

BOARD OF EDUCATION

OF THE

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



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MINNIE S. WOODSON

February 12, 1979

The President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

As one of the few minority political persons who is not disappointed with your performance with regard to solving the problems in our communities, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you for actually exceeding my expectations in that area. I would also like to take this opportunity to commend you for taking a daring step forward and beginning the 1980 Presidential Campaign in other than the traditional location. Mexico City sure beats the peanuts out of New Hampshire in many ways. Perhaps you and Senator Kennedy, who is awaited in Mexico with great anticipation by many people, could together persuade all of the other 1980 presidential candidates to kick off their campaigns in Mexico City as well. If all the Democrats, Republicans, Raza Unida, Conservatives, Liberals, and all the others send their candidates to Mexico as a prelude to the 1980 races, Mexico's economy might start booming just from the discussions that will ensue about all those dollars and all those petropesos.

I would like to take this opportunity, Mr. President, as you prepare to visit my other country, to discuss with you some matters of common concern, such as education, immigration, human rights, dollars and petropesos, and the D. C. Public Schools. It is almost a pity that you have refused for over a year to meet with the leadership of the Chicano Movement. We might have been able to prepare you for your visit to the land of love, peace, and a freedom-loving people whose roots on this continent go back many thousands of years. You might have learned that the "Hispanic" part of our roots is only a part of the mixture of Asian, African, European, and American Native that makes up the Mexican. It can be said that, even though the Indian and the Spanish parts of us are greater, all people in this world are our people. You might also have learned that the only difference between a Chicano and a Mexican is a border imposed on us in 1848 at the point of a gun. You might have noticed that, in spite of how we have collectively been culturally abused by the educational system of the U. S., large numbers of us are still aware that, in spite of being occupied by the government you head for the last 143 years, we realize that our roots, Northamericanized as they have become externally, internally are firmly planted in the land of Hidalgo, Juarez, Madero, and Zapata.

DWIGHT S. CROPP
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

PRESIDENTIAL BUILDING
415-12TH STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20004
(202) 724-4289

DAVID A. SPLITT
GENERAL COUNSEL

February 12, 1979

If, instead of deciding to discredit us in a White House meeting almost a year ago, rather than meet with us as has President Lopez Portillo, you had chosen to learn about our problems as Chicanos facing barriers to opportunity in our own country, you would be better prepared for your trip. Instead of meeting with us, you have ordered efforts to discredit and destabilize us. These politically motivated efforts have resulted in the denial of economic development funds to the people of Zavala County, Texas, the planting of one of Mr. Brzezinski's agents as the Director of the Council of Hispanic Agency Directors in our local D. C. Latino community, the continued harassment of Reyes Tijerina and José Angel Gutierrez, the government-sponsored attacks on the Raza Unida Party, a government-assisted campaign against bilingual/bicultural education--legislated in Title VII of the ESEA and guaranteed in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, a document violated by the U. S. since its signing.

It is ironic, Mr. President, that in less than two years you find yourself rushing down to buy gas and oil from the very same people that you have wanted to keep out of this country since your entry into office. Your pencilled in "Merits consideration" to a Charles Kirbo memorandum suggesting that a good jobs program for Chicanos would be to stand along the border to keep Mexicans out of the United States indicates an attitude inconsistent with your pronouncements on human rights. Your Immigration Plan, the INS-KKK joint operations along the border, the increase in police brutality against our people, the attacks against us by the Federal government in housing, education, health care, and economic development all serve to indicate an anti-Mexican, anti-Chicano policy that is consistent with the anti-Black, anti-Indian, anti-Latino, anti-female, anti-aged, anti-poor, and anti-youth activities of your and prior Administrations.

A N D Y E T Y O U W A N T T H A T O I L !

You want to spread a few dollars around Mexico today so that you won't be inundated with petropesos tomorrow. Is it perhaps your fear that many of those petropesos will pass through Chicano hands that motivates your actions with regard to us? Is it your fear that equality for us--meaning, as it will, a drastic improvement in the lifestyle of the migrant farmworker, as a beginning--will also mutually improve across the board the condition of Blacks, Indians, Asians, and Latinos in this society? Our communities have been starved too long of the dollars needed for education, housing, and social services. Do you fear we might be able to get some petropesos to help us out, too?

One word of caution. Before you and Chase Manhattan begin spending all those petropesos, it might be a good idea to provide Mexico with some "no-strings attached" technical assistance and dollars so that Pemex can verify the existence of all that oil. You wouldn't want to buy up all we've got only to discover that there wasn't quite as much as the CIA and the Washington Post said there was, would you? Both of them, by the way, have been wrong on quite a number of things lately.

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Since the long-term investment has to be in people, not in gas, oil, and weapons, you might, while in Mexico, commit some dollars to help provide improved educational opportunities in our barrios and ghettos from here to the Guatemalan border. You might even consider going beyond. It would be an improvement if the U. S. spent as much on education as it does on the military adventurism and police-state tactics that imposes its will on Latinos from the streets of New York to the fields of the Rio Grande Valley to the halls of government from Guatemala to Chile.

As a real gesture of friendship toward the Mexican people, you could announce the end of all U. S. intelligence operations in Mexico, with the proviso that the same amount of money would go to "no-strings" community-based economic development. After all, your spies do spend a lot of dollars all over Mexico.

Some of us appreciate your family's and your efforts in learning Spanish. Many of us would appreciate it more if all government workers providing service in our communities would do so. After all, if Mr. Castillo's INS agents can harass us in our own language, there is no reason why those portions of government designed to help us can't learn to communicate with us as well.

I know you will enjoy Mexico's hospitality and weather. While you are gone, you certainly must admire your fellow farmers braving the cold here to remind us that they can't pay their farmworkers a decent wage, let alone themselves, because of the government-supported greed of the big agri-business conglomerates who have invaded the family farm in this country with the same viciousness they have used throughout Mexico and the rest of Latin America.

But, as I mentioned earlier, if you would meet with and talk with us instead of acting against us, you would be aware of these things and more. We would certainly be able to meet with you after your Mexican trip as well. I hope the preceding ideas will be helpful as you visit the homeland of Mexicans and Chicanos. I feel confident that if you get to really know the Mexican people, you will, upon your return, repudate all your commitments to David Rockefeller and his Trilateralists and will begin attaching some meaning to all of those populist promises made in the last campaign. You would do this because you would learn that, in spite of Mexico's "distance from God and proximity to the U. S.", in spite of the U. S. corporate control of Mexico's economy, in spite of the multitude of U. S. intelligence operatives tacing their way around Mexico, in spite of the poverty, racism, disease, and ignorance promoted in our Chicano Latino communities, in spite of all these things and more, the spirit of Zapata is alive in all Mexicans. We all know that someday the land truly must belong to those who work it.

