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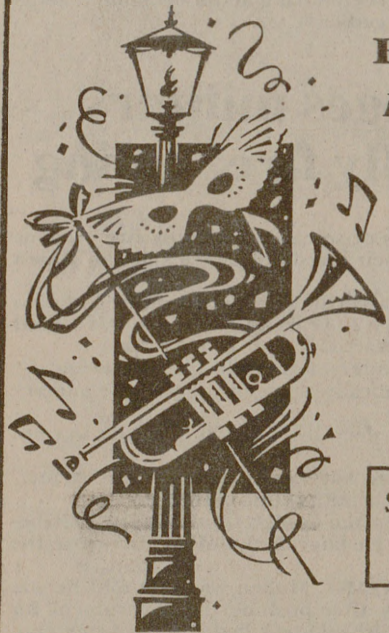
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Gramm: Free trade benefits all

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sen. Phil Gramm says a free trade agreement with Mexico will turn impoverished border communities into prospering, bustling hubs of commerce.

But Sen. Dennis DeConcini says he's afraid an increase in trade could bring more people and pollution to a region where raw sewage is dumped into precious water supplies and residents cope with diseases more common in the Third World than the United States.

"We just cannot afford to do anything that would magnify the bad environment that's on the border already," says DeConcini, D-Ariz. "I don't believe you could get an agreement without the environment playing a major role."

But Mexico's commerce secretary,

Jaime Serra Puche, said last week that environmental issues would not be on the table when Mexico and the United States negotiate an agreement to eliminate tariffs and other trade restraints. He and U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills said environmental questions can be addressed outside the free trade negotiations.

While border states like Texas and Arizona are the gateways to economic opportunities south of the border, their border cities will feel the effects of the increase in trade in a number of conflicting ways, with the net effect ambiguous, according to the International Trade Commission.

Gramm, R-Texas, said he believes that the prosperity that comes with an increase in trade will provide the

revenue to address pollution problems.

"The thing that's causing pollution is poverty. The reason the Rio

"One of the big advantages of free trade agreement will be that Mexico grows and prospers, it will have the capacity to institute



"The thing that's causing pollution is poverty. The reason the Rio Grande is the most polluted river in North America is because the Mexicans are dumping raw sewage into it. ... Free trade will help the environment, not hurt it."

Grande is the most polluted river in North America is because the Mexicans are dumping raw sewage into it," Gramm said.

clean air and clean water provisions. Free trade will help the environment, not hurt it."

Veteran medic returns to serve in Gulf War

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Medal of Honor winner Louis Richard Rocco is ready to go to war again.

The retired Army medic, physician assistant, counselor of veterans and one-time politician is back in the military, ready to save wounded soldiers in the battlefields of the Persian Gulf War.

"I volunteered for it," Rocco said. "I feel very strongly that they need experienced people. They need people who have been in combat before."

"Believe it or not, there are a lot of retirees that want to go." After hearing on television that the military was calling up former physician assistants, 52-year-old Rocco volunteered. Last month he headed to San Antonio and Fort Sam Houston to start getting recertified.

"I had never even given thought (to) coming back to the service," the chief warrant officer said. "I guess it's destiny."

After 22 years in the Army, Rocco left in 1978 but remained involved with veterans by heading counseling programs and becoming director of New Mexico's Veterans Affairs Department.

He later ran for lieutenant governor of New Mexico but lost in the Democratic primary in June 1990.

"I wasn't well-versed in politics, and as a result I was soundly defeated," Rocco said with a laugh.

While clearing up campaign debts and trying to figure out what to do next, Rocco heard about the military's need for physician assistants.

Now he's doing laboratory work and auditing classes. He'll find out in the coming months whether he'll be sent to the Middle East.

In the meantime, Rocco is trying to help young people in the many Army medicine classes at Fort Sam Houston by telling them about his war experiences.

"The medics carry a heavy load," he said. "They're not doctors, but they're expected to perform like doctors under fire."

Rocco did two tours of duty in Vietnam in the mid- and late-1960s and won the Medal of Honor for saving five lives as a medic during the conflict. He later became a physician's assistant, a position requiring more education and training.

Rocco said the young people training to be physician assistants and medics are "wide-eyed" when he speaks to them. "It sort of brings the message home of why they're there," he said.

He tells them about the harsh realities of war.

"There will be a lot of confusion, a lot of noise ... there will be a lot of people screaming," he said. One of the toughest jobs, Rocco said, is staying calm and deciding which patients to care for first.

"It's a little different than reading it from the books," he said. "You will be scared. There's no question you will have a lot of fear."

And, he said, he warns students that some fears may not emerge until years later, in the form of post-traumatic stress disorder.

Rocco said he expects a big difference between Vietnam and the Persian Gulf War to be the threat in the Middle East of chemical or biological warfare.

"It can develop into a nightmare because there will be an enormous amount of casualties," he said.

Another difference, Rocco said, is the possibility more wounds will come from rocket and artillery fire, rather than from smaller weapons common in Vietnam.

Aside from enjoying his return to medical studies, Rocco said, he likes getting back into the familiar military life.

"It's been a ball," he said, explaining that he has met up with several old friends from his Vietnam days. "It's like old home week."

As for his family and close friends, his three grown children and his girlfriend are adjusting to Rocco's rejoining the military.

"They're proud that I'm in," he said.

American Airlines, pilots reach contract agreement

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) — American Airlines pilots would receive annual 4 percent raises under a three-year contract expected to be ratified this week, a union spokesman said Sunday.

A tentative accord reached Saturday between the airline and the Allied Pilots Association would provide annual increases each Aug. 31, union spokesman Wally Pitts told The Associated Press Sunday.

In addition, each of the nearly 9,000 pilots covered by the pact would receive a lump-sum retroactive raise of 8 percent dating to Jan. 1, 1990, Pitts said. That 8 percent would also apply to the pilots' pensions, he said.

After the first increase, American MD-80 captains would earn more than their counterparts at Delta Air Lines, Pitts said. All American pilots would make more than their Delta colleagues by the end of the contract, he said.

Pitts said the contract also would eliminate retirement and vacation disparities between senior pilots and those hired after November, 1983. All pilots would reach top pay range after 6 years, he added.

Union directors are expected to approve the agreement this

week, said Allied Pilots spokesman Tom Hunt.

"I think this is something that American and the pilots can all live with," he said.

The contract replaces one that expired more than a year ago and ends 16 months of talks. The National Mediation Board has been moderating the pilots' contract negotiations at a Washington hotel since Jan. 7.

Talks broke down Jan. 30 when the union rejected an offer that would have increased American's cockpit costs by more than \$1 billion over four years. The breakdown raised the prospect of a 30-day cooling period that, under the bargaining terms, would be required before a strike.

Mediator Harry Bickford pushed the two sides back to the table Monday and kept them there virtually around-the-clock Thursday and Friday. In statements announcing the agreement, the sides called Bickford's efforts "extraordinary."

However, Bickford said he never doubted an agreement would be reached.

The two sides left a handful of issues, including pilot contributions to American's health plan and retiree medical coverage, to be decided by an arbitrator.

PRE-LAW SOCIETY

Meeting Wed. Jan. 13 7:00 p.m. 226 MSC

South Texas College of Law

For Info: Joycelyn Ray 693-2842

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