

## Minority Groups Ask:

# Vote For the Good of North-East Lubbock

Minority groups from throughout Lubbock gathered this past week in a press conference to voice their support for the passage of the proposed venue tax to be voted on in an election May 5th.

The Lubbock Hispanic Chamber of Commerce was joined by the American G.I. Forum, the Hispanic Agenda, NAACP and community groups from east Lubbock to bring attention to the fact that the venue tax would bring much needed economic prosperity to north and east Lubbock.

"The softball and baseball parks would help to build up our neighborhood" said Irma Guerrero. "It addition the proposed improvements would add to the beauty of the canyon lakes to make them an area of town that everyone would want to visit," she added.

Lubbock's two minority councilpersons, T.J. Patterson and Victor Hernandez are also backing the election saying that all of Lubbock would benefit.

"This is one way in which we could economically help Lubbock and at the same time benefit our children in that we could give them a better place to play," said T.J. Patterson.

The proposed venue tax would be paid only by persons who register at hotels and rent cars but would raise the money necessary to build a championship softball complex, eight little league baseball parks and would build an outdoor arena/stage in the

Buddy Holly Recreation area. Money raised through the tax would be dedicated only toward the projects.

Early voting boxes are currently open **United SuperMarkets** 2630 Parkway Dr., 112 N. University Ave., 401 Slide Rd, 1701 50th Street and **Albertson's** 3249 50th Street & at the South Plains Mall.

Early Voting is going on now until May 1, 2001. The actual voting day will be on May 5th at all regular voting places.

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

# EL EDITOR

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## World War II's Braceros Seek Withheld Wages

By SHARYN OBSATZ

Miguel Ayala, 89, remembers working 10-hour days in the hot sun to bolster the Allies' World War II supplies a half-century ago.

As a Mexican contract worker, or bracero, Ayala crisscrossed the U.S. countryside, machete in hand, picking lemons, cotton, cherries and beets while America's young men went off to war overseas.

Ayala, who lives in Moreno Valley, Calif., is joining hundreds of other former braceros and their family members in supporting a federal lawsuit demanding millions of dollars they say is owed.

The area's wartime economy was sustained by Mexican laborers, who picked everything from oranges to grapes, historians say. Under U.S.-Mexican contracts from 1942 to 1949, 10 percent of the agricultural and railroad workers' wages were withheld in a savings fund that was supposed to be paid to them after they returned to Mexico.

Four former braceros have filed a class-action lawsuit against the United States and Mexican governments and several banks, alleging that much of the money was never repaid in Mexico. Two of the plaintiffs live in Northern California, one in Mexico and another in Illinois. Though not named on the suit, other ex-braceros are watching the case closely.

"It's the money I earned. They only gave me a little of it," said Ayala, who worked in California, Montana, Colorado, Michigan, Texas and Arizona between 1943 and 1964.

Confusion lingers over just how much money went unpaid, if any. Bank and Mexican officials have promised to investigate but say it will be tough to track down decades-old documents.

The U.S. Congressional Hispanic Caucus is asking President Bush to support the investigation.

Bracero advocates also petitioned Mexican President Vicente Fox during his California visit last month, urging him to provide government pensions and health insurance for ex-braceros.

Of an estimated 5 million braceros, only 1 million are still alive, said Luz Maria Ayala, an organizer with the Alliance BraceroProa, who is not related to Miguel Ayala. Most ex-braceros are living in Mexico, but many immigrated to the United States.

The alliance is helping braceros' attorneys gather information that supports the case. It also participates in demonstrations and holds meetings to tell ex-braceros about the lawsuit.

The braceros' attorneys say they don't know how much money disappeared from the savings fund.

Perhaps \$30 million to \$50 million was withheld from braceros wages, which with interest would be worth about \$500 million today, according to Valeriano Saucedo of Visalia, Calif., one of a dozen attorneys working on the lawsuit.

Many braceros were paid less than \$1 an hour, so their individual claims could be small, most less than \$400 plus interest, according to the lawsuit. Bracero advocates say the complaint is partly symbolic.

Everyone agrees that ranchers, farm owners and railroad companies paid the 10 percent, Saucedo said. But he said it is unknown where the money was lost in the pipeline from the Wells Fargo Bank in the United States to three government banks in Mexico.

Wells Fargo has checked its archives.

"The state-of-the art tracking procedures for the transfer of

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money that exist today for the government and banks unfortunately did not exist 59 years ago," said Lissa Behm, a Wells Fargo spokeswoman in San Diego.

"We have no information that this matter was not handled satisfactorily in the normal course of business ...," she said. "The only documents we've been able to find in our archives, from 1944 and 1945, indicate only that Wells Fargo had arranged with the Banco de Mexico to act as one of the depositories for the salary deductions of braceros."

Juan Jose Salgado, the Mexican consul in San Bernardino, said his government cares about the complaints. But the necessary information might be hard to find, Salgado said, because some Mexican government records are kept for only five years.

The lawsuit was filed March 1 in San Francisco. Saucedo said he hopes the issue will be settled as soon as possible, especially since some braceros are in their 90s.

"We're going to lose them quickly here. This litigation cannot go on for three, four years. We're losing some of them on a daily basis," Saucedo said.

## News Briefs

### Que Pasa Seeks Merger with Private Firm

The Associated Press reported Tuesday that Que Pasa, Inc., the struggling Web portal company which sought to liquidate its assets in December, may merge with a private real estate company.

"We're actually pretty excited about the potential and are hoping this quarter we can make a more definitive announcement," Que Pasa CEO Gary Trujillo said, according to AP.

There is no indication whether or not the company's revenue model will change or if they will do with new or existing personnel. However, this report indicates that Que Pasa, Inc. will remain in business.

Trujillo's company hit hard times late last year after receiving over \$40 million during its initial public offering. While producing over \$3 million in advertising revenue during 2000's final quarter, Que Pasa, Inc., the producers of Quepasa.com and other subsidiary sites, failed to gain profits and suffered from debt. In January, Que Pasa offered its assets for sale - everything from its URL, to office chairs and supplies - in an effort to close debts. According to a company report in December, Que Pasa employed 80 people, but Que Pasa made large cutbacks at the beginning of this year.

Joining other Web sites like Yupicom, Latino.com and Picoito.com which catered to the U.S. Latino market, Que Pasa failed to compete immediately with mainstream portals such as Yahoo! and America Online. Latino.com, the San Francisco-based company, failed to keep investor confidence despite gaining over \$2 million in ad revenue. Latino.com began operations in 1994. The U.S. Hispanic Internet audience is estimated at 56 million, but advertisers slowed its Internet initiatives because of the slumping Internet economy and Internet viewer uncertainty.

### Escena Alterna Debuts On Billboard's 'Latin 50 Albums' & #1 College Charts.

For the first time ever, a compilation of Latin alternative rock and hip-hop has landed on the Billboard 'Latin 50 Albums' sales chart (entering at #38 - and outselling titles by Mana, Shakira and the Gipsy Kings). The feat follows a remarkable week in which 'Escena Alterlatina' concerts (headlined by Julieta Venegas) were completely sold-out in New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. Meanwhile, the just-released album 'Escena Alterlatina: The Future Sound In Espanol' (Ark21 Records/Universal) continues to make waves at radio, holding down the #1 position on CMOJ's 'N-Alternative' chart for the past two weeks. The album is also receiving airplay on major English-language stations such as KCRW (Los Angeles), LIVE105 (San Francisco) and WXPX (Philadelphia).

Bolstered by a money-back guarantee, the unconventional marketing strategy behind 'Escena Alterlatina' also includes placement of the album in listening booths across the USA at major retail chains such as Borders, Tower, and Virgin. On an unprecedented level, a release is being actively promoted to English-speakers, as well as Latinos who do not normally listen to Latin alternative rock and hip-hop.



**David Lopez Named Tech Regent**  
David Lopez, President of Southwestern Bell Telephone, Texas was recently named to the Texas Tech Board of Regents by Governor Rick Perry.

## Mayas Celebran Su Propia Curcifixión

por Néfer Muñoz  
Inter Press Service

SAN JOSE, - Los pueblos mayas de Guatemala celebraron durante los días de la Semana Santa católica su propio calvario de más de 500 años, de atropellos contra su cultura, pensamiento y derechos humanos, como explicaron líderes indígenas.

Ronaldo Similox, sacerdote maya de Chimaltenango, 30 kilómetros al noroeste de la capital, expresó a la prensa local que el sentido de la Semana Santa para los mayas es expresar el martirio de la crucifixión que han sufrido en los últimos cinco siglos.

Similox detalló que en estos días de retiro los indígenas mayas realizan ceremonias para reconciliarse con la "madre tierra" y pedir perdón por sus culpas.

"Presentamos ofrendas que vienen de la misma naturaleza, como candelas de diferentes colores, mirra, incienso y pom (corteza de los árboles procesada que se vuelve aserrín y se mezcla con resina)", narró el sacerdote.

Esta celebración tiene un significado especial en Guatemala, donde la población indígena llega a 7,9 millones de personas, 66 por ciento de los 12 millones de habitantes, según datos del Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, de la Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA).

Los mayas también están asentados en El Salvador y Honduras, donde tratan de conservar su idioma y sus tradiciones.

Durante esta semana, en la que la Iglesia Católica recuerda la muerte y resurrección de

Jesucristo, miles de centroamericanos gozan de vacaciones.

Por eso, mientras muchas familias de la región han viajado a sitios de verano o participan de multitudinarias manifestaciones católicas, como procesiones, misas y otras, los líderes indígenas mayas preparan sus propios ritos.

"Buscamos el equilibrio con el ambiente, para que nos siga dando oxígeno y alimentos, algo olvidado por la cultura occidental", comentó Similox al diario guatemalteco "Siglo Veintiuno".

En Chimaltenango, ciudad con alta población indígena, los rituales son encabezados por dos decenas de sacerdotes, quienes, junto a sus feligreses, se concentran frente al altar mayor, que es un cerro o un bosque.

El viernes de Semana Santa, día en que los católicos conmemoran la crucifixión de Jesucristo, el calendario maya indica que debe recordarse la "pzoj", es decir, la justicia.

Similox explica que este viernes las plegarias están mezcladas con peticiones para que la justicia llegue a todos los pueblos indígenas y a los no indígenas del mundo.

"Es como un sermón que está a cargo de los sacerdotes", explica el sacerdote maya.

Recordó, además, que antes de que se firmaran en Guatemala los acuerdos de paz, en diciembre de 1996, estas celebraciones eran tomadas por las autoridades como actos de subversión.

En el calendario maya el año nuevo llegó el 24 de febrero y, aunque los pueblos indígenas son

respetuosos de las tradiciones católicas y evangélicas, ellos dedican estos días libres para meditar sobre la salud del pueblo y sobre la situación educativa y económica del país. Las celebraciones mayas de esta Semana Santa encuentra a Guatemala sumida en una severa crisis política, económica y de violencia social.

Al escándalo de corrupción desatado tras la quiebra de dos bancos privados, se le sumó una cadena de robos y secuestros y un ambiente de inestabilidad política.

Sin embargo, los problemas de Guatemala reconocen causas de larga data, como la marginación que han sufrido a lo largo de los siglos los indígenas de este país y del resto de América Central.

