

Riley Endorses Two-Way Bilingual Education

By Kenneth J. Cooper
Washington Post Staff Writer
Education Secretary Richard W. Riley yesterday endorsed a novel approach to bilingual education that simultaneously teaches English to immigrants and a foreign language to their English-speaking classmates.

The Clinton administration has strongly backed bilingual education in general, but Riley's comments in a major address on the education of Hispanics were the first time he has singled out a particular method of teaching students whose first language is not English. Bilingual education has grown increasingly controversial in some portions of the country because immigrant students sometimes spend years speaking mostly their native language in special classes.

In the "dual language" classes that Riley endorsed, students are taught about half in their native tongue and half in another language, with the goal of making them proficient in both. The classes are typically an even mix of students who speak English as their first language and students who have another mother tongue. The method is sometimes also called "two-way bilingual" or "dual immersion."

Riley said the nation's economic competitiveness would be enhanced if dual-language instruction expands and more students learn to speak both English and another language.

"I think that it is high time we begin to treat language skills as the asset they are, particularly in this global economy," he said at Bell Multicultural High School in Northwest D.C. "Anything that encourages a person to know more than one language is

positive--and should be treated as a positive."

The dual-language method was first used in a public school in 1963 and has spread from the Miami suburb of Coral Gables to 261 schools in 23 states and the District, according to the Center for Applied Linguistics. Most are elementary schools that teach in Spanish and English, and some receive federal funding. Nine are in the Washington metropolitan area.

Riley called on the nation to nearly quadruple the number of dual-language schools to 1,000 within five years. The number has already been rising rapidly, increasing by about two-thirds since 1992, according to the linguistics center.

"It has become much more popular in the last 10 years," especially among English-speaking parents interested in their children learning a foreign language, said Heidi Ramirez, a bilingual education specialist at the Education Department.

Nancy Rhodes, a foreign language specialist at the linguistics center, said long-term studies have shown the method to be perhaps the most effective of various bilingual techniques.

"The two-way model is something we're seeing more and more of because they're getting better results" as immigrants develop English skills as well as "maintain and develop literacy in their native language," Rhodes said.

Delia Pompa, executive director of the National Association for Bilingual Education, called Riley's endorsement "wonderful" and suggested that it might ease the controversy over bilingual education. "I do hope his comments go a long way toward bringing people together on this

issue," she said.

Tim Schultz, a spokesman for U.S. English, which has opposed other bilingual methods, said the group supports the technique that Riley favors.

"We agree that dual-immersion programs are good," he said. "We just want kids to learn English."

But Schultz said the method is not a complete solution because some schools in heavily Hispanic areas of Los Angeles and Albuquerque, for instance, do not enroll enough English-speaking students to form dual-language classes.

Emotiva Oración del Papa en el Portal de Belén



El Papa Juan Pablo II oró ayer en el sitio donde nació Jesucristo y utilizó el poderoso púlpito para emitir un emotivo respaldo a un estado palestino independiente.

En su visita a Belén el Papa recurrió a un lenguaje inusitadamente directo para abogar por un estado palestino, a pesar de haber prometido que se apegaría a temas religiosos

According to the Education Department, about 75 percent of the 3 million students in the nation with limited proficiency in English are Hispanics, the fastest-growing ethnic group in the country. Riley said about 20 percent of teachers have training in bilingual education methods, but slightly more than half teach students whose proficiency in English is limited. President Clinton has requested an increase of \$54 million, or 13 percent, in federal spending for bilingual and immigrant education programs.

durante su peregrinaje de una semana por Tierra Santa, siguiendo los pasos de Jesús.

"Nadie puede desconocer cuánto ha tenido que sufrir el pueblo palestino en las décadas recientes. Su tormento está ante los ojos del mundo. Y ha transcurrido durante demasiado tiempo", dijo el Papa, en la ceremonia de bienvenida que le

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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.

INS Intercedes for Elian to Insure Communication with Father

Miami, - U.S. Immigration officials have interceded with Elian Gonzalez's relatives in Miami to make sure the boy, at the center of an international custody battle, is able to talk regularly with his father in Cuba.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) said that it had reached an agreement last March 8 so that Juan Miguel Gonzalez, Elian's father in Cuba, could talk any night that he wanted and for as long as he wanted with his son.

"Our lawyers contacted representatives from the family of Lazaro Gonzalez (the boy's great uncle in Miami) to insure that there would be communication," Maria Cardona, an INS spokeswoman in Washington, told the El Nuevo newspaper in Miami.

Cardona said that the arrangement was made after Juan Miguel Gonzalez complained to U.S. authorities that he had not been able to speak on a regular basis with his son.

An editorial that appeared in the state-run Granma on Thursday accused Lzaro Gonzalez and the relatives in Miami of using "cynical and cruel methods" to block the father-to-son dialogue.

The complaint was rejected by Linda Osberg Braun, one of the six lawyers representing the Miami relatives in a federal lawsuit that seeks to block the repatriation of the boy.

"The relatives have always tried to make the communication as flexible as possible because they understand that it is important for the boy. With all the means possible they have tried to keep the relation between father and son from deteriorating," Osberg said.

The president of Global Peace Initiative, the evangelical minister Kilari Anand Paul, said that, in a recent visit to the boy's temporary home in Miami, he observed that a call from Elian's father was hung up somewhat rudely.

The boy's case is currently in the hands of federal court judge Michael Moore who is to issue a ruling - expected at any time - on whether the court has jurisdiction to accept a political asylum plea filed by the Miami family.

The family claims that the federal government violated the constitutional rights of the boy by rejecting their request to file the asylum claim in his behalf. The father in Cuba has said he is the only one who can speak for the child and he does not want a claim filed.

La Raza Weekly to Celebrate 30th Anniversary in Chicago

Chicago, - The weekly publication La Raza, the oldest Hispanic publication in Chicago, is celebrating its 30th anniversary with great future projects, including a daily edition on the Internet.

Also in March, La Raza celebrates the first year of its cultural magazine, Arena, which has amply exceeded the growth prospects envisioned by the directors.

"The secret of La Raza is that it is not a test tube baby. It grew in and with the community and our goal is to continue growing with it," the weekly's publisher, Elbio Dominguez-Barilari told EFE.

The Uruguayan-born journalist said that the publication's intended image was "that of a modern, cosmopolitan newspaper looking toward our countries and covering the realities of the Hispanic community in the United States."

The circulation of La Raza is around 130,000 copies, distributed mainly in Chicago and its suburbs, although there are plans to expand it to the Hispanic community outside the metropolitan area.

The weekly, owned by Rossi Enterprises, a Hispanic company, also publishes a "yellow pages" service guide for Hispanics in the city.

Similarly, its Internet site presents the weekly content of La Raza and of the fortnightly Arena, as well as information on local and nationwide community services for Hispanics.

It is estimated that La Raza Online receives about 25,000 visitors a month.

"Our new projects also include an interactive section for kids, which can be used as an education tool at schools and also expanded sections on business, finance and sports," he said.

As regards the Arena magazine, "our immediate goal is to include it in the overall circulation. At present it is distributed only in half the copies."

For the purposes and to increase the number of pages in the weekly, the company plans to buy a new building and set up its own printing presses.

Despite all this innovations, there are no immediate plans to turn La Raza into Chicago's top Hispanic newspaper.

"This is always a goal, but although the environment is favorable and there is a need for it, this is a step to be taken most carefully, in economic terms," Rodriguez-Barilari said.

According to Census Bureau data, Hispanics are the fastest growing community in the state of Illinois. In 1997, there were already more than one million Latinos, a number expected to exceed two million by 2025.

For the sixth year in a row, the National Association of Hispanic Publications elected La Raza "Best Spanish Weekly" in the United States in 1997. It also won best design of its entertainment shows section and best coverage of local Hispanic events.

Anniversary celebrations will kick off in April with a concert by famous Panamanian singer-author Ruben Blades at the Chicago House of Blues, followed by yearround cultural events.

In addition, there will be a literary tournament to mark the first year of Arena magazine.

"We want Arena to become the axis of Hispanic culture in the United States, with one face looking at the local scene, another at Latin America and the third, at the bilingual Latino world of the United States," Rodriguez-Barilari said.

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

Vol XXIII No. 26

Comentarios de Bidal

by Bidal Agüero

There was a vote in Congress last week. Our Representative Larry Combest is bragging about this vote saying that he voted for what is best for West Texas



Combest was proud of his vote against H.R. 3846 which would have mandated a \$1 raise for those people that are paid minimum wage. These workers would have seen the raise within a period of 2 years.

Rep. Combest says that the raise would have hurt the workers because "The increase, while well-intentioned, has unintended consequences." Rep. Combest says that a raise actually hurts the workers it seeks to help. "Studies have shown that when the minimum wage goes up, entry-level or low-level workers are the first ones to lose their jobs."

I have quite a few friends that work for minimum wage. Besides not making enough money to live, the jobs they have don't provide health insurance, medical leave, or even a little vacation time. Very few of the jobs are even full-time and as a consequence workers can't put in overtime to make a little more money in order to make ends meet.

If my memory serves me right, Combest has gotten a raise every year since he's been in office. It seems that his raises are hurting him to the point that his mind isn't working right when he thinks that a little more money is a minimum wage worker's pocket will not be good for him.

Pico de Gallo

Our congratulations to the Ballet Folklórico Aztlan for their first place finish and winning "Best Overall" in the intermediate division at the Viva Aztlan Festival last weekend. Chicago's "Back of the Yard" Ballet for the second time in a row won "Best of Festival"

For those of you that didn't attend the Festival, you missed the best presentation of Hispanic entertainment pre-sented in Lubbock. Our thanks to all our sponsors as well as to those ballets that participated. Next week, courtesy of John Cervantez, El Editor will feature a full page of photographs taken during the Festival plus listings of all the winners in different categories. Those of you interested in buying a video of the Festival can call our office at 763-3841 for information.

EL EDITOR

Week of March 23 thru March 29, 2000

Lubbock, Tx

8th Annual Powwow Held Here



The West Texas native American Association is proud to present its 8th Annual Powwow, March 25-26, 2000, at the South Plains Fairgrounds, Fair Park Coliseum, Lubbock, Texas.

We welcome the public to this event! Thw powwow is a combined effort of the West Texas native American Association members and friends to help educate the community about some aspects of native American culture, while providing hands on experience. There will be dancers from throughout the United States and Canada competing for prize money. There will also be Native American vendors selling arts and crafts. The public may participate in round dances, cake walk dances and blanket dances. This is an excellent time to meet and see the dancers in their traditional dress.



Lack of Health Insurance Has Devastating Effect on Hispanics

By SANTIAGO TAVARA

Although Hispanics only represent 11.7 percent of the total population of the United States, they make up more than 25 percent of the population that lacks health insurance, making them more susceptible to illness, a study released Wednesday by the American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine (ACP-ASIM) indicated.

"This lack of health insurance has a devastating effect on Latino health outcomes," Dr. Whitney Addington, the current president of the ACP-ASIM, said.

Among uninsured Hispanics, women with breast cancer and men with prostate cancer are more likely to be diagnosed at a more advanced stage than non-Hispanics, the ACP-ASIM report said.

"Like the rest of the population without insurance, it means they tend to live sicker and die younger," Addington said at a conference attended by legislators from states with large Hispanic populations.

"Early detection and treatment is the key to the effective management of such diseases as diabetes and cancer," Addington said.

Rep. Ciro Rodriguez (Dem.-TX) said the Hispanic groups most affected are not children or the elderly - who benefit from free healthcare programs such as Medicare and Medicaid - but small business employees and migrant workers.

Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart (Rep.-FL) said he is sponsoring a bill that would offer tax incentives of 1,000-3,000 dollars for people that purchase private health insurance coverage.

The incidence of end-stage renal diseases related to diabetes is six times higher among Hispanics in comparison to the non-Hispanic white population. The report added that uninsured Mexican-Americans are three-and-a-half times less likely than the rest of the population to seek medical attention for the treatment of hypertension.

