

By GREG HITT

Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
TIERRA AMARILLA, N.M. — Moises Morales is a Democrat and a sitting county commissioner. He also is supporting the re-election of Republican Rep. Bill Redmond this fall.

The reason for his endorsement, offered before the Democrats pick a challenger early next month, is Mr. Morales's Hispanic heritage. Mr. Redmond is championing legislation that would create a presidential commission to study the validity of disputed land grants dating to the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, which ended the Mexican-American War in 1848. The treaty was supposed to protect the property rights of Mexican citizens in territories claimed by the U.S., but didn't in many cases.

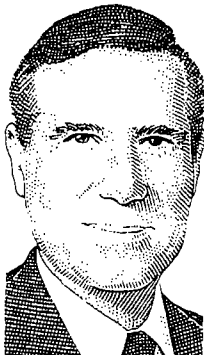
The controversy has echoes of Old West injustices, but is more than the stuff of legend for the thousands of descendants of heirs to land lost or stolen after the war. "This is a wound that goes very, very deep," Mr. Redmond says. His efforts to reach out to "Hispanos," as Hispanics are known here, track a model recommended by party strategists working to repair the GOP's shaky support among those voters.

The 1996 election revealed a sharp drop in GOP support among Hispanics — linked to a series of GOP initiatives, including a proposal to designate English as the national language — and the weakness continues. Nationwide polls by both the GOP and Democrats show a majority of Hispanic voters supporting Democrats over Republicans. A recent Democratic poll also said 63% of such voters feel the GOP takes them for granted.

GOP Ambivalence on Food Stamps

Senate approval this week of a bill restoring food-stamp benefits to the most vulnerable legal immigrants illustrates the Republican problem. While Texas GOP Gov. George W. Bush has supported restoring benefits, which were cut during welfare overhaul two years ago, GOP Sen. Phil Gramm of Texas has argued against it. The Senate measure faces an uncertain future in the House, where GOP leaders, among them Majority Leader Dick Armey of Texas, are working against it.

"These factors add up to a high potential for victory in crucial districts," Texas Democratic Rep. Martin Frost, chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, wrote in a memo distrib-



Rep. Bill Redmond

uted at a recent Capitol Hill meeting. Democrats are plotting ways to boost turnout in about a dozen open or GOP-controlled districts across the U.S. with significant Hispanic populations. They also hope to pad the vote for six Democratic incumbents who have large blocs of Hispanic voters but won only 53% of the vote or less in 1996.

Long term, the stakes are huge. The number of Hispanic Americans is swelling rapidly, and the Census Bureau estimates they could surpass blacks as the nation's largest minority group as early as 2005. GOP leaders feel the party's broad economic and profamily message is appealing to the Hispanic electorate, so rather than tailor a specific agenda, they are working to improve communication.

"Sometimes, as Republicans, we're so convinced of the rightness of our policy, we don't take enough time to listen," says Patricia Harrison, co-chairman of the Republican National Committee.

Mr. Redmond, a trained family counselor, says that's what he does best: "You put your ear to the ground and listen."

High Hopes for Democrats

Democratic strategists have drawn a bull's-eye on the conservative minister, who won a three-way race in a special election a year ago with 43% of the vote. The win was considered a shocking fluke in a district where Democrats outnumber Republicans 2-to-1 and where Hispanics make up more than 30% of the voters. Recapturing the district, long held by Democrat Bill Richardson, now the United Nations ambassador, figures in virtually every Democratic scenario for picking up the 11 seats needed to gain control of the House.

But Mr. Redmond isn't rolling over. Although he says his involvement in the land-grant issue isn't motivated by politics, the effort has created opportunities.

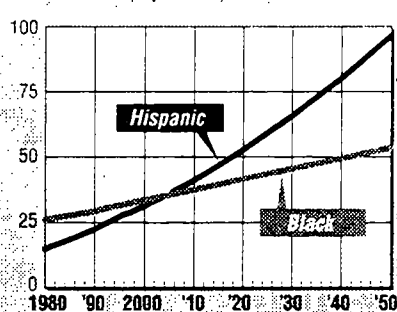
And Democrat Moises Morales is sticking with him. "I don't think people are blind anymore," says Mr. Morales, bitter at his own party's inaction. "I wish him all the luck."