As if these matters were not enough--Mr. President--I must also share some matters with you in your capacity as a concerned parent of a child in our public schools. First, you are invited to participate in the events connected with Wilmington 10 Awareness Day in the D. C. Public Schools on March 21st of this year. That would be a perfect opportunity for you to announce a Patty Hearst-like order of executive clemency for Reverend Ben Chavis and the rest of the ten. Secondly,

February 12, 1979

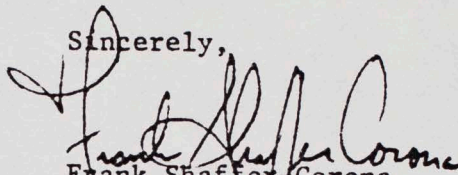
if your inclination is to, instead of dialogue, retaliate against me for my human rights activities and for this letter, please be aware of two concerns:

1. The contents of this letter are my own, do not in their entirety reflect an official position of this Board of Education, and are protected by the First Amendment to the U. S. Constitution.
2. Please do not direct any attacks, such as interference with grants, etc. against the D. C. Public School System. Hurting the children of this city for my expression of opinion, as a public official, on public issues would be just a bit much.

You as a matter of fact, could work with us to increase our Congressional appropriation back up to at least the minimum amount requested by the Board of Education and subsequently reduced by our own City Council. We would welcome your support. The children all over this city all need your help when it comes to providing for their education.

Please enjoy Mexico. Her hospitality is unsurpassed.

Sincerely,



Frank Shaffer-Corona
Member, At-Large
D. C. Board of Education

FSC:ncg



BOARD OF EDUCATION
OF THE



MINNIE S. WOODSON
PRESIDENT

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PRESS RELEASE

December 12, 1979

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From the Office of Frank Shaffer-Corona
Member, At-Large, D.C. Board of Education

Contact the above office at 724-4283

At 2:00 p.m. today, Mr. Frank Shaffer-Corona, elected member of the D.C. Board of Education, met with officials at the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Washington, D.C. This meeting was held to discuss the treatment and possible release of Marine Cpl. William Gallegos of Pueblo, Colorado, and any other Chicano, Puerto Rican or American Indian detainees.

Mr. Shaffer-Corona, as the first and only elected Chicano statewide public official on the East Coast, made his appeal for their release on the same basis as the earlier release of the Blacks and women from the American Embassy in Iran. "Because of the many injustices and oppressions suffered by the Chicano and Latino populations in this country, which at 22,000,000 constitutes the second largest racial minority in the U.S., he and other Chicano leaders feel that these captives should be accorded the same treatment as the Blacks."

Mr. Shaffer-Corona serves as the Washington Representative and spokesperson of La Raza Unida Party, whose National Chairman is Juan José Peña of New Mexico, and whose Secretary of International Relations is José Angel Gutierrez of Texas. He serves that same role for the Alianza de Pueblos Libres headed by Reies Lopez Tijerina.

Mr. Shaffer-Corona pointed out that "Chicanos are Mexicans who have lived under the yoke of U.S. imperial aggression and occupation since the land was stolen from Mexico in 1836 and 1846. For 200 years the Latin American countries have experienced the same kind of U.S. domination and control that Iran experienced between 1953 and 1979. As fellow victims of U.S. greed and racism, Iran and the Latino community must learn more about one another and stand together."

Therefore, as an expression of that need for understanding between oppressed peoples, Mr. Shaffer-Corona urged the release of Cpl. Gallegos, as well as Messrs. Lopez (of Arizona) and Valdez (of California).

These communications were favorably received by the Iranian Embassy officials and this plea, along with supporting documentation outlining Chicano grievances and history, are being forwarded immediately to Tehran for consideration. Mr. Juan José Peña initiated a similar request to the Iranians some three weeks ago.

Ayotollah Ruhollah Musavi Khomeini
c/o Emb. of the Islamic Rep. of Iran
3005 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

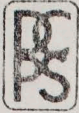
phone (202) 797-6563

It would be good to write or call the Iranian embassy to reinforce and support this request.

PATRICIA EVANS MINER
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

PRESIDENTIAL BUILDING
415-12TH STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004
(202) 724-4289

JAMES E. BROWN
GENERAL COUNSEL



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December 12, 1979

Ayottollah Ruhollah Musavi Khomeini
c/o Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran
3005 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

Dear Ayottollah Khomeini:

By way of introduction, I am the first Chicano elected to statewide public office on the East Coast of the United States and in the District of Columbia, wherein lies Washington, "The Capital of the Empire." Chicanos are Mexicans who have lived under the yoke of U.S. imperial aggression and occupation since our land was stolen from Mexico in 1836 and 1846. We and other Latino people constitute the second largest oppressed racial minority in the United States. Our countries, for two hundred years of U.S. domination and control, have experienced what yours has between 1953 and 1979. As fellow victims of U.S. greed and racism we must learn more about one another, and we must stand together. In addition to being a member of the Board of Education, I am the Washington Representative of La Raza Unida Party, whose National Chairman is Juan José Peña of New Mexico, and whose Secretary of International Relations is José Angel Gutierrez of Texas. I am also the Washington Representative of Reies Lopez Tijerina and the Alianza de Pueblos Libres. As the Washington Representative for these national organizations and leaders, and speaking in the name of some 22,000,000 colonized Chicanos and Latinos, I would hope that the enclosed materials, once they have been studied by your advisors, will enlighten you about our history and our condition within North American society.

We applauded your action in releasing the women and Blacks from within the U.S. Embassy compound. We now ask that in the same spirit of solidarity you extend this same consideration to the Chicanos, and any Puerto Ricans and North American Indians who might be detained among the 50 Embassy personnel. I would add that we (La Raza Unida Party) have taken the position that the Shah should be returned to Iran as a condition for the release of the White North American males. I would personally add that the U.S., Iran, and the rest of the world would benefit if Nixon, Kissinger, and David Rockefeller were also to be turned over to your judicial system for appropriate trial and punishment along with the billions of dollars stolen from your people.

I have stated these positions publically as have other Chicano leaders. We are looking forward to your expeditious and favorable treatment of our request, so that our people can better understand the need for solidarity and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Frank Shaffer-Corona
Frank Shaffer-Corona
Member, At-Large

PATRICIA EVANS MINER
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

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415-12TH STREET, N.W.
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District of Columbia Board of Education
 415 12th Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20004
 (202) 724-4283

Frank Shaffer-Corona
 At-Large

February 11, 1980

The President of the United States
 The White House
 Washington, D.C.

