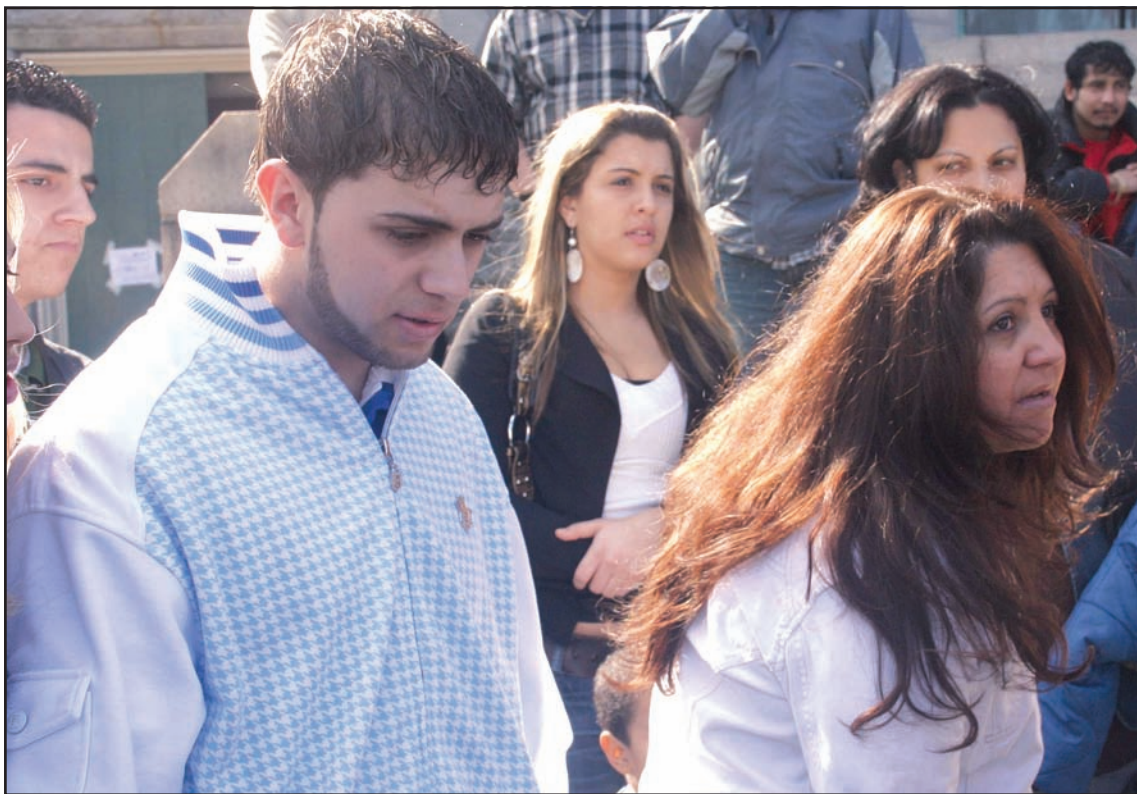


Community damage

A raid in New Bedford triggers debate on immigration reform



Anna Vieira (right) and her 17-year-old son Enrique (left), both illegal immigrants from Brazil, endured a number of hardships while working at Michael Bianco Inc. in New Bedford, including limited

use of the restrooms and senseless fines given for offenses like spending too long in the bathroom. Gov. Deval Patrick called the incident a "humanitarian crisis." (Serghino René photo)

Serghino René and Howard Manly

Sen. John Kerry was clear. Last week's raid on illegal immigrants working at Michael Bianco Inc. in New Bedford, the Massachusetts Democrat asserted, "has become a classic example of what not to do..."

No one needed to tell that to Anna Vieira. An employee of the leather factory for the last three years, she and her son Enrique, both illegal immigrants from Brazil, were two of the 361 people arrested during the raid.

