con los fanáticos anti-inmigrantes y pregoneros anti-bilingüismo, inglés como idioma único en 1994 para explotar los temores de los votantes con el fin de ser re-elegido. Pero a su partido le costó tremendamente al enfurecer a los hispanos con su retórica.

Hoy, existen sólo dos republicanos importantes que pueden adjudicarse atracción política respetable de parte de la comunidad latina: son el anterior alcalde de Los Angeles, Richard Riordan, y el presidente Bush. Si son inteligentes los republicanos, crearán muchas más oportunidades para que el presidente se comunique

con la comunidad latina. Bajo lo que aparenta ser a los que no son adictos a la política una superficie calma, bulle un fermento entre varios grupos latinos, hasta entre sus líderes. Crece el sentido de descontento con el presente sistema político en California.

Tienen conciencia de las cifras. Los latinos son ahora 17 por ciento de los votantes registrados del estado, una fuerza política que explotará dentro de los próximos diez años.

Aunque el gobernador californiano Gray Davis ganó 78 por ciento del voto latino en 1998, existe la duda que no ha hecho lo suficiente por pagar la deuda que tiene con los votantes latinos. Tanto él como los que lo apoyan no comprenden esto. Entre sus acciones para la comunidad, cita el

"El respeto al derecho ajeno es la paz"

Lic. Benito Juarez

haber vencido la propuesta 187, que quería negar las necesidades más básicas a los inmigrantes indocumentados - servicios de salud críticos y acceso a la educación pública para sus hijos. Durante dos viajes importantes para reunirse con dirigentes mexicanos, hizo y dijo lo correcto. Invitó al presidente mexicano Vicente Fox y nombró a un latino a la corte suprema del estado. Firmó legislación reciente que permite que los inmigrantes indocumentados calificados asistan a la universidad en California sin tener que pagar la matrícula altísima de no-residentes del estado.

Aún así, los latinos del estado -- que tradicionalmente han sido leales al partido demócrata -- no se sienten satisfechos. Quieren mayor participación en el proceso político. Quieren estar involucrados en decisiones de alto nivel. Quieren más nombramientos. Quieren ser socios y no ejemplos, maniqués de escaparate.

No es suficiente el nombramiento de un juez a la corte suprema. ¿Por qué no dos?

Ah, sí, y ¿cuándo fue la última vez que los latinos vieron al gobernador diputado Cruz Bustamante como participe de actividades capitalinas de gran envergadura?

Al aprovechar el descontento y hacer todo lo posible por agitarlo, los republicanos pueden implementar una estrategia efectiva. En sus respectivos estados, Bush y Riordan tienen gran apoyo entre los latinos. Los consejeros del presidente saben que Riordan, al querer ser gobernador este año,

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Race relations symposium on tap

LULAC NAACP Pledge to Work Together Against Inequities

By W. Gardner Selby

AUSTIN -- Two civil rights groups announced plans Monday to host a statewide race relations symposium this year followed by roundtable discussions in five cities, including San Antonio and Corpus Christi.

The Texas offices of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and League of United Latin American Citizens spelled out their plans after thousands marched on the Texas Capitol to mark the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

Group leaders said the partnership would encompass voter registration drives and monitoring implementation of a state law that requires local law enforcement agencies to watch for racial profiling.

"It's our attempt to debunk the myth that African Americans and Hispanics

don't get along," said Vincent Ramos, executive director of the 4,000-member Texas LULAC.

"Alone, we're limited in what we can accomplish," Ramos said. "But together I think people need to prepare themselves for a new future here in Texas and the United States."

Gary Bledsoe, president of the Texas State Conference of NAACP Branches, said, "Together we can be more effective."

Bledsoe estimated that the organization has 25,000 members in Texas.

Ramos and Bledsoe credited U.S. Department of Justice officials for bringing the groups together through a joint agreement signed in June. The groups agreed to consult and cooperate with each other on issues including redistricting, racial profiling, police misconduct and fairness in the criminal justice system.

The spokesmen said one of the first joint initiatives would focus on discrimination within the public schools.

During the 2001 legislative session, LULAC supported legislation allowing schools to consider alternative ways for students to advance from grade to grade if they fail a state-mandated test. Such proposals did not win serious consideration.

The LULAC-NAACP race relations symposium, "Building Peaceful Communities," is slated for March in Dallas. Community roundtable discussions, facilitated by Texas A&M University, are to follow in Houston, San Antonio, Austin, Amarillo and Corpus Christi.

The community discussions are to focus on "how our communities can work with each other and others as well and reduce friction and conflict," Bledsoe said.

"187?" "No, 27," she answered.

The Knights of Columbus Council 11807 from Our Lady of Guadalupe provided refreshments. Although they were busy serving the guest, their real purpose for being there was to share a few minutes with Father Curtis.

Who are family to Father Curtis know he is a multifaceted man, but few are aware of his singing talents, although he often intoned the ever popular "Mary's Canticle" in church. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that Father Curtis is a recording artist. His first CD is "Songs of Faith" and according to reliable sources he is working on a second CD which will feature Mariachi accompaniment and songs such as "El Rey." Those present at the reception were treated to Father Curtis' delightful rendition of "Paloma no Llores." He's hot, believe it!

Diana Salinas and her sister Florence Rivas presented the guest book and a pen set with a beautifully inscribed case. "To Monsignor Curtis Halfmann, Just and Honorable. The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the holy is understanding" Proverbs 9:10

If you missed the retirement reception, be not disheartened, there is yet time to bid a personal farewell to Father. The parishioners of Our Lady of Grace Church will host a reception in honor of Father Curtis on Saturday February 2 immediately following the 7:00 PM Mass. Everyone is invited. This will be your opportunity to add your voices to the voices of the children and parishioners of St. John Neumann in saying "We love you Father Curtis."

Ya Viene El Vestival Viva Aztlán Lean Mas en las Proximas Semanas

Father Curtis Halfmann Retires

He Preached and Practiced God's Love

By Ysidro V. Gutierrez

A signature West Texas wind kicked up a dusty haze in Lubbock as hundreds of well-wishers gathered at St. John Neumann Church gymnasium last Sunday to bid farewell to the Diocesan signature Priest, our beloved Father Curtis. After more than 40 years of serving Christ's faithful, the time is come for Father Curtis to exchange the clerical robes of the parochial pastor for a rod, reel, and ice chest.

I first met Father Curtis in 1967 when my family moved into a three-room house on Emory Street, one block from Our Lady of Grace Church. From day one it was apparent that Father Curtis was the quintessential Priest who preached and practiced God's love for all. His love for God is the hallmark of this remarkable Priest and friend.

Father Curtis is a man of many qualities but the attribute I find most impressive about him is his uncanny ability to remember names. Soon after our first meeting in 1967, he knew the names of every one of my brothers and sisters and never failed to call us by name. On occasions he needed a minute to remember my first name, which is per-

fectly understandable as some of my best friends still have difficulty with Ysidro, but Father Curtis never faltered in remembering my family name and to this day he

In 1967 I was a teenager of below average stature. Father Halfmann on the other hand is tall and has always been slender. My earliest impressions of him have endured to the present. I grew taller

but his stature in my eyes never changed. He remains and always will remain a strong man of faith endowed by God's Holy Spirit who pursued the highest Christian ideals. He is a man called to bring God to the faithful who dedicated his life to Christ. I remember him to this day as a holy and venerable man. So shall I remember Father Curtis.

"You are a Priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

But, I am not alone. There are as many personal stories about Father Curtis as there are people whose lives he has touched. It was apparent last Sunday that hundreds of faithful Catholics felt as I do.

always inquires about mom and dad. So reassuring is his demeanor that never is there doubt as to the genuineness of his asking about them. Knowing his people's names speaks to his sincerity and reveals the character of a truly caring servant of the God's people.



Photo by John P. Cervantez

Español Is More Than Just Another Immigrant Language

By Domenico Maceri

French signs in Quebec, designed to protect that language, by law have to be twice as big as those in English. In the United States, 26 states have passed laws declaring English their official language to safeguard it as the language of the nation. Most did so in reaction to the growing importance of Spanish.

Interestingly, while English-speaking U.S. residents and French-speaking Canadians view their languages as threatened, Spanish speakers in the United States share the same feeling of linguistic vulnerability. Indeed, many U.S. scholars looking at the future of Spanish here see little but bleakness.

Historically, immigrants' native languages disappear after a generation or two as their children and grandchildren concentrate on English. When Spanish is somewhat maintained, it turns into Spanglish in the second generation, and by the third generation it's pretty much gone. As immigrant families settle and "Americanize," they lose their language.

Yet thanks to the continuous immigration, which replenishes the number of speakers of the language, Spanish has managed to maintain its importance, in spite of well-

financed efforts to make this an English-only nation.

Spanish was used in the United States, particularly Florida and the Southwest, before English. Currently, this country has 17 million Spanish speakers, many of whom also speak English to various degrees.

A number of indicators point to a future for Spanish, which might prove scholars wrong. President George Bush uses it, albeit not very well. Several members of his family speak it better.

At the 2000 Republican convention in Philadelphia, California Assemblyman Abel Maldonado gave a speech completely in Spanish. This represented a dramatic change from past GOP national conventions, where bashing immigrants and languages other than English seemed to be de rigeur. At the Philadelphia convention, Republicans were willing to accept the Spanish language and, by extension, its speakers, and welcomed them to their party.

Spanish is the most popular foreign language in U.S. high schools, where more than 3.3 million students are studying it.

At the college level, a similar picture emerges. Figures released

by the Modern Language Association reveal that for the first time in the history of foreign language enrollments, Spanish courses attract more students than all the other foreign languages put together.