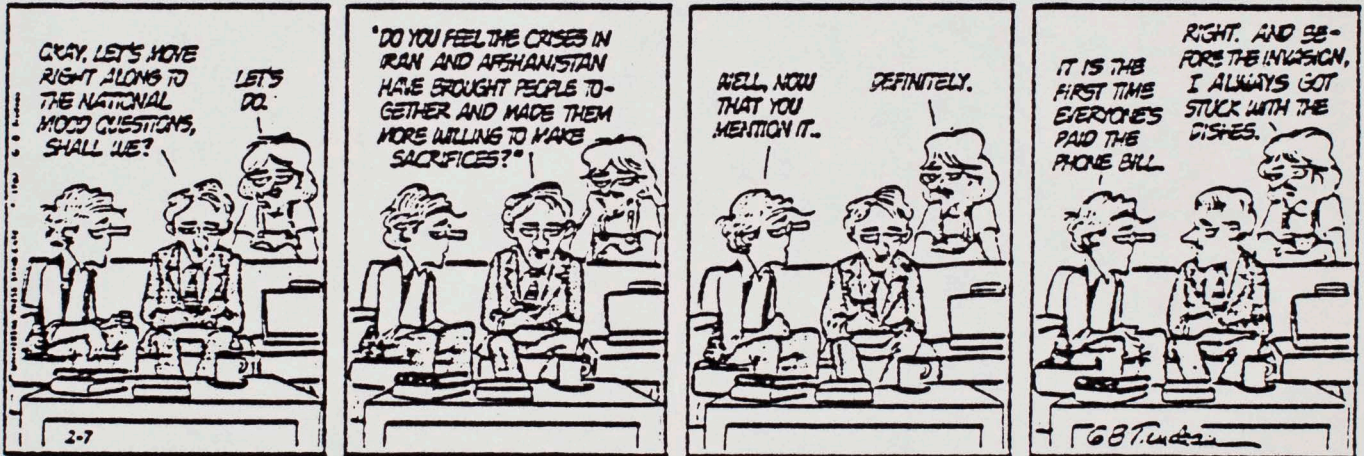
Dear Mr. President:

It would appear from various recent press reports, conversations with constituents, and the following cartoon strip that there is a bit of concern about your and my use of the telephone at taxpayers' expense during the events of the past couple of months.

THE WASHINGTON STAR Thursday, February 7, 1980

C-9

Doonesbury



While there might be some here in this colonized District of Columbia who share your keen interest in farm problems in Iowa, weather conditions in Maine, and highway travel in New Hampshire, I would prefer to think it more significant for all concerned to share with you some matters of importance that I have learned in recent phone conversations related to the Iranian crisis, including some 16 directly with the students inside the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. This information should prove valuable to you in that it may well complement and supplement that which you receive from your advisors, who are known for the

excellent job they have done in isolating you from the people. Please remember that it is this type of isolation which led to the excesses of one of your recent predecessors. If it is not too late to reverse the process of this isolation in yourself, perhaps you will consider becoming more sensitive to the needs of the people. The needs of people should be more important to you than the needs of Chase Manhattan, the Shah, and the armaments and oil corporations, particularly if "human rights" is more than a rhetorical theme by which future historians are to remember you.

One group of people from whom you are particularly isolated are some of the parents of some of the hostages, with whom I have recently met. Their frustration at your Administration's inability to peacefully extricate us from the mess caused by your generous and ill-advised hospitality of a few months ago is growing to a level which will not be placated by monthly PR-type trips to Washington.

It is important for you to know that many people in this country will not be duped by the blatant effort of the White House and the big media and big business to build a level of war fever and "patriotic" hysteria unknown in almost 40 years. Please do not think that you can sail unscathed into re-election on the backs of the hostages, their families, and the concern of the rest of us for a peaceful, non-violent solution to this situation.

People in this country are becoming openly frustrated with the carefully orchestrated efforts of your Administration to infest this country with war fever. Many are further angered by your rather transparent attempts at exploiting the hostage situation to the advantage of your re-election campaign. The imposition or threat by the White House of economic sanctions against the mayors and governors of this country seems to be bearing you more fruit than your efforts to similarly irritate the people of Iran. The ABSCAM caper speaks to the level of corruption rampant in this city, but it also reveals the type of fascist tactics you will allow to be practiced in order to undermine the anti-poverty and anti-racism efforts of a John Jenrette or the labor support of a Harrison Williams. Many people object to the fact that the U.S. and Canada managed to hold six American hostages in Tehran some two and a half months longer than necessary and then brought them out in a manner designed to provoke rather than pacify.

Based on my own direct communications, I am keenly aware of the inability of the White House, the State Department, the Pentagon, and other elements of the U.S. government to communicate with the Iranian government or the students inside the compound. The world is aware of your ability to talk to those concerned. There is a world of difference, as those very few of us who have engaged in serious and respectful dialogue with the three major "players" have clearly seen. The consultation and support of the Raza Unida Party and the sacrifice and understanding of the citizens of the District of Columbia have made possible the significant progress made in our efforts to move this uncontrolled crisis to a posture of respectful negotiations.

The amount of duplicity demonstrated by the State Department in these procedures is frightening when one considers that they are supposed to be closer to reality than the rest of the bureaucracy. Their attempt to eliminate one of the most significant communications links for clearly no other reason than that it represents a Chicano/Mexican breakthrough and solution to this whole

mess is consistent with the anti-Mexican attitude demonstrated by yourself and your Administration since you took office. The following facts support this conclusion:

1. The intervention at the White House and Cabinet levels against the venture capital CSA grant to the Zavala County Economic Development Corporation to prevent economic growth for Chicanos in South Texas and the subsequent hiding behind "executive privilege" soil your hands with your own "Aguagate".

2. The Carter Immigration Plan, inspired as it was by the Corwin Memorandum, clearly placed you in concert with the Kissinger solution to "the Mexican problem" promoted by both of your immediate predecessors.

3. The lack of access to the White House and your refusal to meet with the elected and popularly chosen leadership of the Chicano nation indicate your feelings toward our people. Surely after several phone calls on important matters you can let Esteban Torres do better than a form letter as a response. On this point you have broken a personally made commitment.