Mr. Morales's hometown of Tierra Amarilla sits on a high plain east of the Continental Divide and is crowded by mountains, snow-tipped even in May. The weathered town is in the heart of New Mexico's Third Congressional District, and like much of the state, it is a worn crossroads of Anglo and Hispanic culture.

Mr. Morales shifts easily from Spanish to English as customers trail through his auto-parts store. His hands are black with grease from working on a powder-blue Chevy Blazer. The 50-year-old Mr. Morales is mainstream, but a mural painted by children on the front of his

Shifting Demographics

Resident U.S. population, in millions



Note: Figures for 1997-2050 are projections
 Source: Census Bureau

garage hints at a rebellious past, and underscores the depth of the bitterness Mr. Redmond has tapped into. The painting commemorates the "Alianza" land-grant movement of the 1960s and an armed raid on the nearby Rio Arriba County Courthouse in 1967. Mr. Morales was among 20 men who attempted to make a citizen's arrest of the district attorney. Two officers were shot, hostages taken and the National Guard was called to track those who fled into Kit Carson National Forest.

The protesters were eventually arrested, and the drama faded, but many in the community still proudly hold on to the black-and-white "Tierra O Muerto" posters that went up around the state after the raid.

'Fighting for Something That's True'

Today, the push for change comes within the system, and activists such as Mr. Morales are pinning their hopes on Rep. Redmond, who moved to Los Alamos, N.M., from Chicago 10 years ago. "I don't agree with the raid," Mr. Redmond says. "It was wrong. But the bottom line is they were fighting for something that's true."

Others have attempted to resolve the issue in the past. In fact, Mr. Redmond's bill, while written in consultation with local land-grant activists, builds on a measure introduced by former Rep. Richardson just before he went to the U.N. "He basically left it orphaned," Mr. Redmond says.

Mr. Richardson commends Mr. Redmond for getting House Speaker Newt Gingrich's endorsement for the bill, but he says that "it's important not to raise expectations," because a final solution "involves very complicated issues." Mr. Richardson beat Mr. Redmond handily in the 1996 election, before accepting the U.N. appointment.

For all of his efforts to reach out, what Mr. Redmond can't mask is a conservative record Democrats consider out of step with the district. His likely Democratic challenger is Tom Udall, 49, the two-term attorney general of New Mexico who leads a field of eight candidates vying for the Democratic nomination in the June 2 primary. Mr. Udall's father, Stewart Udall, was a congressman and headed the Interior Department for Presidents Kennedy and Johnson.

Perhaps with the prospect of a tough race this fall in mind, Mr. Redmond is striking a less strident tone, a change not lost on old GOP hands in New Mexico. "Redmond is sounding more and more liberal," says Republican David Cargo, who was governor when the Tierra Amarilla courthouse raid occurred.

In Tierra Amarilla, Mr. Morales's endorsement of Mr. Redmond is mixed with skepticism and the knowledge that others have vowed change but haven't accomplished it. "I hope he has a good heart," Mr. Morales says. "I hope he doesn't turn out like all the rest."

U.S. Embassies Stop Assisting Tobacco Firms

By CARLA ANNE ROBBINS
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Staff Reporters of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WASHINGTON — The U.S. is pressing its embassies to stop helping American tobacco companies overseas, lending the government's weight to the mounting war on smoking around the world.

A State Department cable addressed to all American embassies bars them from "promot[ing] the sale or export of tobacco or tobacco products" overseas. The cable, dated Feb. 14, 1998 and obtained by The Wall Street Journal, also directs U.S. diplomatic posts to support, rather than challenge, local antismoking laws and regulations that may reduce U.S. tobacco company sales, as long as they are applied "in a nondiscriminatory manner to both imported and domestic tobacco."

International public-health officials said the State Department cable would boost their efforts to promote antismoking policies, especially to governments in the developing world. "American diplomatic posts have not been a place where we previously thought to look for assistance. . . . Now with that [cable] in hand, we can," said Neil Collishaw, acting chief of the tobacco health unit at the United Nations World Health Organization in Geneva.