In spite of the anti-bilingual education movement, Spanish is still an essential language in elementary schools. Most states are continuing the programs. While several languages are involved, Spanish is the most widely used.

Its importance is reflected in the pocketbook. University of Miami researchers have found that linguistic knowledge among Hispanics shapes family income in surprising ways. Families who spoke only Spanish had an average income of \$18,000. Those with only English, \$32,000. Those with both Spanish and English averaged \$50,376.

Bilingual employees of the city of Los Angeles earn 5 percent more than their monolingual colleagues in designated positions. And bilingual teachers in the Los Angeles school district receive a yearly bonus of \$5,000.

U.S. companies are well aware of the connection between Spanish and business. When you make a telephone call, AT&T and other

major companies invite you to push 1 for English and 2 for Spanish. Bank ATMs ask the same question.

Watch Spanish-language television and you see commercials from major national and international companies as they try *en español* to capture more business.

Throughout history, many languages have contributed to our linguistic landscape. Spanish, however, will continue to thrive because of poverty conditions in the Spanish-speaking world, particularly Mexico. Unless its economy improves drastically to narrow the U.S.-Mexico wage disparity, Mexicans will continue to make the journey north.

That is good news for the survival of Cervantes' language.

Ironically, if immigration from Spanish-speaking countries peters out because stronger economies keep people home, the decrease in the importance of Spanish in the United States will be offset by its increased importance worldwide. In a global economy, the language of people with a strong purchasing power has great value.

Regardless of what happens, I'm glad I know Spanish. If I didn't, I'd start studying it right now.

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Indictment of Tyson Illuminates U.S. Policy Inconsistencies

By Antonia Hernández

As one who has advocated for increased civil and labor rights protections on behalf of immigrants, I applaud the U.S. Attorney in Tennessee for returning an indictment against Tyson Foods for smuggling undocumented workers.

Yet I cannot reconcile the administration's inconsistent policies as they relate to immigrants.

While the federal enforcement side tries to control the use of undocumented workers, the Labor Department steadfastly refuses to protect these same workers. What could possibly drive Tyson to smuggle human beings into the United States? Could it be as basic as, the company needed workers?

The indictment, returned Dec. 19, mentions nothing about the working conditions of these employees. Is the government saying that Tyson violated our laws by smuggling the workers but that once they were hired they were paid fairly and their working conditions met all the requirements of our labor laws?

I am willing to give Tyson the benefit of the doubt. After all, in our legal system the presumption of innocence applies until one is proved guilty.

The abhorrent working conditions in poultry-processing and meatpacking industries are well known. Had the Labor Department forcefully enforced our labor laws in the poultry industry, and had our government acknowledged the need for workers and adopted more realistic immigration policies, the action against Tyson would be more transparent and believable.

The trouble with the government's current approach is that it does not yet accept the reality that our economy needs these workers. Our immigration policy continues to tolerate undocumented worker abuse when their labor is needed, but as soon as the economy turns sour, it blames the worker and scapegoats the immigrant.

The problem with this approach is that these individuals, both legal and undocumented, have become an integral part of our work force, in bad as well as good times. Many of their jobs are labor-intensive, dirty and low-paying. I am not advocating for elimination of these jobs. What I do advocate is the recognition that the work needs to be done and that we need these people to fill these jobs.

The solution is simple: Legalize the workers, enforce our labor laws and amend our immigration policy to include a process by which we bring the necessary workers legally and permanently.

The U.S. public and its political representatives continue to be schizophrenic about immigrants. When thinking of undocumented workers in the aggregate, they distance themselves from the workers' illegality. Personalize the issue, and it is José their gardener, or María the caretaker of their child, or Kim the dishwasher in their favorite Korean restaurant, or Juan working in the poultry slaughterhouse that guts the chicken that will be eaten at their dinner table. These hard-working, productive members of their community are providing a needed service.

The lesson we can take from the Tyson indictment is that until we remove the incentives to victimize and exploit workers, we will continue to have sporadic exposés that do little to solve our need for labor.

As the U.S. population ages, our need for additional workers will increase. The time is right to return to the earlier discussions between President Bush and President Fox about fixing our immigration problems. That Secretary of State Colin Powell and Mexico Foreign Affairs Secretary Jorge Castañeda renewed bilateral discussions on immigration reform this month is, one hopes, a good sign.

The Sept. 11 attacks rearranged our national priorities. Many still argue that the time is not right.

I could not disagree more. We need to legalize this large underclass not only because these workers have become part of the fabric of our community but also for security reasons. It is in all our interests to have everyone in this country properly documented.

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El Español Es Mas Que Simplemente Otra Lengua De Inmigrantes

Por Domenico Maceri

Los carteles en lengua francesa en Quebec, diseñados para proteger aquella lengua, por ley deben ser el doble del tamaño de los que están en inglés. En los Estados Unidos, 26 estados han pasado legislación que declara el inglés como lengua oficial, con el propósito de salvaguardar el idioma como la lengua nacional. La mayoría así lo hicieron como reacción a la creciente importancia del español en este país.

Es de interés notar que mientras los residentes de los Estados Unidos anglohablantes y los canadienses francófonos perciben una amenaza a sus lenguas, los hispanohablantes en los Estados Unidos comparten el mismo sentido de vulnerabilidad lingüística. De hecho, muchos académicos estadounidenses proyectan un futuro no muy fructífero del español aquí.

Las lenguas nativas de los inmigrantes desaparecen históricamente después de una o dos generaciones al concentrarse los hijos y nietos en el inglés. Cuando el español se mantiene de alguna manera, se convierte en español de segunda generación. Ya para la tercera generación prácticamente ha desaparecido. Al asentarse las familias inmigrantes, y al "americanizarse", pierden su lengua.

No obstante, gracias a una inmigración continua, que alimenta el número de hablantes del idioma, el español ha podido mantener su importancia a pesar de esfuerzos

bien financiados que quieren convertir al inglés en la única lengua de esta nación.

El español se usó en los Estados Unidos, en particular en Florida y en el suroeste, antes que el inglés. Actualmente, en este país viven 17 millones de hispanohablantes, muchos de los cuales también hablan el inglés, a diferentes niveles.

Varios indicadores señalan que el español tiene futuro en los Estados Unidos, contradiciendo la opinión académica. El presidente George Bush lo utiliza, aunque no muy bien. Tiene unos cuantos familiares que lo hablan mejor.

Durante la convención republicana 2000 en California, concejal por California Abel Maldonado dio un discurso enteramente en español. Esto representó una transformación dramática de convenciones republicanas anteriores en las que hablar mal de los inmigrantes y sus lenguas era común. Durante la convención en Filadelfia, los republicanos se mostraron dispuestos a aceptar la lengua española y por extensión a sus hablantes, y les dio la bienvenida a su partido.

En las escuelas de secundaria en los Estados Unidos, el español es la lengua extranjera más popular, y la estudian más de 3.3 millones de estudiantes.

Surge una imagen similar a nivel de la universidad. Las cifras emitidas por la Asociación de Lenguas Modernas revelan que por primera vez en la historia de las

matriculas en un curso de lengua extranjera, los cursos de español atraen a más estudiantes que todas las otras lenguas como conjunto.

A pesar del movimiento en oposición al bilingüismo, el español continúa siendo una lengua esencial en las escuelas de primaria. La mayoría de los estados van a continuar los programas. Si bien se presentan varias lenguas en los programas bilingües, de todas se usa más el español.

La importancia del español la refleja el bolsillo. Investigadores de la universidad de Miami han encontrado que el conocimiento de lenguas entre los hispanos es un indicador del nivel del ingreso familiar de maneras sorprendentes.

Las familias que sólo hablan español tienen un ingreso medio de \$18,000. Las que hablan sólo inglés, \$32,000. Las que hablan tanto el español como el inglés tienen un ingreso promedio de \$50,376.

Los empleados bilingües de la ciudad de Los Angeles ganan 5 por ciento más que sus colegas monolingües en posiciones designadas. Y los maestros bilingües del distrito escolar de Los Angeles reciben un extra anual de \$5,000.

Las compañías en los Estados Unidos saben muy bien que hay una conexión entre el español y los negocios. Al hacer una llamada telefónica, AT&T y otras compañías le invitan a marcar el 1 para el inglés y el 2 para el español. Los cajeros automáticos de los bancos ofrecen la misma opción.

Si mira la televisión en español, verá comerciales de grandes compañías nacionales e internacionales que tratan de capturar más negocios por medio del uso lingüístico y cultural.

Por toda la historia muchas lenguas han contribuido a nuestro paisaje lingüístico. El español continuará prosperando en los Estados Unidos dadas las condiciones de pobreza que sufre el mundo hispanohablante, en particular México. Al menos que su economía mejore drásticamente para ir cerrando la brecha entre los Estados Unidos y México en términos de lo que es posible ganar como sueldo, los mexicanos seguirán viajando al norte.

Para la lengua de Cervantes, ésta es buena noticia.

Irónicamente, si disminuyera la inmigración de los países de habla española porque con economías más fuertes serían capaces de retener a sus trabajadores, la pérdida de la importancia del español en los Estados Unidos se contrarrestaría con el aumento de su importancia a nivel mundial. En una economía global, el idioma de los que más poder adquisitivo tienen es de gran valor.

Pase lo que pase, me alegro de hablar español. Si no lo hablara, comenzaría a estudiarlo ahora mismo.

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Immigrants Lured by Tyson Foods are 'Scared'

While six former Tyson Foods Inc. managers indicted in an immigrant smuggling case have been preparing for their first federal court hearing Thursday, some immigrants stranded with fraudulent IDs have been running for cover.

