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With tears running down her cheeks Geneva Ochoa joined about two dozen Mexican-Americans to protest their treatment at the hands of Law & Drug

Enforcement officers.

Photo by Richard Brown

Restaurant Owner Charges Discrimination After Search

by Bob Lothian

For three years, the El Mexico Cafe has served enchiladas, rellenos, tacos and other Mexican specialties in a quiet corner of downtown Portland, at 214 S.W. Broadway.

But things weren't so quiet on the night of Feb. 28th. As owner Geneva Ochoa prepared another order for the good-sized Friday night crowd, a swat team of U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration agents, Multnomah County sheriff's deputies and Portland police burst through the door with a search warrant.

In the words of Mike Valdez, a contractor and regular customer who had stopped in for dinner, one of the agents announced: "Enjoy your meal, it's on the house. This is the last meal this restaurant will ever serve."

Ochoa was told to turn off the stove and leave the food she had prepared. Her waitress daughter was detained and searched. A table of Mexican customers was also detained, but white cus-

tomers were let go, according to Ochoa and Valdez.

The officers, apparently looking for drugs and/or evidence, "tore the place up," Ochoa said. They confiscated account and check books, along with \$3,200 of Ochoa's cash, part of which was to pay the rent for the restaurant. She still hasn't gotten the check book and money back. "I was robbed," Ochoa said. None of her customers or employees were physically abused, she said.

At about the same time that night, another team broke through the door and searched Ochoa's North Portland house. Two address books were confiscated. Two blocks away, Corpus Londres, a Hispanic man, had just entered a phone booth when a car sped up and officers with pistols drawn jumped out and ordered him not to touch the phone, he said. Londres was allowed to go after an identification check.

"My home was destroyed," Ochoa

said. She and her daughters broke into a piggy bank for money to go to McDonald's for dinner.

Ochoa said the only possible connection between her family and drugs is the case of her nephew Joe, who is in jail on a drug charge. She hasn't seen Joe since November. No drugs or evidence related to drugs were found in either the restaurant or her house, she said.

On the day after the searches, Ochoa said, an officer came to her house and apologized for the rough treatment, and he admitted that authorities knew that she and her husband weren't involved in drugs. He said the searches were conducted to set an example, according to Ochoa.

Ochoa feels that her restaurant was picked "because it's owned by Mexicans." During a tearful interview Monday in front of the U.S. Courthouse, as about 30 supporters from the Hispanic community and the Rainbow Coalition demonstrated on her behalf,

Ochoa charged that her civil rights were wantonly violated. She has hired a lawyer and will sue, she said.

"I would have given them the key to my house and let them look at my books if they had asked," she said. "They didn't need to tear my door down. I felt like they went into my soul and tore it apart."

Ochoa has since cleaned up and reopened the El Mexico, but she said that business is down. She plans to stay in business for the time being, but the experience has caused her to think seriously about returning to California. "I don't want to live in a town that is prejudiced against me," she said.

"There's no discrimination whatsoever," said DEA resident agent-in-charge Connell McGeehan. "There's nobody who would use a search warrant for an example. There's no validity to that statement at all," he said. McGeehan said he could make no further comment on the incident.

Bishop Criticizes Reagan's Foreign Policies

by Jerry Garner

"It's a lie to call the Contras fighting in Nicaragua freedom fighters." Many of the Contras are from the Somoza regime, they're committing atrocities against the Nicaraguan people," said Bishop Thomas J. Grumbleton. Bishop Grumbleton and 200 other bishops accused the Reagan administration of lying about the situation in Nicaragua. "It's a very sad thing that myself and 200 other bishops must say our government is lying." Yet we have discovered 15 separate areas where the facts show clearly that our government says one thing and the facts say the opposite," said Bishop Grumbleton.

Bishop Grumbleton said Witness for Peace has visited Nicaragua on many occasions and reported that the Contras, not the Sandinistas, are committing the atrocities as the Reagan administration claims. He said that religious communities throughout the whole country of Nicaragua, have reported the atrocities that are being done by the Contras. "The Contras are killing women, children, elderly men and mutilating their bodies afterwards." These are the things the administration denies are outright lies.

Bishop Grumbleton said that the church isn't being persecuted, "the church isn't closed, religious education

is being given, priests are free to preach people are being ministered to and the bulk of the population are supportive of their government." It's like the Philippines situation where you had thousands of people in the streets protesting the government."

