



Saturday
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Final

'Irreparable' damage feared for Democrats

Core supporters see disaster in Clinton attacks on Obama



2008 VOTE
PRESIDENT

By Jonathan Weisman
THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON — The protracted and increasingly acrimonious fight for the Democratic presidential nomination is unnerving core constituencies — blacks and wealthy liberals — who are becoming convinced that the party could suffer irreversible harm if Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton maintains her sharp line of attack against Sen. Barack Obama.

Clinton's solid win in the Pennsylvania primary exposed a quandary for the party. Her backers may be convinced that only she can win the white, working-class voters the Democratic nominee will need in the general election, but many black leaders say a Clinton nomination — handed to her by superdelegates — would result in a disastrous breach with black voters.

"If this party is perceived by people as having gone into a backroom somewhere and brokered a nominee, that would not be good for our party," House Majority Whip James Clyburn, D-S.C., the highest-ranking African-American in Congress, warned yesterday. "I'm telling you, if this continues on its current course, (the damage) is going to be irreparable."

That fear, plus a more general sense that Clinton's only route to victory would be through tearing down her opponent, has led even some black Democrats who are officially neutral in the race, such as Clyburn, to speak out.

Clinton's camp has a vastly different interpretation, arguing that the most recent primary demonstrated that Democrats remain very interested in seeing the contest continue.

"Pennsylvania did the job of calming any nerves that existed," Clinton campaign spokesman Jay Carson said. "It showed that the big states around the country think she is the best person to be president."

But that opinion is far from unanimous.

SEE **Democrats, A3**

Iran boosts aid to Iraqi militias, U.S. charges

By Lolita C. Baldor
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Iran is ratcheting up its support for militias in Iraq, providing them with newly manufactured weapons and bringing them across the border to receive training from members of Tehran's elite Republican Guard, U.S. military officials said yesterday.

Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the military is preparing to roll out evidence — such as date stamps on newly found weapons caches — that shows that recently made Iranian weapons are flowing into Iraq at a steadily increasing rate.

Mullen would not detail the evidence — which is expected to be unveiled by military leaders in Iraq as early as next week.

But another senior military official said it will include mortars, rockets, small arms, roadside bombs and armor-piercing explosives — known as explosively formed penetrators or EFPs — that troops have discovered in caches in recent months.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that dates on some of the weapons were well after Tehran signaled late last year that it was scaling back aid to insurgents.

In addition, the evidence will include information gleaned from detainees who were reportedly trained by members of Iran's elite Quds Force, as well as insurgents who received instruction on how to do the actual training.

Part of the firepower the military will unveil was used to support insurgents during the recent fighting in Basra in southern Iraq, officials said.

Mullen said he has seen evidence "that some of the weapons are recently not just found, but recently manufactured."

He also warned that the United States has the combat power to strike Tehran if needed.

Mullen and Defense Secretary Robert Gates have made clear that while all military options