Matthew Baez, who works with immigrants through Esperanza del Barrio, a 4-year-old social services group, said he has been helping some Hispanics lured to Tennessee by promises of \$8-an-hour "dream jobs."

Baez described the affected Hispanics as "scared. They realize they have been part of a fraud."

"They are not going back home. They are forced to look for other means of survival."

Baez said for some of them that has meant traveling to search for "field work" in Kentucky, North Carolina and Florida.

"They know that they are here illegally."

Federal prosecutors in a Dec. 11 sealed indictment accused Tyson and six former managers, including

a vice president, of conspiring to smuggle illegal immigrants to work at company plants in Tennessee, Alabama, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Texas and Virginia.

A hearing on those charges is set Thursday before U.S. Magistrate Bill Carter.

The indictment said a Tyson manager told an undercover agent the company would pay \$200 for each "illegal Mexican alien delivered..."

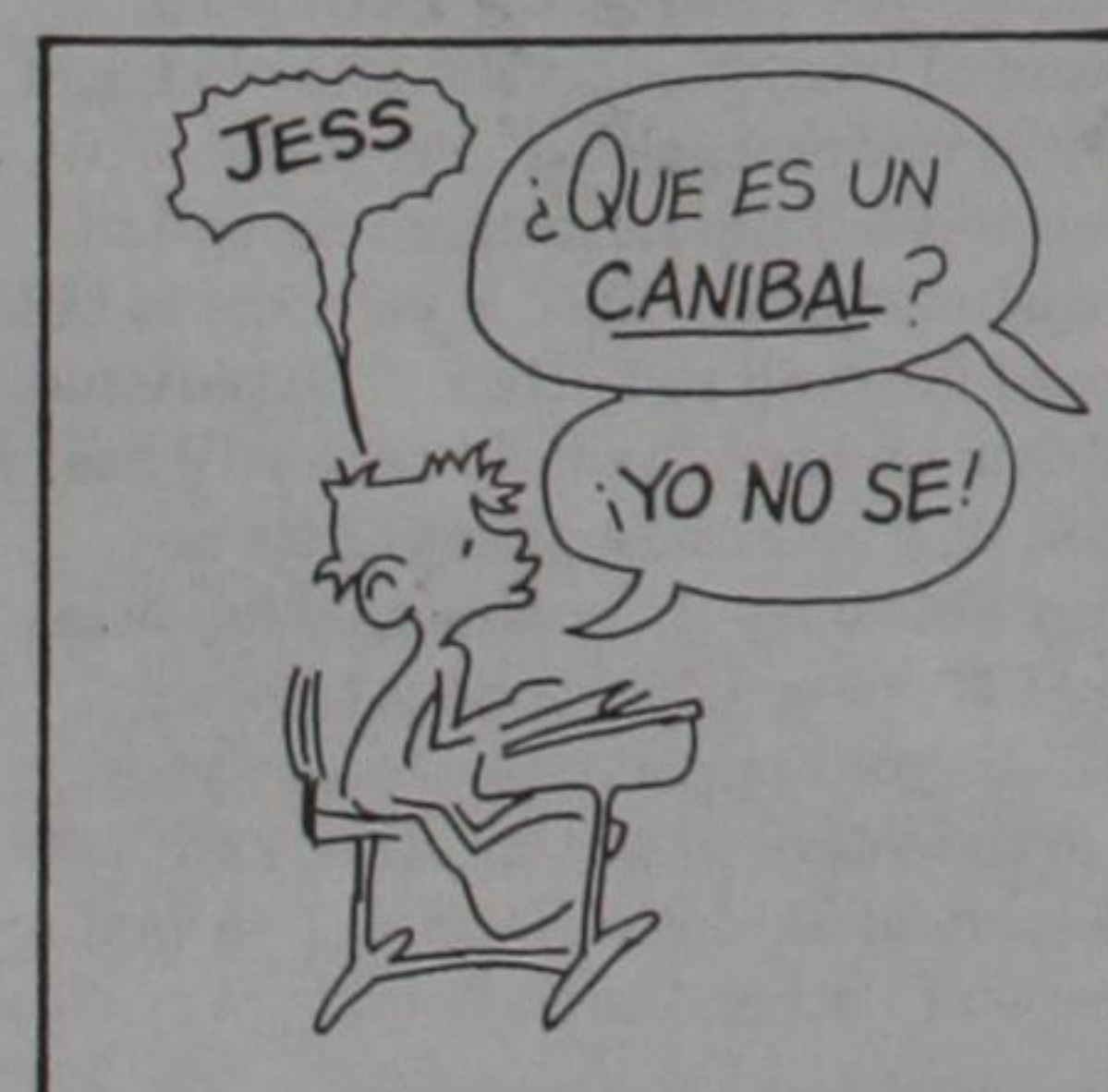
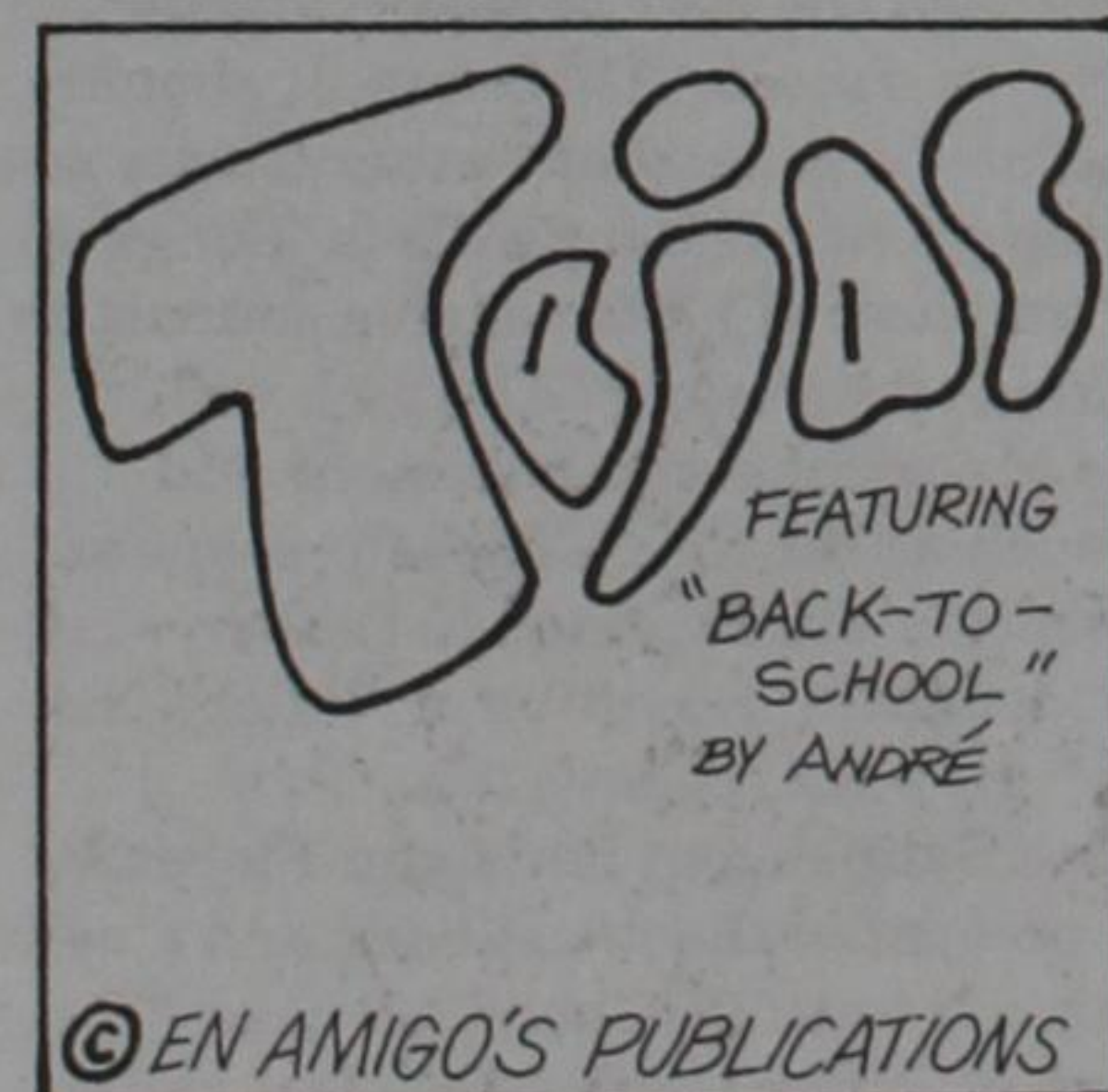
The company aided the immigrants by obtaining false documents so they could work at Tyson plants "under the false pretense of being legally employable," according to the indictment.

Robert Hash, vice president of the firm's retail fresh division, and Gerald Lankford, former human resources manager of the retail fresh division, are charged, as are three former managers at the Shelbyville plant: Truley Ponder, Spencer Mabe and Jimmy Rowland. Keith Snyder, complex manager at the Tyson plant in Noel, Mo., is also indicted. Snyder is a former night shift supervisor at Shelbyville, according to the indictment.

Prosecutors have said a conviction on a charge of importing illegal immigrants for commercial advantage can carry a five-year mandatory minimum sentence, with no chance of parole.

Tyson spokesman Ed Nicholson said he was unsure if the indicted former managers would attend the Thursday hearing or if they would be represented by their attorneys. Springdale, Ark.-based Tyson, with 120,000 employees, is the nation's largest poultry processing company. Since the indictments were unsealed, executives of the company have accused federal prosecutors of "improper racial stereotyping." They also contend the government's case involves a "few managers who were acting outside of company policy."

