



FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 2013

FED-TAGO TASK FORCE INVESTIGATES MAIL-IN VOTE VICTIMS

By Juan Montoya

For the past four days, scores of federal and Texas Attorney General Office investigators have been knocking on the doors of potential victims of the vote harvesting machine that put Justice of the Peace Erin H. Garcia in office in last year's runoff election. Sources close to the task force have indicate that they have sought to question those voters who cast ballots using the usual politiqueros and politiqueras associated with the Ernie and Norma Hernandez vote-harvesting operation.

Among some of the names that have been mentioned are Tomasita Chavez, Margarita Ozuna, Herminia Becerra, Ralph Elizondo, Joey Garza, Amadeo Rodriguez Jr., and others.

"Two men went to see Tomasita's voters at the Brownsville High Rise and they were wearing guns and asking them about their vote," said a politiquera on Monday.

By Wednesday, the reports from the politiqueras indicted that the probe was wider in scope than the voters at the High-Rise and included all areas of southesast Cameron County, especially Cameron Park, Las Prietas, the Southmost area and downtown barrios.

According to one politiquera source, Ozuna was contacted and refused to answer the investigators' questions.

"She told them she had already said everything she was going to say," she said.



Ozuna is currently serving probation after pleading no contest to an elections code violation she allegedly committed during the election of Ernie Hernandez in 2010.

"I want to emphasize that the people being interviewed are considered victims of the vote-harvesting machines," said a source close to the investigating team. "Their votes were harvested by certain politiqueras in the employ of certain politicians."

The mail-in vote has long been said to have been manipulated by local politicians who use a score of politiqueras to acquire the edge in local races. In 2010, Ruben Peña filed suit in court and vowed to show that Ernie Hernandez had used the politiqueras to harvest votes form the elderly and mentally impaired to inflate his vote totals. In the 2010 Democratic primary, Hernandez received 1,206 votes to Peña's 1,121 votes. But in the runoff, after Peña had beaten Hernandez in the runoff election votes 1,863 to 1,701, it was the mail-in votes harvested by Ozuna and Becerra (240 for Hernandez to 34 for Peña) that gave Hernandez the win.

Peña brought Hernandez to court and came within 7 votes of the 49-vote difference to overturn that election before a judge from Hidalgo County put an abrupt halt on the process.

Hernandez was declared the winner over Peña, who was "able to prove fraud, but due to Hernandez's abuse of the discovery process, was unable to prove a sufficient number of illegal votes to overturn the election."

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TRANSLATE

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"Hernandez and his wife (Norma), who is also a politiquera, avoided being served with subpoenas and did not attend the trial. The politiqueras also avoided service and absconded rather than appearing at trial. Numerous persons who supposedly voted by mail refused to appear at trial after being served..."

A judge decided that there would not be enough time for the lawsuit to be heard before Hernandez took office.

The impact of those harvested votes was never more apparent than during the runoff election between Yolanda Begum and Erin H. Garcia.

The same politiqueros and politiqueras identified with the vote-harvesting machine that delivers the votes to Ernie, wife Norma, were identified by Begum in a lawsuit in 2012 for manipulating the mail-in vote of the elderly and mentally impaired. In a couple of cases, illiterate voters were said to have voted by mail.

In that primary, Erin Hernandez Garcia had lost by some 500 votes and ended up winning with less than 200 during the runoff.

In the graphic included here, the voter assistant who hauled in the elderly voters in rented vans is identified as Joey Garza, an Hernandez operative who also signed his name on countless mail-in ballots. Yet, none of



the voters interviewed by investigators recall seeing him or fellow politiquero Ralph Elizondo pick up their ballots at their homes.

Begum also filed a lawsuit against Garcia in the 357th District Court and charged that her family and network of politiqueras like Ozuna and Garza used numerous illegal tactics to obtain votes in the runoff: discarding or altering mail-in votes intended for Begum; paying personnel at adult day care centers and nursing homes to allow drivers to take vans full of voters, many elderly or mentally disabled and influencing their votes; taking mail-in ballots from voters; and offering meals and gift cards in exchange for votes.

