

# The Washington Post

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01/23

1st: Morning snow.  
2: Low 26.  
Day: Mostly cloudy.  
High 33. Low 26.  
Page C10

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Vs

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## Iowa's Show Nears, but Drama Missing

### Caucuses Inspire Little Passion, Pro or Con

By BILLY BRYAN  
Washington Post Staff Writer

DES MOINES, Jan. 22—The Iowa caucuses have often been the scene of heated battles, big surprises and vigils. But on the eve of the event of Campaign 2000, there is little anticipation and even confusion here about the presidential nomination fights that will be unfolded on Monday night.

In two days of campaigning left behind, the candidates crisscrossed the state today in an effort to build excitement and swell turnout for the caucuses. In the final hours, the candidates have grown more boisterous, but not as much as this week the voters expected more as polite spectators and enthusiastic participants in the process.

"By this time you've got a lot of people talking about the differences between the candidates," said Alan Clark, the

Republican county chairman from Grinnell, Iowa. "I'm just not hearing it. It's just not coming up."

Part of the voters' indifference stems from the lack of suspense about the outcome on Monday night. Texas Gov. George W. Bush is expected to defeat his five Republican rivals in the caucuses, while Vice President Gore has strengthened his commanding lead here over a now-defensive Bill Bradley, who will be forced to rethink his New Hampshire strategy if he suffers a big loss here on Monday.

A poll published in Sunday's editions of the Des Moines Register shows that Bradley has slipped in the past two weeks, with Gore now leading 56 percent to 28 percent. Among Republicans, Bush stands at 43 percent, with magazine publisher Steve Forbes second at 20 percent. No other

See CAMPAIGN, A10, Col. 4



BY DAVE HEAVNER—SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS  
Swanson, at his radio station KTFC near Sioux City, says the seemingly new Iowa caucuses are "just the democratic way of doing things."

### Campaign Diary

## Grass-Roots Tradition Comes Around Again

By VON DREHLE  
Washington Post Staff Writer

SIoux CITY, Iowa—"Not so much" in the words of Don Swanson, a man of God and politics, the Republican Party caucus is "dying out."

Swanson, for instance, Swanson through the door of his home last night, looked surprised and discovered that he had just doubled the attendance. A crowd of about 100 people arrived at a little meeting that was all. "I said, 'By the way, this will never happen again.'"

On Monday night, across Iowa, tens of thousands of citizens will gather to vote in the nominating season. | Page A9

in living rooms and high school gyms to cast the first votes of the presidential campaign. Swanson has volunteered to host one of these gatherings. He's expecting 200 Republicans—from a total of 312 in the precinct—to drive up the dirt road to his radio station, KTFC (that's Keep Talking For Christ).

There, they will vote for their favorite presidential candidates and hash out the Republican philosophy of Concord and Banner townships, two largely rural tracts in the low hills east of Sioux City.

The local caucus—an event half block party, half town hall meeting—is a once-common, now-vanishing tradition.

See CAUCUS, A8, Col. 1

## LA NUEVA VIDA | Latinos in the Washington Region



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ROBINSON-CHAVLZ—THE WASHINGTON POST  
Salvadoran immigrants Maria Rubio, left, and Miriam Mejia ride the bus to their jobs in Fairfax County.

## Hope and Hardship

### Latino Newcomers Struggle to Adapt and Excel

By SYLVIA MORENO,  
PHILIP P. PAN  
and SCOTT WILSON  
Washington Post Staff Writers



Marta Palacios is assistant principal at a District elementary school.

The chest pains were so sharp that autumn Sunday, they left Maria Rubio unable to walk and struggling to breathe in the emergency room of Inova Alexandria Hospital. She still could speak, but panic engulfed her when she realized her words were of no use. She was helpless—until her 19-year-old son arrived to translate.

So began Rubio's trying journey through the health care and social service bureaucracies of Northern Virginia. Rubio, who works in a used-clothing store, received an \$11,000 bill for her three-day hospital stay. Ever since, she has tried in vain to obtain Medicaid or a partial-payment plan. Social workers fluent only in English visit her to ask for statements to a checking account she doesn't have and proof of insurance she can't afford.