A Tyson executive also said the



Acusación Contra Tyson Ilumina Las Inconsistencias de Política

Por Antonia Hernández

Siendo una de las personas quien ha abogado por mayores protecciones de los derechos civiles y laborales de parte de los inmigrantes, aplaudo al fiscal del estado de Tennessee por haber decidido por el acta de acusación del mes pasado contra la compañía Tyson Foods por cometer contrabando de trabajadores indocumentados.

Sin embargo, no puedo reconciliar lo inconsistente de la política de la administración de Bush en lo referente al inmigrante.

Mientras que del lado federal se intenta controlar el uso de los trabajadores indocumentados, del lado del Departamento de Trabajo se empeña en negarles la protección a los mismísimos trabajadores. ¿Qué podría llevar a Tyson Foods a traficar con seres humanos, haciéndolos entrar a los Estados Unidos? ¿Podrá ser la razón tan básica como la que necesitaban trabajadores?

La acusación, entregada el 19 de diciembre, no menciona nada sobre las condiciones de trabajo de los trabajadores. ¿Dice el gobierno, entonces, que Tyson violó nuestras leyes al traficar en trabajadores, pero una vez contratados, los mismos recibían el pago justo y sus condiciones laborales cumplían con todas las de la ley?

Estoy dispuesta a concederle a Tyson el beneficio de la duda en este caso. Después de todo, en nuestro sistema legal se aplica la presunción de inocencia hasta probar la culpabilidad.

No obstante, se conocen bien las detestables condiciones de trabajo de las industrias envasadora de carnes y avícola. Si el Departamento de Trabajo hubiera sido más estricto con el cumplimiento de las leyes de trabajo en la industria avícola, y si nuestro gobierno hubiera reconocido la necesidad que existe de mano de obra y adoptara políticas de inmigración más realistas, su caso contra Tyson habría resultado más transparente y creíble.

El problema que hay con el enfoque actual del gobierno es que no acepta todavía la realidad de que nuestra economía necesita estos trabajadores. Nuestra política de inmigración continúa tolerando abusos contra el trabajador indocumentado cuando su mano de obra se necesita, pero apenas empieza a declinar la economía, se culpa al trabajador, y se vuelve chivo expiatorio el inmigrante.

El problema con este enfoque es que los trabajadores inmigrantes, tanto los legales como los indocumentados, se han convertido en parte íntegra de nuestra fuerza laboral, en épocas de bonanza y no. Muchos de los trabajos realizados por estos obreros indocumentados son muy difíciles, sucios y pagan poco. No sugiero que se eliminen los trabajos. Lo que quiero es que se reconozca que hay trabajo que hacer y necesitamos a estos trabajadores para hacerlo.

La solución es sencilla: legalizar a los trabajadores, hacer cumplir las leyes de trabajo, y enmendar la política migratoria para incluir un proceso por el cual traemos a los trabajadores necesarios legal y permanentemente.

El público estadounidense y sus representantes políticos continúan con un comportamiento esquizofrénico en cuanto al inmigrante. Al pensar en los trabajadores indocumentados como conjunto, muchos se distancian de su entrada ilegal al país. Pero si se mira el problema del lado personal, se convierte en José, su jardinero, o María la que cuida a sus hijos, o Kim, el lavaplatos de su restaurante coreano favorito, o Juan, que trabaja en el matadero que destripa el pollo que comerán para la cena. Estos miembros de su comunidad, trabajadores, productivos, ofrecen un servicio necesario.

La lección que podemos derivar de la acusación contra Tyson es que hasta que no saquemos los incentivos que permiten la explotación de los trabajadores como víctimas, continuaremos viendo exposés esporádicos que hacen poco por resolver nuestra necesidad de mano de obra.

Al envejecer nuestra población, aumentará nuestra necesidad de trabajadores. Ahora es cuando se debe volver a las conversaciones anteriores entre el presidente Bush y el presidente Fox en torno a resolver nuestros problemas migratorios. El secretario de estado, Colin Powell y ministro de exteriores mexicano, Jorge Castañeda, renovaron discusiones bilaterales sobre la reforma de las leyes de inmigración este mes.

Los ataques del 11 de septiembre cambiaron la importancia de nuestras prioridades.

Habrán quienes digan que ahora no es el momento.

No estoy de acuerdo, en absoluto. Debemos legalizar a esta gran subclase no sólo porque los trabajadores son parte del tejido de nuestra comunidad, sino también por razones de seguridad. Es del interés de todos nosotros que todas las personas que están en el país tengan los documentos en regla.

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continued on page 3

Anti-Terrorism Effort Keeping Busy

James W. Ziglar gained fame on the Hill as the man who called to order President Bill Clinton's impeachment trial with chants of "Hear ye, hear ye."

But these days, in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the native Mississippian and former sergeant-at-arms of the Senate has a much more challenging job: tracking those who enter and exit the country.

As head of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Ziglar oversees an agency that for years has been criticized for backlogs and delays in processing immigrants applying for residency or citizenship, mistreating customers and being unable to keep track of foreign visitors well enough to know which ones are violating their visas. With Americans concerned about terrorists in their midst, these issues are taking on a new urgency.

"I did not want to be INS commissioner," Ziglar said in his first one-on-one interview since taking over the INS in August. "I was drafted to do this."

Tapped by President Bush and Attorney General John D. Ashcroft

to take the reins of an agency with 34,000 employees and a \$6 billion budget -- and administration interest in restructuring it -- Ziglar said he accepted the \$130,000-a-year job because the INS needed leadership. He acknowledged, though, that he lacks experience in immigration issues.

"I didn't even know where the [INS] building was," he said.

Illegal immigration has overwhelmed the INS for years. The fact that most of the Sept. 11 terrorists entered the country on legal visas has focused Ziglar's attention on the estimated 3 million foreigners who have overstayed the limits of their visas and have faded into the population. "Clearly the focus is on the enforcement side of the business," he said. "We want to send a message that we expect our laws to be observed."

How much progress the INS can make without a huge increase in resources is uncertain. But Ziglar said the agency is working more closely with the FBI and CIA to share information and to do a better job screening visitors before they arrive.

Les Klinefelter, officer in charge of the Immigration and Naturalization Service office in Memphis, said he doesn't doubt some workers with falsified credentials have been stranded by the Tyson case.

"If they come to us, they are going to be arrested ... set up for removal proceedings. Unless they might have a claim to permanent resident status we don't have any other choice."

Amador Anchondo-Rascon, a former employee at Tyson's Shelbyville plant, pleaded guilty in the case as part of a sentencing deal with prosecutors. Anchondo-Rascon, 43, has been meeting privately with federal agents and is prepared to testify at any Tyson trial.

Anchondo-Rascon told a federal judge he smuggled illegal immigrants into America to work for Tyson and provided them with fraudulent identification.

A Worried GOP Learning Spanish

The intensified drive to draw Hispanic voters to the Republican Party isn't a voluntary mission of political correctness, but a matter of sheer necessity at the ballot box.

Worried that legions of campaign workers across the country can't speak the fastest-growing language of political importance, the Republican National Committee is sending key workers to intense Spanish language classes. For up to two weeks, GOP officials from selected states will immerse themselves in vocabulary and conversation at the Berlitz Language School in Washington.

"We can't survive as a party without getting more of the Hispanic vote," said Matthew Dowd, a pollster and senior adviser to the RNC. "The writing is on the wall."

Statistics tell the story best: President Bush won the votes of 35 percent of Hispanic Americans, while Al Gore received 62 percent. If the votes are cast in the same proportions in the 2004 presidential race, the GOP predicts, Bush would lose by up to 3 million votes.

Republicans studied the sobering facts at the party's winter strategy meeting that concluded over the weekend. The new chairman of the RNC, Marc Racicot, delivered a mandate to party activists to plot strategies for winning races in this competitive midterm election year.

"We have an incredible opportunity right now to expand the party, not only in terms of diversity, but also in terms of numbers," said Racicot, a former governor of Montana. "We cannot--and will not--let that opportunity pass us by."

In 1990, Hispanics comprised 9 percent of the U.S. population. Last year's census found the Hispanic population had risen to 12 percent, an increase that creates the potential for millions of new voters, not only in border states such as Texas, California and Arizona, but also Iowa, Illinois and Wisconsin, among other states.

Latinos not easy to define. Republicans once relied on conservative Latino voters in states such as Florida, Dowd said, but today the electorate is not so easily defined. In 1988, when the elder George Bush ran for the presidency, two of every three Hispanic votes came from Cuban-Americans, who lean largely Republican. When his son ran in 2000, two of every three

Hispanic voters were non-Cuban and Democratic-leaning.

Democrats say their party is more aligned with the concerns of Latino voters. At the Democratic National Committee's winter meeting last week in Washington, party Chairman Terry McAuliffe mocked the GOP effort in a speech and vowed Democrats would not surrender the Latino vote.

"They say they plan to teach RNC members to speak Spanish, and I think that's great," McAuliffe said. "Hispanic communities should be able to hear in their native tongue about the Republican policies designed to help the special interests at the expense of working families."

Both parties, though, are aggressively competing behind the scenes for the growing Latino vote. Democrats and Republicans have created separate Spanish-speaking public relation staffs to produce television programs, mailings and radio addresses targeted at Hispanic voters.

Bush pitches in President Bush, who frequently speaks some Spanish during public

appearances, is bolstering the Republican Party's effort. Earlier this month in California, for example, the president held a televised town meeting sponsored by the Latino Coalition Foundation, the Ontario Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Latin Business Association. Internal GOP polling indicates that as Latinos rise on the economic ladder they have greater tendency to support Republican candidates.

