

# FUTURE TEACHERS! PREPARE FOR THE PPST

DATE: Saturday, Oct. 5 PLACE: The Hilton  
TIME: 9-12 COST: \$35 INSTRUCTOR:  
1-4 or Dr. De Johnson  
5-8

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THE ANNUAL

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—William Wolf, GANNETT NEWS SERVICE

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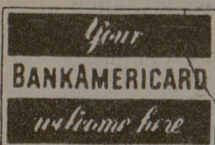
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# World and Nation

## Mexico slow to request help

# U.S. makes cautious aid offers

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Among the side effects of Mexico's devastating earthquake was a ticklish diplomatic problem: How much aid should the United States offer and how much should Mexico request?

Mexico has always sought to minimize its one-sided relationship with the United States and, whenever possible, attempt to maintain a discreet distance from its big neighbor. For example, until the recent disaster, Mexico had not asked for U.S. government assistance since an earthquake there in 1964.

It has never taken part in U.S. bilateral aid programs; it shunned participation in President Kennedy's Alliance for Progress program and has never accepted U.S. Peace Corps volunteers.

Despite pressing needs, Mexico has had a go-it-alone attitude, and U.S. officials took that into account in deciding how to respond to this month's earthquake.

"We know that you don't shove aid down Mexico's throat," said one official.

"Mexico has not asked for aid but we cannot refuse to accept it."

— Mexican Foreign Minister Bernardo Sepulveda said as plane loads of food, clothing and medicine began arriving the day after the quake.

But there were countering pressures from American citizens, who felt the neighborly thing for the administration to do was to be as generous as possible.

"We couldn't afford to look like we were sitting around doing nothing," said the same official.

Thus, the administration made it clear from the outset that it stood ready to meet Mexican requests for aid but took no initiative beyond that. Thirty hours after disaster struck, Mexico came forth with its first request for U.S. aid in more than 20 years — demolition teams to destroy buildings beyond repair and personnel trained in spotting survivors in devastated areas.

It was a modest request indeed.

Secretary of State George P. Shultz expressed admiration for Mexican self-reliance.

Subsequently, the Mexican request list grew longer but the U.S. government role in the relief effort remains relatively limited. After the first six days, U.S. assistance totaled more than \$3.5 million.

Some Latin American and European countries dispatched aid without asking Mexico for a list of necessary items. As the plane loads of food, clothing and medicine began arriving the day after the quake, Mexican Foreign Minister Bernardo Sepulveda said, "Mexico has not asked for aid but we cannot refuse to accept it."

Mexico also has discouraged

goodwill expeditions by well-meaning foreigners, and the Reagan administration has done what it can to support that stand.

When San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros announced plans to visit Mexico shortly after the earthquake, he was publicly rebuked by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Eli Abramson. Cisneros ignored the request and flew to Mexico on a plane loaded with relief supplies.

The caring but cautious U.S. approach was reflected in the visit of first lady Nancy Reagan to Mexico City four days after the quake. The visit was kept brief to cause minimum disruption. In addition to touring devastated zones, she presented a \$1 million check to the Mexican government.

Still, U.S. officials said there were consistent indications of a Mexican government desire to downplay the extent of the damage. In the few days after the disaster, U.S. estimates of the death toll invariably exceeded the official Mexican government count.

## Official attacks state of bilingual education

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Hispanic leaders condemned U.S. Education Secretary William J. Bennett's call Thursday for revising bilingual education by giving local districts more control and placing greater emphasis on teaching English.

Critics and supporters alike said they suspected the proposal was a veiled attempt by the administration to pull back from federal involvement in the controversial program.

"After 17 years of federal involvement, and after \$1.7 billion of federal funding, we have no evidence that the children whom we sought to help... have benefited," Bennett said in a speech before the Association for a Better New York.

Bennett said the original purpose of bilingual education has gradually taken a back seat to teaching foreign-speaking children about their native language and culture.

"Pride in one's heritage is natural and commendable," Bennett said. "But the responsibility of the federal government must be to help ensure that local schools succeed in teaching non-English speaking students English, so that every American enjoys access to the opportunities of American society."

The Reagan administration is prepared to press for increased federal funding of bilingual programs, but only if local school districts are given

a bigger say in creating those programs.

Hispanic advocates roundly condemned Bennett's speech.