"It costs to get help here," Rubio, 49, complains in Spanish. Then, reflecting on the war-ravaged rural village that her family fled nearly a decade ago, she adds: "It's hard here, but it's different than in El Salvador. . . . There is no way to live over there."

"Here, there is a little hope."

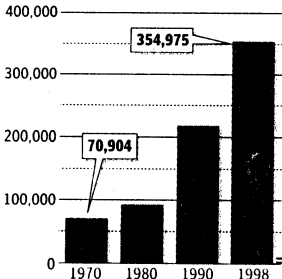
Shaped by the crosscurrents of hardship and optimism, Rubio illustrates a central element of the Latino experience in the Washington region: Though they often cannot communicate with teachers or police or doctors, many must juggle two or three jobs to support children they worry are picking up the worst of American values, though getting a driver's license—much less health insurance—can be a struggle, area Latino residents are remarkably upbeat about their lives and their children's prospects.

An in-depth survey of the area's fast-growing

See LATINOS, A16, Col. 3

## Latino Growth

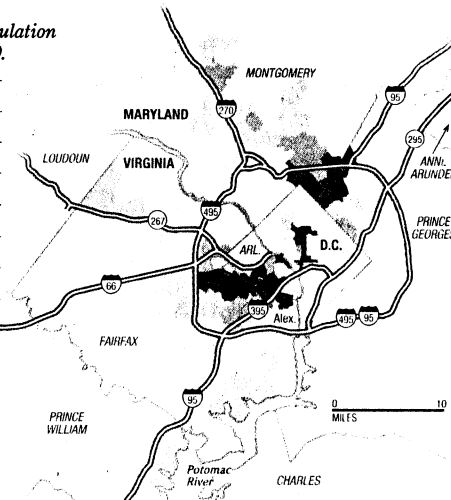
The Washington-area Hispanic population has grown dramatically since 1970.



PERCENT HISPANIC (by Zip code)

|              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| ■ 30 - 36.6% | ■ 15 - 20% |
| ■ 25 - 30%   | ■ 10 - 15% |
| ■ 20 - 25%   | ■ 5 - 10%  |

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau  
MAP BY WILLIAM MCINTYRE—THE WASHINGTON POST



## Civilian Rule Is Restored In Ecuador

### Vice President Takes Power After Foreign Pressure

By STEPHEN BUCKLEY  
and STEVEN DUDLEY  
Washington Post Foreign Service

QUITO, Ecuador, Jan. 22—Ecuador's vice president was elevated to the presidency today after a three-man junta toppled the president but then stepped down itself under pressure from the United States and other foreign powers.

In a fast-moving crisis triggered by this small South American country's severe economic troubles, Vice President Gustavo Noboa took power with support from the head of the armed forces and Congress.

The previous president, Jamil Mahuad, was ousted on Friday after Indian protesters supported by some junior officers in the armed forces stormed the Congress building. They announced a new government led by a three-man junta initially formed of an army colonel, the head of the movement of indigenous people that organized the protests, and a former president of the Supreme Court.

The colonel was then replaced by Gen. Carlos Mendoza, the armed forces chief. He subsequently dissolved the junta and handed over power to Noboa, a 62-year-old former university professor. Mendoza said he did so after discussions with U.S. officials, who threatened to cut foreign aid and discourage foreign investment in Ecuador if power were not restored to the elected government, the Associated Press reported.

"What we were trying to do was prevent the international isolation of Ecuador," Mendoza said, in part because of U.S. pressure.

In Washington, officials confirmed that American policymakers had spoken to Mendoza and others in Quito warning that aid and other support would be at risk if the junta remained in power. The United Nations and the Organization of American States criticized the overthrow of a civilian government, and South America's Mercosur trade bloc—made up of Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay as well as associate members Chile and Bolivia—issued a statement urging Ecuadorians to respect their democratic institutions.

A successful military coup here would have been the first in South America in years and could have encouraged a wave of similar efforts on a continent where several countries are in deep economic crises.