But Republicans must delicately balance just how far they reach out to new citizens. Last week, Bush's proposal to restore food stamps to more than 363,000 legal immigrants in his 2003 budget drew criticism from conservatives who accused him of trying to buy votes at a 10-year cost of \$2.1 billion.

"It's plain to see that the president has chosen to steal a page from the Democrats' playbook," said Rep. Tom Tancredo (R-Colo.). "His attempt to expand our political base through surrendering to the Hispanic vote is usually the Democrats' job. Votes can't be bought with welfare." Democrats hope to keep the

skepticism alive, pointing out that the Republican Party is not traditionally friendly to Hispanic causes.

"Republicans hope they can use high-dollar advertising, photo ops and spin to make up for their poor record on issues important to most Hispanics," said Texas Democratic Party Chairwoman Molly Beth Malcolm. "The record makes it clear why Democrats have the support of the vast majority of Hispanics and Republicans can't buy support they haven't earned."

Marlys Popma, the executive director of the Republican Party of Iowa, hopes to learn the language to recruit candidates and increase voter registration in a state where the Hispanic population has grown exponentially in the last decade. In a state where Bush lost by only a few thousand ballots, new voters will be key in future elections.

"The party has been perceived as exclusionary," Popma said. "But President Bush has awakened Republicans to the fact that these are our people. It's a long-term prospect of teaching and learning for both sides, but it will have a huge impact in 2004."

Role Models Help Kids' Grades, Self-Esteem: Study

and self-esteem.

More than half of white, Latino and African-American teens--and 56% overall--said they had a role model. The higher the family income level, the more likely a teen was to have a role model.

A majority (42%) named a parent or relative as their role model, while 39% named a "figure," such as a sports star, musician, actor or politician. Nineteen percent said their role model was someone they knew outside their family, such as a friend, doctor, teacher or clergy member.

The investigators found that teens with any role model fared better in school and had greater self-esteem than those with no role model.

And the combination of having no role model and no father at home was associated with the highest rate of substance abuse, according to the report. This was especially true of white males, for whom having a role model in the absence of a father reduced the likelihood of substance abuse, the researchers note.

As for ethnic identity, it was strongest among teens who actually knew their role model.

But boys and lower-income teens overall were more likely to pick a role model from the media than from people they knew, the survey showed.

"Needless to say, the opportunity for a role model to have a positive influence is severely limited without direct personal contact," the authors point out. "It is sobering to note that 31 teens (7%) named doctors, lawyers, teachers or clergy members as role models, while 142 teens (34%) named sports figures, singers, or actors."

Yancey's team concludes that since many at-risk teens may not have a person in their lives to emulate, more needs to be done to ensure that ethnically diverse role models are available to adolescents.

"Aside from their families," Yancey and colleagues note, "teens are choosing media 'products' to emulate rather than the responsible, professional adults to whom they are or should be exposed."

From Page 2

indictment followed the company's refusal to pay the government a \$100 million penalty.

Justice Department spokesman Bryan Sierra has described the company officials' remarks as "rubbish."

Baez said some illegal immigrants from Mexico and Guatemala who say they were recruited to work at Tyson's plant in Shelbyville have contacted him for help. He said "dozens" of immigrants were not aware until the Tyson indictments were announced in December that they were holding bogus Social Security cards and other documents.

"A lot of them that I have spoken to had no clue that was a scam or illegal," Baez said. "They were told these documents were for employment at Tyson and not to show them anywhere else."

De la pagina una

tiene la oportunidad de atraer gran parte del voto latino.

Podría surgir una situación que pro quo si Riordan es victorioso con la ayuda de Bush.

No fue coincidencia que Riordan, secretario de estado Bill Jones, y empresario Bill Simon Jr., cada uno deseoso de ser nominado candidato a gobernador por el partido republicano, fueron muy visibles durante la visita de Bush. Los tres han enfatizado repetidas veces que están comprometidos con los temas de importancia a la comunidad latina. El cortejo del partido republicano a los votantes latinos ya comenzó.

Parece clara ya una conclusión. Antes que termine, nos habremos cansado de la música mariachi.

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LHCC to Host 27th Annual Banquet

The Lubbock Hispanic Chamber of Commerce will be holding its 27th Annual Awards and Installation Banquet.

Mr. Tony Sanchez, candidate for Texas Governor will be the keynote speaker for the evening event.

Annual Awards of Corporation of the Year, Business Man & Women of the Year, Media of the Year, and Member of the Year will be presented during the banquet. A special award will be presented to one outstanding legislator.

The event will be held at the Lubbock Memorial Civic Center which is located at 1501 6th Street.

"So mark your calendar for Friday, February 8", said Esther Sepeda, chairperson for LHCC. The event is schedule to kick off at 5:45 p.m..

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The Lubbock Hispanic Chamber of Commerce cordially invites you to our 27th Annual Awards & Installation Banquet on Friday, February 8, 2002 at 5:45 P.M. to be held at the Lubbock Memorial Civic Center 1501 6th Street Lubbock, Texas

Keynote Speaker - Mr. Tony Sanchez
Candidate for Texas Governor

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The Lone Star State May Have a Few More Stars On the Way

The Houston Texans were given an all-star list of players Tuesday made available for their expansion draft next month. In fact, the list is lined with so many former and current marquee names, it seems more like a fantasy football list than the real thing.

All-Pro left tackle Tony Boselli

is one of the stars available to the Texans.

SportsLine.com has acquired a list through several league sources of some of the higher profile names exposed for the Texans' taking. As opposed to the lower-grade group of talent available when the Cleveland Browns had a similar

draft before the 1999 season, the Texans have several Pro Bowlers and marquee names waiting behind Door No. 2.

According to the sources, the following is a quick compilation of many of the top players who have been made available:

- * Saints left tackle William Roaf, guard Wally Williams and quarterback Jeff Blake.
- * Jets cornerbacks Marcus Coleman and Aaron Glenn.
- * Chargers tight end Freddie Jones.

- * Chiefs wide receiver Derrick Alexander.
- * Ravens linebacker Jamie Sharper and return maven Jermaine Lewis.
- * Buccaneers defensive end Marcus Jones and guard Randall McDaniel.
- * Lions running back James Stewart.

- * Jaguars left tackle Tony Boselli and defensive tackle Gary Walker
- * Bills quarterback Rob Johnson.
- * Giants safety Sam Games and guard Glenn Parker.
- * Dolphins defensive tackle Tim Bowens.
- * Cardinals wide receiver Rob Moore.

It appears the Texans already have their sights set on a few of these players. In fact, Tony Agnone, the agent for the Ravens' Sharper, said he was informed by Texans' officials that Houston will select his client.

"They have to bring him in for a physical first, but they have informed us that they would like to

take him," said Agnone. "I'd say right now it's 99.9 percent. Jamie understands the business."

In addition to the solid Sharper, Texans sources said that they are very interested in bringing in Boselli for a physical as well. Should his surgically repaired knee check out well they would give serious consideration to drafting him.

"Who wouldn't consider a guy like that if he's healthy," said the source. "Regardless of the salary, you're talking about Tony Boselli."

The reality of why the list is so star-studded lies with cap crimes of the past. NFL teams have spent money faster than the salary cap allows, and many teams have painted themselves in a corner. The Houston expansion draft has become an easy escape for many of these cap-strapped clubs who want to dump contracts, many they regret giving in the first place.

"We're using this to try to get rid of some high-priced guys," said another GM. "That was our strategy going into this. We're hoping we can dump a lot of money."

Several general managers and coaches said that they are using the Texans' draft specifically to free up salary-cap room. This strategy strongly differs from those for the Browns' draft as most of those lists were heavy with fringe players, busts and over-the-hillers.

"Did you see some of the names on this list?" exclaimed one general manager. "I knew there would be some big-name guys, but not that many. That was a shock. It isn't what Cleveland had to choose from."

Bullfighting Comes To Texas First Dedicated School Opens In Santa Maria

She's a Hispanic from Southern California who found her calling by crossing the border to the bullrings of Tijuana, Mexico.

He's a Texan born with clubfeet who picked up the reins of his father's aborted dreams and became an acclaimed matador in Mexico.

Together, Raquel Martinez and David Renk have inaugurated the latest part of the Tex-Mex tapestry that is Deep South Texas.

A 30-foot circle of dirt in the midst of Webb County's lonely brushland is being hailed as Texas' first dedicated bullring and bullfighting school.

Fred Renk, David's father, broke ground on his dream in June.

On Sunday, he circulated proudly, admitting surprise at the opening day crowd squeezed into the bleachers to cheer on the matadors — and the bulls.

going to let her? It was sacrilege," she remembered.

"If I had failed in that first one, it would have been over. But I triumphed. The next day, the newspapers changed. She IS a matador!"

Martinez earned her doctorate and in 1981 became the first professional lady matador in the world, opening the door to others.

Women in tiny villages in Central and South America would gather to watch her, banging pots and pans, kissing her, pulling at her hair, cheering her as one like them.

"I got my bravery from the women," she grinned. Like the bulls, who get their aggression from the mother.

"It's for that moment that you do the fight."

The elder Renk had aspirations as a bullfighter. He was badly mauled during a fight, and gave up the sport.

The younger was not deterred. Other boys played with the cap guns, David Renk played bullfight.

"One day, he stepped out with his cape and the little vaca and they started putting him in shows. He trained with the ninos. All of a sudden, he was in a suit of lights."

The lithe David Renk, now 38, fought throughout Mexico, becoming the seventh American to become a full matador.