Un informe elaborado en 1999 por el Programa de Naciones Unidas

para el Desarrollo señala que los pueblos indígenas son los que enfrentan las mayores exclusiones en el istmo.

Vitalino Similox, líder indígena maya y político que ha aspirado a cargos públicos, envió esta semana un mensaje público al gobierno de Alfonso Portillo para que rectifique sus errores y saque al país de la turbulencia social y política.

"En todo caso, deberíamos aprovechar la oportunidad para analizar por qué está el país como está, qué tenemos que hacer como personas y familias para sacarlo adelante y recobrar la brújula que parecen haber perdido nuestros líderes", expresó.

Similox agregó que cada ciudadano guatemalteco no debería echarle la culpa a "otros" por lo que está pasando en su país, y más bien toda la sociedad debería tratar de ayudar a buscar soluciones.

## Mayans Commemorate Their Own 'Crucifixion'

By Néfer Muñoz  
Inter Press Service

SAN JOSE, - During Holy Week, Guatemala's Mayan Indians commemorated their own 500-year calvary of violations of their culture, thinking and human rights, indigenous leaders explained this week.

Ronaldo Similox, a Mayan priest from Chimaltenango, 30 kms northwest of Guatemala City, told the local press that the significance of Holy Week for the Mayas is reflecting on the "crucifixion" they themselves have suffered over the past five centuries.

Similox said that in these days of holiday and retreat from the normal obligations of life, the Mayan Indians hold ceremonies to reconcile themselves with "mother earth" and to ask forgiveness for their sins.

"We present offerings that come from nature itself, like candles of different colors, myrrh, incense and pom," a sawdust made from tree bark that is mixed with resin, said the indigenous spiritual leader.

The celebrations have a special meaning in Guatemala, where the country's 7.9 million indigenous people account for a full 66 percent of the population of 12 million, according to statistics from the Inter-American Indigenist Institute, an Organization of American States (OAS) agency.

Similox pointed out that prior to the December 1996 signing of the peace accord that put an end to 36 years of civil war, the Mayan celebrations were seen as acts of subversion by the de facto military governments ruling the country.

Mayan communities also live in El Salvador and Honduras, where

they are struggling to preserve their language and traditions.

Thousands of Central Americans are on holiday during Holy Week, when the Catholic Church commemorates the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. While many families in the region travel to resort areas or take part in Catholic processions and go to mass, Mayan Indian leaders hold their own rituals.

"We seek equilibrium with the environment, in order for it to continue giving us oxygen and food, aspects that have been neglected by western culture," Similox told the Guatemalan daily 'Siglo Veintiuno'.

In Chimaltenango, a city with a particularly large indigenous population, the rituals are presided over by around two dozen priests, who gather with the faithful around the central altar,

which is a hill or a forest.

Good Friday, when the Catholic Church is in mourning, is identified by the Mayan calendar as a time to reflect on and pray for justice for all indigenous and non-indigenous people in the world.

According to the Mayan calendar, the new year began on Feb 24. But while Guatemala's indigenous peoples respect the Catholic and Protestant traditions, they dedicate these days to reflecting on the health of their people, as well as the country's economic situation and the problems facing the education sector.

The Mayan ceremonies taking place during this year's Holy Week find Guatemala in the grip of a severe political and economic crisis.

A corruption scandal unleashed by the bankruptcy of two private

banks, a political scandal that has a number of lawmakers of the ruling party against the wall, the trial for the 1998 murder of Bishop Juan José Gerardi, in which the army is implicated, and a growing wave of crime have created a climate of political instability and ungovernability.

But the problems facing this impoverished country are long-standing ones, such as the marginalization suffered for centuries by indigenous people here and in the rest of Central America.

A United Nations Development Program report released in 1999 underlined that indigenous peoples suffered the worst social and economic exclusion and neglect of any social group in Central America.

Vitalino Similox, a Mayan indigenous leader who has run

for public office, sent an open letter to the conservative government of Alfonso Portillo this week demanding that it correct its errors and pull the country out of the present social and political turmoil.

"We must take advantage of this opportunity to analyze why the country is in the situation it finds itself in, and what we must do as people and families to move forward and to find the bearings that our leaders seem to have lost," he wrote.

Similox added that Guatemalans should not shift the blame to "others" for what is happening in their country, because it is society as a whole that must try to come up with solutions.

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# Los Hispanos y Los Negros Deben Asociarse, No Ser Rivales

Por Miguel Pérez

Durante años los dirigentes latinos han estado predicando, con fervor casi religioso, que llega el día. "Pronto, los latinos serán la minoría más grande del país," dirían, como si esto representara la solución perfecta a todos los problemas de la comunidad hispana.

Ahora las estadísticas del censo confirman que ha llegado el día. Sumando al conteo de 35.3 millones de hispanos, el millón que admiten haber dejado de contar, más los 3.8 millones de residentes de Puerto Rico, la cifra total supera los 40 millones, dejando atrás a los 36.4 millones de negros que el censo encontró.

Pero, ¿esto qué significa en términos económicos y de poder político?

Ahora algunos de los mencionados dirigentes latinos nos están diciendo que no significa absolutamente nada el título de "minoría más grande," al menos que los latinos aprendan, como lo han hecho los africano-americanos, a hacer contar sus números.

Es posible que sea más difícil para los latinos, ya que la mayoría de los negros son ciudadanos, mientras que no lo son muchos latinos, y otros por su estatus no tienen derecho al voto. Otros muchos sienten apatía ante ejercer sus derechos democráticos aquí. Los meros números no harán que los latinos tengan más influencia, ni tampoco les garantizan la representación apropiada.

"Nos exponen más a los medios de comunicación," opina Daniel Santo Pietro, director ejecutivo de la Asociación de Directores Hispanos de Nuevo Jersey, un grupo coordinador de agencias multiservicio. "Pero no cambian nada. No significará nada si no convertimos nuestros números en organización y en ideas concretas para enfrentar lo que hay que hacer para mejorar la vida de nuestra gente."

Hay que hacer mucho más que responder al censo de los Estados Unidos. The assignment, Artellia Burch told me, was no different from any other "man-on-the-street" assignment she has done in her year and a half as features editor of the Post.

Yes, she said, it was born out of a reaction to the Census numbers. She had been aware of rumblings within the black community about the influx of Hispanics in the Charlotte area. She expected to hear negative statements from the more uneducated in the community.

What surprised her, Burch explained, was the level of negativity from professionals -- and their willingness to express it.

But none of the statements really shocked her. "It was nothing new to me," she said, making it clear that she had grown up hearing the same kind of talk, with one difference: the slurs were directed at African Americans, at her.

The public response to the article -- being called stupid and a racist herself -- didn't shock her either, she said. That's just part of the job. "I know their response is of ignorance." Readers must understand that the comments were not hers, she insisted. Good reporters shield their articles from their own opinions. "I don't feel that way, but I can't tell people what to say. It bothers me when readers make those comments."

After hanging up with Burch, I found myself rereading her article. The quotes I found so harsh still stung, but putting aside my initial outrage, I knew I couldn't shoot the messenger. What I had considered to be irresponsible journalism, I decided, was merely an article in a niche publication that strives to reflect the views of the community it serves.

Her piece accomplished that. Absolutely. Some criticized the article as

lacking balance. Burch told me she has since spoken to many people within the black community who expressed outrage at the comments.

However, the fact remains that these comments were expressed, and I don't think Charlotte is unique in having a population that feels this way. It doesn't take a Sunday morning talk-show analyst to tell me there is increasing negativity across the country to Census figures on the Latino population boom.

Is the media feeding this debate by dwelling on Hispanic population increases in areas of the country unfamiliar with the Latino culture? That is a separate issue.

What troubles me is that people, any people, should view us with dread and outright hatred.

If there is a good side to an article such as this, it is that it strips away all semblance of political correctness. It lays out the ugly truth that problems do exist. It underscores how little we know each other. It highlights the need for a true outreach from all sides to gain a better understanding of one another. Hay que implementar el registro de votantes, la organización y la participación. Hay que dejar de lado las diferencias nacionalistas y trabajar juntos.

En este respecto, tienen mucho que aprender los latinos de los africano-americanos.

Mucho se dice ya del conflicto que puede surgir entre los africano-americanos y los latinos cuando supuestamente luchan por mantener el título de "minoría más grande."

Algunos creen que la competencia por los números llevará a una amarga lucha por la redistribución de distritos políticos para conseguir los pocos escaños abiertos en distritos competitivos. Algunos dicen que los la-

tinios se fortalecerán a expensas de los africano-americanos.

Tanto para los latinos como para los negros, el desafío será evitar este tipo de lucha. Los que se especializan en técnicas de división y conquista van a estar en su gloria.

"Cuando se organicen mejor los negros y los latinos," dice Santo Pietro, "nos daremos cuenta todos que compartimos el 80 por ciento de los problemas."

Lo que tendrían que ver los africano-americanos es una asociación más fuerte, y no un rival, con la comunidad hispana, añade. Si los dos grupos se respetan en cuanto al 20 por ciento de los problemas restantes, "y si sumamos a los asiáticos a la ecuación, faltará poco para que hablemos de una mayoría. Allí todo el mundo tendrá que prestar atención," dice.

Algunos dirigentes latinos reflexivos encuentran preocupante que ciertos medios noticiosos azucen el conflicto entre los dos grupos. Algunas publicaciones recurren a tácticas para alarmar a los negros con la posibilidad de que pierdan influencia y poder con la llegada de la población hispana creciente.

Habrán conflictos inevitables, al redistribuir las líneas distritales, al hacer los nombramientos a las agencias gubernamentales, al conceder contratos del estado -- y cuando el establecimiento político blanco quiera distribuir la misma porción del pastel entre los negros y los hispanos, sin aumentarlo la porción.

En última instancia, si el resultado del Censo 2000 es una serie de luchas por el poder entre los negros y los latinos, los números más altos no significarán absolutamente nada.

(Miguel Pérez es columnista con The Record en el norte de Nuevo Jersey. Contáctese con él por correo electrónico a: MiguelP236@aol.com (c) 2001, Hispanic Link News Service. Distribuido por Los Angeles Times Syndicate International

# Bush Goes to Quebec With Weak Hand

Jim Lobe

I Despite renewed pledges to press for a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) accord by 2005 as a top priority for his administration, U.S. President George W. Bush will attend this weekend's Summit of the Americas in Quebec City without as strong a hand as he would have liked.

Almost three months after taking office, his administration has not yet even drafted a bill to submit to Congress that would grant him "fast-track" -- renamed "trade-promotion" -- authority to negotiate the FTAA, although in a speech to the Organization of American States (OAS) Tuesday he said he was "confident" of winning such authority by year's end.

The sharp slowdown in the U.S. economy -- which may even be moving into recession -- could also strengthen domestic protectionist pressures that had largely been held at bay during the country's longest economic expansion in history during Bill Clinton's administration.

And, with as many as 25,000 protesters expected to demonstrate their opposition to FTAA surrounding the walled old city, where the 34 leaders attending the Summit will be gathered, the event itself could well become the kind of public-relations disaster that took place at the 1999 World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in Seattle which derailed Clinton from even seeking fast-track authority during his last year in office.