4. In the summer of 1977 you penciled in "Merits consideration" on a memorandum to you from Charles Kirbo which suggested that a good jobs program for Chicanos would be to have us stand shoulder-to-shoulder along the border to keep Mexicans out of the U.S. Your hiding behind humor as a defense at the time hardly absolves you of your racism at this time.

5. Your remarks at public events during your visit to Mexico indicate your unwillingness to accept the fact that "Montezuma's revenge" is, in fact, all that oil. It is apparent that you would rather let the American people go without than stomach the notion of having to treat Mexicans with respect.

Your negative attitude toward Mexico, Mexicans, and especially outspoken Chicanos prevents you from seeing the parallels between the Iranian Revolution and the Mexican Revolution of 1910. Your blindness hides from you the similarities of U.S. intervention in Iran to similar capers in Mexico, Central and South America, and elsewhere throughout the world. The inflexibility of your advisors prevents respect from entering the proceedings, and the recent decision by the State Department to sever one of the most significant communications links speaks to your Nixonian fear of the people. I would never have entered into these communications via the method agreed upon if the State Department had made severing these contacts at their whim a precondition. I upheld my part of the agreement, what prompted them to renege on theirs?

There is a people-level solution to this whole mess. It cannot be imposed by the heavy-handed, duplicitous, and unilateral tactics of the State Department. It cannot be aided by the inflammatory, divisive statements of your advisors and immediate staff whenever the Iranians make a positive gesture. It cannot be assisted by the headlong mad rush to war which the White House seems to be promoting in between prayer meetings and phone calls to New Hampshire. There is a solution--one which will respect all the parties concerned, improve the relations of this country to the rest of the world, significantly heal domestic divisions, and prevent a war. I would like to discuss this solution with you personally. Please do not be afraid of the people if you are sincere.

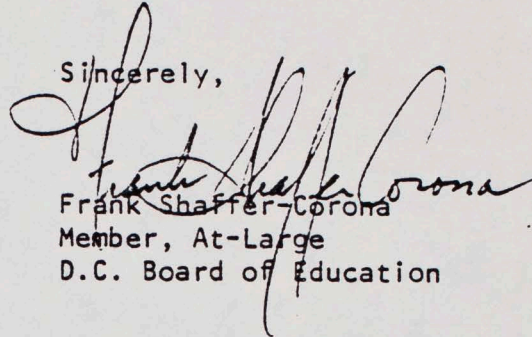
You have a daughter in our D.C. Public Schools. She is a member of our community. You as her father can afford to isolate yourself no longer from this community. We do not want a draft. We do not want to see our young Blacks, Chicanos, Latinos, and women turned into cannon fodder for the continued growth of Exxon's profit margins, which you seem to be singularly unable to tax meaningfully. We in D.C. are particularly sensitive to the efforts of one of

February 11, 1980

your staunchest supporters--our Mayor--to undermine childrens' education by cutting the school system's budget, sell school buildings, and hasten the displacement process of Third World people and working people away from the centers of power and decision-making in this city. You as President and as a concerned parent can set an example that will begin to reverse these destructive trends. The ever-escalating war hysteria will only divert still more badly needed funds from public education.

I call on you to instruct the State Department to re-establish the direct lines of communication which were beginning to bear fruit and I request that you make yourself available at once for a meeting on this matter. The symptoms of chaos are numerous and widespread. The chance of a mishap is too great. Who occupies the house you live in a year from now is not quite as important as the desire that the house and this city and its people be here a year from now.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Frank Shaffer-Corona". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Frank Shaffer-Corona
Member, At-Large
D.C. Board of Education



District of Columbia Board of Education

415 12th Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20004
202-724-4283

Frank Shaffer-Corona
At-Large

July 10, 1980

TO: Leaders of the Latino Community

FROM: Frank Shaffer-Corona, Member, At-Large,
D.C. Board of Education

SUBJECT: LULAC Resolution re International Tensions

Enclosed you will find copies of my remarks to the LULAC Annual Convention on June 28, 1980, and a resolution approved at that convention resolving LULAC support for any and all efforts to reduce tensions in the world's trouble spots, especially serious and respectful efforts that will result in the release of American hostages from Iran.

As you probably know, I and other members of La Raza Unida have been active in such efforts for some time. It is sincerely hoped that the passage of this resolution will encourage many other members of the Latino leadership nationwide to also support such efforts.

Enclosures

(OVER)

WHEREAS, the world we live in is filled with tensions which are capable at any time of erupting into a condition of war; and

WHEREAS, cognizant of the inter-relationships that exist in today's world, we are mindful that conditions in the Middle East, in Iran, in Central America, and other places do actually affect the lives of all Hispanics; and

WHEREAS, the increase in tensions around the world has shifted our national priorities from much needed programs like bilingual education, housing, health care, employment, and civil rights; and

WHEREAS, we must recognize the significance of the words of Benito Juarez: "Respect for the rights of others is peace" and we must reaffirm our commitment to that belief;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that LULAC supports any and all efforts to reduce tensions in the world's trouble spots, especially serious and respectful efforts that will result in the release of American hostages from Iran.



District of Columbia Board of Education

415 12th Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20004
202-724-4283

Frank Shaffer-Corona
At-Large

A DEFINITION OF THE
CHICANO NATION

Remarks by
Frank Shaffer-Corona
Member, At-Large
D.C. Board of Education

Before the
51st
Annual Convention
of the
League of United Latin American Citizens
(LULAC)

Washington, D.C.

28 June 1980

Brothers and Sisters, Platform guests, President Bonilla -- Thank you for allowing me to welcome you to the District of Columbia, a jurisdiction which also, like the Chicano or Hispanic or Mexican nation, suffers from less than equal representation in the U.S. This is a city with no Senators and no vote in Congress. A colony--and yet here is the capital city--an amorphous thing called Washington. It is because of what happens in Washington, which is right here in D.C.--my city--that I must stand before you in shame. In shame because it is this city which up until now has controlled our destiny--from the invasions of Mexico in 1836 and '46 until now. For 144 years this city has orchestrated many of our problems--inflation, housing, immigration, police brutality, racism and cultural confusion. Your presence here has begun to change all that.

