The Battalion WORLD & NATION

Monday, November 27, 1989

Mexican officials suspect foul play Poll watchers discover signs of ballot stuffing at election sites

pounded in Sunday's state and municipal elecion after poll watchers found ballot boxes stuffed with votes cast for the ruling PRI party before the polls opened.

At Matamoros precinct No. 35A, where only 18 people had signed in to vote by mid-morning Sunday, election officials counted 562 ballots cast in the race for state representative and 429 in the eparate box for the mayoral election.

Almost all of the extra ballots were for candidates of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party, known by its Spanish initials as the PRI.

Mayoral candidate Jorge Cardenas with the opposition Authentic Party of the Mexican Revo-lution (PARM) accused PRI officials of orches-trating "a huge fraud" throughout the state of Tamaulipas.

"The people of Matamoros will not accept this, and neither will the people of Tamaulipas," Cardenas said.

At Precinct 35A, where 30 times as many balvoted, voting was suspended temporarily while

MATAMOROS, Mexico (AP) — More than election officials counted the votes in front of 1,000 suspected fraudulent ballots were impublic notaries called in to record the evidence.

"Fraude, fraude, fraude (fraud, fraud, fraud)," chanted a crowd gathered in the govern-ment health clinic, while the votes were being

Reymundo Padilla, precinct president, said he did not know how the ballots ended up in the boxes before polls opened.

"Somebody put them in the boxes," Padilla said.

At another precinct set up at a Matamoros el-ementary school, the PRI poll watcher called in a complaint to denounce alleged ballot-stuffing by his own party. Reynaldo Carrillo Nava, PRI precinct representative, said he called after finding 380 ballots — all cast for the PRI — inside a box before voting was to start at 8 a.m.

"There were ballots already inside," Carrillo said. "I protested, but they (other PRI officials at the precinct) didn't want to recognize it.

After election officials emptied the 380 suspect ballots into a garbage bag to await inspection by the State Electoral Commission, a man ran off with the bag, but threw it down before escaping,

said Mariano Aguilar Estrada, who helped re-trieve the bag of ballots.

Voting temporarily was suspended while nota-ries recorded the evidence.

PRI mayoral candidate Javier Muzquiz said voting fraud would be impossible in Matamoros because precinct officials would discover irregularities.

'They (PARM) are inventing stories of fraud when they don't need to invent stories of fraud," Muzquiz said Sunday. "I am not interested in winning with fraud.

PARM officials on Sunday turned over another 300 ballots marked for the PRI after discovering a man carrying them with him.

"They were to be used for tacos," Valentin Jimenez Mora, a PARM candidate for state repesentative, said.

A "taco" in a Mexican election is a ballot with several additional ballots secretly folded inside, making it possible for one person to cast more than one vote for a candidate.

Cabrera said there had been no reports of violence as of mid-afternoon.

High winds delay Discovery's return after successful spy satellite launch

desert Sunday forced NASA to delay space shuttle Discovery's return to Earth until Monday following a se-cret mission that put a spy satellite in

Mission Control in Houston informed the five astronauts of the wave-off" about three hours before they were to fire rockets to drop the craft out of orbit to start an hourlong descent to a nighttime landing at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., in the Mojave Desert.

"Discovery has been waved off from its scheduled landing this eve-

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) tional Aeronautics and Space Ad-Blustery winds in the California ministration said. man Linda Copley said. Discovery carries end

The statement said that conditions were forecast to be favorable Monday night and landing was re-scheduled for 4:32 p.m. PST, mak-ing it a daytime rather than a night landing, as had been planned for

Sunday Winds gusting to nearly 30 mph sent small dust storms whipping across the Edwards runways. Mission rules dictate that a shuttle not land at night if crosswinds are more than 12 mph.

"Another problem is that we have no upper-level wind data because ning due to unacceptably strong the winds keep breaking our tion." winds," a statement from the Na- weather balloons," NASA spokes- This was the sixth time in 32 shut-

Discovery carries enough fuel and other supplies to remain in orbit at least through Tuesday. If conditions remained bad at Edwards, the shuttle could land at either White Sands, N.M., or at Cape Canaveral.

Edwards landings are preferred because of the long, wide-open run-

ways. Because the mission is classified, no information is being reported by NASA. So the reaction of the astronauts to the delay was not made pub-

The statement did say the crew "continued to be in excellent condi-

tle flights that a landing has been

waved off by bad weather. Discovery was slated to be only the third shuttle to land at night. Its launch Wednesday was the third after dark. Most news about the flight was

blacked out on Pentagon orders since Discovery blazed away from Cape Canaveral, Fla. NASA was allowed to make only periodic statements that the spaceship was doing fine and to announce the landing time.

The after-dark liftoff and touchdown were dictated by the need to put the shuttle's satellite in a specific orbit and by the military experi-ments conducted by the astronauts.

Deadliest battle in El Salvador's civil war sets stage for more bloodletting in future

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador AP) — The two deadliest weeks of the 10-year-old civil war have served only to set the stage for more blood-

The battle of San Salvador - at least the first one — is over. The huge rebel offensive that began Nov. 11 failed to achieve its principal obective of persuading the govern-ment to make significant concessions in the quest for a negotiated solu-

El Salvador is the smallest country on the Western Hemisphere's mainland. With 5 million people in an area the size of Massachusetts, it is also the most densely populated.

The consolidation of land holdings by relatively recent immigrant families — not of the centuries-old Indian-Spanish mix that makes up more than 90 percent of the popula-tion — disenfranchized hundreds of thousands of peasants who raised subsistence crops on collectively held

The agricultural export economy made vast fortunes for a tiny elite. The rich have mansions on their plantations, sumptuous homes in the capital's posh western sector and houses or apartments in Miami, New York or Los Angeles. They tune in to U.S. television stations with their satellite dishes and send their children to U.S. universities while twothirds of the population lives in dire poverty.