In addition, uninsured Hispanic children that suffer from asthma are six times more likely to not receive standard medical treatment than non-Hispanics.

"In comparison to other groups, Latinos have a greater risk of experiencing reduced access to regular health care services and delays in obtaining

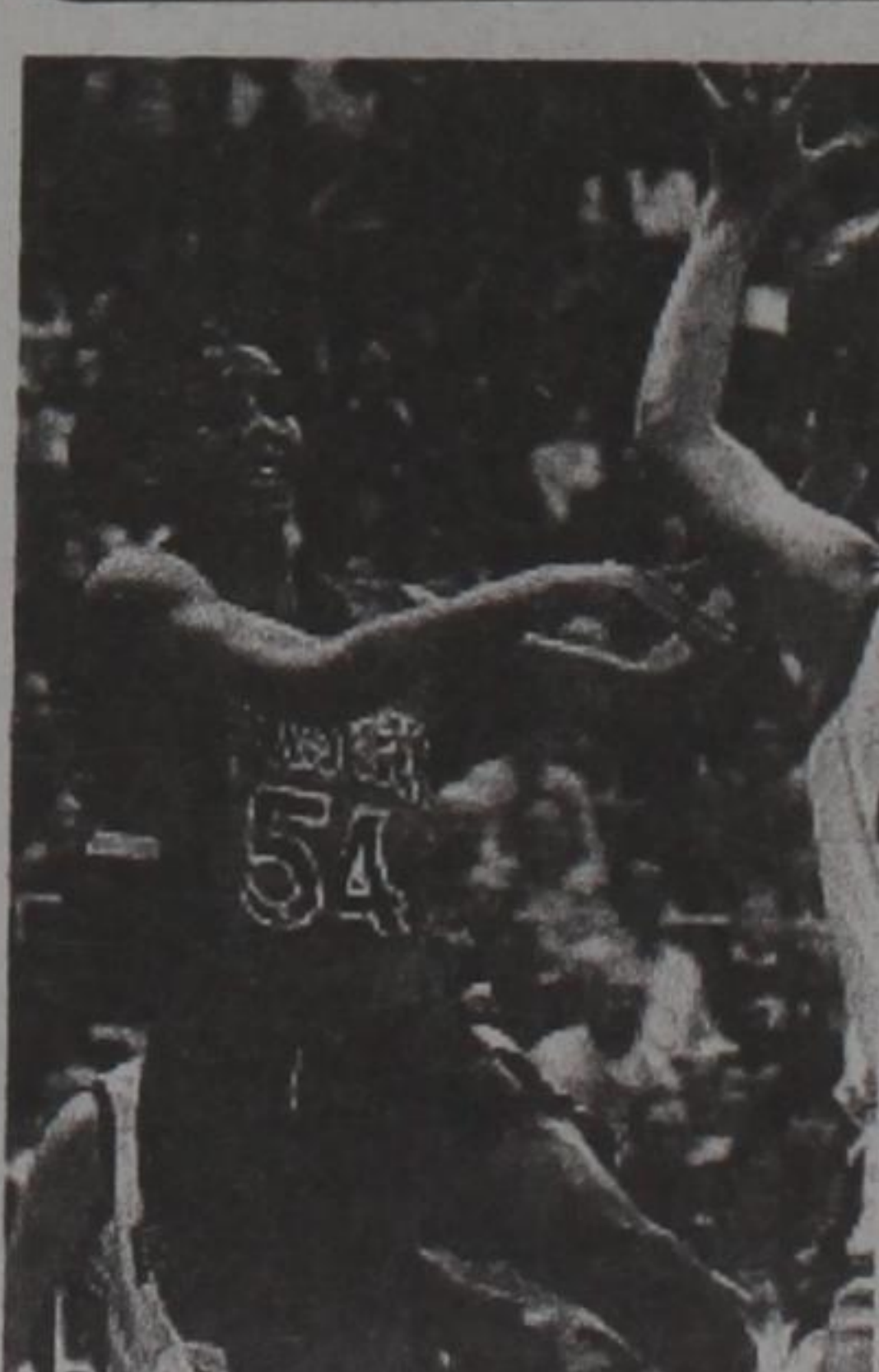
necessary diagnoses and treatments," Rep. Diana DeGette (Dem.-CO) said.

DeGette, who is sponsoring legislation to improve the registration process for Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), said that of the 11.1 million children that did not have medical insurance in 1998, one-third of them were Hispanics, "the highest index among any group."

"Whether through tax incentives or legislation, it is vital that issues that affect Hispanics, particularly women, are taken into consideration as we debate reforms in our health care system," Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (Rep.-FL) said.

After emphasizing that 35 percent of Hispanics in the United States lack health care coverage, Rep. Robert Menendez (Dem.-NJ) said that his district has launched public education campaigns on breast cancer and vaccination campaigns.

The ACP-ASIM is the largest medical specialty organization in the United States, and the second largest physician's group. It has over 115,000 members among internists and medical students.



Plenette Pierson and No. 11

Texas Tech take on No. 5

- NCAA Sweet 16
- Opponent: Notre Dame
- Region: Mideast
- Site: Memphis, Tenn.
- Date: Saturday, March 25
- Time: 1:30 p.m. CT
- TV/Radio: espn 2
- Lubbock's 98.1



Violence is Causing Mexicans to Lose Trust in Government

By Claudia Meléndez

In 1998, there were 578 killings in Baja California, most of them performed Mafia style, most of them still unsolved.

In 1999, there were 657 killings, most of them Mafia style, most of them still unsolved.

There have been 81 killings reported so far this year, including the recent assassination of Tijuana Municipal Police Chief Alfredo De la Torre Márquez.

Twenty suspects were arrested soon after De la Torre Márquez, ambushed by three cars on his way to the office, was sprayed with more than a hundred bullets. All 20 suspects were freed less than 48 hours after being detained, even though they were known to have links with the city's organized crime.

Tijuanaenses are crying for justice, so tired are they of seeing their city fall into the hands of criminals, organized or not. People don't go out at night anymore. Bodyguards and armored cars have become commonplace.

But Tijuanaenses have little hope anything will be done to scale down the wave of violence. That's because in the face of the increasingly brazen attitude of criminals, authorities seem incapable of doing anything effective to halt the reign of terror.

Tijuanaenses — like most Mexicans — have very little trust in the system.

Of all the crises Mexico is suffering — poverty, substandard health care, substandard education, unemployment — the most worri-

some may very well be the people's lack of trust. They trust almost no one. They don't trust their representatives; they don't trust the police; they barely trust their neighbors.

This is happening not just in Tijuana, but in Mexico City, where university students took over their campus for more than 10 months. It's happening in Hidalgo, where outraged parents demanded the return of their imprisoned children by stripping naked a group of riot police; and it's happening in remote areas of the country, where armed guerrillas continue to pop up.

This lack of trust is particularly disquieting at a time so near to the presidential elections, expected to be the most hotly contested in recent history.

In the past, elections have been mired in corruption, but because of electoral reforms, officials expect the upcoming vote to be the cleanest ever. But few expect the ruling PRI to lose, even though the official party has been tainted, to its highest levels, by the far-reaching dirt of drug trafficking.

Yet Lorenzo Meyer, political history professor at El Colegio de México, said during a recent visit to Stanford University that under the current climate of distrust, it would be difficult to predict how the population would react to another victory by the PRI. Meyer stopped short of predicting a popular uprising. But given the many incidents of people trying to take justice with their own hands, he said

that anything is possible..

Vicente Fox, presidential candidate for the conservative National Action Party (PAN), has accused the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) of allowing organized crime to take hold of the country.

Francisco Labastida, the PRI's candidate, demanded that Fox present proof of PRI involvement with drug lords. For Labastida, it doesn't seem to be enough that one PRI governor, Mario Villanueva, is wanted in connection with drug charges. It doesn't seem to be enough that Carlos Hank González, a former high-ranking PRI official, has been under investigation in the United States for his links with powerful drug cartels. No wonder Mexicans don't trust anybody.

President Ernesto Zedillo has promised to increase Baja California's fiscal year 2000 law-enforcement budget, from \$21 million to \$53 million. But according to PAN officials, for each dollar spent by the government in law enforcement, drug lords spend two dollars on bribes. No wonder very few get prosecuted for drug crimes.

If there's any consolation for suspicious Mexicans, it should be that the United States trusts that Mexico is doing its best to fight organized crime. And in God we should all trust.

(Claudia Meléndez, a resident of Silicon Valley in California, is a contributing editor to the California-based Latino quarterly magazine El Andar. (c) 2000, Hispanic Link News Service.

Thou Shall Not Love

BY RICHARD RODRIGUEZ, PACIFIC NEWS SERVICE

SAN FRANCISCO — Whenever an African-American church is burned by hate, whenever graffiti is smeared upon the walls of a synagogue, then priests and ministers and rabbis link arms to denounce "hate crimes." Yet throughout American history — and to this day — love crimes have been a larger preoccupation of many churches. On March 7, California voters will consider Sen. William "Pete" Knight's Proposition 22 which would restrict the state's definition of marriage to the union of a man and a woman.

Though some mainline Protestant churches have denounced the initiative as malicious, many other churches are supporting the Knight Initiative, particularly fundamentalist Protestants, the Church of Latter Day Saints, and my own Roman Catholic church.

If, nowadays, it's homosexual love that disturbs church leaders, in earlier years the injunction was against miscegenation. Only two years ago, the leaders of the Southern Baptist Conference apologized for their long support of segregation. And there still are odd-ball Protestant sects — notably Bob Jones University — that adhere to the color line: Thou shalt not flirt with anyone outside your race.

Poor Governor Bush! When he recently appeared at Bob Jones, he thought he was only flirting with the Christian Right. By the next morning, the press corps had pronounced him wedded. The buzz was that the Texas governor had alienated northern Catholics by consorting with Rome-hating, bible-belt Protestants.

While it's true that an old antagonism separates Roman Catholics from fundamentalist Protestants like Bob Jones, it is also true that in their public elaboration of "family values," the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the faculty of Bob Jones U. sound alike.

A stumbling block: I must admit to a personal sense of scandal in all this. In San Francisco, the gay capitol of California, Archbishop William "Bill" Levada has lifted a hefty amount from the collection plate and placed it on Number 22. Levada's generosity with other people's money is all the more demoralizing because the Archdiocese is staggering from legal costs incurred by the misbehavior of sexually dysfunctional priests.

I cannot think William Bill's purple hat should have been tossed into this particular political ring. But there it is. I am more scandalized as I regard that hatful of money than I am by any number of child-molesting priests; any number of childish sermons.

"Scandal is grave when given by those who by nature or office are obliged to teach and educate others. Jesus reproaches the scribes and Pharisees on this account: He likens them to sheeps' clothing." (Catholic Catechism.)

As a homosexual and a Roman Catholic, I have long noted the refusal of my church to grant me a claim on the word "love." All my life I have listened to sermons which pointedly describe homosexuality as "life-style." But homosexuality is not a life-style. It is emotion, Physiological departure from homeostasis. (Roughly translated: "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? Thou art more lovely and more temperate.")

The wish to describe marriage as exclusively between a man and a woman says nothing about marriage, or nothing positive; rather, it attempts to define marriage by exclusion. The Catholic church has long maintained that homosexual couples cannot provide an "outward sign" to the community (which is how the Church defines sacramental marriage).

From the Catholic catechism: "What does the sign consist of? It is the simplest imaginable: the mutual promise and the life in accordance with this promise. Hence the form of the sacrament is no particular juridical formula taken by itself, nor the marriage ceremony, by itself, but the will to belong to each other in love and fully chosen loyalty, till the day of death."

I remain a Catholic. I am yet convinced of the charity of the Church. The Church is charity is it not? If it is not, it is nothing. Nevertheless, I am no longer able to observe that the hierarchy of the American church exercises any moral authority. Once the Church resorts to a secular persuasion — substituting legality for morality — then the American church has abrogated its deliberative and teaching function to Judge Judy.