Indeed, compared to the first Summit of the Americas in Miami, the mood surrounding the Quebec meeting is downright pessimistic. "We have to tone (down) our expectations," according to Bruce Stokes, a trade specialist at the influential Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) here. "The best that can be hoped for is a political push to move forward as rapidly as possible" on negotiating the FTAA, he said.

First raised by Bush's father in 1990, the FTAA will be the top agenda item at the weekend Summit, George W.'s first multilateral meeting since his inauguration in January. In that respect, all eyes will be focused on the U.S. president and how committed he appears to be to negotiating a final accord by the target date, 2005.

"The result (of the Summit) will depend very much on what (he) says," according to Peter Hakim, head of the Inter-American Dialogue, a hemispheric think-tank here. "So far, the United States hasn't given enough of a signal that it is really ready to be a partner."

Indeed, most free-traders who strongly favour an FTAA have been disappointed that Bush's campaign rhetoric -- which featured strong expressions of commitment to FTAA -- has not been backed up by concrete action.

Unlike the Clinton administration which stressed the central importance of economic globalisation in the post-Cold War world, Bush's foreign-policy team seems far more interested in traditional power politics.

After taking power, for example, it considered reducing the post of U.S. Trade Representative (USTR), who negotiates trade agreements, to sub-cabinet rank, and re-arranged the White House flow chart so that international economics staff would report to the president through National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, a former Soviet specialist with virtually no background in economics or trade.

Rice, who gave a preview of Bush's Summit at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace here last week, was panned by trade analysts who attended the address, which, in the words of one, was "short on specifics and long on platitudes."

Of greater concern to the administration has been the failure so far of USTR Robert Zoellick to make any progress in forging a compromise between Republicans and Democrats on a "fast-track" or trade-promotion bill that would give Bush authority to negotiate the FTAA, as well as other trade agreements.

Without fast-track authority, trade agreements negotiated by the executive branch can be amended on the floor of Congress, which would then require re-opening negotiations. With such authority, however, Congress can only vote a trade package up or down, without subjecting it to amendment or normal procedural delays.

As the price for their support of fast-track authority, Congressional Democrats have insisted that all new trade agreements, such as the FTAA, include strong and enforceable labour rights and environmental protections, stronger than those included in side agreements to the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with Canada and Mexico.

The Congressional leadership in Bush's Republican Party, on the other hand, strongly opposes any provisions which would make such protections enforceable through sanctions. It is Zoellick's task to forge some kind of compromise which will satisfy enough lawmakers on both parties to rally substantial majorities in both houses behind new fast-track legislation.

But the fact that he has failed to do so -- or, according to some insiders, to even seriously engage in a negotiating effort between the two sides -- is worrisome to many who support the FTAA.

"There has to be some kind of compromise, particularly on the labour issues," said Hakim, who added that he hopes that Bush will signal in his remarks in Quebec that he is sensitive to labor's demands. "If he says anything about labor, that will be a good sign," according to Hakim.

So far, however, Bush has disappointed. In a speech to the Organization of American States (OAS) here Tuesday in which he outlined his Summit agenda, he never mentioned Democratic demands on the environment or worker rights, stating only that his administration was "now actively working with Congress on a strategy for passing legislation granting trade promotion authority."

"We will intensify this effort when I return from Quebec, and I am confident that we will succeed," he added.

His only bow to critics was a promise to publish the current working draft of the FTAA to "allow our citizens to see what is being negotiated and give them a chance to provide their views on this important document."

But others believe that, even if Bush intensifies his efforts, he must still overcome powerful forces over which he may have only limited influence, according to analysts here.

A downturn in the U.S. economy, particularly if it persists, could well result in an upsurge in protectionist pressure not only in the United States but in some other FTAA countries, says John Cavanagh of the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS), an influential critic of economic globalization.

Indeed, free markets and other neo-liberal economic principles on which the FTAA is based evoke much less enthusiasm in the region today than they did in 1994, primarily because they have not fulfilled hopes for lifting tens of millions out of poverty, says Hakim.

Many of the demonstrations in Quebec over the weekend will be led by trade unions, which are legitimately concerned that more free-trade agreements without strong worker rights' protections will accelerate the "race for the bottom" as countries compete for corporate investment, according to Cavanagh.

Another factor will be resistance, particularly from Brazil, to concluding a far-reaching accord without major trade and politically sensitive concessions by the United States itself.

Indeed, Brazil, which will hold key presidential elections next year, could by itself block a successful negotiation. "If Brazil and the U.S. can come together, you will get an FTAA by 2005," according to Mack McLarty, Clinton's special Latin America trade envoy.

One hedge against this is the administration's desire to negotiate bilateral accords, starting with Chile whose president, Ricardo Lagos, met with Bush here Monday. "A bilateral agreement with Chile will add to the momentum (for an FTAA)," says McLarty.

liticamente correctos. Nos demuestra la fea verdad de que sí existen problemas. Subraya lo poco que nos conocemos. Destaca la necesidad que hay de que cada lado dé un paso hacia la comprensión mutua.

Exacto. (Marisa Treviño, de Dallas, es escritora y columnista contribuyente de Hispanic Link News Service. Contáctese con ella a: mtrevino(AT)SIGN@airmail.net)

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# Hispanics & Blacks Must Be Partners, Not Rivals

By Miguel Pérez

For years, Latino leaders have been preaching, almost with religious faith, that the day was coming. "Soon Latinos will be the country's largest minority," they would say, as if that represented the ultimate solution to all Hispanic community problems.

Now census statistics confirm that the day has arrived. Add its count of 35.3 million Hispanics to the admitted undercount of another million, plus 3.8 million residents of Puerto Rico, and the figure passes 40 million, surpassing the 36.4 million blacks the bureau found.

But what does this mean in terms of economic and political empowerment?

Some of the same Latino leaders are now telling us that "largest minority" means *absolutely nada*, unless -- as African Americans have done -- Latinos learn how to make their numbers count.

It may be harder for Latinos, since most U.S. blacks are native-born, while many Latinos

are neither citizens nor eligible to vote. Many are apathetic about exercising their democratic rights, and mere numbers won't make Latinos more influential, or even adequately represented.

"It gives us a little more visibility in the media," says Daniel Santo Pietro, executive director of the Hispanic Directors Association of New Jersey, an umbrella group for multi-service agencies. "But it doesn't change anything. It won't mean anything unless we convert our numbers into organization and concrete ideas about what needs to be done to improve our people's lives."

It takes much more than responding to the U.S. census. It takes voter registration, organization and participation. It takes putting aside nationalistic differences and working together.

And on this, Latinos have a lot to learn from African Americans.

Much is already being said about the friction likely to de-

velop between African Americans and Latinos as they supposedly struggle to hold onto the "largest minority" title. Some believe the competition will lead to battles over redrawing political boundaries for the few seats available in competitive districts. Some say that Latino empowerment will be at the expense of African Americans.

For blacks and Latinos, avoiding those battles will be the ultimate challenge. Those who specialize in divide-and-conquer techniques can have a field day.

"When blacks and Latinos become better organized," says Santo Pietro, "we will all realize that 80 percent of our issues are issues we have in common."

African Americans should see a stronger partner, not a rival, in the Hispanic community, he says. If blacks and Latinos respect and support each other on the other 20 percent, "and if we throw Asians into the equation, soon we will be talking about a majority. Then everyone will

have to listen," he says.

Thoughtful Latino leaders are concerned about media outlets that pit one group against the other. Some publications are using scare tactics to alarm blacks about how they stand to lose influence and power to the emerging Hispanic population.

There will be some unavoidable friction when district lines are redrawn, when appointments are made to government agencies, when state contracts are awarded -- and when the white political establishment tries to divide a portion of the pie among blacks and Hispanics without increasing size of the portion.

The bottom line: If the result of the 2000 census is a series of power struggles between blacks and Latinos, higher numbers will not mean a thing.

(Miguel Pérez is a columnist with The Record in Northern New Jersey. He may be reached by e-mail at MiguelP236(AT)SIGN@aol.com (c) 2001, Hispanic Link News Service. Distributed by Los Angeles Times Syndicate International

# El Censo 2000 y La Reaccion Negra

Por Marisa Treviño

¿Incredulidad? ¿Ira? O miedo No sé cuál de estas emociones puede describir mejor mi reacción al leer el relato de la reportera Artellia Burch sobre la reacción antagonista de los negros ante la incursión de los hispanos a su comunidad tranquila en Carolina del Norte. "Cuando los mundos chocan," se entitula su artículo.

Las estadísticas porcentuales del Censo 2000 proclaman que Carolina del Norte es el estado de mayor movilidad y fertilidad hispana en la década de los noventa, habiendo subido tremendamente, un 394 por ciento. Esto es, hay 300,000 residentes nuevos en las comunidades del estado como Charlotte, ciudad de la que Burch escribe para el periódico Post, que sale bi-semanalmente, una publicación africana-americana respetada desde hace cien años.

Preocupa ya bastante el tono del reportaje sobre el Censo 2000 en los medios noticieros a nivel nacional. Con mucha frecuencia han pintado la imagen de una explosión de latinos sin educación ni documentos, desesperados por trabajar, un potencial escape de aire para los problemas ya existentes en el país, que está pasando por una fase descendente en la economía.

tellia Burch dio hasta más miedo. Citó a profesionales negros que definían a la recién llegados hispanos a la comunidad con términos así como que "se multiplican cual conejos," que viven "10 en un apartamento" y quizás hasta pueden estar "planificando tu asesinato."

Leí el artículo varias veces, maravillada de la audacia del periódico en publicarlo. ¿Cuál era la intención?

Llamé por teléfono a la reportera, dispuesta a preguntarle cuánto tiempo había tenido que recorrer las calles de Charlotte para encontrar las citas que encajaran con su motivación.

Contestó una africana-americana de 28 años, de voz queda, que claramente había vivido toda su vida en el sur. Dijo que estaba desconcertada con la atención que recibió el artículo de los medios de comunicación nacionales, ya que ella consideraba que era noticia directa y justa. El trabajo asignado, me dijo Artellia Burch, no era diferente de cualquier recorrido de entrevista al "hombre cotidiano" que ha hecho en el año y medio que tiene de editora de actualidades para el periódico.

Sí, confirmó, surgió de una reacción a los números del censo. Sabía de las quejas entre la comunidad negra sobre la llegada de hispanos al área de Char-

lotte. Suponía que oíría comentarios negativos de los de la comunidad que tuvieran menos educación.

Lo que le sorprendió, continuó Burch, fue el nivel de sentimiento negativo de parte de los profesionales -- y que estuvieron dispuestos a expresarlo. Pero ninguno de los comentarios le chocaron mucho. "Para mí no era nada nuevo," dijo, haciendo claro que había crecido oyendo el mismo tipo de comentario, con una diferencia: los insultos eran para los africano-americanos, para ella misma.

La reacción pública al artículo -- y que le llaman estúpida y racista -- no le chocó tampoco, dijo. Es simplemente parte de su trabajo. "Yo sé que reaccionan por ignorancia." Los lectores deben entender que los comentarios no eran de ella, insistió. Los buenos reporteros protegen sus artículos de sus propias opiniones.

"No me siento yo así, pero no puedo decirles a las personas qué tienen que decir. Me molesta que los lectores hagan esos comentarios."