On that day, the Vieiras were handcuffed, taken to Boston, then transported seven hours to Pennsylvania without food and water. They were detained there for two days before being returned to New Bedford, where they ended up in the basement of Our Lady of Guadalupe at Saint James Church in New Bedford's South End. "I didn't do anything wrong," said

Vieira. "I just came here for a better opportunity."

The Department of Homeland Security and its Immigration and Customs Enforcement doesn't agree.

Vieira now wears a monitoring device around her ankle and faces a deportation hearing in April. Until then, she must be home by 6 p.m. each day and her telephone calls are limited to 10 minutes.

Vieira's story about her treatment at the hands of the federal government was repeated over and over again. Making matters worse were the revelations that her employer used sweatshop conditions to meet the demands of \$91 million in U.S. military contracts to make products including safety vests and lightweight backpacks.

And so it is for immigration reform — a tangle of mixed messages.

The confusion dogged President Bush during his recent trip through **Damage**, continued to page 24



Gov. Deval Patrick answers a reporter's question concerning the more than 300 immigration arrests in New Bedford during a news conference at the State House in Boston on March 8. (AP photo/Stephan Savoia)

New plan looks to put more minorities on federal juries

Howard Manly

In an attempt to increase the number of minorities on federal juries, the Judicial Council of the First Circuit recently approved revisions to its selection process that are random and ensure "a fair cross section of

the community."

The United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts instituted the revised plans on March 1.

The revisions were the result of an unusual challenge filed two years ago by U.S. District Judge Nancy Gertner, who at the time was presid-

ing over a death penalty case concerning two African American men allegedly involved in a slew of street crimes, including murder and selling crack.

Gertner argued then that the process was based on frequently outdated residency lists and caused the

available pool of African American jurors to plummet from 20 percent in Suffolk County to about 7 percent in the Eastern District of Massachusetts, where the federal jury pool is drawn. The Eastern Division includes Essex, Middlesex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Bristol, Plymouth, Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket counties.

The number of African Americans dwindles to about 3 percent or less after jury summonses are returned because of outdated or inaccurate residency lists. That number is further reduced in capital punishment cases to about zero, Gertner argued.

Saying the resident lists were "not

functioning as the [court's] Jury Plan assumed they would," Gertner found that "the resident lists undercount African Americans from the outset ... [and that in many cities and towns the resident lists] are not improved and updated annually as required by state law, resulting in disproportionately high rate of undeliverable and non-responses in heavily African American poor and urban communities."

Though Gertner's ruling did not conclude that the process was unconstitutional, she did find that the defects in the system "amounted to

Juries, continued to page 21

'Regrets' the latest legacy of slavery

Erin Texeira

America is once again struggling to atone for slavery and its aftermath.

In a nation with an unquenchable need to analyze its racial past, there is now a fresh flow of contrition from public officials for the many wrongs of U.S. history.

Inspired by a resolution expressing "profound regret" for slavery that Virginia legislators passed last month, black lawmakers in Georgia said last Thursday they plan to introduce a similar measure there. Maryland and Missouri also are discussing an apology. And so far, a white Memphis congressman has gathered 36 co-sponsors for a bill that, if passed,

would bring an apology to the federal level.

The FBI announced earlier this month it is actively reinvestigating about a dozen cases of blacks slain in the 1950s and '60s as possible civil rights violations. As many as 100 more cases are being considered for similar treatment.

"Much time has passed on these crimes," Attorney General Alberto Gonzalez told a news conference in Washington. "The wounds they left are deep, and many of them still have not healed."

It's been decades since these crimes were committed. And nearly 142 years since the Civil War ended and Congress ratified the 13th

Slavery, continued to page 25



Maria Silvia (right) and her two children enjoy themselves at a March 10 reception and housewarming party for the first-time homebuyers in the new Hyde/Jackson Homes. Formerly vacant city-owned lots, the new affordable homes

are providing people of modest means the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of homeownership, a rare and wonderful chance in the Boston area. (Photo courtesy of Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation)

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