February 7th 2007

Hispanic News

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/hispanicnews

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/hispanicnews/189

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Special Collections & Archives at CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Hispanic News by an authorized administrator of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@csusb.edu.
BILL RICHARDSON ENTERS THE PRESIDENTIAL RACE

Bill Richardson, Governor of New Mexico, announced his candidacy for president in late January and formed a presidential exploratory committee, joining a big list of Democratic hopefuls, including Senators Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama that continues to expand at the present time.

The moderate presidential candidate, if elected, would be the first president of Hispanic descent. He has had an extensive government service career in Washington, serving in various professional, elected, and high-level appointed positions and currently at the state level.

Richardson was born in Pasadena, California in November, 1947, to an American father and a Mexican-American mother. He was raised in Mexico City, later moving to Boston at age 13, educated at the local schools. He attended Tufts University, receiving a B.A. in French, and an M.A. in Law and Diplomacy. He is also fluent in Spanish.

After college, Richardson worked at the State Department and a staff member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. In 1978, He moved to Santa Fe, ran for Congress and losing to Congressman Manuel Lujan, who later became Secretary of the Interior.

Four years later, Richardson was elected to the newly created third congressional district. He served in Congress for 14 years, being involved in foreign relations, visiting Nicaragua, Guatemala, Cuba, Peru, India, North Korea and other countries, representing American interests. During his tenure in Congress, he became involved in the causes of the Native American, and successful in passing the Trial Justice Act, Indian American Religious Freedom Act Amendments, American Indian Trust Fund Management Reform Act, and the Native American素质教育 Act, American Indian Trust Fund Management Reform Act, and the Native American素质教育 Act.

He is currently the president of Hispanic Heritage Foundation, and the president of Hispanic Business Circle.

S.B. COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS DELIVER STATE OF EDUCATION ADDRESS

Washington - February 2, 2007 - I am deeply troubled by allegations with respect to the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC). A months-old internal CHC discussion has been re-packaged into accusations with sexual overtones through irresponsible reporting and inflammatory headline writing. Let me repeat: These accusations are categorically untrue.

Many reports this week cite a conversation between California Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez and me, Speaker Nunez has subsequently confirmed that the reports were not accurate. I refer you to an article that appeared in the San Diego Union Tribune on February 1, 2007, in which Speaker Nunez said he had “no recollection” of being at a meeting with me where any slur was made, and added that he thinks he would remember if such “harsh” language had been used.

I wish to clear up concerns raised about the CHC election of its leadership. The election was held on November 15, 2006, when I was not yet serving in the Chair position and thus I did not administer the voting process.

LOUISE AYALA-S.B. SCHOOL DISTRICT NEW VOICE

Louise Ayala was elected to the San Bernardino School District Board of Trustees, after the November 7, 2006 election. Louise Ayala, a retired teacher, ran a strong campaign and garnered third place in a field of eight candidates, edging out an incumbent in the race.

Ayala stated, “As a member of the school board, I am committed to progressively providing full leadership and effectively communicating what I see as the vision for educational services to our children’s precious resources.”

She has publicly stated that as a board member she will strive for the school district board to be recognized for accountability-stressing academic excellence and sound fiscal management; outstanding customer relations; recognizing that board members are public servants and communicating with customers, that is, students, parents, and employees; and trustworthy-ness-earning and maintaining the public’s trust is essential to the success.
leges, the workforce and citizenship: Smaller Learning Communities: The U.S. Department of Education awarded a $9.7 million grant to San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools (SBCSS) that will benefit 31,000 students in 10 additional high schools in San Bernardino and Riverside counties. There are now a total of 19 high schools in the county restructuring their schools into Smaller Learning Communities, where courses are designed to connect students with real-world interests and prepare them for college, work and citizenship.

Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID): Of the 935 seniors in 2007, 56 were involved in AVID programs at 31 county high schools, 753 or 80.5 percent were accepted to four-year colleges. The counties of Riverside, Inyo, Mono and San Bernardino include 22,000 AVID students enrolled in junior and high school programs.