Mormonism, once a cowboy religion, now represents itself as a global religion. Not so long ago, however, the Church of Latter Day Saints relegated the African to an inferior tribe. It required a private revelation from God to enable church elders to read the writing on the wall.

Today, Mormons favor a definition of marriage as between a man and a woman (note the singular). But in an earlier century, Mormons suffered mightily for their adherence to an eccentric version of family values that went by the name of polygamy.

Evangelical ministers, Mormon elders, Catholic bishops — none of them have sufficient moral authority to stem the tide of divorce in heterosexual America. But it's not only that one in two marriages is ending in divorce.

Many Americans are forming unions and, indeed, families without churchly sanctions.

The Catholic church, the Mormon church, the evangelical sects are powerless to prevent such sacramental unions. They only hope to deny legal benefits of marriage to homosexuals. But can these churches describe a sacrament legally and hope to retain a moral authority?

Homosexuals look to corporate America to uphold — through "domestic partners" benefits — an inclusive description of human fidelity. Meanwhile, William "Bill" Levada and William "Pete" Knight and Bob Jones III, backed up by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir in full throttle, link arms to assure the electorate that the greatest commandment boils down to: Thou shalt not love.

La Violencia Esta Ocasionando Que los Mexicanos Pierdan la Confianza en el Gobierno

Por Claudia Meléndez

En 1998 hubo 578 homicidios en Baja California, la mayoría de ellos realizados al estilo de la Mafia y la mayoría de ellos no resueltos aún.

En 1999 hubo 657 homicidios, la mayoría de ellos al estilo de la Mafia y la mayoría de ellos no resueltos aún.

Ha habido 81 homicidios informados hasta ahora en este año, incluyendo al asesinato reciente del jefe de la policía municipal de Tijuana, Alfredo de la Torre Márquez.

Veinte sospechosos fueron arrestados poco después que De La Torre Márquez, emboscado por los tripulantes de tres automóviles durante su recorrido hasta su oficina, fue rociado con más de 100 proyectiles. Todos los 20 sospechosos fueron puestos en libertad menos de 48 horas después de ser detenidos, aún cuando era conocido que tenían vínculos con la delincuencia organizada de la ciudad.

Los tijuanaenses están clamando por justicia, tan cansados están de ver a su ciudad que cae en manos de los delincuentes, organizados o no. La gente ya no sale más de noche. Los guardaespaldas y los autos blindados han llegado a ser comunes.

Pero los tijuanaenses tienen pocas esperanzas de que se hará algo para desacelerar la ola de violencia. Eso se debe a que, a la vista de la actitud cada vez más desvergonzada de los delincuentes, las autoridades parecen ser incapaces de hacer algo eficaz para detener su reinado de terror.

Los tijuanaenses — como la mayoría de los mexicanos — tienen muy poca confianza en el sistema.

De todas las crisis que está sufriendo México — la pobreza, la atención inferior a la salud, la educación inferior, el desempleo — la más preocupante puede bien ser la falta de confianza del pueblo. La gente difícilmente confía en alguien.

No confían en sus representantes, no confían en la policía, difícilmente confían en sus vecinos.

Esto viene sucediendo no solamente en Tijuana. Está ocurriendo en Ciudad de México, donde los estudiantes universitarios se apoderaron de su recinto durante más de 10 meses; está sucediendo en Hidalgo, donde los padres y las madres indignados exigieron la devolución de sus hijos encarcelados al desnudar a un grupo de la policía contra motines; y está ocurriendo en zonas remotas del país, donde continúan surgiendo los guerrilleros armados.

Esta falta de confianza resulta especialmente intranquilizadora en una época tan cercana a las elecciones presidenciales, de las que se espera que sean las más cálidamente disputadas de la historia moderna.

Anteriormente, las elecciones han estado encenagadas de corrupción, pero debido a las reformas electorales recientes, los funcionarios esperan que la próxima votación sea la más limpia de todos los tiempos. Pero pocos esperan que el PRI gobernante pierda, aún cuando el partido oficial ha sido enlodado hasta sus niveles más altos por el cieno de largo alcance de la corrupción.

Sin embargo, Lorenzo Meyer, catedrático de historia política en El Colegio de México, dijo durante una visita reciente a la Universidad de Stanford que, bajo el clima actual de

desconfianza, sería difícil pronosticar cómo reaccionaría la población a otra victoria del PRI. Meyer no llegó hasta pronosticar un levantamiento popular, pero dadas las muchas señales de las personas que tratan de tomar la justicia en sus propias manos, "cualquier cosa es posible," dijo él.

Vicente Fox, candidato presidencial del Partido de Acción Nacional (PAN), que es conservador, ha estado acusando al PRI gobernante de permitir que la delincuencia organizada se apodere del país bajo su régimen.

Francisco Labastida, el candidato del PRI, exigió que Fox presente pruebas de la involucración del PRI con los barones del narcotráfico. Para Labastida, no parece ser suficiente que un gobernador miembro del PRI, Mario Villanueva, esté requisitoriado por acusaciones tocantes a narcóticos. No parece ser suficiente que Carlos Hank González, un ex-funcionario de alto rango del PRI, haya estado sujeto a investigación en Estados Unidos por sus vínculos con poderosos consorcios de narcotraficantes. No es de extrañar que los mexicanos no confíen en nadie.

El Presidente Ernesto Zedillo ha prometido aumentar el presupuesto de Baja California para el año 2000 desde \$21 millones hasta \$53 millones. Pero según los funcionarios del PAN, por cada dólar que el gobierno gaste en la ejecución de la ley, los barones del narcotráfico gastan dos en sobornos. No es de extrañar que casi nadie sea enjuiciado alguna vez por delitos relacionados con los narcóticos.

Si hay algún consuelo para los mexicanos que sospechan, debería ser que Estados Unidos confía en que México está haciendo su mejor esfuerzo para combatir a la delincuencia organizada. Y todos deberíamos confiar en Dios.

El Defensor Accidental

Por Paul Cuadros

Andrew Gatica nunca se imaginó que sería un defensor, un dirigente de toda una comunidad de personas sin voz. El y su esposa se mudaron desde Austin, Texas, a un pueblo rural pequeño de Carolina del Norte hace siete años, cuando su compañía lo trasladó.

Creyó que no vería muchos latinos en Carolina del Norte. Estaba equivocado. Veía latinos en todas partes. Los veía en el Food Lion, en las gasolineras y en la oficina de correos, donde muchos trabajadores compran giros postales para enviarlos a sus familias en sus países de origen.

Un día en la oficina de correos, un latino se le acercó y le preguntó si él era mexicano. Respondió que sí. "El hombre preguntó: '¿Puedes pedir dos estampillas, por favor?' Y la señora de la ventanilla dijo: 'Vi a ese caballero de pie allí durante 30 minutos; ¿qué quería él?' Y yo le dije: 'Solo quería estampillas de correo.'"

Desde entonces Gatica, el defensor accidental, se ha convertido en traductor, intérprete, maestro y dirigente mercantil para la comunidad hispana de su pueblo, que es cada vez mayor.

Por todo el país, en lo que algunos llaman "la porción interior de Estados Unidos," personas y nuevas organizaciones están surgiendo para satisfacer las necesidades de los hispanos que están asentándose en estados que no son tradicionalmente hispanos, como Carolina del Norte. Estos defensores vienen construyendo la estructura para que los latinos procuren ayuda, resuelvan problemas y con el tiempo obtengan poder político y económico en estas regiones. Pero lo que es más importante, ellos están creando los bloques de construcción para lo que será el Siglo de los Latinos.

Conoció a Andrew en el Foro Latino, auspiciado por El Pueblo Latino, una organización estatal de defensa y cursos de acción públicos radicada en Raleigh. Gatica había venido a

procurar ayuda. El Foro, que efectuó su quinto acontecimiento anual en este mes, reúne a personas como Andrew y a organizaciones que están haciendo frente a los asuntos hispanos en todo el estado. Ellos se reúnen para debatir los asuntos y resolver problemas en la comunidad.

En este año, el Foro hizo frente a asuntos tales como la rescata en algunas comunidades por parte de grupos de odio, como una asamblea reciente de David Duke en Siler City, convirtiendo a las ideas en cursos de acción públicos, habilitación económica, derechos de los trabajadores, el Censo de Población, y los Equipos de Reacción Rápida del INS. También incluyó a un Foro Juvenil, para que los adolescentes se involucren.

La construcción de la infraestructura es importante, porque muchos servicios, dependencias, clínicas y hospitales, los tribunales y los negocios no pueden comunicarse o hallan dificultades para comunicarse con la población latina, que es cada vez mayor. Los grupos como El Pueblo Inc. y El Centro Hispano Inc., en Durham, y otros, han sentado las bases para que los latinos procuren ayuda y se relacionen con la comunidad mayor de habla inglesa.

Otros estados han visto igualmente la creación de organizaciones basadas en los latinos. Joel Najjar, del Consejo Nacional de La Raza, en Washington, D.C., que asistió al acontecimiento, dijo: "Hemos financiado a organizaciones recién comenzadas en Kentucky, Georgia y Tennessee."

El gobierno y las organizaciones filantrópicas también han empezado a proyectarse. Por ejemplo, la Oficina Administrativa de los Tribunales, en Raleigh, que es el cuerpo gobernante de los tribunales estatales, creó recientemente un Proyecto de Servicios en Idiomas Extranjeros que capacitará y certificará a intérpretes hispanos para los casos de lo criminal y juveniles en los tribunales. El proyecto desarrollará e im-

plantará también directrices estatales para los intérpretes. En Siler City, la Dotación Duke financió un programa auspiciado por el Hospital de Chatham para aumentar el acceso a la atención a la salud en la comunidad latina, empleando a miembros de la comunidad.

Pero las zonas rurales, como aquella en que vive Andrew, sufren todavía de la escasez de recursos y organizaciones que puedan ayudar a

las personas. "Hay que tener una infraestructura más poderosa, a fin de poder proyectarse hacia las zonas más pequeñas," dijo Nolo Martínez, director de la Oficina del Gobernador para Asuntos Hispanos/Latinos. "Llevará mucho más tiempo el desarrollarla."

Continúa Pagina 5

Important Candidates' Voices... But Will We Hear Them?

BY JEFF MILCHEN, PACIFIC NEWS SERVICE

BOULDER, CO — Ralph Nader announced his Green Party candidacy for President of the United States recently, potentially adding to the presidential race not only viewpoints but issues currently absent from most campaign coverage. Nader's name recognition and public service record could help him mount a real challenge to the bi-partisan lock on the presidency — if Americans ever hear his views. Unfortunately, we probably will be denied the opportunity to hear Nader or any other candidate with serious challenges to the status quo in the most important events of the campaign, the presidential candidates' debates. The ultimate victim of the shutout is not Nader or other excluded candidates, but democracy itself.

In 1987 Democrats and Republicans worked together to displace the League of Women Voters as the presenter of the debates, consolidating control over the process by creating the Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD). The CPD, exclusive presenter of post-primary presidential debates since 1988, calls itself non-partisan, but with only two parties represented, "bi-partisan" is the most generous label possible. This duopoly is a powerful barrier to political competition, just as a corporate duopoly thwarts healthy business competition. But the public debate duopoly has even more severe consequences.

You would think a national commission which is effectively deciding which candidates we may hear would have democratic input, but the CPD is a private corporation with no public accountability or government oversight. In the last presidential election eight corporations and two foundations provided its operating funds, paying \$25,000 to \$250,000 each to sponsor debates. This year the price has gone up: Anheuser Busch Inc. alone is paying \$550,000 for exclusive sponsorship of a debate in St. Louis.

Can we have democracy when a narrow group sets the political agenda and citizens are relegated to choosing from such a reduced menu? Now is the time to ask, since the CPD's exclusive forums assuredly will diminish public participation in politics even further. New Hampshire's registered independent voters now outnumber Republicans or Democrats in that state, and the number of declared independents is growing nationwide — strong evidence that voters are dissatisfied with their current lack of choice. The four leading major Democrat and Republican candidates closely align on too many matters, resulting in the omission

of vital discussion that a third party candidate could stimulate.

