

NOTICE

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Monday April 4
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10am-7pm Monday-Friday

Extra Announcements:
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Knowledge of languages aids career of A&M grad

By Cindy Milton
Reporter

For most of us, learning a second language is like pulling teeth — it's a long and sometimes painful process that we could easily do without. But for one Aggie who was born and raised in Bolivia, learning languages comes naturally and has been a big influence on his career in the United States military.

Col. John A. Tudela, Class of '64, initially came to the United States from Bolivia on an exchange program with the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York. However, his plans were soon changed — he came to A&M instead.

"The ambassador (of Bolivia) designated his son to go to West Point instead of me, so I came to the better school — Texas A&M," Tudela says.

Tudela, who is especially proud of his A&M education, says being an Aggie has helped his military career because of A&M's connections throughout the world.

"Being an Aggie is an asset because you come with a package of tradition that's hard to find anywhere else," he says. "There's always an Aggie wherever you go. Being an Aggie has attained national prestige from all angles."

A&M graduates don't suffer from identification. This is a leg-up on graduates from other schools. An A&M graduate with a good record is going to get good positions in business and in the government.

Tudela graduated with a degree in industrial engineering technology and was commissioned into the United States Army. Since then, he has traveled to 52 countries.

He currently commands the Galveston District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This brings him closer to his alma mater than he's been in years.

He speaks six languages fluently and has held special assignments throughout the world, including assisting a former secretary of state and serving as special assistant to the Supreme Commander Europe in Belgium.

Not long after graduation from A&M, Tudela went to Austria for an Army exchange program and then to Spain, where he attended the Spanish Army War College. During these assignments, Tudela learned the languages of the countries he was in, and later in his career he attended language schools before traveling to some foreign countries.

In addition to learning the languages, Tudela met and worked with American and foreign politicians and diplomats.

As a captain, Tudela had the unique opportunity of meeting current Panamanian strongman Manuel Noriega while working for an engineering special forces detachment for the U.S. Army in Panama in 1972.

Noriega, a captain at the time, was an intelligence officer for the Panama National Guard, and Tudela met him during a meeting to discuss different projects that the engineering detachment was going to be involved in.

Tudela commented on Noriega's loyalty to the government even as a captain.

"At that time he was a loyal supporter of the former Gen. Torrijos," Tudela said. "He practically was a prodigy of Torrijos. When Torrijos was overthrown, there was a coup against him, and Capt. Noriega was the one who re-took the government and handed it back to Torrijos. That's how his association (with the government) developed."

Tudela later served as a military assistant to then-Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in 1975 and 1976. He coordinated Kissinger's visits with foreign governments and accompanied him on visits to countries such as Chile, Mexico and his native Bolivia.

"That was a fascinating experience," he said. "Just



Col. John Tudela, Class of '64, discusses his personal experiences in the United States Army, which include meeting Gen. Manuel Noriega.

seeing and hearing all that was going on was fascinating."

Tudela's last military assignment was in Belgium, special assistant to the commander-in-chief of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization). He was responsible for handling French matters concerning NATO.

"(My job) was very discreet since France was a member of the alliance," he said. "I was the representative in Paris — they called me 'Shape's man in Paris.'"

Tudela said his special assignments in the military were fostered by the fact that he speaks so many languages.

"The fact that I speak several languages has influenced my positions," he said. "I've served the majority of my tours overseas, and through them I've had to speak Thai, Portuguese, German and French."

Tudela is now looking to improve international relations with his job in Galveston. He said the Corps of Engineers is involved in several programs with NATO that could reinforce relations between the two countries.

Tudela, the highest ranking officer of Hispanic heritage in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, said he will play an important role in the nation's future.

"When you look at the current legalization program and when you convert it into voting, you'll see new electoral districts," he said. "I wouldn't be surprised if within the next 10 years we have some (Hispanic) running for the highest position in the government."

"The biggest challenge is education. Educating active participation in the government and the community is important. The opportunity is there — the panics just have to take them."