Alliance for Education: In a little more than four years, our County Schools' Alliance for Education program has partnered with 1,200 businesses, labor, communities and faith-based organizations to bring real-world education opportunities to students.

S.B. COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS DELIVER STATE OF EDUCATION ADDRESS

Highlights from the address included:

- Nineteen schools in 11 county districts were recognized as California Distinguished Schools; Five California School Board Association Golden Bells were awarded to county schools and districts; Ten county schools were designated Title I High Achieving Schools.
- Rick LeVan, a science and math teacher at Canyon Middle School in the Yucaipa-Calimesa District was named California Teacher of the Year; North Tamarind Elementary School in Fontana Unified was one of only 10 schools statewide to exit Program Improvement in Year 4.
- County Schools has constructed six permanent school facilities, part of a total of 156 classrooms, to date. SBCSS dedicated three new facilities: Barbara Phelps County High School, Frost County Early Education Center and the Mulberry County Early Education Center.
- Gov. Schwarzenegger's 2007-08 budget proposes two controversial fund shifts that breach the integrity and accountability system that continues to address the needs of high quality, accessible and equitable education for all students, but takes into consideration those states that have established strong accountability systems of their own, Fischer said.
- County Schools has a newly formed District Accountability Support Department that will provide schools and districts with unfettered support to assess structure and respond to specific needs of underperforming groups of students. The new department is critical to the ability of schools and districts to be able to develop and implement powerful instructional delivery systems that can be sustained over time.
- In education, we are no longer just in the business of developing minds, we are in the business of building lives," Fischer said. "Educate a child, and together we will build communities — one school, one teacher, one parent, one partner, one student at a time."

The No Child Left behind Act (NCLB) marks its fifth anniversary and Congress will be considering its reauthorization. The main controversy in California continues to be that API and AYP measure academic success differently. California's system rewards schools for showing improvement from year-to-year, while a school that doesn't meet proficiency targets for one group of students is penalized under the federal system. NCLB's reauthorization this year needs to include a better funded, less rigid, accountability system that continues to address the needs of high quality, accessible and equitable education for all students, but takes into consideration those states that have established strong accountability systems of their own, Fischer said.

San Bernardino includes 22,000 AVID students enrolled in junior and high school programs.

The new department is critical to the ability of schools and districts to be able to develop and implement powerful instructional delivery systems that can be sustained over time.
other legislations vital to Native American issues.

Richardson made trips to Baghdad, meeting with Saddam Hussein and negotiating the release of two American workers. He was also successful in negotiations in the Sudan and North Korea.

Richardson was appointed Ambassador to the United Nations by President Clinton in 1997; later appointed Secretary of Energy in 1998. After the Clinton Presidency, Richardson taught at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and later joined the Kissinger-McLarty Associates as Senior Management Director. He was also lecturer at the Armand Hammer United World College of the American West.

In 2002, Richardson was elected governor of New Mexico, defeating Republican candidate John Sanchez, 56-39, the only Hispanic governor in the United States.

During his tenure as governor, he proposed tax cuts to promote growth, personal income tax cuts, transferring state funds to meet current expenses and projects, able to provide $400,000 in life insurance coverage for New Mexico National Guard members serving in active duty, and a large scale public infrastructure improvements throughout the state.

He continued to be involved in foreign policy. In 2003, he met with a delegation from North Korea at their request, and in 2006, at the request of the White House, he met with a delegation from North Korea. The popular governor won his second gubernatorial race in November 2002, defeating Republican can West.

As a lecturer at the Armand Hammer United World College of the American West, Richardson has run as an underdog and was successful. Politicians have indicated a potential vice president, but his goal is as a presidential candidacy, and indications are that he will be working hard toward a win. On the Iraq War, Richardson supported a phased withdrawal of American troops, with diplomatic efforts to broker a peace among that country's ethnic and religious factions. He also suggests talking to Iran and Syria to seek their aid in ending the conflict.

The surge that the president wants to bring about will make more sectarian conflict, and the American people are against it, he said.