Después de colgar con Burch, volví a leer su artículo. Las citas que había encontrado tan duras todavía dolían, pero al apartar mi sentido de ofensa inicial, sabía que no podía matar al mensajero. Lo que yo había consid-

erado hacer irresponsablemente el periodismo, decidí, era simplemente un artículo en una publicación particularizada que quiere reflejar las opiniones de la comunidad a la que sirve.

Su artículo logró el objetivo. Absolutamente.

Algunos criticaron el artículo por falta de equilibrio. Burch me dijo que desde entonces ha hablado con muchas personas de la comunidad negra que expresaron su escándalo ante los comentarios.

Todavía queda el hecho que tales comentarios se expresaron, y no creo que Charlotte sea diferente al tener una población que se siente de esta manera. No necesito que un comentarista de televisión el domingo por la mañana me diga que va en aumento el sentimiento negativo por todo el país en reacción a los números del censo que describen el boom de la población latina.

¿Están nutriendo el debate los medios de comunicación que se concentran en el incremento de población hispana en regiones que no tienen conocimiento de la cultura? Ese es asunto aparte.

Lo que me aflige es que se nos vea con miedo y hasta odio directo.

Si hay un lado bueno a un artículo como éste, es que nos libra de toda semejanza de ser po-

# México Modelo de Liberación

Pilar Franco  
Inter Press Service  
MEXICO, 18 abr - El equipaje que llevará México esta semana a la Cumbre de las Américas en Québec, Canadá, incluye numerosos acuerdos firmados por su cuenta que lo elevan a la categoría de potencia comercial continental.

Este país juega por su ubicación geográfica, entre otros factores, un papel clave en las negociaciones del Área de Libre Comercio de las Américas (ALCA).

México es considerado puerta de ingreso de la producción latinoamericana al mayor mercado del continente: Estados Unidos, cuyo presidente, George W. Bush, aspira además a liderar la liberalización del comercio americano. Entre ambos países hay unos 3.000 kilómetros de frontera terrestre.

Federico Nobelo, investigador del Departamento de Producción Económica de la Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (UAM), dijo a IPS que el gobierno de Vicente Fox se sumará sin resistencia a los esfuerzos de su

mayor socio comercial por acelerar la puesta en marcha el ALCA.

Los líderes de 34 países — todos los de América excepto Cuba — establecieron el 1 de enero de 2005 como fecha límite para fijar los términos del acuerdo dirigido a crear la mayor zona de libre comercio del mundo. Washington pretende anticipar la fecha al 2003.

Bush llegará a la cita en Québec desprovisto de la facultad de la "vía rápida" (fast track), la cual le permitiría negociar el acuerdo con independencia del Congreso legislativo, que sólo podría aprobarlo o rechazarlo en bloque al cabo del diálogo multilateral.

México, Estados Unidos y Canadá mantienen un intercambio comercial superior a 600.000 millones de dólares en el marco del Tratado de Libre Comercio de América del Norte (TLCAN), que en vigencia desde 1994.

En la última década, las exportaciones mexicanas crecieron más de 400 por ciento al pasar de 41.000 millones en 1990 a 166.000 millones el año pasado.

En el mismo periodo, las importaciones aumentaron más de 310 por ciento, de 42.000 millones

de dólares a 174.000 millones.

El libre comercio es una bandera del gobierno Fox, del Partido Acción Nacional, así como lo fue para los anteriores, a cargo del Partido Revolucionario Institucional, en el poder durante 71 años.

Pero, más que el ALCA, a Fox "le interesa impulsar el Plan Puebla-Panamá (PPP)", programa con el que el mandatario prevé integrar al sudeste de este país con América Central, afirmó Carlos Gómez Chiña, experto del Departamento de Economía de la UAM.

Con el PPP, Fox pretende "dar un sello personal a los principios de libre comercio que rigen la política económica para el logro del desarrollo nacional", añadió el investigador.

El PPP fue diseñado por el nuevo gobierno sobre la base de que el sudeste mexicano y los países centroamericanos poseen el potencial para convertirse en un polo económico de América Latina.

Considerando que ese proyecto representa una prioridad para los responsables del comercio en México, este país no se ha mostrado

como el más entusiasta en la creación de un gigantesco mercado de 800 millones de personas mediante el ALCA, destacó Gómez Chiña.

"Aunque con cierta frialdad frente al proceso de integración del ALCA, México no es de ninguna manera un simple espectador, si se considera que en la última década trazó su propio camino para construir acuerdos comerciales en la región", añadió.

Además del TLCAN, México firmó tratados bilaterales de libre comercio con Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica y Nicaragua.

Con Colombia y Venezuela estableció el Tratado de Libre Comercio del Grupo de los Tres, y otro más con el denominado Triángulo del Norte, que forman Guatemala, Honduras y El Salvador.

Para México, que concentra cada vez más su comercio con Estados Unidos, un acceso preferente en 33 países facilitaría un aumento de sus exportaciones, señaló Nobelo.

La creación del ALCA permitiría también al país cambiar la "multimembresía actual por un

esquema único", en el marco de una "armonización de las economías regionales", dijo el experto.

Al plegarse a las intenciones de Estados Unidos, México contrarresta a Brasil, que se resiste a adelantar los plazos del ALCA, señaló Gómez Chiña.

Brasil duda de que Estados Unidos esté dispuesto a dar pasos decisivos hacia reglas comerciales más justas y a permitir el ingreso a su mercado de productos textiles o de calzados brasileños.

Pero Brasil cuestiona, sobre todo, el carácter limitado del ALCA, en virtud de que ese país apuesta a propuestas de integración más radicales que no se queden sólo en el terreno comercial, estimó Gómez Chiña.

México no propone iniciativas nuevas, sino que llega a Québec para ir al ritmo de sus socios del TLCAN en la construcción de una comunidad económica, afirmó, por su parte, el canciller mexicano, Jorge Castañeda.

México aspira a captar este año unos 14.000 millones de dólares por concepto de inversión extranjera directa, ante los 13.162 millones del año pasado.



## Felicidades Marisol

Le deseamos a nuestra hijita lo mejores de bendiciones y salud en este día el 20 de abril en su 11vo cumpleaños. Happiness and Health on your 11th birthday Mari. From Dad, Mom your brother and sisters and nieces and nephew

**Happy Birthday!**

## Day of Farmer Protests, Demands for Agrarian Reform

Mario Osava

Demonstrators in dozens of cities throughout Brazil and around the world marked International Day of Farmers' Struggle on Tuesday, protesting police massacres of rural workers, genetically modified seeds, and agricultural trade that jeopardizes food security.

In one major mobilization, some 2,000 landless peasants and small farmers blocked the international bridge in the border city of Uruguaiana, in southern Brazil, to halt imports of farm products from Argentina.

Brazilian farmers are forced to sell their maize at prices 25 percent less than production costs, or they have to store it, because of the heavy volume of the same grain imported during the local harvest season, complained the protesters, who say they intend to hold the bridge for three days.

In Carazinho, another thousand people -- mobilized by the powerful Movimento dos Sem Terra (MST - landless workers' movement) -- gathered outside a dairy processing plant of the Italian transnational Parmalat, preventing the firm's administrators from entering the site.

MST targeted Parmalat as

one of the corporations favored by the Brazilian government's agricultural policy.

One demonstrator explained that a dairy farmer in southern Brazil today receives 20 percent less per litre of milk produced than in 1994, while the price has more than doubled for consumers.

Parmalat and its Swiss counterpart, Nestlé, pay just 15 cents on the dollar for every liter of milk produced in the developing South, compared to the 48 cents per liter paid to European farmers, but their prices are nearly the same in supermarkets everywhere, pointed out Joao Pedro Stédile, an MST leader.

The protests on this "day of the farmer" aim to denounce cheap food imports, which hurt the domestic agricultural sector, to defend sovereign policies on food security and to condemn agricultural commerce regulated by the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The peasant farmers and rural workers want to abolish the WTO rules that, for example, force developing countries to import up to five percent of their domestic consumption of agricultural products.

Farm production destined for

export, a dynamic required by the globalisation process and adopted by the Brazilian government, "only benefits the big producers" and harms small farmers and agrarian reform, charged Gilmar Mauro, another MST leader, as he led protests in Sao Paulo.

Protesters threw rocks, eggs and tomatoes at a McDonald's restaurant -- another symbol of the neoliberal globalization process -- in Campo Grande, a capital in Brazil's central-west, where an estimated 3,000 activists gathered, including rural workers from neighboring Paraguay.

MST reports indicate that peasant farmers and rural workers in dozens of countries took part in demonstrations Tuesday promoted by 'Via Campesina,' a movement founded in 1993 that unites more than 80 peasant and farm organizations.

In Europe, protests focussed on genetically modified seeds, but also served to express solidarity with agrarian reform movements in developing countries and to condemn violence against peasant farmers.

April 17 was chosen as International Day of Farmers' Strug-

gle because it was on this date in 1996 that police assassinated 19 landless rural workers during a protest in Eldorado do Carajás, in northern Brazil.

Of the 19 victims, 13 were killed with hatchets and scythes after having their hands tied, according to the MST, which organized that fateful march.

Now, five years later, peasant protests throughout the state of Pará, where Eldorado do Carajás is located, condemned the fact that not one of the 154 military police who participated in the massacre has been brought to justice.

One case did reach the courts in 1999, absolving the three commanders of the operation, but the trial was annulled due to a series of irregularities in the proceedings.

Landless peasants in southern Brazil, who have lived in encampments for the last several years as they await the implementation of agrarian reforms, blocked numerous roads for 19 minutes -- to commemorate the 19 people killed in Eldorado do Carajás.