In January the CPD Inc. announced its participation criteria for this year's debates: candidates "who have achieved a level of electoral support such that they realistically are considered to be among the principal rivals for the Presidency." What this means: For the CPD, a candidate must possess the expected votes of 15% of the public in order to share a stage with the two dominant parties' candidates. That is three times the 5% of actual popular vote required for political parties to receive major party status and matching public funds.

Also disturbing: The measure of popularity used is a sampling of several national polls that may not even list certain candidates. Jesse Ventura for instance received just 10% support in polls for Governor of Minnesota in September 1998 before he participated in five debates. Ventura won the gubernatorial election in November with 37% of the vote. No major poll ever identified Ventura as a front runner.

In October 1992, independent candidate Ross Perot polled at just 7%. But that year more reasonable criteria for debate participation let us hear his views and Perot captured 19% of the vote; the inclusion of an alternative candidate helped boost voter participation by 12 million from the previous election. By 1996 the CPD had raised the barriers to participation rendering Perot the most visible critic of NAFTA and the corporate laissez-faire agenda, "unelectable" by CPD's standards — and thus excluded from the debates. Of course, by excluding a candidate, his or her "non-viability" is made a self-fulfilling definition.

With over 60 potential presidential candidates this year, some threshold for participation and a limit to the number of debate participants are warranted, but they must be set to permit a wider spectrum of opinion than the current sliver. The CPD offers no justification for making the debate club so exclusive.

Televised debates are the most influential candidate forum for most voters and a rare opportunity to hear ideas unedited and in context. To permit control of these crucial forums by corporate interests and the dominant parties is inherently undemocratic and a blatant conflict of interest.

Even if some might defend the notion of limiting debates to the two leading candidates, surely a private corporation without accountability to citizens is not the entity to hold such power. The Commission on Presidential Debates must be replaced with a publicly accountable body that will encourage — not dissuade — participation in the debates and elections. At the same time, we should question how such an affront to democracy came to be in the first place.

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En Cualquier Idioma, El Censo es Importante

El entender las razones por las cuales se lleva a cabo el censo y obtener mayor participación son sólo dos de los desafíos que enfrenta el Censo 2000. Las cifras del censo se usan para distribuir fondos para muchos programas, incluso aquellos que benefician a las minorías lingüísticas. Por lo tanto, es esencial que las personas cuyo idioma primordial no es el inglés tomen parte en el censo porque la información que proviene de su participación alerta a los funcionarios locales y nacionales a prestar atención a sus necesidades especiales.

Las agencias gubernamentales usan información con respecto al idioma que se habla en el hogar para diseñar e implementar programas e iniciativas que favorecen a las minorías lingüísticas, incluso a los niños y los adultos que tienen un dominio limitado del inglés. La Ley de derecho al voto, por ejemplo, exige una pregunta con respecto al idioma en el censo para determinar la necesidad de procurar materiales electorales en idiomas diferentes al inglés.

La información también se necesita para planificar programas que proporcionen asistencia directa a las escuelas con niños cuyo idioma natal no sea el inglés. La distribución de cientos de miles de millones de dólares en fondos estatales y federales para la educación, el cuidado de la salud, el transporte y otros programas cruciales se basan en las cifras del censo. Mientras más completa sea la participación de los diversos grupos, mayor será la equidad en la distribución de estos fondos.

El temor a las represalias gubernamentales, a la persecución y a la deportación son algunas de las razones que ofrecen las personas que se abstienen de responder al censo. Pero el censo no sólo es importante, sino también es seguro.

La Oficina del Censo está firmemente comprometida con la confidencialidad. Por ley, se prohíbe a la Oficina del Censo compartir la información acerca de los individuos con persona ni organización alguna, incluso el Servicio de Rentas Internas, la Oficina Federal de Investigaciones, el Departamento de Servicios Humanos y de Salud, y el

Servicio de Inmigración y Naturalización. Todos los empleados de la Oficina del Censo deben rendir un juramento de no divulgar los datos de quienes responden al censo, la violación del cual puede dar por resultado una multa de \$5000 y hasta cinco años de prisión.

Existen varias razones por las cuales las personas no llenan sus formularios del censo. Muchas personas simplemente no tienen conocimiento del censo. Las minorías lingüísticas deben entender que el objetivo primordial del Censo 2000 es contar a todas las personas que viven en los EE.UU., sin importar su estado de ciudadanía. De otra manera, el censo no sería completo.

En marzo de 2000, cada hogar en los Estados Unidos recibirá un cuestionario del Censo 2000. El formulario estará escrito en inglés a menos que la persona solicite uno en español, chino, vietnamita, tagalo o coreano. Se proporcionará información acerca de cómo obtener el cuestionario en estos idiomas en una carta previa al censo.

Las guías de idioma para aproximadamente 49 idiomas estarán también disponibles para ayudar a las personas a contestar el censo. Para recibir una guía de idioma, llame al número telefónico gratuito que está impreso en el cuestionario del censo.

Se proporcionará ayuda adicional en los Centros de asistencia para llenar los cuestionarios ubicados en las comunidades de todo el país. La Oficina del Censo está reclutando activamente personas bilingües para dotar de personal a estas instalaciones.

Si usted es bilingüe y está

interesado en una de estas posiciones, la Oficina del Censo está buscando activamente a personas para dotar de personal las instalaciones y conducir el censo. Llame al 1-888-325-7733 para obtener más información acerca de los trabajos del Censo 2000.

Para garantizar el mayor éxito en el Censo 2000, la Oficina del Censo está desarrollando alianzas con los grupos comunitarios y las organizaciones nacionales para ayudar a educar al público acerca de los fines del censo. Para hogares con un dominio limitado del inglés, las escuelas pueden ser la única vía de llegar a ciertas personas de una manera significativa. Los estudiantes que entienden la importancia del Censo 2000 juegan un papel vital para convencer y ayudar a otros miembros del hogar a participar. En la primavera de 1999, la Oficina del Censo distribuirá materiales didácticos para educar a los estudiantes con respecto al Censo 2000. Visite el sitio de Internet de la Oficina del Censo en <<http://www.census.gov>> para obtener más información acerca de los materiales educativos del Censo 2000.

Usted puede jugar un papel importante en el esfuerzo para garantizar que el Censo 2000 sea un éxito. Para averiguar más, sírvase ver el sitio de Internet o llame a su oficina regional del censo. Recuerde, ¡su participación es importante!

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Could Romans Have Landed in the New World Before Columbus?

By JONATHAN KNIGHT

Quite possibly, say two anthropologists, who have produced the first reliable evidence that an artifact found in Mexico is of Roman origin, and that it almost certainly arrived in the New World before the Spanish.

Roman Hristov, an independent anthropologist formerly at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, decided to investigate a black terra-cotta head that was first unearthed in 1933 in the Toluca Valley, approximately 65 kilometers west of Mexico City. The head, which is just a few centimeters tall, represents a bearded man and is different in style from any other known pre-Columbian artwork.

Although much had been written about the head since its discovery, Hristov found that no one actually knew where it was. With the help of a Mexican anthropologist, he finally found it in 1994, locked away in a Mexico City museum.

To determine when the head was made, Hristov drilled some material from the remains of its neck. He then took the sample to be tested at the Max Planck Institute for Nuclear Physics in Heidelberg using a technique called thermoluminescence.

In this method, heat forces high-energy electrons that have accumulated in the sample over time to release their energy as light. By measuring the light released, the researchers were able to estimate that the terra-cotta was fired 1,800 years ago.

Hristov also consulted art experts, who agreed that the head was Roman, dating roughly to A.D. 200. Furthermore, a review of the circumstances surrounding the head's original discovery confirmed that the head was placed in the burial ground where it was found no later than 1510, a decade before the Spanish arrived in Meso-America.

Crucially, the head was excavated from the site by professionals, says David Kelley, an archaeologist at the University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada. "This was sealed under three floors. It's as close to archaeological certainty as you can get."

Hristov believes the head is the first hard evidence of pre-

Hispanic transoceanic contacts between the Old and New Worlds. But it is unclear whether it will resolve what is one of the most contentious debates in modern cultural anthropology.

"I see no reason why ancient contact is not possible," says Betty Meggers, an anthropologist at the National Museum of Natural History in Washington D.C., who says that ancient Ecuadorian and Japanese pottery have identical features.

David Grove, an archaeologist

Otorgan \$100,000 al Grupo Mexicano American en Texas

AUSTIN, Texas—Wells Fargo/Norwest es el Patrocinador Diamante del año 2000 de la Asociación Tejana de las Cámaras de Comercio Mexicanas Americanas (TAMACC).

El patrocinio incluye una contribución de \$100,000 de Wells Fargo/Norwest a TAMACC.

"Esta contribución nos ayudará a cultivar recursos y oportunidades económicas para las Cámaras de Comercio Hispánicas en Texas y en otras partes del país," dijo el Dr. Ray Leal, presidente y director ejecutivo de TAMACC. "Felicitamos a Wells Fargo/Norwest por su apoyo continuo a propietarios hispanos de empresas."

Los hispanos han hecho contribuciones enormes a la economía de Texas y de todo el país y es nuestra intención darles todo el apoyo posible," dijo Jana Teis, gerente del desarrollo comunitario para Wells Fargo/Norwest en Texas, Nuevo México y Arizona.

Además del Patrocinio Diamante de \$100,000 con TAMACC, Wells Fargo también tiene un compromiso firme para apoyar a los propietarios hispanos de empresas pequeñas, dijo Teis.

"Durante los últimos dos años, Wells Fargo ha otorgado prestamos por \$490 millones bajo nuestro Programa de Préstamos Latino Hispano," dijo Jana Teis,

at the University of Illinois in Urbana, Champaign, agrees the head is Roman, but questions its significance. It could, for example, have been taken off a Roman shipwreck on the Mexican coast, which would not require significant interaction between ancient Americans and Romans, he says. There is also no evidence of ancient cultures from Europe or elsewhere making a significant mark on pre-Columbian cultures.

This article is excerpted from New Scientist, a weekly science and technology magazine based in London.

gerente del desarrollo comunitario para Wells Fargo/Norwest. "Nuestra meta es la de prestar \$3 mil millones para el año 2009."

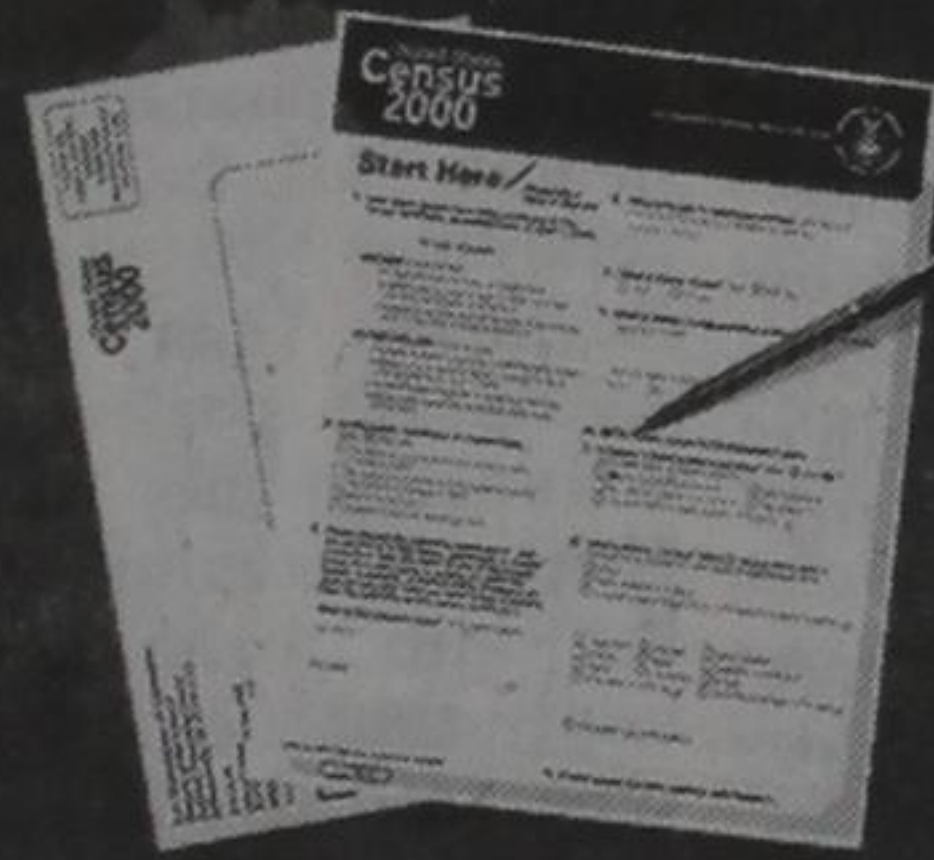
TAMACC representa a más de 115,000 propietarios hispanos de empresas en todas partes de Texas. Fundado en 1975, TAMACC ha trabajado para promover el crecimiento y reconocimiento a la comunidad de empresas hispanas en todo EE.UU. La organización también sirve como el vínculo central entre las asociaciones de comercio y empresas hispanas en los Estados Unidos y Latinoamérica.