On the immigration issue, Richardson supports an overhaul of current laws to provide a path to citizenship for long-term illegal residents who can prove they are otherwise law-abiding residents. Richardson has been married to his high school sweetheart, the former Barbara Flavin, for 33 years.

He has been nominated four times for the Nobel Peace Prize for negotiating the release of hostages in Iraq, Sudan, and Cuba.

The election adhered to the established rules and procedures of the CHC so there should be no question about the validity of the process or the outcome. Our bylaws make no mention of secret ballots, simply requiring that there be an affirmative vote of a majority of the CHC Members.

As no Member requested a secret ballot for herself or himself, the candidates were reviewed individually by voice (to nominate and second) and by show of hands (to approve the nominations). There was a straight up-or-down vote on the Chair position, and I was elected as the CHC Chair.

Some Members sent a letter to the current CHC Chair and the former CHC Chair at the start of the new Congress, expressing concerns with the election, which of course, was their right. To address these concerns, Members discussed the points in the letter during an executive session of the CHC business meeting held on January 11, 2007 and voted to hold a secret ballot vote at the next CHC meeting. On January 18, 2007 CHC Members voted (by secret ballot) to ratify the November 2006 election. Although this meeting was open to all CHC Members, none of the Members who have since expressed concern attended the executive session.

On the issue regarding seniority in the CHC — for the Chair position, I was the only candidate who chose to run. No other Members at the November 15th meeting said they would want to serve as Chair, and no other Members were nominated. It is inaccurate to say that a more senior Member was formally running to be CHC Chair.

As to matters concerning BOLDPAC, these issues have been discussed, reported, and laid to rest. I abstained from voting on the issue of distribution of funds to my sons' campaigns. However, upon coming to light, my sons returned the money to BOLDPAC immediately on their own accord.

I was sworn in as CHC Chair barely three weeks ago, but in that short time I have advanced the leadership and stature of our female members in many ways, including:

- Appointing Representative Solis as Chair of the Health & Environment Task Force.
- Recommending Representative Velazquez as Chair of the Economic Development Task Force.
- Recommending Representative Loretta Sanchez as Chair of the Banking & Finance Taskforce as well as Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Banking & Finance.
- Recommending Representative Linda Sanchez as Chair of the Civil Rights Task Force and as Vice-Chair of the Labor Task Force.
- Appointing Representative Solis to the National Association of Latino Elected Officials (NALEO) Board.
- Asking Governor Dean to give Representative Velazquez a speaking role at the Democratic national convention.

Also, my Chief of Staff, who has been an invaluable colleague and friend for almost 12 years, is a Latina and the majority of my staff is composed of very competent and dedicated Hispanic women.

The CHC will continue to work on behalf of the Hispanic community. We are facing urgent and critical issues now. We cannot allow distractions or personality conflicts to interfere with the important work we are doing on issues including education, healthcare, immigration reform, small businesses and other issues that impact the Hispanic community.

As a loving husband and father of two daughters, I look forward to making them proud of the work that we accomplish in the CHC. As CHC Chair, I look forward to continuing to work with all Members of Congress who are committed to the welfare of the Hispanic community and our nation. We must continue to work together for the betterment of our community.

The CHC Bylaws state: "The Officers shall be selected at a meeting of the Caucus held during the organizational caucuses period for the new Congress by the affirmative vote of a majority of Caucus Members. Newly elected Hispanic Members of Congress who intend to become Caucus Members shall be allowed to vote in the election of Caucus officers."

SALE REPRESENTATIVE WANTED

The IEHN is seeking tenative persons as sales representatives within the INLAND EMPIRE.

GOOD commissions.

Call (909) 381-6259 for appointment.
WASHINGTON – Two out of every three Hispanics now believe that U.S. troops should be brought home from Iraq as soon as possible and only one in four thinks the U.S. made the right decision in using military force, according to a new survey by the PEW Hispanic Center.

Hispanics have generally expressed more negative views toward the war compared with the rest of the population. The latest survey, however, shows an even stronger opposition on the part of Hispanics, especially when it comes to keeping troops in Iraq.