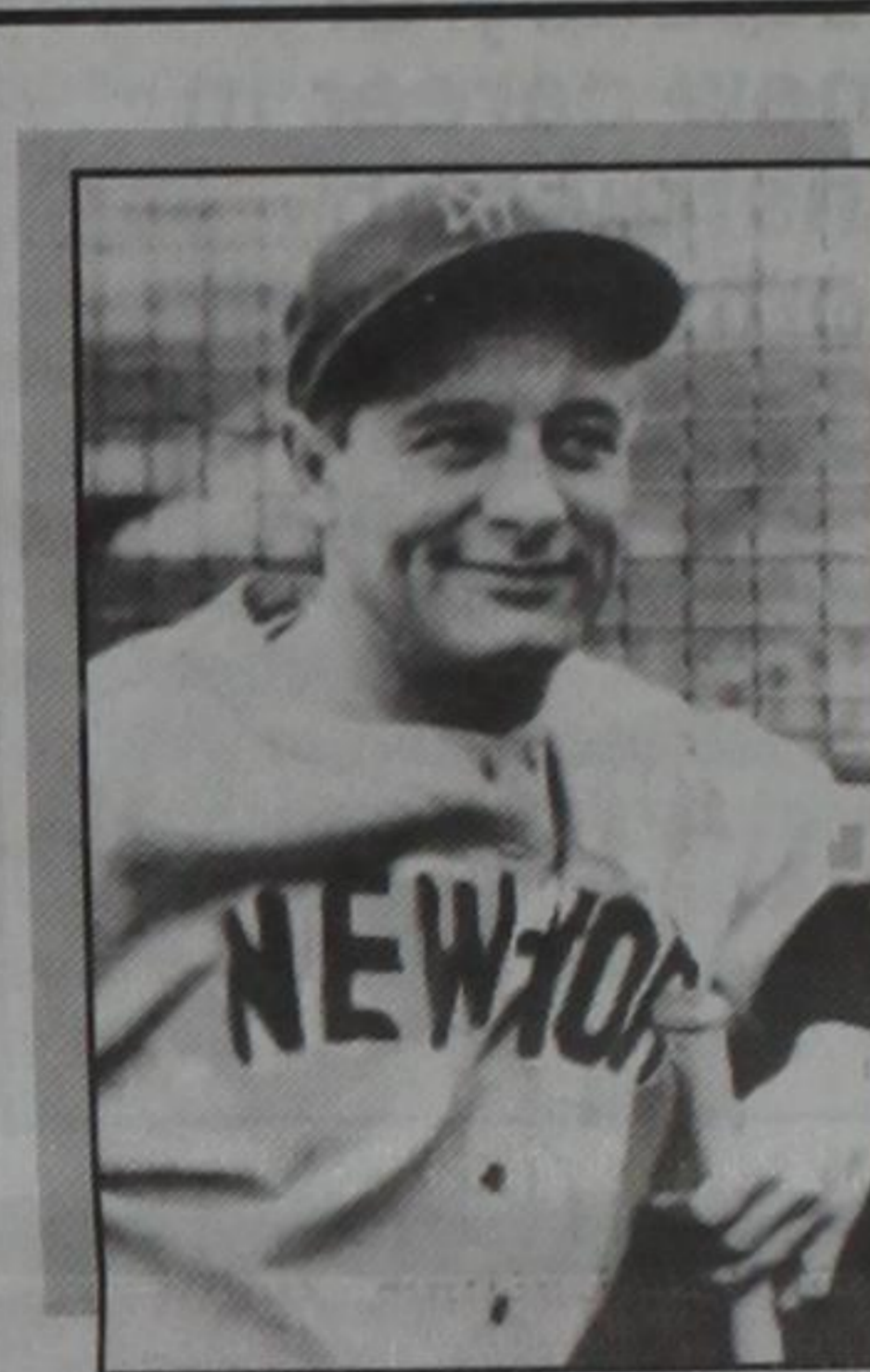
The protests throughout the country were mostly peaceful, and did not involve the takeover of government offices, as officials had feared. In some states, such as Mato Grosso do Sul, demonstrations in the cities were preceded by weeks-long marches through rural ar-

eas and smaller towns.

The impact of this "day of the farmer" on the international arena was quite limited, despite the numerous events in Brazil, and indicates that turning April 17 into a date as powerful as May Day (International Labor Day), or March 8 (International Women's Day), will require a great deal of mobilization and coordination of the rural workers' movements around the world.

It is a date created 110 years after International Labor Day -- a tribute to industrial workers -- and is intended as a response to the neoliberal globalisation process that threatens to eliminate small farm production, according to organizers.

But the efforts to consolidate April 17 as International Day of Farmers' Struggle occur at a time when the world's rural population has been greatly reduced, except in some areas of Asia and Africa.

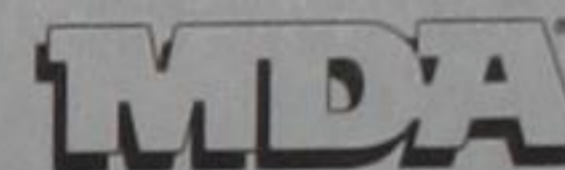


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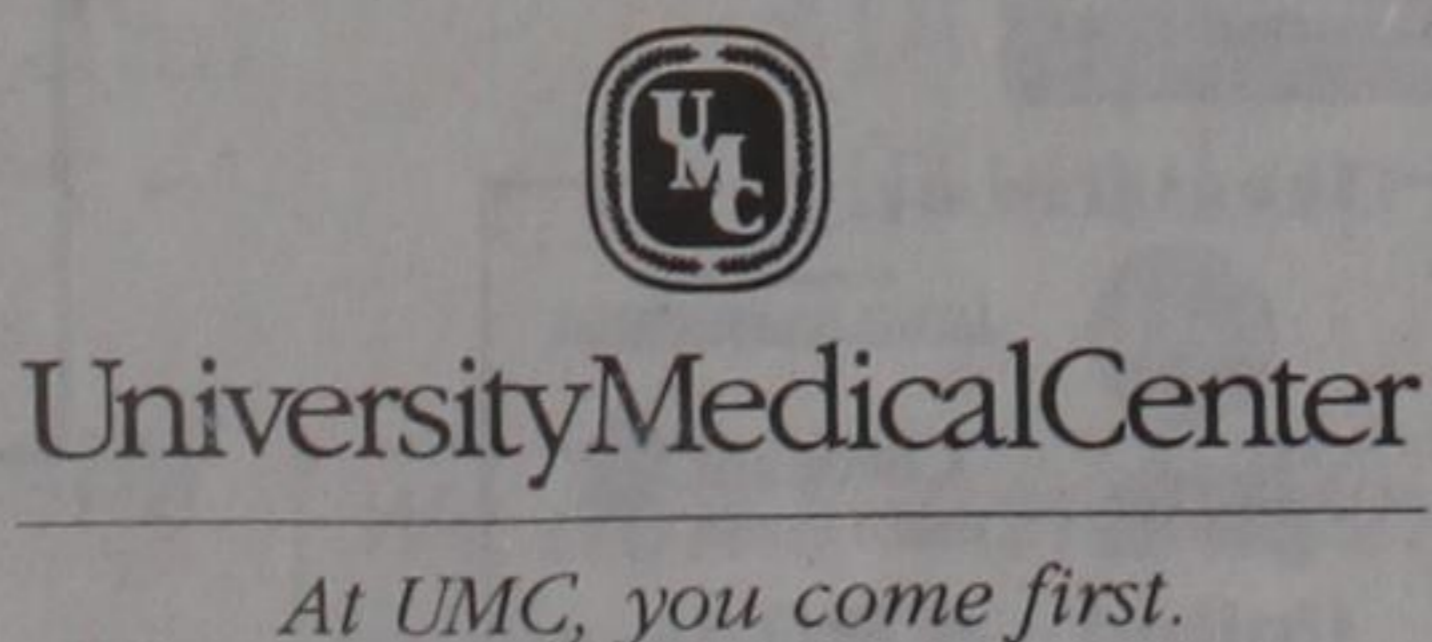
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# Se Quejan Los Negros de Carolina Del Norte Sobre La Llegada de Los Inmigrantes Hispanos Al Estado

Por Artellia Burch

(Nota del editor: En la década de los noventa, Carolina del Norte encabezó el aumento de hispanos. La población hispana del estado saltó 394 por ciento, de 76,726 en 1990 a 378,963 en 2000, según informó la Oficina del Censo el mes pasado.)

Pregúntele a Walt Little sobre la reciente explosión de la población hispana. Tiene mucho que opinar. Desde que informaciones del Censo 2000 revelaron que los hispanos están en el umbral de ser el grupo minoritario más grande de la nación, los africano-americanos -- apenas el grupo más grande hoy -- se han estado preguntando qué significan los números.

Little, ingeniero de informática de 40 años de Charlotte, no se sorprende que están alcanzando los hispanos a los negros. "Los hispanos vienen aquí, establecen negocios, y se multiplican cual conejos," dijo. "No sorprende nada que nos ganen en números porque tienen un bebé cada año."

Los hispanos son 12.5 por ciento de la población de los Estados Unidos, o 35.3 millones de personas. Los africano-americanos son 12.9 por ciento, o 36.4 millones. La población hispana de Carolina del Norte ahora llega a aproximadamente un cuarto de la población negra del estado, que son 1.7 millones.

Vivica Banks, de 33 años, analista financiera, dice que no le sorprende que se muden los hispanos a Carolina del Norte. "Siempre me mantengo al tanto de los cambios demográficos en América," dijo. "Por lo tanto, no

me sorprenden en nada las estadísticas actuales."

"Nos ganan en número por una razón," dijo Little. "El gobierno quiere controlar nuestra población al introducir métodos anticonceptivos a nuestras mujeres. A mi sobrina, que tiene 21 años, le dijeron que si tiene otro bebé, le van a ligar las trompas. Les encanta operarnos. ¿Por qué no persiguen a los hispanos?"

Durante décadas, los expertos en cuestiones sociales han advertido que eventualmente el conflicto racial incapacitaría los Estados Unidos. En vez de discutir el estado de relaciones entre los blancos y los negros, los africano-americanos se preocupan más del crecimiento de la comunidad hispana. A pesar de ser víctimas históricamente del racismo por el color de la piel, los africano-americanos no quieren abrirse a los hispanos, quienes temen se llevarán lo que han ganado en términos económicos y políticos.

Técnico de computadoras, Rob Johnson, de 30 años, admite que tiene prejuicios en cuanto a lo que piensa de los hispanos. "En definitiva pienso que son de temer," dijo. "Se movilizan en manadas. Les gusta hacerse los tontos, fingiendo no entender el inglés cuando sabes que sí lo hablan. Se reúnen y se hablan en su idioma. Podrían estar planificando tu asesinato y no lo sabrías nunca."

"Y hay otra cosa. Están dominando. Se están llevando todos nuestros trabajos, lenta pero se-

guramente. No me interesa estar con ellos. Me dan escalofríos. Yo me reservo mis ideas. Esto puede sonar mal, pero no acostumbro hablar de ellos con otra gente. Así, sólo Dios me podrá juzgar."

"En general, probablemente deberíamos acercarnos a ellos porque todos somos minorías," dijo Little. "Pero, cuando llegan aquí, consiguen más que nosotros. No tienen que pagar impuestos. Además, siempre la gente nos está sacando de nuestros barrios. Pero permitirán que vivan cinco o seis de ellos en un apartamento. Mi pregunta para la sociedad es, ¿cómo caben cinco hispanos en un apartamento de una habitación? Si caben, cabe un camello por el ojo de una aguja."

Dice Johnson que hay algo que nunca ha entendido de la capacidad que tienen los hispanos de compartir vivienda. "¿Cómo logran vivir 10 en un apartamento? Si vivimos dos de nosotros en un apartamento, recibimos una carta en la puerta amenazando con sacarnos."

"Son el nuevo *nigger* (término despectivo)," dijo Little. "En cuanto a barriada, son barriada con 'B' mayúscula."

Kali Ferguson, quien trabaja en un programa comunitario para unir las comunidades hispanas y negros, dice que categorizar a los hispanos con estereotipos le molesta. "Me parece que hay quienes ven a los hispanos como los nuevos *niggers*. Esto lo digo por las cosas crueles que he oído a la gente decir. Oigo a nuestra gente diciendo lo mismo que otras razas han dicho de nosotros."

"A mí, personalmente, me han dado la bienvenida los hispanos. Creo que esto es resultado de mis ganas de aprender de su cultura."

Los prejuicios aparte, dice Little que los negros no deberían temer a los hispanos. "No les deberíamos tener miedo sólo porque son más en número que nosotros," dijo. "El solo hecho que se multipliquen como conejos no implica que haya que tenerles miedo. Nos tienen que tener miedo a nosotros."

(Artellia Burch es editora de actualidades con The Charlotte Post, un periódico africano-americano establecido en 1879 en Charlotte, Carolina del Norte.)