SEE **Iran, A10**

Beach warnings in effect after shark kills triathlete

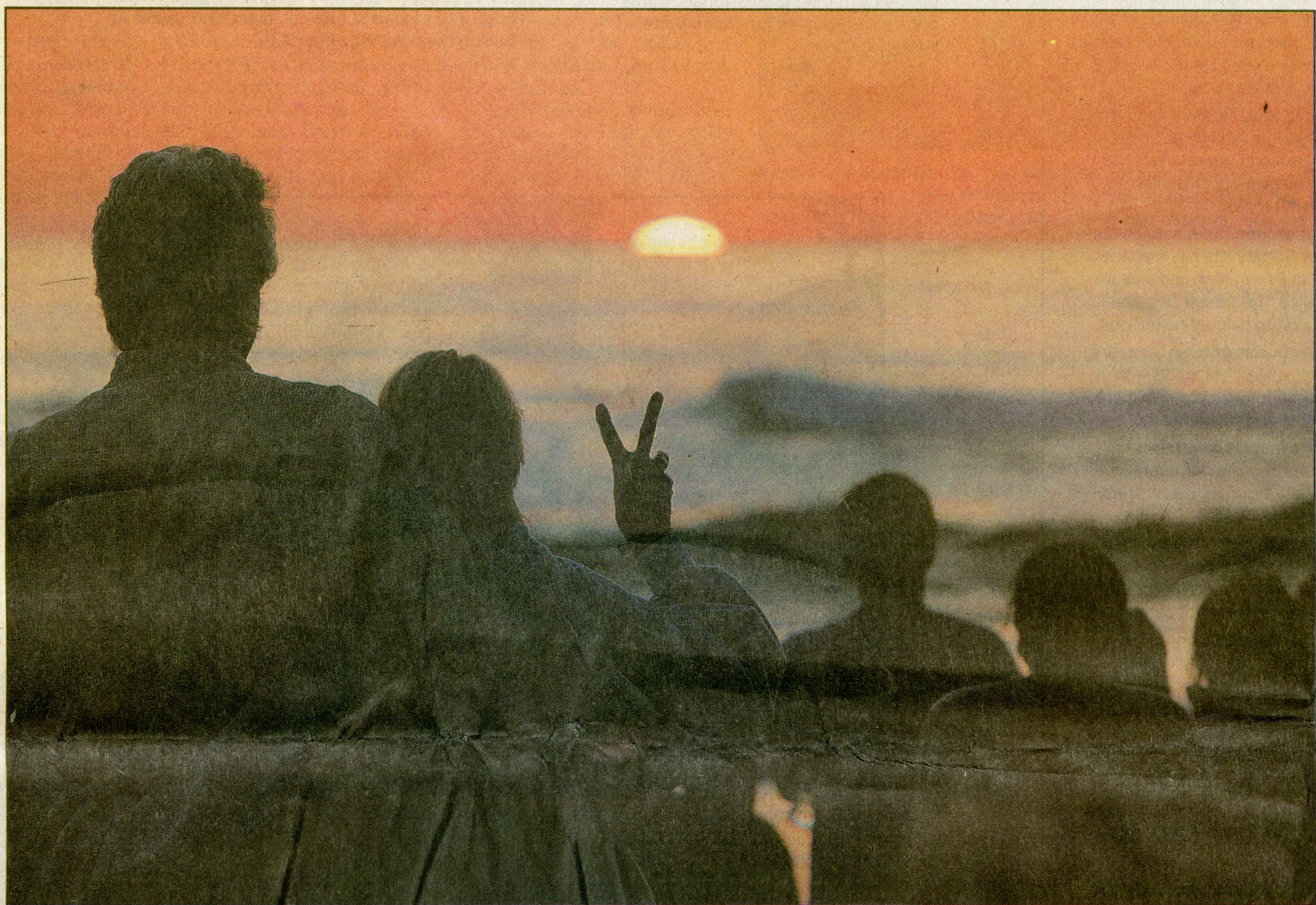


Harry Romero photo

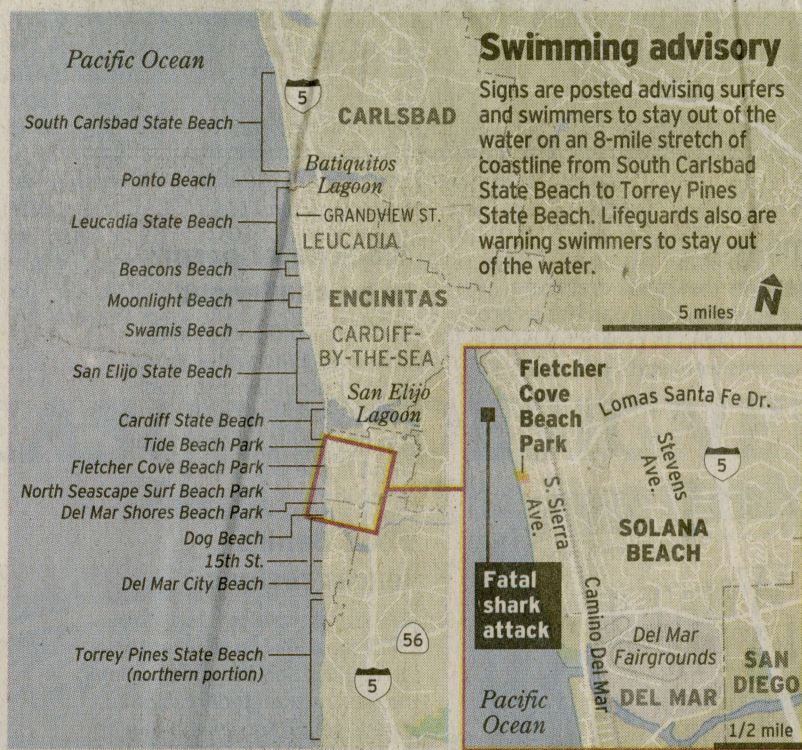


Victim: David Martin, 66, was a father of four and retired veterinarian

Safety: Authorities issue alert for the public to avoid entering the ocean along eight miles of coastline



Donna Johnson Shaw made a peace sign yesterday as she joined others at a Solana Beach memorial service after yesterday's fatal shark attack. Rescue workers (above) were unable to revive David Martin shortly after the attack. Eduardo Contreras / Union-Tribune



By Terry Rodgers
STAFF WRITER

The county's first fatal shark attack in a half-century focused worldwide attention on a stretch of coastline with no history of shark activity.

The attack occurred about 7 a.m. yesterday off Solana Beach, a community of about 13,000 known for its strong tradition of triathlon competition. One of those competitors, David Martin, 66, died while swimming with eight other members of the Triathlon Club of San Diego.

"This is just so rare. In 20 years of service as a lifeguard in this area, I've never even seen a species of shark capable of killing a man," said Larry Giles, the lifeguard captain for neighboring Encinitas.

Authorities issued an unprecedented warning for the public to avoid entering the ocean along eight miles of coastline — from the northern part of Torrey Pines

Sense of loss: Triathletes, pet owners remember attack victim David Martin. **A8**

Comparing risks: Rip currents and lacerations pose the greatest dangers to beachgoers. **A8**

Mixed reactions: Surfers, triathletes, swimmers talk about when, or if, they'll go back in the water. **D6**

State Beach to South Carlsbad State Beach. The advisory will be in effect until Monday morning.

Lifeguards said they cannot stop anyone from surfing or entering the water if they choose to do so. Hours after yesterday's attack, dozens of surfers ignored lifeguards' warnings and paddled out.

Martin — a father of four, retired veterinarian and longtime resident of Solana Beach — was training for a triathlon. He and his group were heading north from Fletcher Cove Beach Park toward