Two thirds of Hispanics (66%) now favor bringing troops home as soon as possible, up from 51% in January 2005. Conversely, the share of Hispanics who favored keeping troops in Iraq until the situation there has stabilized has declined from 37% to 19%.

Native-born Hispanics are generally more supportive of the war than their foreign-born counterparts. But in the latest survey, the native born are almost as adamant about bringing troops home as the foreign born (62% vs. 68% respectively).

The general public also is more inclined to bring the troops home, but not to the same extent as Hispanic. A survey of the general population by the PEW Research (50%) favored bringing troops home as soon as possible, up from 41% in January 2005. The changing attitude toward the war is also evident in the answer to a basic question: Do you think the U.S. made the right decision or the wrong decision in using military force against Iraq? Since 2004, a third or more of Hispanics responded that using military force was the right decision. In the latest survey, only 24% of Hispanics agreed with that assessment. That is down from 39% in April/May 2004 and from 31% in August/October 2006.

PROGRESS AND PROMISE IN THE WAR ON CANCER

By John R. Seffrin

Here's some good news for the millions of people nationwide whose lives have been touched by cancer: We now know how to win the war on this feared disease.

Scientific advances over the past 30 years have resulted in enormous progress against cancer. The American Cancer Society recently reported that the number of cancer deaths dropped by 3,014 in 2004, despite an older and larger population. This followed a drop of 369 deaths from cancer in 2003, the first decline since nationwide data was first compiled 70 years ago. Age-adjusted cancer death rates, measured as proportion of the population, have been declining for years.

There are many hopeful trends such as these, but as all too many of us know, cancer continues to be one of our biggest health problems. An estimated 1.4 million Americans will be told they have cancer this year, including more than 151,000 in California. Cancer will kill an estimated 560,000 Americans and 55,000 Californians this year, remaining the second-leading cause of death in this country.

We can conquer cancer once and for all, but doing so will require an immediate and unfailing commitment to medical research and established methods of prevention, early detection, and treatment. It is up to our elected leaders to embrace that commitment by investing the necessary funds for cancer research and vital cancer-fighting programs.

Unfortunately, federal cancer funding has been inadequate in recent years. The last Congress voted to cut the budget of the National Institutes of Health for the first time in 35 years, and funding for cancer research and cancer control programs was reduced for the first time in more than a decade.

Worse still, the president's proposed budget for the current fiscal year included an additional $40 million cut for the National Cancer Institute, when the NCI estimated it would take a $296 million increase to maintain current services and provide for minimal growth.

Consider the progress we've already made. In the 1950s, only a third of those diagnosed with cancer survived for at least five years. Today, two-thirds of cancer patients reach that milestone. America's investment in cancer research reduced cancer mortality rates by nearly 14 percent between 1991 and 2004, saving 544,500 lives.

Death rates for colorectal cancer have dropped by 25 percent nationally since the 1970s. The development of colon cancer screening tests and treatments has led to a 90 percent five-year survival rate for early stage diagnoses. The same is true for breast cancer.

In the 1950s, the survival rate for localized breast cancer was 80 percent. Today it is nearly 100 percent, in large part because of mammography and drugs developed and tested by NIH-supported scientists.

We have an impressive record to build upon in the fight against cancer. But further progress depends on whether elected officials will commit to defeating the disease. We cannot afford to cut or freeze federal research funding. Rather, lawmakers should support research at levels that at least keep pace with rising costs.

At the same time, we need to make health care reform a national priority. If we are to win the war on cancer, we must reevaluate the structure of our nation's health care system to address disparities in quality care.

More than 300 lawmakers have signed the promise, signaling their support for making cancer a national priority.

Let's not jeopardize the gains we've made against cancer. The costs of such a mistake would be felt for generations to come.

John R. Seffrin is the national chief executive officer of the American Cancer Society and its sister advocacy organization, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

For cancer information anytime, call (800) ACS-2345, or visit www.cancer.org

REP. BACA LEADS EFFORT TO HONOR CESAR CHAVEZ;

As Nation Honors Martin Luther King, Baca Reminds Colleagues of Another Civil Rights Hero

Washington, D.C. - Rep. Joe Baca (D-California) introduced a resolution that calls upon Congress and the President to establish a national holiday in honor of Cesar Chavez, the civil rights advocate and labor organizer.