# North Carolina Blacks Vent Over Hispanic Immigrants to State

By Artellia Burch

(Editor's note: North Carolina led the nation in the increase of Hispanics in the decade of the 1990s. The state's Hispanic population jumped 394 percent, from 76,726 in 1990 to 378,963 in 2000, the Census Bureau reported last month.)

Ask Walt Little about the recent Hispanic population explosion, and he has plenty to say. Since information from Census 2000 revealed that Hispanics are on the threshold of becoming the nation's biggest minority group, African Americans -- barely the largest today -- have been wondering what the numbers mean.

Little, a 40-year-old computer engineer from Charlotte, isn't surprised that Hispanics are nearly even with blacks. "Hispanics come over here, start businesses and multiply like rabbits," he said. "It's no surprise they outnumber us because they have a baby every year."

Hispanics make up 12.5 percent of the U.S. population, or 35.3 million. African Americans constitute 12.9 percent, or 36.4 million. North Carolina's Hispanic population is now roughly a fourth of the state's black population of 1.7 million.

Vivica Banks, 33, a financial analyst, says it's not surprising that Hispanics are moving into North Carolina. "I'm always aware of the demographic changes going on America," she said. "So to hear the current statistics doesn't surprise me at all."

"There's a reason they outnumber us," Little said. "The government tries to control our population by introducing birth-control methods on our women. My niece that's 21 years old wastold that if she has another

baby, she would have to get her tubes tied. They love to try to cut us up. Why don't the government go after them?"

For decades, social experts have warned that racial friction could eventually cripple America. Instead of discussing the state of black-white relations, African Americans are more concerned about the growth of the Hispanic community. Despite blacks' historic victimization based on skin color, some aren't willing to open up to Hispanics, who they feel will siphon economic and political gains.

Computer technician Rob Johnson, 30, admits he is prejudiced when it comes to his view of Hispanics. "I definitely think they are people to fear," he said. "They travel in packs. They like to play stupid, acting as if they don't understand English when you know they do. A group of them will sit around and talk to each other in their language. They could be plotting to kill you and you would never know it."

"And another thing," he added. "They are taking over. They're taking all of our jobs. Slowly but surely. I just don't care to be around them. They make my skin crawl. I keep my ideas to myself. This might sound bad, but I don't go around making remarks about them to other people. So, only God can judge me."

"Overall, we probably should be closer to them since we all are minorities," Little acknowledged. "But when they come over here, they get more than we do. They don't have to pay taxes. Plus, people are always trying to force us out of neighborhoods. But they'll let five or

six of them live in one apartment. My question to society is how do you fit five Hispanics in a one-bedroom apartment? If that fits, you can put a camel through an eye of a needle."

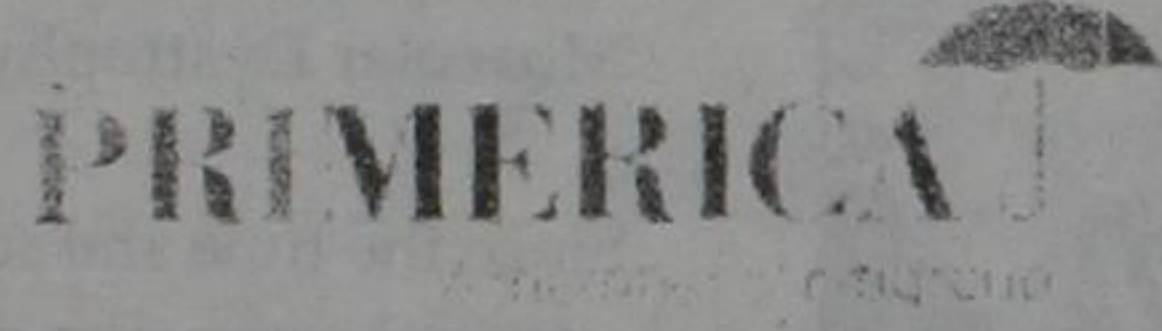
Johnson says there's one thing he has never understood about Hispanics' ability to share living quarters. "How do they get away, 10 of them living in one apartment?" he asked. "Now, let two of us live in an apartment, we'll have a letter on our door threatening to throw us out."

"They are the new niggers," said Little. "When it comes to ghetto, they are ghetto with a capital 'G.'" Kali Ferguson, who works in a community program to bridge the gap between blacks and Hispanics, says that stereotyping Hispanics bothers her. "I think some people look at Latinos as the 'new niggers,'" she said. "I say that because of the cruel things I have heard people say. I hear our people say some of the same things other races have said about us. Personally, I have been welcomed by Hispanics, I think, because of my thirst for knowledge of their culture."

Prejudices aside, Little says blacks shouldn't be afraid of Hispanics. "We shouldn't fear them just because they outnumber us," he said. "Just because someone multiplies like a rabbit doesn't mean you should fear them. They need to fear us."

(Artellia Burch is features editor with The Charlotte Post, an African American newspaper founded in 1879 in Charlotte, N.C. This feature is reprinted from that publication. © 2001, Hispanic Link News Service. Distributed by Los Angeles Times Syndicate International.)

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(Artellia Burch es editora de actualidades con The Charlotte Post, un periódico africano-americano establecido en 1879 en Charlotte, Carolina del Norte.)

## Cáncer Del CuelloDel Útero (Cancer de la Cerviz)

Existe evidencia de que el uso prolongado de la píldora puede incrementar el riesgo de desarrollar cáncer del cuello del útero (parte estrecha, más baja del útero). Los resultados de un estudio realizado por científicos del Instituto Nacional del Cáncer y otros centros de cáncer apoyan la relación entre el uso extensivo de la píldora (cinco o más años) y el ligero aumento de riesgo de cáncer de cuello del útero. Sin embargo, la naturaleza exacta de esta asociación no está clara todavía.

Una razón por la cual la asociación aún no está clara es que muchos estudios sobre la píldora y el cáncer del cuello del útero no han tenido en cuenta la influencia del virus de papiloma humano (HPV, por sus siglas en inglés) como un riesgo en el desarrollo de este cáncer. El virus de papiloma humano es un grupo de más de 70 tipos de virus, algunos conocidos como factores de riesgo de cáncer del cuello del útero. La probabilidad de que las mujeres que toman la píldora utilicen otros métodos anticonceptivos (como condones) es menor comparada con las que

no la toman. Dado que los condones pueden prevenir la transmisión del virus de papiloma humano, las mujeres que utilizan la píldora y no utilizan los condones pueden tener un mayor riesgo de ser infectadas con este virus. Por consiguiente, el riesgo mayor de desarrollar cáncer del cuello del útero, que algunos estudios han considerado ser causado por el uso prolongado de la píldora, puede ser en realidad el resultado de una infección del virus de papiloma humano que no fue detectada.

Existe evidencia que las mujeres que toman la píldora y nunca utilizan otro método anticonceptivos o tienen historia de infecciones genitales, están a un mayor riesgo de desarrollar cáncer del cuello del útero. Esta asociación sugiere la posibilidad de que la píldora puede actuar conjuntamente con agentes transmitidos sexualmente (como el virus de papiloma humano) en el desarrollo del cáncer del cuello del útero. Los investigadores continúan estudiando la naturaleza exacta de la relación entre el uso de la píldora y el cáncer del cuello del útero.

Las etiquetas de las píldoras anticonceptivas han sido modificadas para advertir el posible riesgo de desarrollar cáncer del cuello del útero; a las mujeres que toman la píldora se les aconseja que se hagan anualmente una prueba Pap (Papanicolaou) para detectar los posibles cambios en las células del cuello del útero.

**Disminución del riesgo**  
Después de estar más de 20 años en el mercado en los Estados Unidos, los efectos del uso de la píldora en la salud en general están todavía mezclados. El efecto secundario más serio de ésta continúa siendo el aumento en el riesgo de enfermedades cardiovasculares en ciertos grupos, tales como en las mujeres que fuman; en las mujeres mayores de 35 años de edad; en las mujeres obesas; y en aquellas con historia de presión arterial alta, diabetes o alto nivel de líquido seroso de colesterol.

El Instituto Nacional del Cáncer recomienda que todas las mujeres de 40 años de edad o mayores, con un riesgo promedio de desarrollar cáncer del seno, se hagan un mamograma cada uno o dos años.



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# Over 100 Key Latin Americans Call for Halt to Plan Colombia

Jim Lobe

On the eve of the third Summit of the Americas in Quebec City, more than 100 important Latin American personalities, including former heads of state and parliamentary leaders, are calling on President George W. Bush to halt operations on Plan Colombia and return to a consultative process "to develop realistic proposals to address the root causes of the violence" in that South American country.

"Instead of expanding misguided, ineffective and harmful policies, the international community should offer its resources for health, education, and economic development programs, and support efforts to negotiate a peaceful settlement of the longest running conflict in the hemisphere," states a letter to Bush signed by the group and sent Monday.

It also calls on Bush to join the European Union (EU), whose response to U.S. appeals to contribute aid to Plan Colombia has so far been quite tepid, in developing a better program to address the problem of coca and opium production in Colombia and their trafficking to the United States.

Among the signers are two governors of key provinces in Colombia, the former president of Bolivia, Lydia Gueiler Tejada, prominent members of the Catholic hierarchy in Brazil, Ecuador and Colombia, and prominent human rights activists and parliamentarians from most of Central and South America.

Plan Colombia, a two-year program to which the United States has so far committed some \$1.3 billion, is aimed primarily at helping the Colombian Army to gain control of the southern part of the country -- along its border with Ecuador, Peru, and Brazil -- where much of its coca and opium are produced.

The area has been controlled mostly by the country's largest left-wing rebel movement, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), although right-wing paramilitary groups -- apparently with at least the tacit support of some army commanders -- have moved into the region ahead of the army's Plan Colombia campaign.

Most of the aid already appropriated by Congress has come in the form of equipment -- mainly transport helicopters -- and the training of three special batta-

lions to be used in anti-drug assaults. Washington also provides support and contract personnel for the aerial eradication of coca and opium fields, primarily through crop-dusting.

Relatively little of the \$1.3 billion has been devoted to economic or development assistance in the affected regions. Washington had hoped that the EU and international financial institutions like the World Bank would step in with hundreds of millions of dollars in such aid.

The Bush administration announced just last week that it will ask Congress to provide another \$731 million in aid next year to continue Plan Colombia and to expand its reach into neighboring countries as well. Of that total, Colombia would receive \$252 million more for interdiction and aid to the military, and \$147 million in development and economic assistance for a total of \$399 million.

At the same time, Peru would get some \$156 million in aid; Bolivia, \$101 million; and Ecuador, \$39 million -- all divided roughly equally between military and economic assistance.

Meanwhile, Brazil, Venezuela, and Panama would receive \$15 million, \$10 million, and \$11 million, respectively, in military aid to help them contain the spill-over effects of the military and eradication campaigns in Colombia.

While negotiating a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) is expected to top the agenda when more than 30 Latin American and Caribbean heads of state meet in Quebec City beginning Friday this week, Washington's anti-drug war, which has had a major impact on U.S. relations with the region over the last 15 years, will naturally be addressed at the summit.

Since his inauguration in January, Bush has held bilateral meetings so far with three Latin American leaders concerned about Plan Colombia: Andres Pastrana, Colombia's president; Mexican President Vicente Fox whose government has been somewhat critical of Plan Colombia; and Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso who has publicly expressed concerns that Plan Colombia could lead the United States to intervene directly.