Peasants and workers organized

counted together, a plurality of Salvadorans.

The growing left threatened the privileged, who reacted ferociously. About 30,000 people — most of them real or perceived leftists — are estimated to have been slain by government troops or right-wing death squads between 1979 and 1984, when such murders began to decline.



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Indeed, with the administration laiming victory and demanding what amounts to the rebels' surrender, and the insurgents promising to finish off "the mortally wounded fascist beast," Salvadorans can only expect weeks or months more of warfare of an intensity unseen since early 1981, when the rebels' first "final offensive" failed.

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"This battle against ARENA is a battle that cannot turn back, a battle to sweep fascism once and for all from our country," the rebel clandestine Radio Venceremos said late last week. ARENA is the rightist Nationalist Republican Alliance, the governing party.

"They (the guerrillas) tried, and they lost," President Alfredo Cristiani said, proclaiming the military defeat of the Farabundo Marti Naional Liberation Front, or FMLN.

The government contends its forces killed or wounded a third of the rebel army, estimated at about 7,000 full-time combatants. Most foreign journalists who spent day after day in the combat zones doubt the official claim that more than 1,000 guerrillas were killed.

The figure appears inconsistent with the relatively few dead guerril-las seen by reporters who daily compared notes on what they saw where and when.

Cristiani says the decimation suffered by guerrilla forces has been so telling that they will be capable from now on of only "terrorist" actions.

The contention is suspect, as the president, the defense minister and every colonel who went on record in the months prior to the spectacular push said the same thing: that insurgent capacity had been reduced to isolated terrorist activity.

Cristiani acknowledged in an interview after the fighting waned last week that the guerrillas "are doing some things that look more like regrouping than withdrawing." Radio Venceremos on Friday re-

ferred to the 10-day concerted assault on the capital and several pro-vincial cities as "the first period of offensive," implying that others are in the offing.

The war began in late 1979, but its , toots go back decades.

village lands. Landless peasants became migrant peons who went seasonally from the coffee harvest to picking cotton to cutting cane — the

widely in the 1970s. By the end of the decade, left-leaning federations demanding profound structural reform to more equitably distribute work force of an economy that was wealth were regularly putting tens of almost completely dependent on the thousands of people in the street. export of those three products. They probably constituted, if

Repression combined with the vast majority's manifest lack of economic opportunity to create a fertile field for revolutionary harvest.

The government and its U.S. patron contend a fledgling democracy is on its feet.

Gorbachev supports European reform; Czech leader believes Soviet president endorses socialism with 'human face'

MOSCOW (AP) - Mikhail S. Gorbachev displayed solid support Sunday for reform in Eastern Europe by endorsing socialism with a "human face" — the slogan used by the Czechoslovakian progressives toppled by a Soviet-led invasion in 1968.

In the Czechoslovakian capital, Alexander Dubcek, leader of the illfated "Prague Spring" reforms of 21 years ago, read Gorbachev's remarks at a rally as proof of the Soviet presi-

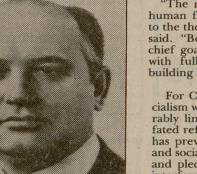
dent's backing for change. Two days earlier, the Czechoslo-vakian Communist Party dumped party chief Milos Jakes and some other leaders associated with hardline policies in an attempt to stem the political crisis that has rocked the country

With the East bloc in upheaval, the Soviet Communist Party daily Pravda published a 2¹/₂-page compi-lation of Gorbachev's thoughts on the future of socialism and his own program for "perestroika," or re-construction of the economy and so-

Pravda said the article was a synthesis of recent remarks by Gorbachev.

The Soviet leader's major theme seemed to be that socialism must modernize - even adopt traits of capitalism if necessary - or risk becoming irrelevant. He offered no quick answers but said the process would take years, "into the 21st cen-

He also said achievements attained under capitalism, like "equal-



Mikhail Gorbachev

ity of all before the law" and general prosperity, should not be dismissed because of ideology. "In the hullabaloo of our constant

confrontation with capitalism, we clearly underestimate the importance of much that has been done by humanity over the centuries," the Kremlin leader said.

On the need for Soviet reform, Gorbachev said: "The people are tired of waiting.

"Many words have been spoken about the interests of man, but they have been little reinforced with material resources and genuine deeds. As a result, in becoming a great and mighty power, the country did not create for the masses of the people the conditions of life that are natural for any civilized state.

"The new face of socialism is its human face; this fully correspond to the thought of Marx," Gorbacher said. "Because its creation is the chief goal of restructuring, we can full justification say we are building humanitarian socialism."

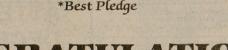
For Communists, the phrase "se cialism with a human face" is insepa rably linked to Dubcek and his it fated reform movement. Gorbache has previously supported econom and social reform in Eastern Europ and pledged the Soviets would no interfere there, but by appropriatin Dubcek's words, he made his poir dramatically.

Some in Prague even took Gorba chev's comments as a public admis sion that the 1968 interventior which led to Dubcek's overthrow was a mistake. The Soviet Union ha not yet renounced the 1968 inter vention, as it has the 1979 invasio of Afghanistan.

In the Pravda article, Gorbache sounded a note of alarm about so cialism by contrasting its presen woes with the adaptibility of capital ism.

Karl Marx was wrong, Gorbache acknowledged, when he predicted capitalism's imminent demise.

Gorbachev defended the 191 revolution that brought the Commu nists to power in the former Russia. Empire as a "world-historical break through to the future," but said so cialism has often been perverte since.



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