Each and every one of you is to be congratulated for being here and participating in this historic convention. Each of you is here out of a sincere belief that it is our turn as a people to make a difference. You are right--it is! We will make a difference during the coming decade. In spite of being sandwiched in between the gallop to the right on one end and the sceptre of Chicano nationalism on the other, you--each and every one of you--have the opportunity to participate in shaping the most significant decade in all of history. We have a destiny as a people--a mission in life. Your presence here today is evidence of the importance of our role. We come here from great traditions, such as that of Benito Juarez, who said, "El respeto al derecho ajeno es la paz." Respect for others is the cornerstone of any great civilization. Our soul, or traditions are rooted in a spirituality as deep as the soil of America and as far away as the sacred ground of the Holy Land--to whose people we are linked through the bridge called Spain. Europe, Asia, and Africa have also contributed to our formation as a people whose destiny is to make a difference--a fundamental difference in life. You have come here to this great white capital city with a sense of purpose and mission which has already been felt in meaningful ways. Yours has been a presence which personifies respect, understanding, and love. You speak for everyone as

you verbalize our needs as a people, because history has decreed that all people are our people, just as we are the mixture of all others. We are quite literally the fruit of the seed that was planted almost 500 years ago by the joining of the hispanos and the indios (within God) as the last hope for mankind. Ours is the opportunity to chose between making the same tired old mistakes made by everyone else or having the courage to change course into a direction yet untraveled and uncharted. You will be strong. Your tradition of respect and your humanity have made an indelible mark on this city. Together, we will make a difference--we will do it!

community-gram

BOARD OF EDUCATION of the DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



PRESIDENTIAL BUILDING
415 TWELFTH STREET, NORTHWEST
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20004
(202) 724-4289

June 11, 1980

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Contact the Office of Frank Shaffer-Corona, 724-4283.

D.C. School Board Member Frank Shaffer-Corona, Washington's first and only elected Latino Official, was assaulted and arrested by members of the D.C. Metropolitan Police on Saturday, June 7, 1980. The incident occurred at around 3 a.m. Shaffer-Corona, who also works as a free-lance writer, was drinking a cup of coffee at Al's Sub-Preme, a restaurant located at 18th and Columbia Road in the heart of Washington's Latino community. The restaurant was crowded, enjoying the overflow from closing time at other establishments in the neighborhood. There were some 20 to 30 people present.

A group of three or four policemen entered the restaurant, rushed to a table where several Latinos were sitting, and began shouting at one of them. He, obviously shaken by this approach, responded to them in a similar manner. Sensing the imminence of possible violence, Shaffer-Corona approached the table, which had become the center of a growing crowd. Identifying himself as a public official, the School Board Member questioned the constitutionality and "courtesy" of the policemen's conduct. Pointing out their lack of probable cause, he was rudely shouted at by the police as well. When he cautioned the victim of the officers' harrassment about the illegality of their tactics, the police left the restaurant.

Things quieted down, only to be interrupted by the sudden return of more than ten policemen, who this time ushered their victim, a Manuel Gascón, out of the restaurant. Responding to requests from several of the people present for further intercession, Shaffer-Corona went outside. There he discovered Mr. Gascón being handcuffed. As he began to further question the police about their tactics, one of them gave an order to grab Shaffer-Corona as well.

This was done instantly with an excessive amount of violence. The Latino official's arm was injured as he was thrown against a police car. He was then pushed into the back seat and told that he was being arrested for "obstruction of justice." The police began exchanging insulting remarks about Shaffer-Corona, calling him a "communist," an "Iranian," and a "sympathizer of Fidel Castro." Upon arrival at the precinct, he was informed that the charge had been altered to "disorderly conduct." His Miranda rights were read to him only after his insistence that this be done. Later the charge was changed again to "interfering with a police officer."

Shaffer-Corona's response to the harrassment of a Latino citizen was a reaction to a common occurrence in the Latino, Black, and other communities in the Nation's Capital. The actions of the police toward an elected official attempting to protect the rights of a constituent are frightening in a democracy, particularly in its capital city. Cognizant that these violations have been commonplace in such places as Nazi Germany, Israel, Pinochet's Chile, and Miami, Shaffer-Corona has urged restraint on the part of the citizens of the District of Columbia and has suggested human relations training for the police in order to head off the alarming tendencies toward a "long, hot summer" in the Nation's Capital.

Star 2-18 80

Letters to the editor

A glimpse of a man in motion

After reading your "Mr. Shaffer-Corona and Mr. Toad" editorial (Feb. 8) with some thoroughness, I find myself the subject of mixed feelings. Although you have compared me to one of the heroes in Kenneth Grahame's children's classic, I find your comparison of the elected government of this colonized District of Columbia with the animal kingdom to be somewhat less than innocent, albeit amusing. It is important to correct several misimpressions and deviations from fact and reality created by your editorial.

First of all, I gave up my fascination with shiny motor cars long before Exxon made it necessary to do so.

Secondly, the salary of most D.C. School Board members is not \$17,500, as *The Star* reported, but \$18,750, an amount still not commensurate with our level of responsibility. Rather than assume that I "revel in bad publicity," you should ask yourselves why you and that other paper turn yourselves on by creating such an unobjective and negative image of myself and my colleagues -- seldom, if ever, providing an in-depth analysis of our views and reasons for functioning as we do.

I do not understand your reference to Chinese textbooks, as that country appears to be facing an inundation of U.S. "educational" materials. While I have made no attempts to acquire Chinese materials, I have sought to acquire some Mexican textbooks to compensate for the lack of books our system provides in Spanish for its Latino children.

Conditions in El Salvador, Mexico and other Latin American countries impact a significant number of my constituents in many ways. It would, as a matter of fact, be of constructive assistance for some of my fellow



FRANK SHAFFER-CORONA
This chap will go far

"moles, badgers and toads" in city government to learn more about those conditions.

It is true that I have had several conversations with the students inside the U.S. Embassy in Iran, otherwise known as the "Nest of Spies" to Tehran cab drivers. It strikes me as odd that the press is more concerned with the taxpayers' financial sacrifice in this serious effort to suggest a peaceful and equitable solution to

the problem than with the substance of these conversations. This confusion is magnified by the lack of journalistic scrutiny into President Carter's use of the taxpayers' phones to inquire about farm problems in Iowa, weather conditions in Maine and road conditions in New Hampshire.

The State Department's opinions and recent actions designed to prevent dialogue leading to an imminent breakthrough of a people-level solution which would be respectful and positive for all concerned should not be given much credence. The State Department would benefit from the lesson of Claude Debussy in the French opera "Peleas et Melisande" where King Arkel says: "History does not produce useless events."

It would perhaps be more beneficial to make copies of the Lewis Carroll quote on "everybody minding their own business" for the desks of David Rockefeller, Richard Nixon, Henry Kissinger and Jimmy Carter. That inspired notion might have prevented the unwholesome intervention of the United States in Iran's affairs since 1953 and the complicity of the Carter administration in extending our hospitality to the shah. It is, after all, those events which got us into this mess in the first place.