"He is using local flexibility as a code word for federal abandonment," said Norma Cantu, director of education programs for the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund in San Antonio. She also challenged Bennett's assertion that bilingual programs are teaching youngsters more about their culture than about English.

"I don't know of any studies that show that," she said. "States are very conscientious about keeping English proficiency the main goal of these programs."

The Puerto Rican-Latino Education Roundtable, a New York-based coalition of nine Hispanic advocacy groups, said it was "appalled" by Bennett's speech.

"The secretary's call for local flexibility represents a bald attempt to undermine the hard-fought gains of our community over the last 15 years," the coalition said in a prepared statement.

Gary Marx, associate executive director of the American Association of School Administrators in Arlington, Va., applauded Bennett's emphasis on local control, but said it would be up to members of the education community to be vigilant to make sure the federal government doesn't abandon the programs.

## Controllers' training being questioned

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The suspension of an air traffic controller in this week's near-collision of an Eastern Airlines jet and a helicopter raises new questions about controller stress and training — and concern over the limitations of the air traffic control system since a 1981 strike.

The Federal Aviation Administration has struggled to replace the 11,400 experienced controllers that were fired because of the walkout. Last February its rebuilding goal was reached with 14,306 controllers on the job.

But today there are only 14,064 controllers in airport towers and enroute centers, about 70 percent of them qualified to handle traffic without supervision. Before the 1981 strike, there were 16,412 controllers with about 80 percent considered fully qualified.

Since the strike, the volume of air traffic has increased by about 9 percent, according to the FAA. At the same time, the airlines have restructured their operations increasingly toward a "hub-and-spoke" routing system that concentrates more planes in certain areas during certain times of the day.

This has prompted concern

among aviation safety experts about whether controllers are able to deal with traffic at congested airports and in crowded air space nearby.

Such is the case at Washington's National Airport where on Tuesday, as an evening Eastern Airlines "shuttle" roared down the runway, a helicopter lifted off and began to cross the plane's path.

The Eastern pilot slammed on the brakes and aborted the take-off, resting his Boeing 727 on a grassy area beyond the runway only 40 yards from the Potomac River. The helicopter pilot veered away when he saw the jetliner coming.

Investigators said a five-year veteran controller had failed to direct the helicopter away from the runway when she gave the pilot his departure clearance. The controller, one of the few who had been rehired after the 1981 strike, has been suspended from tower traffic duty and directed to undergo additional certification, FAA officials said.

Some argue the problem is one of experience rather than numbers. And gaining experience to handle all types of air traffic conditions takes controllers at least two to three years.

## Study: elderly hurt by Medicare cuts

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Thousands of sick, elderly Americans have been kicked out of hospitals too soon or given bad medical treatment because of a Medicare cost-cutting program, a congressional study said Thursday.

Senators said they were disturbed by it and vowed to correct and fine-tune the so-called Prospective Payment System, which began two years ago.

Sen. John Heinz, R-Pa., chairman of the Senate Special Committee on Aging, said the study by the panel's staff indicates "seriously ill Medicare

patients are being denied admission to hospitals or catapulted out of hospital doors prematurely...."

The study also said many patients are not informed of their right to appeal hospital decisions. It said "a number of other very serious quality of care issues are not being addressed at all."

The cost-containment policy has created for doctors of "a dilemma of medical ethics vs. profitable practice," said Heinz at a hearing to discuss the report.

The program's intentions are "to rein in inflation and unnecessary spending without sacrificing the

quality of care available to Medicare beneficiaries," said Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio.

The savings program, established in October 1983 to save the \$71 billion-a-year Medicare program from bankruptcy, requires that hospitals be paid a predetermined, specific amount for the care of beneficiaries, depending on the diagnosis.

Previously, Medicare, the government's health care program for the elderly, reimbursed hospitals after treatment based on reasonable charges.

While the report said it was impossible to calculate precise figures

on the extent of the problem, it "more severe and widespread" than the Department of Health and Human Services' preliminary estimates.

HHS's division which runs Medicare, the Health Care Financing Administration, says between 2,500 and 3,700 patients have been prematurely or inappropriately discharged.

Dennis Siebert, a HCFA spokesman, said the agency is concerned about possible program abuses, but has not found any "systemwide evidence" of premature discharges.



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