Rep. Baca said, “As we honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. this week, let us also remember the legacy of Cesar Chavez. Dr. King and Cesar Chavez are often spoken of as two of the greatest civil rights leaders in American history. Their devotion to the advancement of all Americans has left an indelible mark on the hearts and minds of our great nation. While we rightly acknowledge the achievements and contributions of Dr. King by celebrating Martin Luther King Day, we should give recognition also to Cesar Chavez, an American hero and role model.”

Cesar Chavez Day is celebrated as a holiday in states including AZ, CA, CO, IL, MI, NM, TX, UT and WI. On this day, (March 31), dozens of cities throughout the nation provide students, teachers, businesses and community members with the unique opportunity to learn about Cesar Chavez and advance his values and principles. Thousands of people across the country observe this day by participating in volunteer, educational and cultural activities within their communities.

Chavez was the founder of the United Farm Workers of America (UFW), the first successful farm workers union in American history. For more than three decades, he led the UFW, achieving dignity, respect, fair wages, medical coverage, pension benefits, and humane living conditions, as well as countless other rights and protections for hundreds of thousands of farm workers, especially migrant workers who engage in demanding labor.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, the first Hispanic American to be recognized in this way.

Rep. Baca said, “The creation of a national holiday will not only honor a great man but also educate Americans about Cesar Chavez and help ensure his legacy continues to inspire others to continue his fight for the fair and just treatment of workers.”

Cesar Chavez was a humble leader who fought for social change by employing the principles of non-violence practiced by Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, including peaceful demonstrations, boycotts, strikes, and pilgrimages.

His leadership on behalf of workers helped achieve the first industry-wide labor contracts in the history of American agriculture and brought about the passage of the groundbreaking 1975 California Agriculture Labor Relations Act to protect farm workers. This remains the only law in the nation that protects farm workers' rights to unionize.

He is especially admired within the Latino community, and a national holiday in his honor would make him the first Hispanic American to be recognized in this way.

Wednesday, February 7, 2007
SENATOR GLORIA NEGRETE MCLEOD APPOINTED TO CHAIR THE SENATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

SACRAMENTO - State Senator Gloria Negrete McLeod (D-Inland Empire) was appointed chair of the Senate Local Government Committee by Senate President pro Tem Don Perata.

Negrete McLeod's committee is responsible for the state laws that govern nearly 5,000 local governments throughout California. The committee also has jurisdiction over local land use planning and development decisions, public financing and local boundaries.

Committee members oversee legislation that affects local governments' revenue and spending powers including measures on property tax allocation, extraordinary property tax rates, and redetermination agencies' property tax increment financing and special taxes. "With our skyrocketing growth, the Inland Empire faces serious challenges," Negrete McLeod said. "I am ready and eager to provide the leadership that our local communities want."

One of the crucial issues facing the Inland Empire is growth around local airports. Negrete McLeod said. "How to develop land near our airports like Ontario International, Chino Airport and San Bernardino International Airport requires that we pay attention to the long-range consequences of our planning," she said.

Senator Gloria Negrete McLeod represents the 32nd District which includes San Bernardino, Ontario, Fontana, Rialto, Colton, Pomona and Montclair.

VENGER UNDERESTIMATE YOUR CONNECTIONS.

Charter Business®

Choose customized and scalable fiber solutions or bundled phone, Internet, data networking and digital TV/music packages and connect with your most important partners.

- Fiber solutions: completely customized TLS, private line, optical business Internet and WAN serviced from a redundant network and connectivity into One Wilshire.
- Telephone: fully featured and tailored to your business needs.
- Internet: lightning fast, up to 8 Mbps download and 2 Mbps upload.
- Digital TV and music: Up to 300 of your favorite channels available.