Being mindful that the last words of "Wind in the Willows" are, "This was a base libel on Badger, who . . . was rather fond of children; but it never failed to have its full effect," I will opt, over my desk, for the following words of inspiration from Kenneth Grahame: "The whole world before you, and a horizon that's always changing!" And, "The poetry of motion! The real way to travel! The only way to travel!"

Frank Shaffer-Corona,
Member, At-Large,
D.C. Board of Education

Washington, D.C.

(NOTE — Mr. Shaffer-Corona should re-examine his salary. The office of the school board's secretary insists it is \$17,500.)

Thursday, February 7, 1980

The Washington Post **METRO**

Shaffer-Corona Phones Iran, Bills School Board

By Judith Valente
Washington Post Staff Writer

D.C. school board member Frank Shaffer-Corona has been making telephone calls at board expense to the Iranians holding American hostages in Tehran in an apparent effort to mediate the standoff personally, board President R. Calvin Lockridge disclosed last night.

Lockridge and other board members said they are not only angered that the calls are being billed to the school board, but greatly concerned that Shaffer-Corona's attempts at long distance diplomacy might be jeopardizing U.S. attempts to negotiate the hostages' release.

Shaffer-Corona refused last night to confirm or deny that he had made the calls. According to board member Carol L. Schwartz, she and other members confronted Shaffer-Corona two weeks ago about the Tehran calls, and he acknowledged at that time that he had made them.

Schwartz said Shaffer-Corona told

the other members that the calls were "in the national interest" and that therefore it was appropriate that they be paid for out of school board funds.

"I think it's appalling," Schwartz said last night of the calls. She said she told Shaffer-Corona: "your politics are your business . . . I just don't think that we should be paying for it."

Schwartz also said that she is out-she told Shaffer-Corona: "Your poli-pear to be concentrated on trying to win the release of only two Chicanos and an American Indian being held at the embassy. Shaffer-Corona, who is of part-Mexican ancestry, refers to himself here as a leader of the Latino community and commonly identifies himself in official correspondence as "the first Chicano elected to statewide office on the East Coast."

In a letter addressed to the Ayatollah Khomeini that he delivered to the Iranian Embassy here last Decem-

See BOARD, C5, Col. 3

Board Upset by Tehran Calls

BOARD. From C1

ber, Shaffer-Corona says that "Chicanos have lived under the yoke of U.S. imperialism," and adds that Iranians and Chicanos "as fellow victims of U.S. greed and racism . . . must stand together."

Board members said they became aware that Shaffer-Corona was making the calls when a phone company telephone operator called Superintendent Vincent Reed to ask if it were permissible for Shaffer-Corona to be calling Tehran. Reed told the operator that he had no power to stop board members from telephoning wherever they wish.

Board sources said Shaffer-Corona has telephoned the embassy in Tehran at least three times in the last two weeks and each time spoken for about 30 minutes. One source said that Shaffer-Corona allowed him to listen to a tape recording of one of the calls during which Shaffer-Corona told the Iranians that the hostage-taking incident is much like a "backgammon game." The Iranian on the other end of the line merely replied, "We want the shah! We want the shah!" the source said.

Lockridge said last night that the board has not received the bills for the calls and that he could not estimate how much they might have cost.

Schwartz and Lockridge also said they were upset over several earlier calls made from Shaffer-Corona's home to Mexico that he charged to the school board. One of those calls amounted to \$141, according to phone records.

Shaffer-Corona has said a member of his staff had made that call from

his home to him while he was in Mexico last July with the D.C. Youth Chorale and that it was "perfectly legitimate." He said he made other calls to Mexico himself to discuss "cultural and educational exchange programs" between the U.S. and that country.

In a memo to Schwartz, board counsel James E. Brown advised that while Shaffer-Corona's calls to Tehran do not "rise to the level of criminal culpability," the board could instruct the telephone company that it will not pay for certain calls, or it could initiate civil action to "recover funds allegedly expended in an improper manner."

A State Department spokesman said last night that he personally had helped Shaffer-Corona telephone Tehran "five or six times" after department officials had given the board member permission to try to contact the embassy there shortly before Christmas. Recently, the spokesman said, the State Department had asked Shaffer-Corona to stop placing calls to the embassy, "because it is getting to be a rather sensitive time."

The spokesman said he did not think the State Department would be willing to pay for the calls.

Stop Calling U.S. Embassy in Iran, State Dept. Tells Shaffer-Corona

By Jody Beck

Washington Star Staff Writer

The State Department yesterday told D.C. School Board member Frank Shaffer-Corona that he may no longer make calls to the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. Shaffer-Corona has been calling the embassy in an effort to win release of the Hispanics among the American hostages being held in Tehran.

Shaffer-Corona, better known for his controversial public statements and foreign travel at school board expense, has tried to play the diplomat's role in recent weeks.

But his telephone calls — to be paid for by the D.C. school system — have become an open topic of discussion at school system headquarters and in the District Building.

After an initial press release in December about his activities, he has refused to discuss them except in general terms. For example, he has steadfastly refused to discuss his method of contact with the militants in the embassy.

Some of his colleagues are known to be furious that Shaffer-Corona has billed calls likely to cost the school system hundreds of dollars as it faces a budget deficit of several million dollars.

Member Carol L. Schwartz asked the board's general counsel whether Shaffer-Corona's calls had violated any laws. In a memo to her, James E. Brown, the general counsel, said they appeared to be legal but that board members could seek to have Shaffer-Corona pay for them if they wished.

Schwartz said she would seek another legal opinion, adding that other board members had expressed outrage at his calls to Iran as well as at expensive calls to Central and South America.

A member of the State Department's Iran task force here said Shaffer-Corona was one of a "very few" persons who have been allowed to call the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. All such calls were cut off yesterday, he said.



FRANK SHAFFER-CORONA
No specifics on contacts

Calls were stopped, he said, because of "the combination of the fact that the situation (in Tehran) has changed a little bit, the combination of that, and in the many calls that he (Shaffer-Corona) has made, there has been no discernible result for our end."

Calls were allowed in the first place, the task force member said, because "we, as always, have been open to any and all avenues . . . at that time a decision was made to let him see if he could make any worthwhile contact with the militants at the embassy."

Asked if Shaffer-Corona's contacts were indeed considered worthwhile, he replied, "No."

However, he described Shaffer-Corona as "very cooperative in terms of calling us after he has talked to them."

See EMBASSY B-2

No Embassy Calls, Shaffer-Corona Told

From B-1

Chesapeake & Potomac Telephone Co. spokesman R. Webster Chamberlain said that, with the exception of calls to the U.S. Embassy, telephone calls to Iran are being placed normally.