The letter to Bush calls on him to place a "greater emphasis on supporting the peace process"

between the FARC and one other rebel group in Colombia and Pastrana's government.

"We, the undersigned Latin Americans, know there are no easy answers or quick fixes to Colombia's tragic dilemma of warfare and drug-related violence," it says. "And we believe the United States has a legitimate interest in reducing the damage done by illegal drug use."

"But we are gravely concerned that current policy will cause more harm than good in Colombia and in the region at large -- while having little or no effect on the drug problems of the consumer countries," it goes.

The letter also cites concerns that the Plan's military emphasis "will intensify the internal conflict and undermine the ongoing peace process", as well as cause environmental damage through the spraying of herbicides and increase forced displacement of farmers whose crops have been destroyed.

History shows that forced crop eradication campaigns in Latin America have consistently failed to stop the flow of drugs north," the letter says, adding that, despite more than a decade of such efforts, no significant decline in total drug production and trafficking has been achieved.

Among the more prominent signers are former senator Graciela Fernandez Meijide and Nobel Peace Laureate Adolfo Perez Esquivel from Argentina; former foreign ministers Antonio Aramburo Quiroga and Edgar Camacho Orniste, former Vice President Julio Garret Aillon, and Chamber of Deputies Commission for International Policy president Carlos Quiroga Blanco of Bolivia; and Cardinal Evaristo Arns of Brazil.

From Colombia, signers include Armando Balbuena, president of the National Indigenous Peoples' Organization; former Human Rights Ombudsman Jose Fernando Castro; Narino Governor Parthenio Cuellar Bastidas; Putumayo Governor Ivan Guerrero Guevara; former High Commission for Peace Daniel Garcia Pena; and former Presidential Human Rights advisor, Carlos Vicente de Roux, as well as several top labour union leaders.

Other signers include Sen. Sergio Bitar of Chile; the secretary-general of the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI), Israel Batista; Monsignor Luis Albergro Luna Tobar, prelate of the Catholic Ecuadorian Church; Leo Valladares Lanza, president of the Ibero-American Association of Ombudsmen; Mexican writer Carlos Fuentes; Nobel Peace Laureate Rigoberto Menchu Turn; Samuel Ruiz Garcia, the former bishop of San Cristobal de las Casas in Chiapas, Mexico; and former Nicaraguan foreign minister Miguel D'Escoto.

# NAFTA Falling Short on Worker Rights

Mechanisms for protecting labor rights under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) have fallen far short of their promise, largely because timidity on the part of three member governments, Canada, the United States and Mexico, according to a new report released Monday by Human Rights Watch (HRW).

The 64-page report, entitled "Trading Away Rights," calls for the NAFTA partners to create an independent oversight agency to pursue claims of labor rights violations. It also urges that the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), the top agenda item at this week's Summit of the Americas in Quebec City, include provisions which will better protect worker rights.

"The NAFTA labor accords suffer from both structural defects and a lack of political will," said Jose Miguel Vivanco, director of HRW's Americas division. "They are an important lesson for any future trade agreements."

"Our research shows that agreements on labor will never work without the active support of the countries involved. In the case of NAFTA, these three countries have actually worked to minimize the impact of the labor provisions," he charged.

Reform From U.S. Congress? The report, whose release was clearly timed for maximum impact on discussions on the FTAA in Quebec City, may also affect the domestic debate, as President George W. Bush's Trade Representative (TR), Robert Zoellick, struggles to put together a trade policy that will be backed by a solid majority in Congress.

Zoellick has been trying for weeks to fashion a trade bill that would grant the administration new "fast track" authority to negotiate the FTAA and other market-opening accords.

Without fast track authority, trade agreements negotiated by the executive branch can be amended on the floor of Congress which would then require re-opening negotiations. Fast track authority requires Congress to vote up or down on the trade package without it being subject to amendment or normal procedural delays.

But Congressional Democrats have insisted as the price of their support for fast track au-

thority that all new trade agreements, including the FTAA, include strong and enforceable labor rights and environmental protections -- stronger even than those included in NAFTA.

They want all future agreements to be modelled on a U.S.-Jordanian free-trade accord negotiated last year by the Bill Clinton administration and currently pending before Congress. Under it, trade sanctions may be imposed against either country if it weakens or fails to enforce domestic labor laws or core labor standards as defined by the International Labor Organization (ILO).

The Republican leadership in Congress is strongly opposed to the accord which it sees as a dangerous precedent that threatens U.S. leadership in promoting free trade, especially in the emerging markets of Asia and Latin America.

Report: NAFTA Labor Standards Doomed From The Beginning

As originally conceived and negotiated by Bush's father, NAFTA included no provisions to protect labor rights, an omission much criticized by Bill Clinton during his successful 1992 campaign to unseat the elder Bush. Once elected, he negotiated a side agreement, the North American Agreement on Labor Co-operation (NAALC), which was approved by Congress along with NAFTA in late 1993.

NAALC, however, was not intended to harmonize labor standards in the three countries, and it ruled out the creation of tribunals or other appeals procedures by which individuals who claimed their labor rights were violated could seek redress.

Instead, it required NAFTA signatories to recognize a broad range of labor rights as defined by the ILO and to effectively enforce their own labor laws. It also established a government-appointed National Administrative Office (NAO) in each country to investigate complaints of non-compliance with the NAALC's requirements.

In dealing with complaints, an NAO can set up consultations with its counterpart to obtain information about specific cases and make initial findings. If that proves inadequate, the NAO can ask that a meeting of labor ministers be convened to take up the problem.

If that is not successful, a state may request that a special experts committee be formed to analyse whether there is a pattern of violations which requires greater attention. For issues which remain unresolved, the labor ministers of all three states can convene an arbitration panel that may also make recommendations to redress the problem.

The most important structural weakness of this scheme, according to the HRW report, is the lack of an independent oversight body focused solely on protecting and advancing labor rights. The fact that the three governments control the process means that decisions reached under NAALC are always taken with respect to general bilateral relations.

Despite that basic structural flaw, however, HRW still sees NAALC as "the most ambitious link between trade and labor rights ever implemented. Even with these limitations, the NAALC has the potential to be a much more effective mechanism for promoting labor rights than it has been, in practice to date," the report says.

The principal reason it has failed to be more effective is its "timid use" by the governments, according to the report, which accuses them of failing to speak out forcefully against apparent violations, press their counterparts to redress problems, or take cases to higher levels in the appeals process.

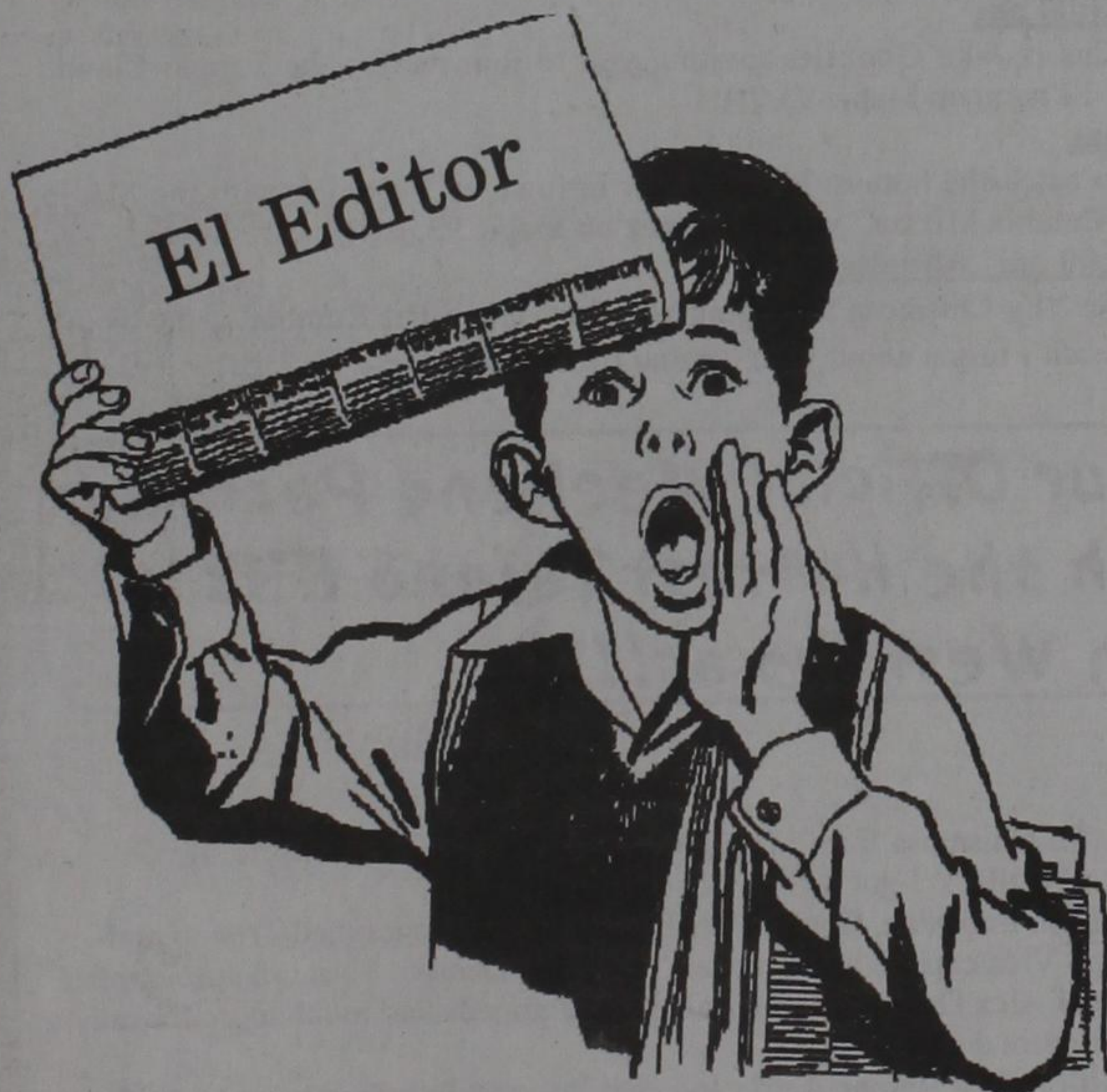
Twenty three complaints of systematic violations of workers' rights have so far been filed with NAOs under NAALC since it came into force in 1994 -- 14 in Mexico, seven in the United States, and two in Canada. Companies named as violators include General Electric, Honeywell, Sony, Spring, and General Motors, all of which have assembly plants in Mexico, and the Washington State apple industry, which has been accused of mistreating Mexican migrant workers.

Violations alleged by these complaints have included favoritism toward employer-controlled unions; retaliation against workers for organizing; denial of collective bargaining rights; forced pregnancy testing; and life-threatening health and safety conditions.

Despite the strength of the

continued on page 6

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#### From Page 5

evidence in cases of violations and the seriousness of the violations themselves, there has been not a single case in which sanctions have been imposed against an alleged labor rights violator. Indeed, no expert committees -- the third step in the appeals process -- has ever even been convened, according to the report.

Although the publicity created around some of the cases have highlighted problems, especially in Mexico, the structural problems and lack of political will shown by the governments "represent a very serious blow to labor rights in the region," said Vivanco.