Connect with Charter Business.
1-877-NEW-DATA • Call now for up to 20% off.
Wednesday, February 7, 2007

TRANSIENT SERVITUDE: THE U.S. GUEST WORKER PROGRAM FOR EXPLOITING MEXICAN AND CENTRAL AMERICAN WORKERS

By Richard D. Vogel

Introduction

Defining moments in the history of a nation are time and again overshadowed by the drama of war. These critical events are often domestic policy decisions that affect the immediate state of a country and have serious consequences for the future. Significant examples in U.S. history include: the initial decision of the revolutionary government to found a republic dedicated to the lofty principles of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" but embracing slavery, a contradiction that ultimately led to civil war; the decision to prematurely end reconstruction efforts in the South after the Civil War, a policy reversal that allowed the long-term oppression and exploitation of the emancipated slaves and their descendents; and the decision during the Second World War to encourage the mass migration of poor African Americans from the rural South to the industrial centers of the Midwest and Northeast to support the war economy, a hazardous resettlement program that resulted in the ghettoization and continued oppression of a significant national minority.

The United States is currently at war and, simultaneously, at another historical crossroad of domestic policy that will not only undermine the economic life of working people, but will tax the social and political institutions of the nation at large. The stakes of the unfolding U.S. strategy to exploit millions of Mexican and Central American laborers as transient servants through a national guest worker program are staggering.

Since a major component of the plan is to reduce the unauthorized migrant population currently residing and working in the United States, a look at the target population suggests the scope of the strategy and its consequences.

Richard D. Vogel is an independent writer and the author of "Stolen Birthrights: The U.S. Conquest of the Mexican People."

IEHN recommendation: readers may want to read the entire analytical article on the following link: Monthly Review—January 2007 http://www.monthlyreview.org/0107vogel.htm

ASSAMBLEPERSON CARTER ANNOUNCES EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLEGE GRADUATES

Assembly Member William Ammann Carter (D-San Bernardino) announced today the availability of applications for the 2007-2008 Jesse Marvin Unruh Assembly Fellowship Program. The eleven-month program provides college graduates the opportunity to become full-time Assembly-staff working with Assembly Members on fiscal and policy issues in Sacramento. Fellows receive a monthly stipend, plus health, dental and vision benefits.

"The Assembly Fellowship Program offers post-baccalaureate students and mid-career professionals the opportunity to expand their knowledge and understanding of the legislative process," Assembly Member Carter noted. "It is a valuable experience that serves as the foundation for successful careers in both the private and public sectors."

Qiana Charles, a graduate of California State University at San Bernardino, served as a fellow in 2004-05. During her fellowship, Charles worked on a number of policy issues including transportation, healthcare, economic development, and childhood obesity. She now is employed as Legislative Analyst to the California State Association of Counties. "The fellowship is an amazing opportunity to expand your knowledge of policy and politics," Charles said. "It was by far the most rewarding and challenging experience of my life."

Applicants must have earned their undergraduate degree by September 2007. No specific major is preferred, and individuals with advanced degrees or in mid-career also are urged to apply. Brochures are available at Assembly Member Carter's District Office at 335 N. Riverside Avenue in Rialto. Applications are available online at www.csus.edu/cale/assembly.

The postmark deadline for submitting applications to the program is February 28, 2007.

VIETNAM ALL OVER AGAIN

By Bobby Muller, AlterNet

As a soldier who fought in the Vietnam War — the United States' only lost war — President Bush's imminent decision to increase the U.S. force in Iraq by thousands of troops brings to mind events more than thirty years old.

In 1968, shortly after Clark Clifford succeeded Robert McNamara as Secretary of Defense, Secretary Clifford met with the Joint Chiefs of Staff to discuss the war in Vietnam. He quickly learned that America's top military leaders did not know how many troops were needed nor did they know what constituted victory.

During March 1968, despite this discovery, President Johnson agreed to send 24,500 more troops to Vietnam on an emergency basis. President Johnson and Secretary Clifford thought that this increase in U.S. troops would lead to U.S. victory there. And in an address to the nation on March 31, President Johnson stated: "We have no intention of widening this war."