Hundreds of Indians, whose marches and other protests in recent days had led to the weekend's cli-

See ECUADOR, A27, Col. 1

# VP Named Ecuador's President

ECUADOR, From A1

mactic events, fled Quito today. Leaders said they were not happy with Noboa and vowed that they will continue the protests, which were aimed at what they described as Mahuad's corrupt government and detrimental economic policies.

"We don't accept the presidential successor," said Salvador Quishpe, an Indian leader.

Other indigenous leaders said that Indians would refuse to pay their taxes and utility bills as a way of continuing their protests. One leader, who asked not to be identified, said that Indians also might block roads into Quito to prevent food from arriving here.

As in many South American countries, Ecuador has a significant number of citizens who are at least part Indian—about 90 percent here. In Ecuador, people of pure or almost entirely of Indian blood have become a particularly strong political force in recent years because of their numbers—4 million—and aggressive political strategies.

They have been especially vocal in attacking Mahuad's policies. Among them was his plan to replace the slumping Ecuadoran currency, the sucre, with the U.S. dollar as a way of restoring confidence in the economy and slowing inflation. Mahuad's critics said that such a move would have made the savings of Ecuadorans worthless and would have hurt the country's poorest people. In this nation of 12 million, 7 million live in poverty, including a large number of Indians.

Noboa is thought to be ideologically similar to Mahuad—and has vowed to pursue "dollarization"—but the two were one-time political rivals; Noboa lost to Mahuad in the 1998 presidential elections. However, Noboa has close ties to industry and may be able to better sell the economic plan than his predecessor.

Despite the political uncertainty left by the tumultuous events today and Friday, the country remained

peaceful. In Quito, known as the city of eternal spring because of its mild year-round temperatures and its beautiful mountain vistas, shops opened, traffic appeared normal, children played basketball on local courts, and airports and other essential facilities continued to function.

Noboa's elevation to the presidency came after Mahuad went on television Friday night, vowing that he would not leave his position. Even today, he seemed reluctant to accept his ouster, saying, "A thrown-out president does not resign. He is thrown out."

Yet Mahuad also asked Ecuadorans to support the new government, saying that the country had to put Friday's events behind it as quickly as possible. Noboa was approved as president today by a large majority in Congress.

Mahuad reportedly was offered asylum from Chile, but it remained unclear tonight whether he was going to accept it. Mahuad, who took refuge at an air force base and at a private home Friday night, has suggested that he is inclined to remain in the country.

It also remains unclear what will happen to the Indian leaders and military officers who led Friday's attempt to overthrow the government. Their whereabouts were unknown.

When Mahuad took over as Ecuador's president in August 1998, he vowed to reverse one of the nation's most wrenching economic slumps. Ecuador, about the size of Nevada, is burdened with high unemployment and a 60 percent rate of inflation.

But Mahuad was unable to turn things around, and his decision to "dollarize" the Ecuadoran currency proved to be controversial and divisive.

The indigenous protesters had taken over the Congress building as well as the Supreme Court on Friday after a week of relatively peaceful demonstrations in the capital.

Shortly after the takeovers, a three-man government was formed, initially composed of Col. Lucio Gu-

tierrez, Indian leader Antonio Vargas and former Supreme Court president Carlos Solorzano. But it was never clear Friday whether this group had the backing of the military, or of the Ecuadoran population.

Subsequently, armed forces chief Mendoza replaced Gutierrez in the junta and later broke up the junta so Noboa could become president.

The restoration of civilian rule came about after considerable pressure from U.S. officials in Washington and the American embassy in Quito, according to U.S. officials in Washington. Peter Romero, the as-

sistant secretary of state for Latin America and Western Hemispheric Affairs, warned Mendoza by telephone that "Ecuador will find itself isolated" if the junta did not relinquish power, a State Department official said.

"We did vigorously communicate with military leaders there that we were very concerned with constitutional order and democracy, and we believe that played a role," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.



BY FERNANDO LLANO—ASSOCIATED PRESS

**A supporter hugs ousted Ecuadoran President Jamil Mahuad after he unexpectedly appeared on TV.**

Calls also were made by some of the administration's most senior policymakers, including White House national security adviser Samuel R. "Sandy" Berger and Undersecretary of State Thomas Pickering.

*Staff writers John Harris and John Lancaster in Washington contributed to this report.*