Wells Fargo ha sido un patrocinador corporativo de TAMACC desde 1997, ha patrocinado las conferencias anuales del grupo y por varios años ha sido miembro de la Mesa Redonda Corporativa de la organización.

Wells Fargo es una compañía de servicios financieros diversificados, con \$218 mil millones en activos que proporciona servicios bancarios, seguros, inversiones, hipotecas, financiamiento al consumidor, a través de 5,836 tiendas y otros canales de distribución en todas partes de Norteamérica. Wells Fargo tiene 15 millones de clientes y 102,000 miembros de equipo. Wells Fargo y Norwest se unieron en 1998.

El Editor Newspapers

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

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ES NUESTRO FUTURO. HAGASE CONTAR.

Latinos Elusive As Border Patrol Presses To Hire More

By Oswaldo Zavala

When Ricardo Lucio made the decision to join the Border Patrol 11 years ago, not everyone thought it was a good idea. "My family was supportive, but some uncles and friends said that I'm stopping my own kind," Lucio recounts. "It's a tough question."

The dilemma did not deter him from becoming an agent. Nor did it stop his wife, Melissa, four years later.

Now, says Lucio, "I just say that I was born here, and that I'm helping my country. Every Hispanic should be proud of that."

U.S. Rep. Silvestre Reyes (D-Texas), a former Border Patrol chief, had a different experience when he joined the organization. He had family already working for its parent Immigration and Naturalization Service.

"The Border Patrol and the INS have always been part of the border communities," Reyes says. "It wasn't something controversial for me."

The Border Patrol has become the federal employer with the highest percentage -- 37.8 percent -- of Hispanics in its work force. Yet the patrol failed badly to comply with a congressional mandate to hire 1,000 new agents for fiscal year 1999. It successfully recruited only 369 new ones by September, the end of the federal fiscal year.

A drawn-out selection process, comparatively low pay and benefits, and often-stressful working conditions, along with an extremely competitive job market, have not made hiring and retention easy. Cultural barriers, such as Lucio mentions, can be another hurdle the Border Patrol must face in attracting Hispanics to become agents.

INS spokesperson Nicole Chulick sees the major problem facing most U.S. law-enforcement agencies as career competition. "There are a lot of other job opportunities," she says. On top of that, she adds: "New agents must be willing to relocate along the Southwest border, pass intensive training and accept the working conditions."



Patrullas fronterizas detienen a inmigrantes ilegales.

In their first year on the job, the agents average between \$30,000 and \$40,000 a year, depending on the position level where they start. Most work 40 hours a week plus nine to 10 hours of overtime. Ninety-two percent of the force is concentrated on the Southwest border.

The high value many professions now place on bilingual skills contributes to the Border Patrol's frustration in attracting and retaining Latinos.

"Our agents are required to speak Spanish. We don't pay extra for that," says San Diego Patrol spokesperson Gloria Chávez. "Other agencies often pay extra incentives to their workers who speak a second language."

The INS recently announced a \$2.2 million fund only for recruitment. It trained some 200 agents to bring in applicants, and it currently offers a \$2,000 bonus for each new agent joining the force.

Lucio, who trains incoming agents of various backgrounds who are assigned to the El Paso, Texas, sector, sees sensitivity as an important trait to watch out for. "I have reported agents for mistreating people. Most are suspended. Some get fired," he says. "Some of them are Hispanics."

Critics say many Border Patrol agents, and the

institution itself, portray a negative image.

"Sensitivity could also mean to tolerate abuses," suggests Fernando García, coordinator of the Southwest border-based Immigration Law Enforcement Monitoring Project, a program of the American Friends Service Committee. "The reality is that most border communities live in fear of official violence."

Dr. Delia Saenz, professor of psychology at the University of Arizona in Tempe, perceives the conflict among Mexican Americans, particularly those raised in the border's cultural environment: "Every one of us has multiple identities." She describes Mexican cultural identity as in conflict with the enforcement role Latinos must play as Border Patrol members. "It can create extreme discomfort," she says. "As official government agents, their role is, in effect, to wage a war -- to capture the enemy and deprive him of entry."

Congressman Reyes contends that most criticism goes beyond reality. "When I was a Border Patrol chief, I personally implemented programs to work with the community and to explain what we were doing, how and why it was important for our community," he says. "There are always problems, but never like the ones the critics point out."

Candidates must pass a written test and oral interview after a personal background check. Then they attend 19 weeks of training, which includes intensive Spanish lessons. Fluency is required prior to beginning work.

Chulick admits to losing many candidates in the process. Last year, from 15,506 applications received, 1,126 were accepted by the Border Patrol, but at the same time, it lost 757 agents who retired or quit their jobs, leading to the net increase of 369.

On one point most all observers agree, however. Understanding the culture and language of the persons you interact with in your daily work not only makes the contact less stressful for all parties, it also makes for a more effective work force.

(Oswaldo Zavala is a reporter with Hispanic Link News Service in Washington, D.C. He may be contacted at 202-234-0280. E-mail zapoteco(AT)SIGN@aol.com)

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The Accidental Advocate

By Paul Cuadros

Andrew Gatica never imagined he would be an advocate, a leader for an entire community of voiceless people. He and his wife moved from Austin, Texas, to a small town in rural North Carolina seven years ago, when his company transferred him.

He thought he would not see many Latinos in North Carolina. He was wrong. He saw Latinos everywhere. He saw them at the local Food Lion, the gas station and at the post office, where many immigrant workers buy money orders to send home to their families.

At the post office one day, a Latino approached him and asked if he was Mexican. He said he was. "The man asked, 'Puedes pedir dos estampias por favor?' And the lady behind the counter said, 'I saw that gentleman standing there for 30 minutes. What did he want?' And I said, 'He just wanted some stamps.'"

Since then, Gatica, the accidental advocate, has become translator, interpreter, teacher and business leader for the growing Hispanic community in his town.

Elsewhere across the country's interior, in states like North Carolina that seem unlikely destinations for Hispanics, individuals and organizations are emerging to meet the needs of Latinos who have settled there. The advocates are building an infrastructure for Latinos to obtain assistance and gain eventual political and economic power in these regions. But more important, they are

creating the building blocks for what will be the Latino Century.

I first met Andrew at the Latino Foro, or Latino Forum, sponsored by El Pueblo, a statewide advocacy and public policy organization based in Raleigh. He had come seeking help. The Latino Foro, which held its fifth annual convention this month, brings together individuals like Andrew and organizations that are dealing with Hispanic issues from all over the state.

This year the Latino Foro tackled addressed such topics as the backlash in some communities by hate groups like a recent David Duke rally in Siler City; how to turn ideas into public policy; economic empowerment and workers' rights; and the 2000 Census.

Infrastructure is important because many public agencies, clinics and hospitals, courts and businesses cannot communicate with the growing Latino population. Groups like El Pueblo and El Centro Hispano in Durham and others have laid the groundwork for Latinos to interact with the greater English-speaking community.

Other states have also seen the creation of Latino-based organizations. "We funded started-up organizations in Kentucky, in Georgia and in Tennessee," said Joel Najar of the National Council of La Raza, an advocacy group based in Washington, D.C.

Government and philanthropic institutions have also begun to reach out. The Administrative Office of the

Courts in Raleigh, the governing body of state courts, recently created a Foreign Language Services Project that will train and certify Spanish interpreters for criminal and juvenile court cases. In Siler City, The Duke Endowment, a charitable trust, funded a program sponsored by Chatham Hospital to increase access to health care in the Latino community.

But rural areas like Andrew's still suffer from few resources and organizations. "You have to have more powerful infrastructure there so you can reach out to the smaller areas," said Nolo Martinez, director of the Governor's Office of Hispanic/Latino Affairs. "Those will take a lot longer to develop."

The Governor's Office of Hispanic/Latino Affairs, which features a task force of community leaders, was an idea born out of the Latino Foro.

New organizations appear each year at the forum. This year, a new group is looking into the interests of native Latino peoples who don't speak Spanish as a first language, said Andrea Bazan-Manson, executive director of El Pueblo. "There's still some duplication, there's still some isolation and gaps obviously that will fill up as time goes by, but we'll get there."

We'll get there indeed because of people like Andrew and the organizations that attended the forum.

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A Mexican Considers Turning Pro

By Miguel Martín

My daughter, who is gay, told me she has begun dating a woman she met on the Internet. The chat room was called "Professional Lesbians of (---) County."

I wished her well with the relationship, but in private, I puzzled over the "professional lesbian" appellation.

I've known for some time that my daughter is gay; she revealed it more than five years ago, after she turned 21. I surprised her by telling her that I was relieved. She was destined for fewer heartbreaks by hooking up with women instead of men.

But I'd never thought of my daughter as a "professional lesbian." In fact, I'd rather hoped that she was an "amateur lesbian," which, I suppose, imparted to me that she hadn't been around the block too many times. Call me old-fashioned.

Then it occurred to me that the "professional" label might simply be a designation for those who were well adjusted to that particular lifestyle, that "professional" lesbians had better adapted to the rigors and regimens of gay life than their "amateur" counterparts.

But my mood darkened again when I thought it might, on the other hand, reflect some enhanced sexual prowess -- not something for which any father

wants his daughter lauded.

I finally decided to broach the subject offhandedly with my daughter. Of course, I felt like a fool when she revealed that this group of "professional lesbians" were doctors, lawyers, business executives and such.

This wasn't the first time the adjective "professional" has confounded my understanding. A number of years back, former state Supreme Court Justice Cruz Reynoso -- one of the Hispanic community's few contemporary heroes -- was characterized by a California jurist as a "professional Mexican."

This characterization was meant to be a disparaging reference to the fact that Reynoso has dedicated a significant portion of his life to advancing the interest of the Hispanic community. I suppose the glib jurist also meant to imply that Reynoso reaped some type of tangible reward for fomenting discontent within the Hispanic community or fostering division among California's various constituencies.

But I was blissfully oblivious to this innuendo. Upon hearing Reynoso characterized as a "professional Mexican," I decided that I wanted to join that exclusive fraternity.

After all, I had been active in Hispanic community politics and

had served as an officer or board member of an array of organizations. But, alas, I'd never gained professional status. I was never remunerated with anything other than (former) Gov. Jerry Brown currency (psychic income).

I didn't mind being labeled an "amateur Mexican." But I decided that there was nothing wrong with being monetarily compensated for doing what I enjoyed doing.

Ever the obsessive worrier, I began considering the implications of losing my "amateur" status. If I turned pro, could I ever return to the amateur ranks?

Were there some positions in community organizations, for example, that would be off-limits to me as a pro? No, I decided, I would remain an "amateur Mexican."

(Miguel Martín is a journalist and attorney in Elk Grove, Calif.)