He is one of only three fighters in the history of the Reynosa, Mexico, ring to have fought a bull so challenging it was awarded an indulto, or pardon from death.



The Santa Maria Bullring was named for his patron saint.

The ranch where it sits is La Querencia, which translates to "haunt" or "safe place."

Renk has invested about \$100,000 into what he hopes will be a venue for local fans and curious winter tourists.

Bullfighting, he said, is not cruel.

It is, he said, a dance of wills that is as old as history.

"Since B.C., people will fear them. A bull will run, a rhino will run. It's carved there on the walls of Crete," he said.

As are the women fighters, Martinez said.

Out of costume, Martinez is a petite woman with a long, white-blond pony tail and a tiny voice.

In the ring, she is fierce yet playful, egging on the 880-pound bulls as if they were simply playground bullies.

Raised in a family of scuba divers, hikers, and mountain climbers, a career as a matadora to her wasn't too far-fetched, she said.

The Mexican matadors had other ideas.

"It was like a war. How are we

"It took a while to feel accepted," he said. "To my face I was never dissed — but you sensed it."

Ultimately, The Mexican crowds fondly nicknamed him El Texano.

Since U.S. law prohibits fight-to-kill bullfights, all fights at Santa Maria will be bloodless.

The traditional three-act structure will remain intact, but blunt sticks will be used instead of barbed.

Since bulls learn the game quickly, they are considered lethal before their second fight.

Once a bull has fought once at Santa Maria, it will go on to a gentler career with rodeo clowns.

In that, something is lost, David Renk said.

"Even when they are charging and they are charging real hard. It's left empty," he said.

"The act is not finished."

Sunday's 1,000-plus crowd didn't seem disappointed.

Long lines at the border, especially since Sept. 11, make the venue especially welcome, said Webb Skinner, historian with Pena Taurin Del Valley, a local club for bullfighting fans.

"Really, there hasn't been a bullfight in Texas since '84 in the Houston Astrodome," he said.

"We're missing this."

Ex-Champ Tapia Knocks Out Alvarez in First Round

Former four-time world champion Johnny Tapia ended his first fight as a featherweight by knocking out Eduardo Alvarez in the first round Saturday.

Tapia, who turns 35 next month, trapped Argentina's Alvarez in a corner and unloaded with body and head shots to score the quick

victory in a nontitle fight at York Hall.

Tapia, based in Las Vegas, was jailed and also banned from boxing for 3 1/2 years for drug and alcohol addiction early in his career. Since, though, he has won four world titles and is aiming for a fifth crown.

He's a former IBF and WBO junior bantamweight and WBA and WBO bantamweight champion.

He charged after Alvarez early in the fight, landing left hooks to the body before switching his attacks to the head. Alvarez tried to cover up, but a series of six blows to the body put him down, and referee Richie Davies counted him out.

The victory took Tapia's record to 51-2-2 with 28 knockouts, while Alvarez dropped to 29-5.

The fight was on the undercard to the bout between Juan Pablo Chacon and Victor Polo for Chacon's WBO featherweight title.

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"Friday Night Super Bowl Bash" to Air on CBS

Sting and No Doubt are among those set to perform on "FRIDAY NIGHT SUPER BOWL BASH", a new entertainment special to be broadcast from the New Orleans Arena, Friday, Feb. 1 (10:00-11:00 p.m., live ET/delayed PT) on the CBS Television Network.

The music special, which kicks off the festivities surrounding Super Bowl weekend and is the most highly anticipated event leading up to the big game, features rousing performances by chart-topping musical performers, as well as interviews with celebrities and NFL players.

Included will be performances by multiple Grammy Award-winning singer/songwriter Sting and Grammy-nominated band No Doubt, who will sing their current hits as well as cover versions of other artists' classic songs. Additional musical acts will be announced shortly.

Celebrities from the worlds of movies, music and sports, including Rebecca Romjin-Stamos and LL Cool J, will introduce the live performances.

One of the NFL's all-time greats, Deion Sanders, will also be on hand to conduct sideline interviews with the musicians, NFL players and celebrities in attendance at the concert extravaganza, as football, music and entertainment come together to capture the energy and excitement of sport's ultimate showdown.

"FRIDAY NIGHT SUPER BOWL BASH" is a Tenth Planet Production. Joel Gallen ("America: Tribute to Heroes," "MTV Movie Awards") is the executive producer and director.

Michael Dempsey ("Michael Jackson: 30th Anniversary Special") is the co-producer.

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"LO DICE TU MIRADA" EMILIO
"NADIE COMO TU" SOLIDO

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2	SHHH	KUMBIA KINGS
3	SANGRE DE REY	MICHAEL SALGADO
4	SUENO CONTIGO	RAM HERRERA
5	QUE METIDA DE PATA...	JAY PEREZ
6	LLUVIA	ELIDA Y AVANTE
7	QUIERO DECIRTE	COSTUMBRE
8	1,2,3,	IMAN
9	POR AMOR	GRUPO VIDA
10	DILE LA VERDAD	SOLIDO

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Tracy Byrd Jumps On The Latin Bandwagon

Tracy Byrd's current single, "Just Let Me Be In Love," provided the singer with an opportunity to learn a new language. The song has a Latin feel that Byrd thought lent itself well to a Spanish version, so the singer learned enough of the language to record a convincing version for his Hispanic fans. Byrd says the learning process proved to be a blast.

"I gotta say, it was the most fun I've probably had in a while, especially when I got in the studio and started really singing along with the track for the first time," he tells LAUNCH. "The song is already a romantic-sounding ballad, and Spanish is such a romantic language, you know? Once it all came together--man, it just came out great! It's different, but I'm glad I did it now. I really think it adds a little twist to it."

Byrd says he had so much fun learning to speak Spanish for the song that he plans to take lessons to learn to speak fluently. Becoming bilingual is something Byrd has toyed with for quite a while now, he explains. "Well I must admit three years ago I ordered Spanish The Easy Way on CD-ROM and I haven't even tore the wrapper off of it, so I never have even started working on it, but it has always been something I



wanted to do and so one of these days maybe I'll get the time to really, really learn the language," he says.

"Just Let Me Be In Love" sits at Number 15 on the Billboard Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart. The song is from Byrd's latest release, Ten Rounds.



Patricia Cardosa, second from left, accepts the Audience Dramatic Feature award for her work in the film "Real Women Have Curves" at the Sundance Film Festival awards show Saturday, Jan. 19, 2002, in Park City, Utah, as America Ferrera, second from right, and Lupe Ontiveros, right, hug each other. (AP Photo/Douglas C. Pizac)

Kmart Se Declara En Bancarrota

Miles de personas entre consumidores y empleados se verán afectadas tras la solicitud de protección de bancarrota presentada ayer por Kmart Corp.

Con el ánimo de reaparecer libre de pérdidas en 2003, Kmart Corp. presentó ayer la solicitud de bancarrota tras no poder competir con otras cadenas de descuentos, como Wal-Mart y Target. En el proceso, se espera que la cadena cierre aproximadamente 300 establecimientos, con la consiguiente pérdida de trabajo para miles de empleados. Muchos clientes deberán buscar tiendas alternativas donde hacer sus compras.

"Son tiendas que funcionan con pérdidas. Muchas personas verán que los productos que quieren ya no están disponibles para la venta", dijo a La Opinión Christopher Castaldo, analista de mercados y fundador de Corporate Communications Corp., firma de la que procede el boletín semanal Stock Traders Press.

La situación del gigante de la venta al menudeo se agravó al no poder pagar 78 millones de dólares a Fleming Cos., uno de los principales proveedores de alimentos de Kmart. Otras compañías también dejaron de enviarle productos en fechas recientes. Algunas agencias que miden el riesgo de las compañías, por ejemplo Standard & Poor's y Moody's Investors Service, habían ya de hecho rebajado el perfil de la compañía en semanas recientes.

"Nuestro consejo a quienes quedaron expuestos con los títulos de Kmart es que vendan. No es una compañía que va a durar mucho tiempo", dijo Asma Usmani, analista de corporaciones de ventas al menudeo de la firma Edward Jones. "Mucha gente se sentirá incómoda de seguir comprando en Kmart. Aunque anticipado, es desde luego una buena noticia para la competencia", agregó Usmani.

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Lo mejor en Noticias que Importan

La declaración de bancarrota bajo el Capítulo 11 significa que "la compañía seguirá operando con la idea de reorganizar la deuda. Kmart ha de presentar un plan de reorganización financiera", dijo Rosendo González, presidente de González & Associates, un despacho de abogados corporativos con sede en Los Angeles que gestionan procesos de bancarratas.

Intentos de recuperación Kmart, cuya sede está en Troy, Michigan, presentó la solicitud de protección de bancarrota en el Tribunal Federal del Distrito Norte de Illinois, en Chicago. En un comunicado de prensa, la firma aseguraba que podría reorganizarse a la brevedad posible y salir a flote en 2003. Las 2,114 tiendas de la firma seguirán abiertas al público.

La decisión de declararse en bancarrota se basa en una combinación de factores, incluyendo menores ventas de las previstas durante las pasadas fiestas de Navidad y los pobres resultados financieros obtenidos durante el cuarto trimestre.

"Estamos decididos a completar la reorganización tan pronto como sea posible, a la vez que aprovecharemos la situación actual para volver a empezar y reposicionar Kmart para el futuro", decía un comunicado de Chuck Conaway, ejecutivo jefe de Kmart.