Any call to the embassy is referred to the State Department, he said, which decides which calls go through.

The school system has not yet been billed for any of Shaffer-Corona's calls.

Chamberlain said a direct dial call at any time costs \$7.80 for the first three minutes. Operator-assisted calls are \$9 for the first three minutes and person-to-person calls are \$12 for the first three

After that, the charge is \$2.60 for each minute, he said.

Shaffer-Corona said yesterday his talks were at a "delicate point and should not be put in the hands of somebody who has a less complete data base." He said that he did not accept the communications cutoff "as a final statement by the State Department."

Shaffer-Corona said he was trying to reach higher officials for a reversal.

In his contacts, Shaffer-Corona said, "I have accomplished the initiation of respectful dialogue."

He began his efforts shortly after the December television interview with Marine Cpl. William Gallegos.

Shaffer-Corona said that was the first he knew of any Chicano hostages.

He told Iranian government officials, "Chicanos are Mexicans who have lived under the yoke of U.S. imperial aggression and occupation since the land was stolen from Mexico in 1836 and 1846."

He has not been in touch with any hostages, Shaffer-Corona said, although he has been in touch with two families of hostages.

Should his communication with Tehran be cut off here, he said, "I can always pick up the phone and patch through Mexico City, and I don't need the State Department for that."

Washington Star 2-8-80

Mr. Shaffer-Corona and Mr. Toad

Like the clever, witty and wise Mr. Toad of *The Wind in the Willows*, the irrepressible Frank Shaffer-Corona of the D.C. School Board seeks always to surpass himself.

Mr. Toad was obsessed with shiny motorcars, while Mr. Shaffer-Corona seems compulsively drawn to international intrigue. It was perhaps inevitable that he would find his way to the Iran crisis. You can almost hear the triumphant "O poop-poop!" from Mr. Toad.

Mr. Shaffer-Corona does business from his own Toad Hall — school system headquarters and the District Building. That's because he is an elected member of the D.C. School Board, for which he is paid \$17,500 a year. He is not, however, a self-effacing school board member. He seems to revel in bad publicity. He undertakes such causes as securing textbooks from the People's Republic of China. He likes traveling to exotic places. Some months ago, he undertook a self-assigned diplomatic mission to Mexico and El Salvador, for which he charged the city \$1,000. In the summer of 1978, he billed the city \$852 after attending the World Festival of Youth and Students in Cuba.

In recent weeks, Mr. Shaffer-Corona has busied himself with what he considers a secret diplomatic mission. He has been phoning the U.S. Embassy in Tehran to talk to the terrorists about releasing the Hispanics being held.

What has he accomplished? Nothing much, reports a member of the State Department's Iran task force. At what cost? The price of several hundred dollars in long-distance telephone calls. To be paid by whom? District taxpayers, if Mr. Shaffer-Corona has his way.

The State Department, which controls calls to the embassy compound, has told him to stop dialing but he may have other plans: "I can always pick up the phone and patch through Mexico City and I don't need the State Department for that," he told *The Star's* Jody Beck. He is also "making preparations to go over there and meet with them face-to-face and engage in eyeball-to-eyeball contact." We'll bet he is. It's a fascinating world out there for the daring Mr. Shaffer-Corona, especially when the motorcars dash by. District voters may be fascinated in November 1981 — if he seeks re-election.

But enough is enough, and it is time for the school board to set some rules. We propose these for starters: 1) That expenses not connected with school business be paid from personal funds. 2) Ditto any trips. 3) That this from Lewis Carroll be posted above Mr. Shaffer-Corona's desk: " 'If everybody minded their own business,' said the Duchess in a hoarse growl, 'the world would go round a good deal faster than it does.' "



District of Columbia Board of Education

415 12th Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20004
202-724-4283

Frank Shaffer-Corona
At-Large

July 14, 1980

Honorable Edmund Muskie
Secretary, U.S. Dept. of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Your appointment as Secretary of State was viewed with a degree of optimism by those of us who struggle for the achievement of equal rights for all people. An elected official ordinarily acquires a sensitivity for the concerns of all of his or her constituents, regardless of their point of view. That is the nature of responsibility in the governmental process in a democracy. Your former views on such sensitive areas as the Middle East, Iran, and Central America are understandable and consistent with the limited data base made available to the U.S. Senate about the reality of conditions in the Third World. I would hope as you travel to other parts of the world that you would pretend that the people you see living in the squalor of poverty that has engulfed this planet were all citizens of the state of Maine. If you can influence a real improvement in their life condition and in their aspirations to achieve dignity, self-determination, control over their own resources, and the ability to make a difference in life, you would give true meaning to the old saying "as Maine goes, so goes the nation."

Even in Maine there are nations of people who have suffered invasion, colonization, and the theft of their resources and dignity. I refer, of course, to the Indians. If you were to view the recent history of the Middle East with an open mind, you would have to be the first to insist on the presence of the Palestine Liberation Organization at any negotiations designed to impact on the future of the Palestinian people. It might, perhaps, be helpful to view the history of Palestine from a slightly different perspective. One can look at England and the U.S. as a childless frustrated couple who adopted an unwanted orphan. Rather than take that orphan into their own home, they assisted him in seizing a neighbor's house. They expelled the neighbor and imprisoned his family. They raped his wife and exploited his children. When his other neighbors rose to his defense they fought them. They beat one of them into a submission so devastating that he has joined forces with the oppressive invaders. The Camp David process is doomed to failure because it essentially involves the stepchild, the beaten neighbor, and one from the childless couple sitting around trying to justify their actions, while the ousted neighbor merely tries to be rejoined with his family in his own house. In short, Mr. Secretary, our present policy in the Middle East is unAmerican.

The recent release by the Iranian government of Mr. Queen should demonstrate to you that even in this situation respect and reason can prevail over militarism and bullying. Given the history of British and U.S. involvement in Iran, perhaps it might be educational to continue with the former example. Perhaps due to his domestic frustration, or perhaps out of a perceived need to defend his first set of illegalities in the neighborhood, the frustrated father decided to expand

his activities as a rapist. When his victim finally had had enough, and broke free of his control, he did not want to accept the reality of her freedom. When out of sheer frustration, she slapped him in the face, he had the unmitigated gall to denounce her for assault, as if he had been her victim.