Bishop Grumbleton said that the Nicaraguan people have spoken and what they are saying is that they want the Sandinistas as their government. He said the Sandinistas government is trying to share the country's resources with the poor in that country, something that hasn't been done before.

Bishop Grumbleton, who was in Portland last week, is Vice President of Pax Christi International and President of the U.S. Chapter of International Catholic Peace Organization.

Bishop Grumbleton also spoke out against the nuclear arms race between the two super powers. "We are moving closer to the time when the planet will be destroyed." He said negotiations of a comprehensive test-ban treaty and eventual reduction and elimination of nuclear arms will prevent a nuclear war from occurring. The Detroit Bishop said he did not expect President Reagan to initiate any steps toward nuclear arms negotiation as long as his "Star Wars" remained his highest priority.

Black Hair Styles Creating Competition for Black Hair-Care Co.

by Jerry Garner

The curly hairstyles worn by millions of Black females and males have created fierce competition between traditional Black hair-care companies and large cosmetic companies such as Alberto-Culver and Revlon.

In 1984 Black consumers spent \$2.3 billion on hair-care products. Blacks spend three to four times more on such products than whites, accounting for 36 percent of the nation's hair-care products.

With such large profits to be made, large cosmetic companies are reaching out to Black consumers. Revlon is now the leading seller of hair relaxer, a straightener used primarily by Black consumers. The leading hair coloring used by Blacks is Nice 'n Easy, which is manufactured by Clairol Inc., a division of Bristol-Myers.

In an effort to combat this trend,

Black-owned hair-care companies such as Johnson Products Co., M&M Products Co. and Soft Sheen Products Inc. have started an advertising and marketing campaign aimed at persuading Black consumers to buy hair-care products made by Black-owned companies. They have also imprinted their products with a logo type silhouette of a Black woman's profile. Edward G. Gardner, president of Soft Sheen Products Inc., the largest Black-controlled hair-product company, said that if Black companies had equal access to the white market, the competition wouldn't bother him at all. Gardner said that some of their products, such as shampoos, could be used by white consumers. But, they continue to meet resistance by major nationwide distributors who could position them for general consumption.

Volunteer Crisis Counselors Sought

A mother calls because her teenage son has been very depressed and she's afraid he's thinking of killing himself.

A young woman with small children telephones for help. Her husband has beaten her and she wants to leave, but has no money and no place to go.

These are typical calls received by Metro Crisis Intervention Service every day. Over 36,000 calls were answered last year by trained volunteer crisis counselors, and the number of calls continues to increase.

Metro Crisis Service is currently seeking caring, non-judgmental individuals to become volunteer counselors. No experience is necessary, training is provided. Counselors are needed for daytime and overnight shifts. Positions are available at the Hillsboro and Portland offices.

Spring training begins April 14th. Deadline for registration is April 10th. Class size is limited, so early registration is suggested. For more information call 226-3099.

Black College Officials Visiting Israel

Five leading black university officials are in Israel this week (March 9-15) in a pilot project aimed at creating an academic bond between their institutions in the American south and Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

"Our goal is to inaugurate a series of academic exchanges between scholars in Israel and black college leaders in the United States," said Jacques Torczyner. He is chairman of the inter-religious and community relations department of the World Zionist Organization, which is co-sponsoring the project with the World Jewish Congress, Hebrew University and Israel Colloquium, an interfaith group. Mr. Torczyner added:

"We hope to forge these academic links by creating opportunities for black scholars to conduct research in Israel and by affording Israeli scholars the opportunity to meet and know the

American black community and black scholars in the U.S.

"In so doing, we hope to promote better understanding between the people of Israel and the black community in the United States," Mr. Torczyner said.

In addition to meeting deans, scholars and other academic leaders in Israel, the American educators will be received by Yitzhak Navon, Israel's Minister of Education; U.S. Ambassador Thomas Pickering and Simcha Dinitz, a Knesset member and vice president of Hebrew University.

MEMORIAL WEEKEND

The 7th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Weekend is April 4th-6th. For information call 622-0261 or 522-1420. Help SCLC fulfill the dream.



Children of the Black Educational Center visited the rehearsal site for the 1985-86 Portland Opera season production of The Marriage of Figaro. On the set the youngsters met members of the cast, including Benjamin Holt (above)

who plays the role of Figaro. Holt talked about and got the children involved in the opera Figaro in what turned into a joyful experience for all.

Photo by Richard J. Brown