At that time, approximately 24,000 U.S. service members had died in Vietnam. By the end of that war, more than 58,000 U.S. troops had been killed. More U.S. soldiers died winding down the war than had in starting it. In addition, by the end of the war, the United States had greatly expanded the war into Cambodia and Laos.

But, little more than a year later, after he left office, Clifford wrote: "Nothing we might do to be so beneficial ... as to begin to withdraw the United States from Vietnam. Moreover, we cannot realistically expect to achieve anything more through our military force, and the time has come to begin to disengage."

By recommending to President Bush that U.S. troops in Iraq should be increased, with no clear plan for achieving victory there, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates risks following in the footsteps of Clark Clifford. As with Secretary Clifford, Secretary Gates has succeeded the architect of a U.S. military failure. Like Clifford, Gates has proven incapable of calling for a dramatic change in course.

Iraq is in the midst of a civil war. In addition, some in the U.S. government blame neighbors such as Iran and Syria for exacerbating sectarian tensions in Iraq. Increasing the number of U.S. troops in Iraq increases the likelihood that the United States will be pulled further into an intra-Iraqi struggle and deploying a second aircraft carrier to the Persian Gulf — apparently in an effort to warn Syria and Iran and to increase the flexibility for commanders in the region — reminds me of the decision by U.S. military and civilian leadership to expand the war in Vietnam beyond the borders of that country.

Today, the U.S. military is, in the words of the Pentagon, stretched "to the breaking point." Almost 30 percent of the 1.5 million U.S. service members who have been deployed since September 11, 2001 have been deployed more than once. Thousands of members of Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) have been called up in what many term a "backdoor draft." Military recruiters are struggling to meet their goals; the Pentagon is considering greatly increasing the number of noncitizens in the U.S. military; more than 16,000 single mothers are in the U.S. military and have been deployed. And, most importantly, more than 3,000 service members have been killed in Iraq and tens of thousands wounded. Finally, more than $350 billion has been spent on the Iraq war.

It is time for the U.S. Congress to ensure that the voice of the American people — including the voices of those who have served in Iraq and before — are heard. Clearly, President Bush missed the central lesson of the November elections and the Iraq Study Group: that Americans want a dramatic change in course in Iraq, one that does not include deepening the U.S. involvement there. Fortunately, not only Democrats have come out opposing the surge. Most prominently, Republican Senators Chuck Hagel, Gordon Smith, Susan Collins, and Norm Coleman have made clear their opposition to the president's plan.

Hard questions must be asked regarding the possibility of increasing the number of U.S. troops in Iraq; the effect that such a choice will have on those who have volunteered to serve their country in the military must be carefully considered.

With such a small percentage of the U.S. population bearing the vast majority of the burden of the war in Iraq, the sense of shared sacrifice has been lost. The social contract between service members and their government and society must be repaired. It is time for members of Congress — Democrats and Republicans alike — to come together to make it clear to President Bush the folly of the surge.

Otherwise, the United States risks repeating the failures of Vietnam.

Bobby Muller is President of Veterans for America (formerly the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation), and a co-recipient of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize. http://www.alternet.org/story/46549/
We work hard to keep your employees working hard
Are you a business owner whose bottom line is being impacted by employee sick days, illnesses or accidents? We can help.

ARMC’s full-service Occupational Medicine Program offers:
- Comprehensive treatment of job-related injuries
- Injury prevention programs, including on-site ergonomic evaluations
- State-of-the-art medical imaging services, including multi-slice CT scans and MRI
- Cutting-edge rehabilitation services focusing on employees’ timely return to work
- Full-service pharmacy

For additional information, call (909) 580-1100.

The Heart Of A Healthy Community

Metrolink’s new late-night Saturday service makes it easy to get close to the action. Experience the excitement of Saturday nights downtown, including our L.A. Kings "Lucky Charm" ticket package this St. Patrick’s Day—get a game ticket, train ticket, and hot dog and soda voucher all for as little as $25. To order, go to metrolinktrains.com and click the "Kings" button or call (213) 763-4664.

Weekend tickets 25% off
Kids 5 and under ride free
metrolinktrains.com
800-371-LINK