Construction may not solve prison problem

DALLAS (AP) — Construction that will increase the capacity of Texas prisons by more than 65 percent in just four years is still only a stopgap measure, state officials say. By the end of 1989, the 12,500 beds approved last year by the Texas Legislature and Texas voters are expected to be in place. And in next year's legislative session, state officials plan to ask for an additional 14,000 beds to be built by the end of 1991.

But those 26,500 new beds won't solve the overcrowdedness of Texas prisons, says Rider Scott, who is Gov. Bill Clements' general counsel and criminal justice director.

"By November 1990, we'll be right back to where we are today, having to slam doors of the prison shut and backing them (inmates) up in county jails," Scott said. "In 1992, then, you would again look for additional capacity."

Prison capacity expanded by 50 percent from 1980 to 1987, but the number of new prisoners increased 113 percent. During the same time, a federal court ordered the state to ease overcrowding by reducing its prison population by 6,500.

Currently, Texas houses 38,500 inmates in 28 prisons. Another 4,000 state prisoners are serving time in county jails as they wait for beds in state facilities.

A 1987 study by the governor's office estimated that 20,000 additional beds would be needed by 1991.

The first 12,500 beds toward that goal were made possible by action in the last Legislature. Lawmakers appropriated \$30 million for the construction of 2,000 units to be operated by private concerns. And voters authorized another \$213.8 million in bonding authority last November for the construction of 10,500 units.

Last month, law enforcement officials meeting at a Texas criminal justice summit concluded that the 1987 report had underestimated the growing need for more prison beds.

Not 7,500, but 14,000 beds beyond the first 12,500 would be needed by 1991, the group said.

Scott said that recommendation was expected to become part of the governor's crime package in the next Legislature, and he was optimistic that the construction would be approved.

"This is the largest construction project in the state's history," said Charles Terrell, chairman of the Texas Department of Corrections board. "It dwarfs anything ever done in Texas and is second only to California's program in U.S. history."

Scott said the construction of new prisons would eventually contain the need for additional prison space by providing a needed deterrent.

Now, the number of prisoners released during the year nearly equals the number admitted. In 1987, about 36,000 were admitted and 34,000 were released, Scott said.

Construction projects already approved include two maximum-security, 2,250-bed units in Gatesville and Amarillo; and four 1,000-bed regional correctional facilities in Snyder, Dayton, Marlin and Woodville.

Also approved were seven trusty camps housing a total of 1,400 prisoners; and four 500-bed, pre-release centers in Kyle, Bridgeport, Cleveland and Venus. Other additional beds will be created by renovation of existing facilities.

Construction contracts on three of the trusty camps were awarded in early March. Bids are due April 15 on the Gatesville maximum-security facility, and will soon go out for the four 1,000-bed regional centers.

The 14,000 additional beds recommended at the recent Texas Criminal Justice Summit include 8,000 prison beds, 2,000 for a "boot camp" shock probation program and 4,000 set aside for parole violators.

Odessa water causes worry for officials

ODESSA (AP) — Harsh criticism taken from Lake Thomas by Lake Spence for the city's water supply fails to mix with some terments, speeds up the deal appliances and tastes unpleasant officials say.

The West Texas water company high amounts of sodium chloride and magnesium, more than the federal recommendation for dissolved solid content. And state officials have some suggestions to improve the water.

The solution, a two-stage project using reverse osmosis filtration, could begin this fall. A 90-day experiment, Odessa water director Bob Derrington said.

"We'll look at quality and decide whether to do another test which will pertain to different chemicals, different processes, different equipment," Derrington said.

The second stage involves installing the filter system to the water treatment plant for 10 million, which could be done through bond sales.

The state health department recommends that drinking water have a maximum of 1,000 parts per million of dissolved solids while the Environmental Protection Agency recommends 500 parts per million, officials say.

The latest test of Odessa water by the Texas Department of Health showed that in August 1987, there were 992 ppm of dissolved solids in the city's water, down from 1,059 in 1986.

Total dissolved solids include all the particles in the water except the metal. A state health department rating for dissolved solids counts the calcium, magnesium, fluoride, magnesium, sodium sulfate, bicarbonate and calcium in drinking water.

Requirements set by the health department on amount of dissolved solids in city's water supply are not mandatory unless an alternate source is available than those limits.