"The Hernandez family, aided by their network of politiqueras, has stolen two consecutive Democratic primary runoff elections in Cameron County," the election contest stated, referring to this election and the 2010 runoff between Hernandez and Ruben Pena for the county commissioner seat, Begum's lawyers charged.

A visiting state judge also threw out the case saying that in the case that Begum prevailed, Erin would not have the time to appeal the decision and would be deprived of a right. Now, as the federal and state investigators comb the barrios of Brownsville talking to the mail-in vote harvest victims, can the Hernandezes put out what has now become a widespread brush fire that might result in getting them or their politiquero minions indicted?

And Brownsville Housing Authority directors and board members might well reconsider whether they should continue facilitating the harvest of their elderly clients' votes in face of the investigation that has targeted that facility.

POSTED BY JMON AT 11:12 AM

15 COMMENTS:

Anonymous said...

Heeminia has also been seen coming out of Omar Lucio's Office. He needs to be questioned as well. If he can understand the questions.

AUGUST 16, 2013 AT 11:26 AM

Anonymous said...

These rats are so bold that even after they busted Ernie's assistant Raul Salazar, he continues to work for him and paid with taxpayers money. They have no shame.

AUGUST 16, 2013 AT 11:42 AM

Anonymous said...

Woohoo! Hang 'em high!

AUGUST 16, 2013 AT 11:45 AM

Anonymous said...

Cameron County doesn't just accept corruption.....it demands it....and our politicians make corruption part of our political system. Any who aren't corrupt...surely are spineless or sin huevos.

AUGUST 16, 2013 AT 11:51 AM

Anonymous said...

MONTOYA....pa que tanta investigacion,a cualqier jente que le preguntes te dicen que se robaron las elecciones esta familia hernandez,para que tanto pedo y ya se dejan de jaladas y los menten al bote y se acabo.con todo lo que esta pasando en el condado con el pedo de limas y esta jente siguen haciendo chingaderas.

AUGUST 16, 2013 AT 2:21 PM

Anonymous said...

BRAVO!

AUGUST 16, 2013 AT 2:58 PM

Anonymous said...

To the fat Hernandez family! Its coming and you better get ready for the slaughter house!

AUGUST 16, 2013 AT 4:53 PM

Anonymous said...

The words "Mail-In" obviously escapes all of these shysters. Awe the wonderful results of low quality education is paying off in political racketeering. By having under educated communities and filling addresses with people from across who care nothing about this country nor respect its most sacred of processes and who only care about what it can give them in handouts through the manipulation by these political thugs. This town is a shit hole and they all made it this way. Time to clean out the shit from this town. Good citizens are tired of all your crap, abusing our elderly by misusing them. Que gacho.

AUGUST 16, 2013 AT 5:19 PM

Anonymous said...

Visiting judge Banales is a personal friend of Ernie Hernandez I hope he is not going to be the presiding judge because he will find a way to dismiss the case

AUGUST 16, 2013 AT 8:56 PM

Anonymous said...

tarde que temprano todos estos corruptos del condado y ciudad van a ir al bote.YA BASTA DE TANTAS TRANZAS.

AUGUST 17, 2013 AT 8:42 AM

Don cleto said...

Herminia says that she does it for the poeple???? what people you ask??? her people thats what its all about, puras tranzas all this years. hope they all go to jail along with the candiates who hire them all the time right joe Rivera????? bote time all right

AUGUST 17, 2013 AT 12:49 PM

Joaquin said...

Hold on. Your party says there is no voter fraud. I'm very confused here.

AUGUST 19, 2013 AT 8:13 AM

Anonymous said...

mr.hernandez DID YOU REMEMBER sonia leticia solis BECAUSE SHE DOES REMEMBER,THE CASE IS FEDERAL

AUGUST 21, 2013 AT 7:19 AM

monkey shines said...

Ernie y Erin, they coming to take you away los federales y los de texas oag, al bote los dos. like father like daughter, es todo brother

AUGUST 21, 2013 AT 9:50 AM

Red Fusteburg said...

I understand Arambula is looking for politiqueras now since he got a recent windfall of campaign donations spearheaded by his amigos, Los Escobedos!
It looks like EVERYONE in the County of Cameroon is running a SCAM!!

AUGUST 22, 2013 AT 2:45 PM

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RITA

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