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DeLaHoya Has More Than a Fight on his Hands

By Norm Fraunheim

Oscar De La Hoya is a proven money-maker. He's a pay-per-view superstar. They called him The Golden Boy after the 1996 Olympics because of the medal he won in Barcelona. The nickname stuck. He's still Golden, as in profit potential.

But is he popular in the very city he calls home?

The search for that answer will prove to be the fight within the fight when De La Hoya gambles on his future against Shane Mosley on June 17 at the Staples Center in Los Angeles.

Above all, it's a very tough fight for De La Hoya. In fact, it might be the toughest assignment he could have accepted at this point. The public has been asking for a rematch with Felix Trinidad, whom De La Hoya was beating easily before he literally turned his back on victory with the now infamous cut-and-run tactics in the final three rounds. In September, at least, he proved he could beat Trinidad. It was only a matter of negotiating a rematch. But when negotiations fell apart, De La Hoya turned to what he and his promoter, Bob Arum, thought was the best alternative: Mosley.

But Mosley has the speed to make De La Hoya look very awkward. In at least some corners, there's the thinking that Mosley is already the world's best fighter, regardless of weight. Forget about Trinidad. Forget Roy Jones, Jr. And, soon, forget about De La Hoya.

Any truth in it? Yes, although De La Hoya also could look like an awkward winner. He has one of the mightiest left hands in the business. If it lands, the knockout victim figures to be Mosley, who jumped two weight classes -- from 135 pounds to 147 -- for the shot at De La Hoya.

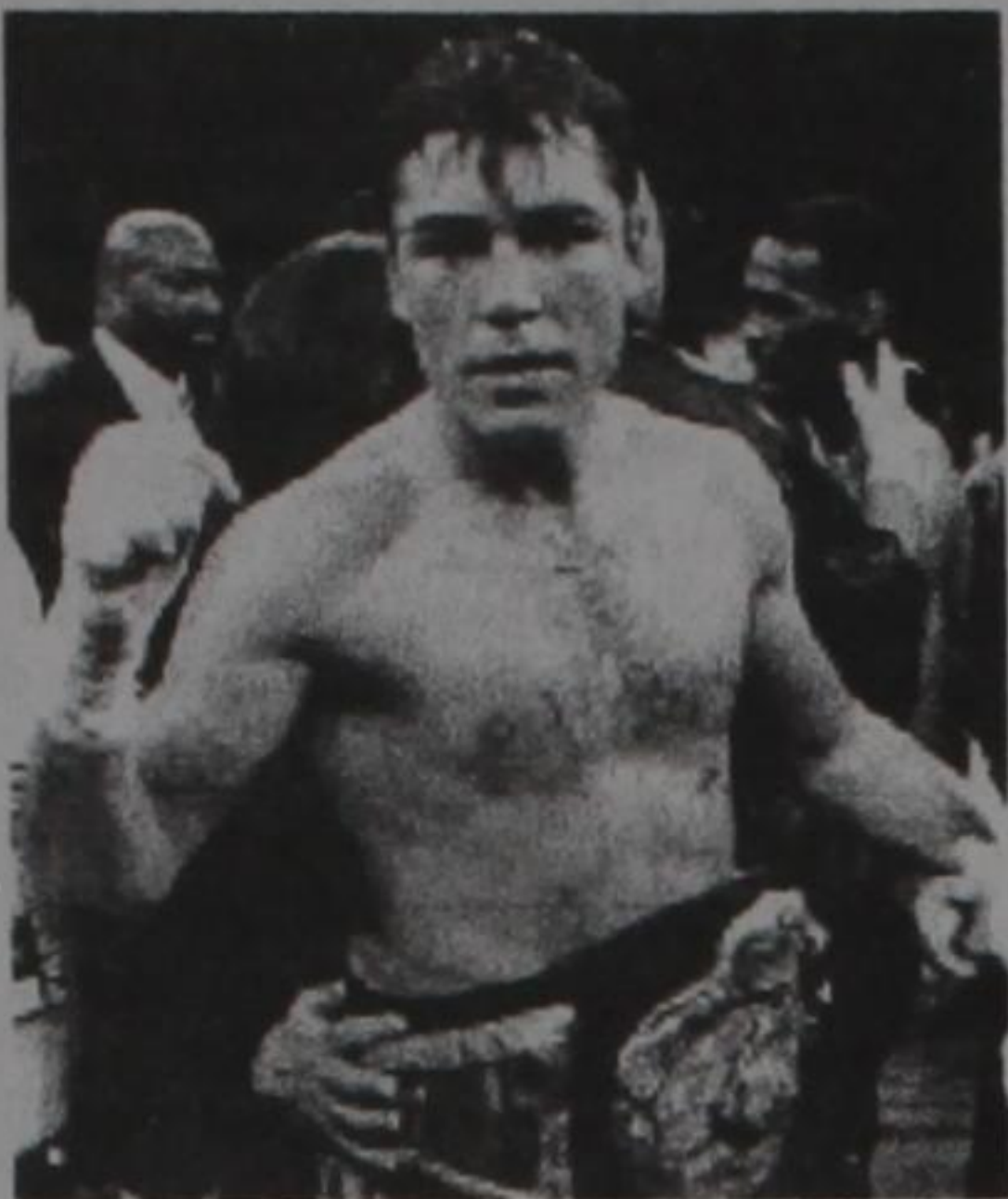
From Page 2

La Oficina del Gobernador para Asuntos Hispano/Latinos, que destaca a una fuerza de trabajo de dirigentes comunitarios, fue una idea nacida del Foro.

Nuevas organizaciones aparecen cada año en el Foro. En este año, un nuevo grupo está mirando por los intereses de las personas latinas indígenas que no hablan español como primer idioma, dijo Andrea Bazán-Manson, directora ejecutiva de El Pueblo, Inc. "Hay alguna duplicación todavía; hay algún aislamiento y algunas brechas evidentemente, que se rellenarán a medida que pase el tiempo, pero llegaremos allá."

Llegaremos allá, en verdad, debido a las personas como Andrew y las organizaciones que asistieron al foro. (Paul Cuadros es becado de la Fundación Alicia Patterson. Vive en la zona rural de Carolina del Norte, examinando el efecto de los trabajadores inmigrantes hispanos en las industrias de las carnes de res y aves de corral por todo el sur del país.)

Propiedad literaria registrada por Hispanic Link News Service en el año 2000. Distribuido por Los Angeles Times Syndicate.



Oscar De La Hoya has yet to win over the tough East LA fans.

It's safe to say that De La Hoya and Arum are betting that the jump in weight will prove to be too much for Mosley. It's a very good assumption.

But De La Hoya is not accustomed to appearing awkward on either side of the ropes. He brings a touch of grace to an uncivilized arena. He doesn't often bleed in the bloodsport. That's both an unusual sight and unlikely.

De La Hoya comes from a city with a great boxing tradition. On the streets in East LA, fighters bleed. The fans trust scars more than title belts. They never really have trusted the handsome, unmarked De La Hoya. Over the last few years, De La Hoya's relationship with his hometown has been ambivalent at best. East LA hasn't exactly warmed to him. But, at least, there aren't any more of the boos that were heard before De La Hoya beat Genaro Hernandez and then Julio Cesar Chavez. There was silence after his second victory over Chavez, who was as much a legend in East LA as he was in Mexico.

El CMB Entrega Título a Oscar

Servicios de El Nuevo Herald

LOS ANGELES-El Consejo Mundial de Boxeo (CMB) declaró el lunes al estadounidense Oscar de la Hoya como el nuevo campeón welter, luego que el puertorriqueño Félix Trinidad renunció al cetro para continuar su carrera en la división superwelter.

De la Hoya recibió el lunes el cinturón que perdió ante Trinidad, y expresó su deseo de exponerlo en su compromiso de junio contra Shane Mosley.

El "Golden Boy" recibió la corona durante una rueda de prensa realizada el lunes por la mañana en el Staples Center, del centro de Los Angeles, convocada para promover su pleito del 17 de junio en esa misma instalación, contra Mosley.

Mauricio Sulaimán, dirigente del CMB y hijo del presidente de ese organismo, el mexicano José Sulaimán, le entregó a De la Hoya el cinturón al que renunció Trinidad este fin de semana.

El boricua destronó a De la Hoya, y le quitó el invicto en 33 peleas, al obtener un controvertido fallo dividido en el

Nonetheless, there is still the sense that De La Hoya moved too fast and too far from the mean streets on which he grew up. And, then, there were the late tactics against Trinidad. In the neighborhood gyms throughout East LA, cut-and-run at any time is heresy. Aggressive pursuit is a canon preached throughout the mom-and-pop gyms that belong to young Mexican and Mexican-American fighters. Defensive tactics are abhorred. Counter-punchers are revered. The great ones are great simply because they took a couple of punches to throw one. Victory has a price, one which can be seen and measured in blood. Everybody identifies with it.

But on De La Hoya, nobody ever sees much of it. Often after the Trinidad controversy, you could hear people say that De La Hoya would risk a loss before he'd suffer a scar to his face.

A lot those people will be at the Staples Center and they don't figure to be very friendly to De La Hoya in a bout against another fighter from Southern California. Mosley, who beat De La Hoya as an amateur, grew up in Pomona.

The money will be there, of course. At a news conference this week, Arum predicted \$20 million for De La Hoya, who will defend the World Boxing Council title that was stripped, also this week, from Trinidad. After his victory over David Reid for the World Boxing Association's 154-pound title, Trinidad decided he won't fight at 147, anymore.

De La Hoya might live to regret that decision on an awkward night when he'll learn that you can never go home.

combate realizado el pasado 18 de septiembre en Las Vegas.

De la Hoya agradeció el gesto del CMB, que calificó como una organización muy prestigiosa, y señaló que lo expondrá ante Mosley (34-0).

"Verdaderamente no me sentiré un campeón hasta que no pelee de nuevo por esa faja. Cuando le gane a Mosley entonces podré enseñar los cinturones del CMB y de la IBA (Asociación Internacional de Boxeo)".

En febrero pasado, De la Hoya obtuvo el cetro welter de la poca conocida IBA tras vencer por nocaut a Derral Coley.

Acerca de su próximo combate dijo que "se va a cumplir mi sueño de pelear ante mi gente, ante mi raza, y les aseguro desde ahora que saldré a fajarme a lo macho, no a boxear como ante Trinidad, aunque de todas formas gané ese combate".

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In Any Language:

The Census Is Important

Understanding the reasons why the census takes place and increasing participation are just two of the challenges facing Census 2000. Census numbers are used to distribute funds for many programs, including those that benefit language minorities. Therefore, it is essential that people whose primary language is not English take part in the census because the information that comes from their participation alerts local and national officials to their special needs.

Government agencies use information on language spoken at home in the design and implementation of programs and initiatives that serve language minorities, including children and adults who have limited proficiency in English. The Voting Rights Act, for example, requires a census question on language to determine the need for voting materials in languages other than English.

The information also is needed to plan programs that provide direct aid to schools with children whose native language is not English. The distribution of hundreds of billions of dollars in state and federal funds for education, health care, transportation, and other critical programs is based on census numbers. The more complete the participation by diverse groups, the greater the equity in the distribution of these funds.

Fear of government reprisal, prosecution, and deportation are some reasons given by individuals who shy away from answering the census. But not only is the census important, it is also safe.

The Census Bureau is strongly committed to confidentiality. By law, the Census Bureau is prohibited from sharing the information on individuals with any person or organization, including the Internal Revenue Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Health and Human Services and the Immigration and Naturalization Service. All Census Bureau employees must take an oath not to divulge respondents' data, violation of which can result in a \$5000 fine and up to five years in jail.

There are a variety of reasons

why people fail to complete their census forms. Many people simply have no knowledge of the census. Language minorities should understand that Census 2000's primary objective is to count everyone living in the U.S., regardless of their citizenship status. Otherwise, the census would not be complete.

In March of 2000, each household in the United States will receive a Census 2000 questionnaire. The form will be in English unless the respondent requests one in Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, or Korean. Information on how to obtain the questionnaire in these languages will be provided in a letter that goes out in advance of the census.