El ejecutivo seguirá ejerciendo las mismas funciones, mientras James B. Adamson, experto en revitalizar compañías, fue nombrado la semana pasada nuevo presidente de la junta directiva. Ronald B. Hutchison fue nombrado ayer vicepresidente ejecutivo y jefe de reestructuración de la firma. Hutchison fue uno de los arquitectos de reorganización financiera de Advantica Restaurant Group, Inc., en cuyo proceso se eliminaron más de 2,000 millones de dólares en deudas.

Para financiar una vuelta a los beneficios, Kmart anunció que ha asegurado 2,000 millones de dólares en un consorcio bancario liderado por las firmas Credit Suisse First Boston, Fleet Retail Finance, Inc., General Electric Capital Corporation y JPMorgan Chase Bank, que ayudarán a la firma durante este periodo de

reestructuración.

Los activos que ahora se encuentran bajo protección del tribunal de bancarratas ascienden a más de 16,000 millones de dólares.

Kmart, que abrió la primera tienda en 1962, tiene en la actualidad unos 275 mil empleados en 50 estados de EU, Puerto Rico, Islas Vírgenes y Guam. Durante los años 80 adquirió renombre a nivel nacional, aunque a principios de los 90 Wal-Mart la superó en ventas y Kmart estuvo a punto de desaparecer.

El sur de California Todavía no se sabe a ciencia cierta qué repercusiones tendrá la bancarrota en el sur de California. Para Jack Kyser, economista jefe de la Corporación para el Desarrollo Económico de Los Angeles (LAEDC) la clave reside en saber si la corporación se podrá restablecer financieramente para 2003.

"Los problemas de ahora no son nuevos. Se sabía que el mal sistema computarizado de inventario no les permitía competir con otras firmas también de descuento y venta al menudeo", dijo Kyser.

En el 2003 tendrán más competencia con la llegada de Kohl's, otra firma del Medio Oeste con productos muy baratos y de marca. "El panorama no se le presenta muy favorable a Kmart", dijo Usmani.

Según Castaldo, la situación económica actual no ha favorecido a Kmart. "El sector de las ventas al menudeo ha caído mucho. La gente no tiene la cantidad de dinero disponible para efectuar compras", dijo el experto.

Las acciones de Kmart cerraron la jornada de ayer en la Bolsa a 69 centavos y cambiaron de mano más de 148 millones de ellas.

Mexicans Living Aboard Could Vote in 2006 Elections

Lawmakers from Mexico's three main political parties on Monday said immigrants living abroad could soon be allowed to vote in future presidential elections at home, AFP reported.

During an official visit to San Diego, three lawmakers from the nation's lower house said they hope to introduce legislation on a plan some time soon.

"For our party, the right to vote for Mexicans abroad is a fundamental human right and we consider it necessary to discuss initiatives to accelerate its approval," said Dep. Tarcisio Navarrete, a member of President Vicente Fox's National Action Party (PAN).

Navarrete said lawmakers have yet to iron details to the proposed legislation, such as how to identify prospective voters and whether or not they would be able to vote in only presidential elections or state and municipal races as well.

Juan Jose Garcia, a member of the center-left Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), said immigrants deserved the right to vote since they represented "an undoubtable economic and political

link" to the nation. About 10 million undocumented and documented Mexican citizens live in the United States, equivalent to one-tenth of Mexico's domestic population. Each year, they wire home to friends and family an average of 8 billion dollars a year, a sum that rivals tourism for the nation's third largest source of foreign income.

Fox, whose July 2000 election victory ended 71 years of unbroken rule by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), has promised citizens abroad they would have the right to vote before his term ends in 2006.

The PRI for years had opposed the plan for fear that access to ballot boxes abroad could doom the party.

PRI Dep. Ildefonso Guajardo said his party was "totally in agreement" with giving Mexicans abroad the right to vote.

"But we think Congress still lacks the mechanisms to put such a plan in practice," he said.

The three lawmakers were invited to California by the Mexico-U.S. Chamber of Commerce.



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Defensa Desmiente Maltratos En Guantánamo

El secretario de Defensa, Donald Rumsfeld, desmintió formalmente todo maltrato a los prisioneros transferidos de Afganistán a la base aeronaval de Guantánamo, en la isla de Cuba, y estimó que las numerosas alegaciones en ese sentido son "completamente falsas".

"Las alegaciones [...] según las cuales los prisioneros son maltratados son completamente falsas [...] Ningún detenido sufrió malos tratos", afirmó Rumsfeld en una respuesta firme a numerosas críticas internacionales.

Pero las críticas no sólo proceden del extranjero.

Un juez federal de Los Angeles aceptó considerar una demanda que exige que estos presos sean consignados a un tribunal civil, no a los tribunales militares creados por el presidente George W. Bush. Sin embargo, el magistrado Howard Matz expresó "muchas dudas sobre su autoridad" para obligar al gobierno a cambiar de planes para los presos.

Las condiciones de detención de los prisioneros talibanes y miembros de la red terrorista Al Qaida trasladados a Guantánamo es "correcta, humana, apropiada" y "plenamente conforme a la Convención de Ginebra" (que protege los derechos de los prisioneros de guerra), añadió Rumsfeld en una conferencia de prensa en el Pentágono.

Después del último traslado

realizado el lunes, 158 prisioneros se encuentran detenidos en Guantánamo.

El trato que reciben de las autoridades de Estados Unidos ha sido criticado por defensores de derechos humanos tras la publicación en la prensa británica y estadounidense de fotos donde se ve a reclusos arrodillados y esposados, con ojos cubiertos y las orejas tapadas.

Rumsfeld estimó que los "artículos de prensa, declaraciones, cuestionamientos, alegatos e informes incasantes en la televisión [proviene] sin lugar a dudas de gente que está mal informada".

Los periodistas que fueron autorizados por el Pentágono a visitar la base sólo se pueden aproximar hasta 150 metros de la prisión donde están los detenidos.

El secretario de Defensa reconoció que el centro de detención en Guantánamo es una instalación "provisoria", recientemente establecida, y que será reemplazada por un centro permanente.

Comodidades
Aun así, Rumsfeld aseguró que los prisioneros "disponen de duchas calientes, de baños, de agua, de vestimenta apropiada, de cobertores, de comida culturalmente adaptada, de mantas para sus operaciones y del derecho de practicar su religión".

Un oficial de la Marina, de confesión musulmana, debe trasladarse a la base con la misión

de satisfacer las necesidades religiosas de los detenidos procedentes de Afganistán, indicó el Pentágono.

Amnistía Internacional anunció este martes que pidió a Estados Unidos la autorización de visitar a los prisioneros y exigió que puedan tener inmediatamente acceso a abogados independientes.

El futuro a largo plazo de estos detenidos, que Rumsfeld calificó de "extremadamente peligrosos" y de "terroristas extremistas", sigue siendo una interrogante.

La cuestión jurídica de saber si son "prisioneros de guerra" o "combatientes fuera de la ley" está siendo estudiada, admitió Rumsfeld, quien explicó que dependerá de la apreciación realizada por los juristas estadounidenses sobre la legitimidad del régimen talibán de acuerdo al derecho internacional.

Cualquiera que sea la decisión final, "Estados Unidos tratará a todos los detenidos conforme a los principios de la Convención de Ginebra", insistió.

"Tenerlos en unas celdas de 2.5 por 2.5 metros, en un maravilloso clima soleado. No es para mí un tratamiento inhumano", agregó.

"Los estamos manteniendo fuera de las calles, alejados de las compañías aéreas y de las plantas nucleares, y eso nos parece algo muy razonable", concluyó el secretario de Defensa, quien repitió lo dicho anteriormente de que uno de los presos ha dicho que quiere matar a algún norteamericano y que otro mordió a uno de los guardias.

Por otro lado, el Pentágono informó este martes que John Walker Lindh, el ciudadano estadounidense acusado de combatir con los talibanes, salió de la base de Kandahar del sur de Afganistán en viaje de retorno a su país en un avión C-17 de la Fuerza Aérea.

Walker fue acusado el 16 de enero de conspiración para matar a ciudadanos estadounidenses en el extranjero y de apoyar a Al Qaida. Fue además uno de los últimos combatientes que se rindió ante las fuerzas de la Alianza del Norte en la prisión de Qalae-Jonyi, cerca de Mazar-e-Sharif, en el norte de Afganistán.

Aunque no se dieron detalles del viaje, se sabe que debe ser juzgado por un tribunal federal civil de Virginia.

Jurisdicción dudosa
Steven Yagman, abogado de derechos civiles de Los Angeles, y un grupo de defensores --entre ellos el ex secretario de Justicia Ramsey Clark-- y representantes eclesiásticos presentaron ayer la demanda contra el gobierno federal por supuestamente recluir a los 110 prisioneros afganos en Guantánamo sin tener evidencia de que son terroristas.

Por otro lado, el fiscal federal Douglas Axel solicitó al juez que desechara la decisión porque los presos no residen en el Distrito Federal Central de California, con sede en Los Angeles.

"Este es un asunto de gran importancia para el público y nuestro sistema legal, ya sea si hay jurisdicción como si no la hay", recalcó el juez Howard Matz.

El juez dio a las partes un plazo de tiempo para que le presenten por escrito las razones en las que apoyan sus posiciones.

Matz afirmó que "el caso será abandonado" si el gobierno puede demostrar su falta de competencia y dio a las autoridades federales hasta el próximo 31 de enero para preparar sus argumentos, defendiendo que el tribunal no tiene jurisdicción en este caso.

La próxima audiencia tendrá lugar el 14 de febrero.

