## commentary

### from other pens...

# Races offer lessons about the Hispanic

#### By Will Lester

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON - Democrats and Republicans got a reminder this year in mayors' races in New York, Houston and Los Angeles that Hispanic voters are a fast-growing and crucial swing vote tied more closely to ethnic than party loyalty.

That dynamic, which played out in very different ways in the three cities' mayoral races, could be important in many races next year.

"Elections for mayor in several of America's biggest cities have confirmed the fact the Hispanic electorate has become a crucial swing vote," said pollster Sergio Bendixen of Miami. "If they're offended or mishandled, they'll cross party lines."

Former California Gov. Pete Wilson took a strong anti-immigrant stance in the mid-1990s that seriously damaged Republicans' image with Hispanics for years. Hispanics have voted more often against Republicans than for Democrats, political analysts say.

Led by President Bush, the GOP is aggressively courting Hispanics, the fastest-growing segment of the population. Democrats are feeling the growing pains of the Hispanic population boom.

These are this year's elections that highlighted the tricky landscape: —In New York, a feud within the Democratic Party took on racial overtones, and Republican Michael Bloomberg scored an upset win. He was aided by a split of the Hispanic vote in the heavily Democratic city.

-In Houston, black Democratic incumbent Lee Brown held onto his job but had to run a tough campaign questioning the competence and judgment of conservative Republican Orlando Sanchez. Sanchez came very close to winning and won over a majority of Hispanics.

-In Los Angeles, Democrat James Hahn angered many Hispanic supporters of Democratic opponent Antonio Villaraigosa by running an ad with images of a crack pipe and a razor blade cutting cocaine. Hahn, who won the June election, was attacking Villaraigosa for writing a letter on behalf of a drug dealer whose sentence was later commuted.

"Republicans are neophytes about inner-city campaigning," said Al Cardenas, chairman of the Florida Republican Party, who advises the national party's efforts to bring Hispanic voters into the fold. "We're great at suburban campaigning, but we need more on-the-ground training when it comes to inner-city campaigning."

"I think the Democratic Party is struggling right now in being able to say they're the party that best represents Latino interests," said Arturo Vargas, executive director at the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials. "They're struggling with how to bring Latinos into leadership roles, on redistricting to give Latinos a fair opportunity to elect candidates of their choice.'

"There's no question we have to fight for the Hispanic vote," said Michael Meehan, senior counselor for the Democratic National Committee. "They're not an automatic part of the base vote."

Meehan said of the 5,000 Hispanic elected officials, about nine in 10 are Democrats. "We have a good bench to build off of," Meehan said.

Democrats acknowledge problems arose during the campaign for their New York mayoral primary. Some backers of white Democratic candidate Mark Green, tried to paint his Hispanic opponent, Fernando Ferrer, as a puppet of the outspoken black minister Al Sharpton. Green denied responsibility, but angry Hispanics stayed home or voted for Republican Bloomberg in the general election.

The attacks on Sanchez may carry a price in Houston, said Republican Cardenas. "I think Democrats are entering a very risky environment as we recruit more minority candidates," Cardenas said.

Democratic spokeswoman Maria Cardona said the "racist tactic" used in New York will be extremely unwelcome in future party primaries. "We don't need it, and we can't afford it," she said. "The Democratic



## Left wingers, Jeffersonions and Jacksonions

Just about everyone you don't agree with is a terrorist these days. It's déjà-vu all over again. What will America's role be in Afghanistan af-

ter the fighting? We don't want to have troops there forever, but we want you to be a democracy.

We are not always for war, we would like a free trick trade agreement with you, but first you will need a knock on the door of constitutional government. These nuclear corporations will need security.

There are many schools of thought within U.S. foreign policy — one is a relic of Alexander Hamilton. He believed the American people were not educated enough to govern. We must have a strong central government that works with big business.

He said we need a strong economy that will sustain a strong military. Nearly every president since WWII have been Hamiltonians.

Then there are the United Nationers who think we will not be safe unless all nations are U.N.ers, too. They are the world courters, too. The global warming eco-nuts are the U.N.ers. They like Kyoto and land mine treaties.

Then there are the Jacksonions who don't trust other nations. They say you can't trust international institutions like the U.N. The nuclear corporations are OK, sometimes, but they always get greedy.

They don't think it's their job to make the nuclear corporations rich it's to make the people rich. If some one attacks us they fight like the devil to win. Not a guns and butter war but a war to win. Then when they win they are not mad anymore.

It was the Jacksonions that introduced the Marshal plan after WWII. It was the Jacksonions that introduced a Marshall plan for Japan, too.



to assure the future of emperor Hiroshima. He not only was their king — he was their God, too.

The next thing General McArthur did was to feed the people. He not only succeeded in creating a constitutional government he also reshaped their eating habits. He introduced the American custom of school lunches that had the American diet of pastries from the American wheat belt. It also had powdered skim milk. Ugh! Which they had little taste for. Well powered skim milk was not saki (Japanese wine) and sweet rolls was not rice, but it was so successful that few Japanese have little to

remember from that sad episode in their history. When the Big Chief in the White Teepee, entered office he was a Jacksonion. Some might say isolationist but what about fast track and Mexican immigration? That sounds like a U.N.er. Was it isolationist to be for farm imports and mega-mergers? But when 9-11 happened he was totally convinced we needed to clean out that nest of vipers in Afghanistan. Is that isolationist or was it for self survival? What ever it was they are not interested in being a nation builder. They just want to win.