Language guides in about 49 languages also will be available to help people answer the census. To receive a language guide call the toll-free telephone number printed on the census questionnaire.

Additional assistance will be provided at Questionnaire Assistance Centers located in communities everywhere. The Census Bureau is actively recruiting bilingual people to staff these facilities.

If you are bilingual and are

interested in one of these positions, the Census Bureau is actively looking for recruits to staff facilities and conduct the census. Call 1-888-325-7733 for more information about Census 2000 jobs.

To ensure maximum success in Census 2000, the Census Bureau is building partnerships with community groups and national organizations to help educate the public about the purposes of the census. For households with limited English proficiency, schools may be the only avenue for reaching certain individuals in a meaningful way. Students who understand the significance of Census 2000 play a vital role in convincing and assisting other household members to participate. In the spring of 1999, the Census Bureau will be distributing teaching materials to educate students about Census 2000. Visit the Census Bureau's web site at <<http://www.census.gov>> for more information about Census 2000 educational materials.

You can play an important role in making sure that Census 2000 is a success. To find out more, please see the web site or call your regional census office. Remember, your participation is important!

silencio ante el pesebre, en una gruta bajo la adyacente Iglesia de la Natividad, donde se cree que nació Jesús.

El Papa se dirigió luego al cercano campamento para refugiados Dheisheh, que es considerado tanto símbolo de los sufrimientos palestinos como de las esperanzas de un estado.

El campamento, establecido en 1949, sigue albergando a 9,600 residentes, casi todos musulmanes.

El endeble pontífice ingresó al campamento apoyado en la mano de Arafat, quien claramente se sentía emocionado por la visita.

El futuro de unos cuatro millones de refugiados palestinos figura entre los tópicos clave que los negociadores israelíes y palestinos buscan resolver a más tardar para septiembre, en un acuerdo definitivo de paz cuyas negociaciones se reanudaron esta semana en Washington.

En un mensaje que dirigió ante una escuela para niños en el campamento, que estaba decorado con banderas palestinas y vaticanas, el Papa dijo que existe la urgente necesidad de una solución justa a las causas subyacentes de las deterioradas condiciones de los refugiados a lo largo de los años.

Insto a todos los líderes políticos a implementar los acuerdos que ya se han logrado y a avanzar hacia la paz que anhelan todos los hombres y mujeres razonables", dijo.

Assad Abdul-Rahman, un dirigente palestino, dijo en un emotivo discurso al pontífice: "La Tierra Prometida jamás será la tierra prometida hasta que los derechos de nuestros refugiados, su derecho a regresar, se implementen en su totalidad".

Poco después de la visita papal de una hora al campamento de refugiados palestinos, cientos de palestinos arrojaron piedras a la policía palestina.

La policía contuvo a golpes de cachiporra a la enfurecida multitud.

El choque comenzó poco después que el pontífice salió del misérrimo campamento de 10,000 palestinos situado al sur de Belén.

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Jesus Is Alive And Well In Vieques, Puerto Rico

By Anthony M. Stevens-Arroyo
"What would Jesus Christ do in circumstances like what's happening on Vieques?" asked Carlos Vizcarrondo, a member of Puerto Rico's House of Representatives.

"Jesus would be on the front lines," he said, answering his own question.

The issue of U.S. Navy bombing of the Puerto Rican island municipality of Vieques is no longer a political question, but one for moral decision and religious commitment. Vizcarrondo's assessment was affirmed with a massive demonstration for peace on Vieques that gathered 150,000 marchers in San Juan, Puerto Rico, last month.

The ink was scarcely dry on a White House agreement in the waning days of January, when the schism became apparent between those who see the future of Vieques as subject to political negotiations and those who consider it a life-and-death struggle between the forces of good and evil.

The agreement offers \$40 million to the 10,000 residents of Vieques and allows the Navy three years of maneuvers with inert ammunition. A referendum will be held to decide if the Navy can go back to live bombs, for which they would pay an additional \$50 million.

From a political viewpoint, the agreement signed by Gov. Pedro Rosselló with President Clinton was a good deal. The governor got political mileage for his party in an election year. Clinton polished his legacy as the great compromiser by giving half a loaf each to a minority constituency and to the military.

But the smoldering indignation of the Puerto Rican people who have endured a century of rule from Washington has now been inflamed with the righteousness of a religious crusade.

Mainline Protestant churches have been in the forefront of a decades-long effort to force the Navy out of Vieques. Catholics, animated in great measure by the arrival of a young archbishop, González Nieves, and galvanized by the Jesuit Bishop Corrada del Río, have mobilized parishes to become part of the civil disobedience movement. The Evangelical and Pentecostal churches served by the Biblical Society of Puerto Rico were instrumental in organizing a major religious demonstration on Feb. 21, and massive numbers of both Catholics and Protestants participated.

Even the outspoken and ultra-conservation preacher, Jorge Raschke, has called the Rosselló-Clinton deal "an immoral act of abuse of power." Standing on the steps of Puerto Rico's capitol in San Juan, Raschke added: "The dignity of a people is not bought with money, the health and the life of the inhabitants of Vieques has no price. The peace of a people goes before the pride and the vanity of the powerful."

The government of Puerto Rico is now faced with the nearly impossible task of selling the sell-outs on Vieques to a populace united in moral opposition. In an effort to discredit the stance of the Catholic Church that circumstances warrant civil disobedience to the Washington deal, one pro-statehood legislator wrote an "open letter" to His Holiness Pope John Paul II, denouncing Bishop Corrada del Río for allowing the church to be associated with politics.

There was never a chance that this pontiff, who helped bring down the Communist regime in Poland and who has stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Fidel Castro in calling for an end to the U.S. embargo of Cuba, would abandon a prelate he had chosen. Bishop Corrada del Río has published a response to an island legislator, reminding him that it is not correct to suppose that "the discourse of politicians and government officials is the only one that can exist or be given legitimacy in the public space which is Puerto Rico."

The critique of the churches is not a shrill ranting and raving from isolated clerics or disgruntled rump groups. Even the call to civil disobedience is in the measured cadences of scholastic philosophy. As explained by Archbishop González y Nieves, the church does not tell its members to disobey the laws of the United States regarding Vieques or to discard the agreement with Washington. But it does admit that the grounds for making such a decision exist.

Therefore, in the freedom that the Catholic Church affords the individual conscience in matters not directly related to doctrine, each Catholic may

decide for him- or herself to disobey the renewal of bombing on Vieques.

Governor Rosselló upped the ante politically when he called upon his party members to engage in "religious disobedience" to the archbishop and all the other religious leaders. The attack on the bishops was somewhat surprising since the governor is a Catholic and a graduate of Notre Dame University. He rebuked the bishops for tolerating "immorality in the Catholic Church" by not allowing women to be ordained.

Wilfredo Estrada, the Evangelical leader who was chief organizer of the Feb. 21 march, leaped to the defense of the bishops, insisting that the bombing of Vieques was a moral issue and Vatican policy was to

be respected. Thus, the march in Puerto Rico has assumed the proportions of a conflict of the Middle Ages, when emperor vied with pope for the allegiance of the people.

Clearly, the politicians in every party would prefer to keep a lid on the dissent, lowering the discourse to the manipulation of the issue for partisan advantage. But although political forces in Washington have usually succeeded in dividing Puerto Ricans, this case seems to be different because of the religious factor.

The movement to drive the Navy out of Vieques seems to have many parallels with the abolitionist movement of the United States before the Civil War. For decades, the politicians had been able to fashion various

Jesus Esta Vivo En Vieques, Puerto Rico

Por Anthony M. Stevens-Arroyo
"¿Qué haría Jesucristo en circunstancias como las que están ocurriendo en Vieques?" preguntó Carlos Vizcarrondo, miembro de la Cámara de Representantes de Puerto Rico.

"Jesús estaría en primera fila," dijo el, contestando su propia pregunta. El asunto de los bombardeos de la Marina de Guerra de Estados Unidos a la municipalidad isleña de Vieques, en Puerto Rico, ya no es más una cuestión política, sino una cuestión para decisión moral y compromiso religioso. La evaluación de Vizcarrondo fue afirmada por una manifestación impresionante por la paz en Vieques, que reunió a 150,000 manifestantes en San Juan, Puerto Rico, el mes pasado.

Apenas se había secado la tinta del acuerdo de la Casa Blanca en los últimos días de enero, cuando se hizo aparente el cisma entre los que ven al futuro de Vieques como un asunto de negociación política y aquellos que lo consideran como una lucha de vida o muerte entre las fuerzas del bien y del mal.

El acuerdo ofrece \$40 millones a los 10,000 residentes de Vieques y da a la Marina de Guerra tres años de maniobras con municiones inertes. Se efectuará un referendo para decidir si la Marina de Guerra puede regresar al uso de bombas "vivas," por lo cual pagará \$50 millones adicionales.

Desde un punto de vista político, el acuerdo firmado por el Gobernador Pedro Rosselló con el Presidente Clinton fue un buen trato. El gobernador obtuvo ventaja política para su partido en un año de elecciones; Clinton pulió su legado como el gran transigente al dar la mitad de una hogaza tanto a un electorado minoritario como a las fuerzas armadas.

Pero la indignación latente en rescoldo del pueblo puertorriqueño que ha sufrido un siglo de gobierno desde Washington se ha inflamado ahora con la rectitud moral de una cruzada religiosa. Las iglesias protestantes principales han estado al frente de las gestiones, que llevan ya décadas, para obligar a la Marina de Guerra a salir de Vieques. La Iglesia Católica, animada en gran medida por la llegada de un joven prelado, el arzobispo González Nieves, y galvanizada por el obispo Corrada del Río, jesuita, ha movilizado a sus parroquias para

que formen parte del movimiento de la desobediencia civil. Las iglesias evangélicas y pentecostales, servidas por la Sociedad Bíblica de Puerto Rico, sirvieron como instrumentos para organizar una manifestación religiosa importante el 21 de febrero, en la que participaron cantidades impresionantes de católicos y protestantes.

Hasta el predicador franco y ultra-conservador Jorge Raschke ha calificado al acuerdo entre Rosselló y Clinton de "un acto inmoral de abuso de poder." De pie en las escaleras del Capitolio de Puerto Rico en San Juan, Raschke agregó: "La dignidad de un pueblo no se compra con dinero; la salud y la vida de los viequeses no tienen precio. La paz de un pueblo está por encima del orgullo y la vanidad de los más poderosos."

El gobierno de Puerto Rico se enfrenta ahora a la tarea casi imposible de explicar satisfactoriamente la "venta" de Vieques a una población unida en oposición moral. Como intento para desacreditar la postura de la Iglesia Católica, en el sentido de que las circunstancias justifican la desobediencia civil contra el acuerdo de Washington, un legislador partidario de la estadiad escribió una carta abierta a Su Santidad el Papa Juan Pablo II, denunciando al Obispo Corrada del Río por permitir que la Iglesia se inmiscuya en la política.

Nunca hubo una oportunidad de que este pontífice, que ayudó a derrocar al régimen comunista en Polonia y que se ha situado hombro a hombro con Fidel Castro al pedir el cese del embargo estadounidense en Cuba, abandonara a un prelado que él había seleccionado. Monseñor Corrada ha publicado una respuesta al un legislador de la isla, recordándole que no es correcto el suponer que el discurso entre los políticos y los funcionarios del gobierno sea el único que pueda existir o recibir legitimidad en la plaza pública que es Puerto Rico."

La crítica de las iglesias no es un alboroto y un delirio estridente de clérigos aislados o grupos tumultuosos de disgustados. Hasta el llamado a la desobediencia civil se halla en las cadencias comedidas de la filosofía escolástica. Como lo explicó el arzobispo González Nieves, la iglesia no dice a sus miembros que desobedezcan las leyes de Estados Unidos con

compromises that avoided war between the states. But when finally the moral and religious conscience of the nation was roused against slavery, the politicians were swept aside.