Today we celebrate the 191st anniversary of the storming of the Bastille. Let us never forget that it was the ideas which spawned the French Revolution that actually gave birth to the noble experiment in democracy known as the United States of America on July 4, 1776. What is taking place in Palestine, in Iran, in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, and other places in the world is nothing more than a continuation of the course of human events charted some two hundred years ago in Paris and Philadelphia. What is taking place now in Albuquerque; Crystal City, Texas; Liberty City, Florida; Wounded Knee; Greensboro, North Carolina; and D.C. is merely the demand by people of color in this country that its original promises apply to all people.

The spirit of democracy in America is not unique to the United States. The tradition of democracy is evident throughout the history of all the peoples of this continent, from the attempts of Quebec to liberate itself from a second class status to the liberation movements in the Caribbean and Central America. The forms of democracy incorporated in both the U.S. and Soviet constitutions are actually patterned after some of the forms of government developed in America prior to the arrival of any European. Since the inception of the U.S. government, which has always placed the interests of corporations ahead of the needs of people, we have drifted further and further away from the ideals which gave birth to this nation. Our society has become a victim of 3 major illnesses --racism, sexism, and elitism. We have allowed corporate greed and dehumanization to replace our ideals. The growth of the economic, political and military power of this country has always been at the expense of other people and other countries. Need I remind you that Anglo-Saxon racism extends to more groups of people in this country than Blacks, Indians, Asians, or Latinos? After all, who invented Polish jokes? The secret to improving our image abroad is to clean up our house at home. If this country is to survive in tomorrow's world, it needs to adopt a foreign policy consistent with the ideals verbalized in the Declaration of Independence. For this country's pronouncements to be believed abroad, we need to adopt domestic policies consistent with a genuine adherence to our original beliefs. If that means a radical change in our economic system, then that should happen. It is totally beyond the realm of logic and reality for the government of this country to be fighting ideas beneficial to people around the world with its armies. Military force has never proved who is right, merely, who is stronger.

The history of the expansion of the United States, as controlled by the Anglo-Saxon, has been a history of military conquest, economic exploitation, and political domination since the English arrived at Plymouth Rock. The hypocrisy and "moral" justifications that have accompanied this expansion challenge every known rule of logic, truth, and justice. Our growth as a nation has involved successive waves of immigration which brought to these shores new groups of people to be exploited by the economic system, to be promised equality and democracy, and to be classified as somehow different from all the others. The natives of America welcomed each new wave of immigrants. In Mexico and in other parts of Latin America the Hispanic became one with the Indian in such a way as to cause recognition today of the fact that Mexico is the true melting pot of America. I don't think it necessary to elaborate on the American and British system of slavery that reintroduced Africans to these shores. I need not remind you, given the wealth of historic data at your finger tips, that

Chicanos and Mexicans are not immigrants to the United States. After all, the U.S. military was the first "illegal alien" to ever set foot in Texas, New Mexico, and the rest of the lands stolen from Mexico. It is ironic, the amount of apparent respect which can be generated at high levels of the U.S. government/corporate machine when people of color discover oil on their own land. I suppose it can be said that there has been some progress made between 1836 and 1980, but not very much. In short, Mr. Secretary, we need to take a look at our entire foreign policy. With some slight exceptions, it is, in its totality, downright unAmerican.

The situation in Iran provides us with an opportunity to dramatically alter our course, to right the wrongs of two centuries of imperial expansion and greed, and to demonstrate to the world that the people of America can in fact take control of their own government and can hold it accountable to honoring the principles which gave it birth for the first time in its history. It is possible to enter into a process of negotiations with the government and people of Iran. To do so will require a significant departure from the way we have done things in the past. It will require listening to the just grievances held against our government. It will require repairing the damage of economic exploitation. It will require levels of respect and courtesy heretofore unattained by U.S. diplomatic and governmental practice. It will require learning to mind our own business. It will require a sincere demonstration of commitment to the new policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations. It will require an admission of guilt and responsibility for prior wrongdoing, not only in Iran, but throughout the world, throughout the history of the U.S. government. It will require a sincere commitment to curing our society once and for all of its three major illnesses--racism, sexism, and elitism. It will require a sincere apology.

Here are some practical suggestions of what we need to do to demonstrate sincerity in the areas I have touched upon. Were the U.S. government to implement the following suggestions, I feel certain that the hostages would soon return home safe, sound and happy:

1. A Presidential and Congressional Commission to study the violations of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.
2. U.S. recognition of the independence of Puerto Rico.
3. U.S. recognition of the sovereignty of the American Indian nations.
4. Full equality and self-determination for Afro-Americans.
5. Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.
6. Statehood for the District of Columbia.
7. Serious de-escalation of U.S. military expenditures, particularly in the Middle East and Central America.
8. An immediate termination of U.S. government plans to seize currently frozen Iranian assets.
9. Immediate termination of U.S. plans for military intervention in Iran, before or after the election.
10. Serious economic development programs designed to eliminate poverty in the U.S.
11. U.S. recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestínians.

On the surface the suggestions listed might seem difficult to achieve, especially in a short amount of time. However, a serious commitment of the national will and all of our resources would enable us to accomplish the above in a surprisingly short period of time. The bottom line is that human rights must begin at home.

I would recommend the following as the basic theme for a letter of apology to the Iranian people:

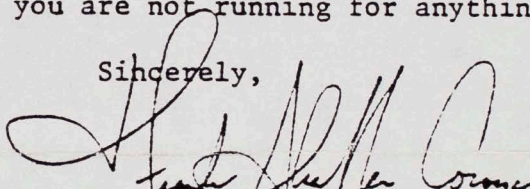
"Dear Iran:

I want to sincerely apologize for the wrongs I have caused you in the past several years. I have behaved badly. I am like the new kid at school who thought it necessary to prove how smart I was by demonstrating how strong I was. I will have to admit that when I first came to school I was afraid. My parents filled me with good values in my early years. I somehow had the idea that those values were unique to me and my parents. I really was scared because when I came to school I discovered that almost everyone else either spoke a different language or looked different. I really got frightened when I noticed that most of the other kids had darker skin than I do. I have behaved badly, and I realize that my fear led me to become the biggest bully in the school yard. I have learned that my values and those of my parents are not the only values in the school. I have learned that we all have to learn to get along with each other and respect each other's values. I want to try to do this. I really want to learn about the values of the other kids and to share mine with them. I'm not sure that I know how to go about doing this. Will you help me please.

Sincerely yours,
The U.S.A."

Mr. Secretary, the above approach works wonders when applied at the local school level. It is my sincere belief that it might work miracles when applied at yours, especially since you are not running for anything.

Sincerely,



Frank Shaffer-Corona
Member, At-Large
Board of Education