SEE **Shark attack, A8**

"He was waving his arms wildly back and forth. Then he went down."

KEN FLAGG, a swimmer who heard the commotion and saw David Martin being lifted in the air

INSIDE THE U-T



Art reopens door to Pliocene epoch

Multimillionaire turns back the clock in Borrego Valley by creating a family of gomphotheres.

OUR REGION, B1

Shortcuts in schoolwork: OMG or NBD?

Texting lingo, slang used in assignments

By Etan Horowitz
MCT NEWS SERVICE

ORLANDO, Fla. — OMG, did u C the report about txtng and skool?

No, wuz up?

Here's the 411:

A study released this week confirmed what teachers, parents and academics have long suspected: All that instant messaging and texting teenagers do is creeping into schoolwork. In

fact, 64 percent of youngsters ages 12 to 17 have used emoticons, text shortcuts and informal language in school assignments, the survey found.

But as the teens in the imagined conversation above might say, it's really NBD: no big deal.

"This is not a worrying issue at all," said Richard Sterling, chair of the advisory board for the National Commission on Writing. "The most important thing about writing is to teach audience and purpose. When this shows up in writing, it's a teachable moment that you can use to explain that, while in cer-

tain contexts this may be allowable, in others, it's not."

The majority of teens surveyed also said they didn't consider electronic communications "writing" and they think good writing skills are important for success later in life.

The study, released Thursday and called "Writing, Technology and Teens," was a joint effort between the Pew Internet and American Life Project and the College Board's National Commission on Writing.

Researchers surveyed 700

SEE **Writing, A10**



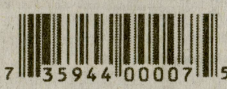
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U-T VOICE | LUIS HUMBERTO CROSTHWAITE
"Ask a Mexican" is a fun read that addresses Mexican immigrants and their customs. **Currents, E1**

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