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## Census 2000 & Black Backlash

By Marisa Treviño

Incredulity? Anger? Or fright? I'm not sure which surge of emotion best describes my reaction as I read reporter Artellia Burch's account of black backlash against Hispanic incursions into her quiescent North Carolina community. "When Worlds Collide," her piece was headed.

Census 2000 percentage statistics proclaim that state to be the biggest target of Hispanic mobility and fertility in the 1990s, up a staggering 394 percent. That's 300,000 new residents in North Carolina communities like Charlotte, where Burch reports for the biweekly Post, a respected, century-old African American publication.

The tone of Census 2000 coverage in mainstream media had been disconcerting enough. Too often it has depicted an explosion of undereducated, undocu-

mented Latinos, desperate for work -- a potential hissing fuse to more problems in a country enduring an economic downturn.

Artellia Burch laid out an even more chilling scenario. She used quotes by black professionals who described the Hispanic newcomers in her community as "multiplying like rabbits," "living 10 to an apartment" and maybe even "plotting to kill you."

I read the article several times over, marveling at the paper's audacity in publishing such a piece. What lay behind its motivation?

I telephoned the reporter, prepared to ask her how long she had to comb the streets of Charlotte to find the quotes to fit her agenda.

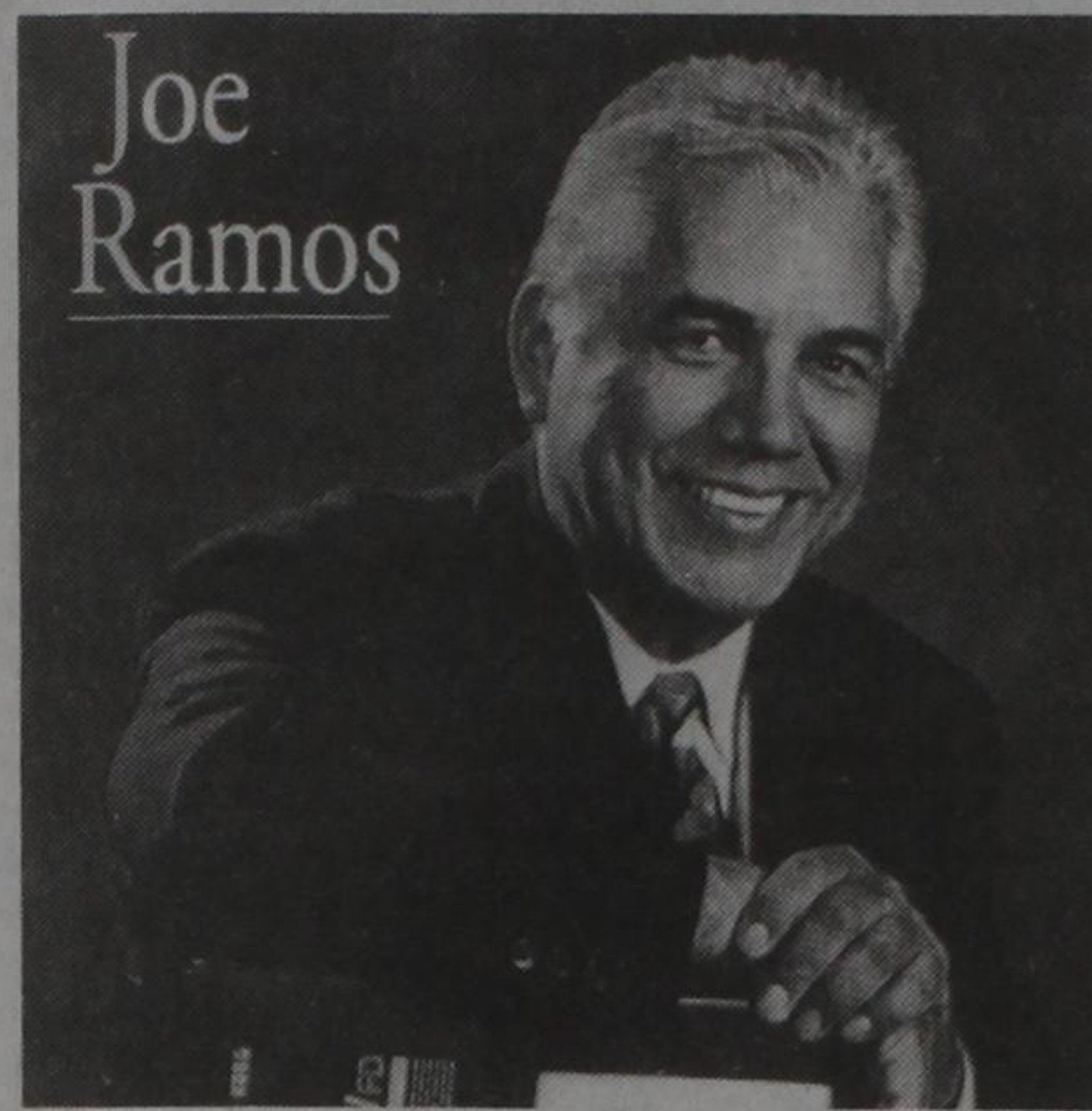
A soft-spoken, 28-year-old, African American -- a life-long

Southerner -- answered. She said she was baffled at the national media attention to a piece she considered fair and another.

Out of curiosity, I asked Burch if she had any Hispanic friends. She answered that though she had friends who could speak Spanish, she didn't know any Latinos personally.

"I've always looked at Hispanics as just people and a people of color. I've never looked at it like we're enemies or anything like that. We're more brothers and sisters than anything."

Right on.  
(Marisa Treviño, of Dallas, is a free-lance writer and contributing columnist with Hispanic Link News Service. She may be reached at mtrevino(AT)SIGNairmail.net(c) 2001, Hispanic Link News Service. Distributed by Los Angeles Times Syndicate International



If it's Tejano, it's...



### 'El Gato Negro Ruben Ramos

Magic 93.7's artist "El Gato Negro" Ruben Ramos was in town this past Saturday, April 14 at Crystals Nite Club and if you missed the show what can I say you missed one heck of a show.

Ruben Ramos and the Texas Revolution were at their very best playing hit after hit from old school to new school. They were hyped and ready to go all night long but unfortunately the night did have to come to an end. Ramos did continue to encourage the fans to take care of their children, to keep them in school, to support Tejano and above all to remember Jesus Christ loves you.

Ruben Ramos has been in the Tejano industry for many years and continues leaving his mark in the industry. Ruben Ramos has gone to a level in his career that many artists hope to reach in their careers. Ramos has won a Grammy, has appeared on the Jay Leno Show and the Conan O'Brien Show. Ramos still has a lot of goals that he wishes to obtain in his career and the way he's going he will definitely accomplish his goals. Keep an ear and eye open on Ruben Ramos and The Texas Revolution because the best is yet to come!!!

Ruben Ramos continues to have great airplay on Magic 93.7 and all across the United States with his latest hit, a duet with Ram Herrera "Demorando Lagrimas".

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**DJ Lopez from 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm**  
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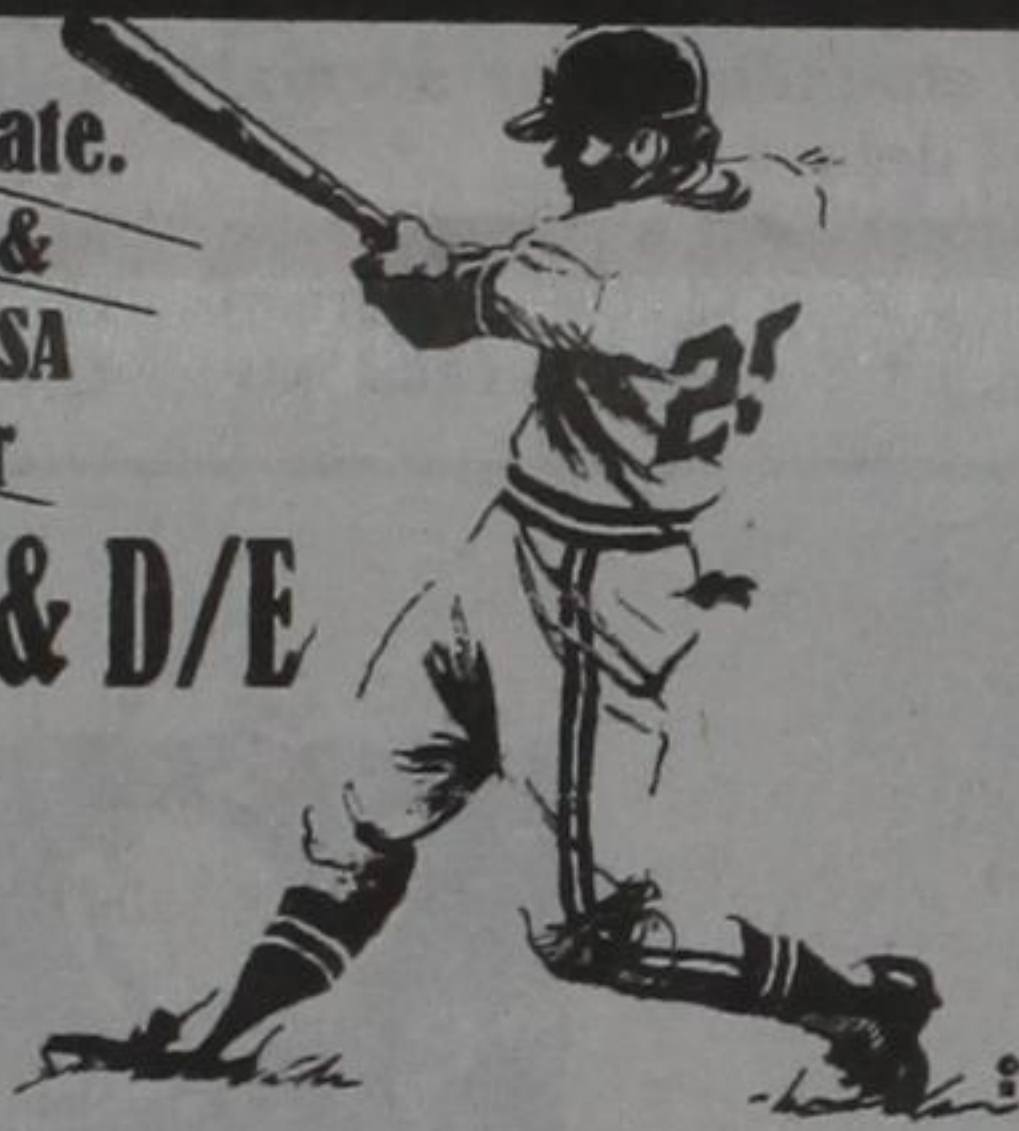
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TW	TITLE	ARTIST
1	BOOM BOOM	Kumbia Kings
2	Ensename a Olvidarte	Intocable
3	Abrazame y Besame	Jennifer Pena
4	No Puedo Olvidar	Solido
5	No Volvere	Shelly/Jay
6	Dona Juana	Trueno
7	Amame Otra Vez	Stampede
8	Derramando Lagrimas	Ruben/Ram
9	Mientras Me Uaya	Margarita
10	Alguien Como Tu	David Lee Garza

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