In more bad news for the tobacco industry, the European Parliament yesterday approved a near-total ban on tobacco advertising despite frenzied last-minute lobbying by cigarette companies, the advertising industry and media interests.

The restrictions, which had been widely expected, will be phased in over an eight-year period. They will prohibit tobacco ads on billboards, in newspapers and magazines; prohibit tobacco sponsorship of sporting events; and even prevent tobacco companies from putting logos on nontobacco products, including clothing.

U.S. tobacco companies, counting on expanding overseas markets to make up for slack sales at home, played down the

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significance of the State Department cable, saying it still ensured their protection from trade discrimination. "The U.S. government is still committed to seeking fair treatment for all U.S. exports," said Owen Smith, vice president and deputy general counsel for Philip Morris Cos.

At the same time, tobacco company officials acknowledged increasingly chilly relations with U.S. embassies overseas — a far cry from the 1980s and early 1990s when U.S. diplomats championed tobacco as a high-cash U.S. export. Even before the cable, "the days of American ambassadors embracing Joe Camel were long over," said a top U.S. official.

Nevertheless, until now there have been no written rules telling U.S. diplomats overseas how to handle tobacco companies on issues ranging from sales promotion to trade cases. The new instructions explicitly bar U.S. ambassadors and embassy staff from attending or supporting tobacco-related "receptions, trade promotions, or any events . . . where their attendance could be construed as United States government support."

The State Department cable was the result of an interagency review of U.S. tobacco policies overseas, begun after last year's proposed tobacco settlement. The cable is also a codification of a little-noted amendment to last year's Commerce-State-Justice appropriations legislation championed by Democratic Rep. Lloyd Doggett of Texas.

"The point of the cable is that advancing public health is good foreign policy," said Michael Eriksen, director of the Office on Smoking and Health at the Centers for Disease Control.

Officials said the cable also reflects a more nuanced approach to tobacco trade cases overseas. In particular, officials point to a paragraph in the cable directing U.S. posts to refer any suspected cases of trade discrimination back to Washington for review not only by the U.S. trade representative but also "health and other appro-

priate agencies."

In 1993, representatives from the Department of Health and Human Services have had a seat on two key U.S. Trade Representative committees reviewing tobacco cases. Their influence on trade decisions has grown in recent years, officials say.

As an example of that changed approach, officials say the Clinton administration late last year refused to challenge a Thai government regulation requiring cigarette companies to disclose their brand-specific ingredients.

The issue has been brewing since 1992. And in 1995, then-U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor indicated that he considered the regulation a violation of the cigarette companies' intellectual-property rights. That position changed last year — the result of intense lobbying by U.S. health officials.

The U.S. embassy in Bangkok recently questioned the Thai government closely to ensure that any information disclosed is not used to benefit the Thai state tobacco monopoly. "We determined that there was a good health reason for [the Thais] to want that information," says a U.S. trade official.

John Singleton, director of corporate communications for R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., said he expected "that U.S. embassies are going to be cautious in how they handle tobacco issues." At the same time, he said, his company is continuing to receive needed support in winning customs clearances and approvals.

Philip Morris's Mr. Smith said the U.S. government is also continuing to defend the tobacco companies from "blatant" trade discrimination. The U.S. embassy in Thailand recently helped Philip Morris after the state tobacco monopoly began selling "Marble" cigarettes with packaging modeled after the U.S. company's red and white Marlboro pack.

While tobacco companies have focused intensively on increasing their share of emerging markets in Asia and Eastern Europe, the new European ad ban is still a

major setback. The tobacco companies currently spend an estimated \$1 billion a year on marketing in the 15 European countries covered by the ban.

"There's no magic way to get out of this difficult bind, but we won't give up," said Michael Prideaux, spokesman for B.A.T Industries PLC, the world's second-largest tobacco company, which owns Brown & Williamson Co. in the U.S. He added that the industry will appeal the decision to the European Court of Justice, and possibly in the courts of member states.

—Ernest Beck and Julie Wolf
contributed to this article.