No one expects war between the United States and Puerto Rico, its colony, of course; still, resistance to this Washington deal could not only push the U.S. military out of Vieques, but raise the question of why it is in Puerto Rico at all.

(Dr. Anthony M. Stevens-Arroyo is a professor of Puerto Rican and Latino Studies at Brooklyn College, City University of New York, and director of the Research Office for Religion in Society and Culture. His e-mail is astevens(AT SIGN)brooklyn.cuny.edu) (c) 2000, Hispanic Link News Service. Distributed by Los Angeles Times Syndicate.

respecto a Vieques, ni que descarten el acuerdo con Washington; pero sí reconoce que existen los fundamentos para adoptar tal decisión.

Por lo tanto, en la libertad que la Iglesia Católica permite a la conciencia individual en asuntos no relacionados directamente con la doctrina, cada católico puede decidir por sí mismo el desobedecer la renovación de los bombardeos sobre Vieques.

El gobernador Rosselló alzó la apuesta políticamente cuando pidió a los miembros de su partido que practicara la "desobediencia religiosa" para con el arzobispo y los demás dirigentes religiosos. El ataque contra los obispos fue algo sorprendente, ya que el gobernador es católico y graduado de la Universidad de Notre Dame. Rosselló refutó a los obispos por "tolerar la inmoralidad en la Iglesia Católica" al no permitir que las mujeres sean ordenadas al sacerdocio.

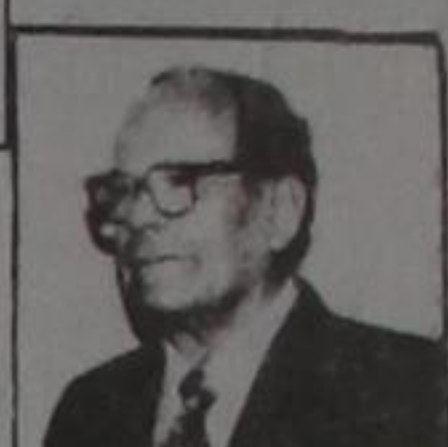
Wilfredo Estrada, el dirigente evangélico y organizador principal de la marcha del 21 de febrero, se levantó en defensa de los obispos, insistiendo en que el bombardeo de Vieques era un asunto moral y que el curso de acción del Vaticano había de ser respetado. Así, la marcha de Puerto Rico ha asumido las proporciones de un conflicto de la Edad Media, cuando el emperador competía con el Papa por la fidelidad del pueblo.

Está claro que los políticos de todos los partidos preferirían "ponerle una tapa" a la disensión, rebajando el discurso hasta la manipulación del asunto para obtener ventajas partidistas. Pero aunque las fuerzas políticas de Washington han acostumbrado tener éxito dividiendo a los puertorriqueños contra ellos mismos, este caso parece ser distinto debido al factor religioso.

El movimiento para sacar a la Marina de Guerra de Vieques parece tener muchos paralelos con el movimiento abolicionista de Estados Unidos antes de la Guerra Civil. Durante décadas, los políticos habían podido elaborar varios acuerdos que evitaron la guerra entre los estados. Pero cuando por fin la conciencia moral y religiosa de la nación se alzó contra la esclavitud de los negros, los políticos fueron barridos a un lado. Nadie espera que haya guerra entre Estados Unidos y Puerto Rico, que es su colonia desde luego, pero la resistencia al convenio de Washington podría no solamente sacar a las fuerzas armadas de Vieques, sino plantear la pregunta de por qué están en Puerto Rico del todo.



PENSAMIENTOS DEL PREDICADOR
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LAS SIETE PALABRAS
(Segunda Palabra)
Lucas 23:43
"DE CIERTO TE DIGO QUE HOY
ESTARAS CONMIGO EN EL PARAISO"

La segunda palabra de nuestro Señor Jesucristo en la cruz, fué dirigida a uno de los ladrones que se encontraban como él crucificado. Esto fueron palabras de gracia para uno que estaba en la misma puerta de lamuerte. Y como si no fuera suficiente la afrenta el sufrimiento del crucificado, y como que no bastaran los dolores intensos que había estado padeciéndolo, el Mesías nuestro Salvador, fue crucificado en medio de dos ladrones, que eran el azote de la región. ¡Tres cruces! ¡Jesús enemigo de los malvados! Pues tenía que cumplirse la Escritura del profeta que dijo: "Fué contado con los perversos," Is.53:12 Pues Cristo fué crucificado de acuerdo a las Escrituras con el fin de opacar la inocencia el Cordero. Para confundir a los que por alguna razón tuviesen todavía restos de simpatía para el Cordero. El Salvador Jesús aceptó todo aquello sin alterarse y sin hablar palabra, como ya lo oímos en el sermón anterior. Y así como en Hermón estuvo enemigo de Elías y Moisés que representan la ley y los profetas, y profesías, así también ahora él como la final de ambas, se encuentra enemigo de los ladrones, sobre la cumbre del Calvario para significar la obra de redención y redención del pecado. Y que es al mismo tiempo un cuadro anticipado del día final, del Gran juicio, cuando el Hijo de Dios hará separación a diestra y a siniestra; como vemos a los ladrones uno a la izquierda y otro a la derecha. ¡Oh! ¡Qué misterio tan grande y significativo! el de aquellas tres cruces, que el Santo por excelencia está confundido entre los malhechores, el Hijo de Dios cumple la palabra que había anunciado, y muere por los pecadores. Y los judíos en su ceguedad no estaban haciendo otra cosa que cumpliendo los santos designios proféticos. Y el Cordero era el centro de la mirada de los curiosos y especialmente la mirada llena de ira de los príncipes y sacerdotes. Luego también los ladrones al escuchar por algún momento lo que se decía... ¡Tú, que derribas el templo y en tres días lo reedificas, sálvate a ti mismo si eres hijo de Dios, desciende de la cruz!... "¡A otros salvó, sálvese que se salve asimismo. ¿O asimismo no se puede salvar? ¡Que descienda de la cruz! Confió en Dios, libréle ahora, si le quiere porque dijo hijo de Dios soy. Cómo se parecen estas palabras a las que dictaba Satanás en el desierto, según nos dice Mt.4:3-7 "Si eres hijo de Dios, si eres hijo de Dios." Este parece que debe ser el mismo espíritu que motivó a los enemigos de Cristo que rodeaban la cruz. Y mientras ésto se oía, uno de los ladrones más que el otro se une a ofender con los otros al bendito Cordero y a dirigir injurias; aunque Mateo nos dice que al principio los dos lo hacían Mt.27:44 Mientras que Luc. nos dice que uno de los malhechores, Luc.23:39 "Si tú eres el Cristo, sálvate a ti mismo y a nosotros." Asimismo Luc. nos informa que un ladrón le decía al otro: "Nosotros estamos sufriendo lo que nuestros hechos merecen, y tú estando en la misma condición, ¿no temes a Dios?" Esto nos hace pensar que el ladrón que dijo esto, tenía nociones de los actos y obras y milagros de Cristo, pero que tal vez su vida había sido una vida criminal. Y ahora es conciente que por el pecado se tenía que sufrir. Y tal vez pasaba por su mente su infancia, cuando su madre lo llevaba al templo y oraba por él y pedía a Dios que alguna vez salvara a su hijo. Como es la oración de muchas de las madres por sus hijos desobedientes. Pero qué cierto es que cuando las personas no pueden oír la voz de Cristo acaso de las voces de la gente, se confunden y no pueden ser salvos. Mientraas que otros aún que Cristo les llama, no pueden oír la voz de Cristo prque andan muy lejos de la cruz. Pero que cuando apartan su mirada y oído de la gente para oír la voz y Palabra de Cristo, es cuando pronto pueden ser salvos. Este ladrón apartó su oído de las injurias que la gente dirigía a Cristo, y puso más oído a la palabra de perdón de Cristo, que en su dolor pronunciaba y ofrecía, a favor de sus enemigos, y fue cuando recibió la palabra de perdón y seguridad, que estaría con Cristo en el paraíso. Ojalá que este ejemplo ayude y sirva a las personas que quieren ser salvas. La fe viene por el oír, por el oír de la Palabra de Dios. Este ladrón aprendió por experiencia que por el pecado se subre. Se sufre en el mundo, se sufre en la cárcel, se sufre en el cuerpo, pero más: se sufrirá en la condenación eterna. Y en la hora de la muerte este ladrón mientras oía la voz de Cristo en la cruz, palabras de intercesión, se acordaba que alguien había orado por él de esta manera, tal vez cuando él era un niño jovencito. Y aquellas palabras del Cordero tocaron su corazón estando en el mismo tormento de la muerte. Y su fe vino a su corazón, como nos enseña la Palabra de Dios que la fe viene por el oír. Y esta fe se agigantó en su corazón a tal grado que produjo arrepentimiento y esperanza, y creyó que Cristo era el Cordero de Dios que quita el pecado del mundo. Porque oía que las palabras del crucificado eran palabras de perdón. Y dejando de oír las injurias de los enemigos de Cristo, se concentró en su necesidad de ser salvo antes de morir, y creyó con todo su corazón, y con todo su corazón se entregó a Cristo. Y dirige estas palabras a Cristo: "¡Acuérdate de mí, cuando vinieres en tu reino!..." Estas eran las palabras más sublimes que Crristo había escuchado de parte de un humano durante la Cruz. (Y aunque un poco tarde) la oración de aquél pronto tuvo contestación. Y tal vez no pudiendo el Maestro volve del todo su rostro al ladrón por estar clavado de sus manos y pies, pero pronto responde para decirle "¡Hoy estarás conmigo en el paraíso!" Esto quiere decir hoy mismo serás salvo. Muy de acuerdo estuvieron sus palabras con la Palabra de Dios "Hoy ha venido la salvación a esta casa," Luc. 19:9 "Con la voca se confiesa para salvación." Rom. 10: 10 Si oyeres hoy su voz, no os endurezcáis vuestros corazones." Heb. 4:7 Los mismos inguridores, estaban testificando "a otros salvo" sin darse cuenta que estaban diciendo la verdad. Pues Cristo es Salvados, no nomás de "otros" sino también de los soldados si se hubieran arrepentido. Y de todo el mundo y de todo el cree en él. Si el otro ladrón no fue salvo, y los inguridores no se salvaron, quizá fue porque no creyeron. Como les pasa a los que se pierden hoy en día. Pero estas palabras de Cristo nos hablan eloquentemente del hecho innegable de que todos los hombres necesitan perdón. Perdón de sus culpas. Pues Rom.3:23 dice: "Por cuanto todos pecaron, y están destituidos de la gloria de Dios." Y aunque los hombres puedan creer que pueden apagar su conciencia, diciendo que el medio ambiente en el cual han vivido los ha obligado a ser lo que son, culpando a todos, especialmente a los que no se han podido guardar fieles, y que han dejado un testimonio confundido, y como excusa han dicho "Todo es falso." Pero ésto no importa; la conciencia al fin despertará y al fin llamará fuertemente al arrepentimiento y les convencerá de iniquidad y de pecadores. Qué loca y qué insensata es la posición de siertas personas en nuestros días, que quieren negar la existencia del alma y la necesidad del perdón. Pero Cristo que había guardado silencio a los insultos, de nuevo abre su boca para ofrecer y garantizar su perdón. ¿LO QUIERES?

Continuaremos la siguiente semana en la tercer palabra

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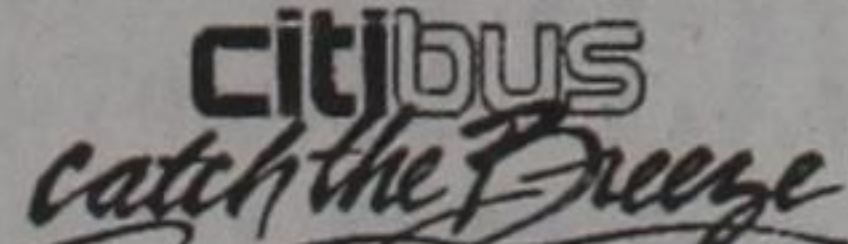
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