Then there are the right wing tax dodgers and money launders. They fear while government is going after the al Qaida it will uncover their money laundering in the Caribbean. The left wingers might be tax dodgers too, but they are the roots of the antiwar movements. They are addicted to conspiracies One of the first things General McArthur did was that national policies is being dictated by Hal- .ixks.com

liburton oil and the Carlyle group - but they love the free-food-pentagon (IBP, ConAgra, Tyson, Cargill, and Archer Daniels Midland Co.)

Even they know there are bad guys but they prefer an elegant strategy that takes what they can get without being a Jacksonion. Everyone may be a mix of all of these but we need a coalition government in Afghanistan that will introduce a constitutional government with women's rights. We need our Jacksonions that say the U.S. will need a Marshall plan, too.

Then there is, who will be better at history, will it be the U.N.ers or the Jacksonions? We helped win WWI but we left England and France to make the peace and they blotched it. They both took their pound of flesh out of Germany.

Let us hope the U.N.ers who met in Bonn, Germany will win the peace. There is merit in bringing back the eighty six year old exiled Zahir Shah, King of Afghanistan or his thirty six year old Americanized grandson. They should be a part in the writing of a new constitution for Afghanistan.

However, none of this means a cow chip if the Jacksonion-U.N.ers lose the peace. The Northern Alliance will have plenty to say about who governs Afghanistan. Even more so, Islamic nations are not known for their constitutional governments. What they call democracy will most likely look like a military junta with their crony corporations. Well what do we expect? Don't drill in our back yard!

Whether it is the price of oil, wheat, or beef, low prices may be as good as a tax cut for New York but for nations like Afghanistan their Gross Domestic Product will depend on oil and agriculture. So let the fast trick trade agreements roll.

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Party comes from a tradition of coalition building and diversity. EDITOR'S NOTE — Will Lester covers politics and polling for The Associated Press.

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N.T. Betz, Director of Internet Services (nbetz@nwkansas.com) Evan Barnum, Systems Admin.(support@nwkansas.com)

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## Pest control services

Dear Attorney General Stovall:

I have recently noticed several spiders in my basement and I believe part of my garage may have termites. I am considering calling a pest control company to get an estimate for treatment, but some of my friends have had bad experiences with companies they have used. I want a company who will help me and tell me the truth. Attorney General Stovall, are these companies required to be licensed, and what advice do you have for selecting a pest control company?

Dear Kansas Consumer:

I completely understand your concerns. When a consumer hires a pest control company, he or she is trusting the company's knowledge of how the chemicals being used affect the physical structure of a home and its occupants. Various licenses and certifications are required when strong chemicals are used, so hiring a pest control company is not



something to be taken lightly.

When you are considering a pesticide company, ask if it is licensed with the Kansas Department of Agriculture. You may also call the Pesticide and Fertilizer program at (785) 296-3786 to verify if a company is properly certified and licensed. Any company operating without a proper license or insurance is in violation of the Kansas Pesticide Law as well as the Kansas Consumer Protection Act. Further, you may call my Consumer Protection Business Bureau, to see if there are any open or closed complaints against a particular company. My office does not endorse or recommend a company; we will simply state if any complaints have been filed. You may also file a complaint with my office against a pest control service if you feel your rights as a consumer have been violated.

Attorney General Carla J. Stovall offers this public service to help you avoid becoming a victim of consumer fraud. Although some of the details have been changed, the cases appearing in this column are based on actual complaints. For further information or to file a complaint, please write Attorney General Carla J. Stovall, Consumer Protection Division, 120 SW 10th, 2nd Floor, Topeka, Kansas 66612, or call the toll-free Consumer Hotline, 1-800-432-2310. Leave your name, number and subject of your inquiry with the receptionist and your Division at 1-800-432-2310, or your local Better *call will be returned promptly.* 

# Tough job understanding breadth of education

In July 1999 the Kansas Board of Regents inherited from the Kansas State Department of Education control of the 11 technical schools and colleges and the 19 community colleges within the state. Since that time the Kansas Board of Regents has worked to understand these two unique forms of two-year higher education systems.

All combined, the Board of Regents governs and coordinates 36 public institutions. When the transition was made in 1999, the legislature required the composition of the Board membership to have representatives that had interest in community college and technical schools and colleges.

After the past two years, the Board of Regents has realized that the span of education is very broad and they have sought ways to streamline the broad responsibilities. The primary approach used by the Board of Regents to narrow their scope has been to utilize a consultant team, NORED, to make recommendations about Kansas's higher education system.

NORED is an agency composed of a team of higher education experts, who are knowledgeable about higher education matters in the United States. This team of experts have recently completed and forwarded a 100 page report entitled, "Kansas—ANew Horizon," to the Kansas Board of Regents. This report predominately is focused on governance and missions of Kansas's post-sec-



college notes

ondary education. The study was funded by a grant by the Kansas Health Foundation. If you are interested, this report is available over the Internet at http://www.nored.net or www.nored.net.

The NORED study has several futuristic recommendations. Much of the report has conditional support by the administration at Northwest Kansas Technical College, but many of the recommendations need to have details worked out before full support may be given.

Some of the most positive recommendations are that the Board of Regents establish a comprehensive database system to account for all students. That the Regents keep transfer of credit as a permanent agenda item, that the Regents assume a leadership role with respect to the state's job training, and that higher education service districts be developed to insure coordinated services. These are a few of the more manageable recommendations. Many of the other 31 recommendations will require considerable discussion and finance before implementation.

If anyone has more interest in this subject, please give me a call at the college. I always enjoy talking about the college and our future.

### berry's world