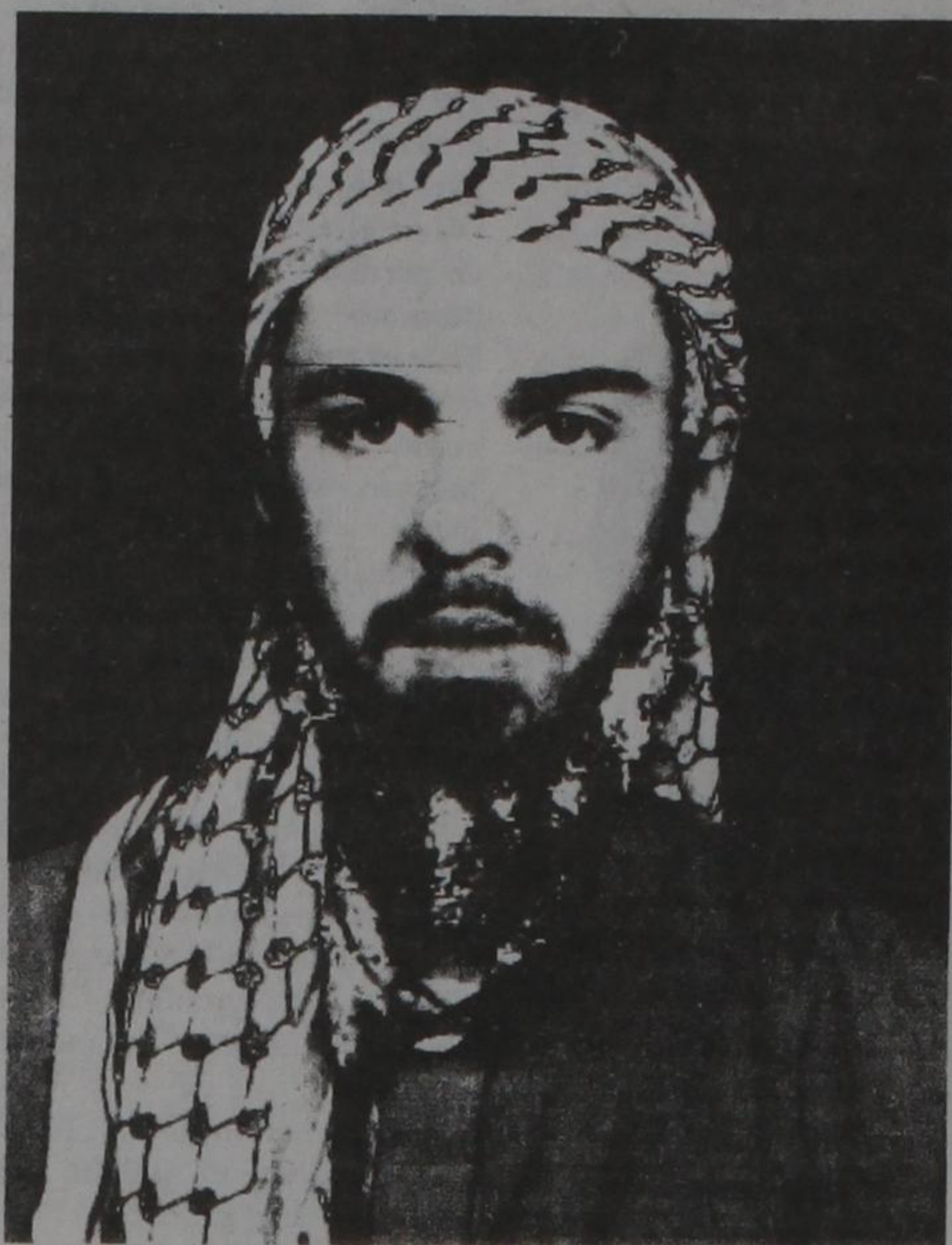
Yagman dijo fuera del tribunal que las condiciones en que el gobierno ha confinado a los prisioneros violan sus derechos civiles ya que no tienen representación legal, además de violar la Convención de Ginebra.

"Nuestro gobierno está asumiendo que son terroristas", indicó Yagman. "Los mantienen incomunicados sin haber cargos en su contra. Cualquier persona que está bajo la autoridad de EU tiene el derecho de pedir las razones de su detención".

"Estos individuos fueron sacados desde su país esposados, drogados, amordazados y con los ojos cubiertos, y están retenidos en jaulas al aire libre en Cuba", declaró Erwin Chemerinsky, profesor de derecho en la Universidad del Sur de California (USC) y uno de los demandantes, a un diario local.

En cuanto a Afganistán, el gobierno provisional comenzó ayer a pagar los sueldos a los funcionarios públicos, la primera paga que reciben en siete meses.

American Taliban, John Walker



John Walker Lindh, the American captured as a Taliban soldier, was sent to the United States aboard a military plane and under high security to face charges he conspired with terrorists to kill fellow U.S. citizens.

"He will now have his day in court, and he will be judged impartially and fairly," White House spokesman Ari Fleischer told a press conference.

Meanwhile, the Pentagon held off on sending more al-Qaida and Taliban figures from Afghanistan to a U.S. naval base on Cuba for security reasons, a senior defense official said Wednesday on condition of anonymity.

With 158 there now, the makeshift prison is reaching capacity, and officials fear it might be easier for the captives to create problems if they were doubled up in cells while more are being built, he said.

He said several dozen more could be ready in a day or so, but it was unclear when the transfers would resume.

In another development, six anti-Taliban militiamen have been brought to Walter Reed Army Medical Center here for treatment of injuries received when an American bomb went astray last month, another defense official said Wednesday, also speaking on condition of anonymity.

Lindh was expected to arrive late Wednesday in suburban Washington, where he was expected to make an initial appearance Thursday in U.S. District Court in Alexandria.

One U.S. official familiar with the process, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Lindh would be handed over to U.S. marshals after the military cargo plane lands, then fingerprinted. Marshals were expected to take Lindh to a federal detention center and transport him Thursday to his court appearance.

Meanwhile, Lindh's parents and attorney James Brosnhan were headed east from San Francisco, said a source familiar with the situation. This person, who spoke on grounds of anonymity, said it wasn't known whether they would see Lindh.

Lindh was taken off the USS Bataan warship in the Arabian Sea by helicopter and transferred to

another military plane at the airport at the southern Afghan city of Kandahar, officials said.

The Pentagon officially was not confirming the transfer, saying it would be dangerous to release any information about his movements. Journalists were kept away from the area.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said Tuesday that Lindh was restrained during the flight.

"When people are moved, they are restrained," Rumsfeld said. "That is true in prisons across the globe. It is not anything new. It is because in transit, movement from one place to another, is the place where bad things happen."

The 20-year-old Californian

converted to Islam four years ago and took up the cause of Muslim radicals, fighting alongside the Taliban in Afghanistan and meeting with Osama bin Laden at an al-Qaida terrorist training camp, his federal indictment says.

Held by the military since shortly after his capture in Afghanistan, Lindh was turned over to the U.S. Justice Department on Tuesday and will not be sent to the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, base where other prisoners from the Afghan conflict are being held.

Rumsfeld said Lindh would be brought into the federal courts' Northern District of Virginia, which covers the Pentagon and most of Washington's Virginia suburbs.

Lindh was coming to the United States because he is an American. President Bush's order allowing terrorism suspects to be tried by military tribunals does not apply to U.S. citizens.

Lindh's indictment alleges he trained at an al-Qaida camp in Afghanistan. He was captured in November in the siege of Kunduz and survived a prison uprising near Mazar-e-Sharif.

The conspiracy charge against him can carry a life sentence.

Meanwhile, the Afghan fighters brought to the states for treatment were among dozens of casualties in a "friendly fire" incident Dec. 5 near the southern Afghan city of Kandahar.

Three American soldiers and six Afghans were killed and 19 Americans were wounded in the air strike when an Air Force B-52 dropped a 2,000-pound satellite-guided bomb near their position north of the city of Kandahar, officials said at the time.

Bush Budget Reaches Out to Black, Hispanic Colleges

President Bush (news - web sites) will propose boosting federal support for black and Hispanic colleges in next year's budget, reaching out to minorities as the nation honors the memory of Martin Luther King Jr., the administration said on Monday.

The United States celebrates its 17th national holiday in honor of the slain civil rights leader on Monday when Bush hosts a White House ceremony to commemorate King's life.

Ahead of the ceremony, Education Secretary Rod Paige announced that Bush's budget blueprint would include more than \$350 million to strengthen historically black and Hispanic colleges and universities -- an increase of more than \$12 million over current funding levels.

Bush has pledged to increase funding for these colleges and universities by 30 percent between 2001 and 2005.

"To honor the legacy of Dr. King, we must continue to support the institutions that offer our minority and disadvantaged students opportunities through higher education," Paige said. "We have committed the resources we need to get that job done."

Bush's budget blueprint for fiscal 2003, due to be released on Feb. 4,

will mark a return to federal deficits for the first time since the budget then-President Bill Clinton proposed in February 1997.

The White House will forecast a shortfall of less than \$100 billion and request spending increases of up to 9 percent to finance the war on terrorism and beef up homeland security.

Calling education "the great civil rights issue of our time," Bush said on Saturday he would seek \$1 billion in new help for the nation's poorest schools. Bush said he would also ask for an extra \$1 billion to help children with special needs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

"Americans can proudly say they have overcome the institutionalized bigotry that Dr. King fought," Bush said in his weekly radio address. "Now our challenge is to make sure that every child has a fair chance in life."

On Jan. 8, Bush signed into law the most extensive overhaul of public education in almost four decades, authorizing up to \$26.5 billion for elementary and secondary schools, much of it targeted to help narrow the achievement gap between low-income students and their wealthier counterparts.

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