



GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times

### A DEEP BLUE SEA

A fleet of double-decker buses carrying the world champion Dodgers and their families rolls down 5th Street in downtown Los Angeles on Friday as fans lining the route cheer their heroes. LAPD officials estimated the crowd at 225,000. **SPORTS, B12**

## A small population with an outsize influence

Central Valley’s Portuguese community could help tip the balance of power in Congress

By FAITH E. PINHO

THORNTON, Calif. — The town is tiny enough that most drivers speeding along Interstate 5 in California’s Central Valley miss it. But on a recent weekend, twinkling white lights stretched over Thornton’s main intersection, the scent of linguica sausage clung to the cool autumn air and Portuguese flags flew proudly above throngs of visitors pouring into the streets. It was one of the final *festas* of the summer, and Portuguese people from across the Central Valley flocked to Thornton to celebrate. There was a parade, a bullfight, several Catholic Masses — and ample opportunity to share the food, language and culture of a quietly powerful community tucked into California’s farmlands.

“You don’t have to be Portuguese to get elected in the Valley — but it doesn’t hurt,” joked Rep. Jim Costa (D-Fresno) with a laugh. Far from the centers of power in Washington, a small but sizable Portuguese population has played a meaningful role in shaping the Central Valley — and the community’s politics could prove crucial in determining which party controls Congress in November’s election. Republicans must hold on to four seats in the House of Representatives to retain a majority. In deep-blue California, half a dozen congressional seats are considered swing districts, and two of [See **Portuguese**, A6]



PAUL KURODA For The Times

**MATADOR** Israel Tellez dips to the ground during a bullfight at a Portuguese *feira* last month at Our Lady of Fatima Church in the town of Thornton, Calif.

## Reports fault UCLA’s handling of spring campus protests

Police Commission draft slams tactics, while House panel cites antisemitism. By JAWEED KALEEM AND LIBOR JANY Two high-profile, back-to-back reports slam UCLA leaders for a confusing

breakdown in its police response leading to violence at a pro-Palestinian encampment in April, with one investigation also calling out the university’s “dramatic failures in confronting antisemitism.” A draft report to the Los Angeles Police Commission released Friday cited a lack of coordination between UCLA, LAPD and the California Highway Patrol and

smaller municipal police agencies that were hastily called to campus in the spring. UCLA, which has its own police force, had distanced itself from relying on the LAPD in the wake of Black Lives Matter protests four years ago, a practice that contributed to the poorly coordinated response, the report suggested. Some arriving teams of officers did not

even know their way around the sprawling campus and were subjected to conflicting orders about what to do as the melee unfolded for hours in front of them the night of April 30. The LAPD should take the lead on campus law enforcement ahead of future “large scale events” if university staffing isn’t adequate, the report said. The report to the com-

mission, the civilian agency tasked with LAPD oversight, came on the heels of a congressional probe that pilloried the university for allowing antisemitism to foment on campus during pro-Palestinian protests. The Republican-led U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce criticized UCLA and other elite universities, including [See **UCLA**, A12]

### Israel heeds U.S. call on Iran

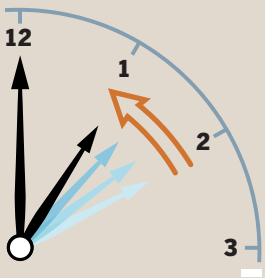
Netanyahu scales back air targets, recognizing Tehran as a foe different from those in Gaza, Lebanon. **WORLD, A3**

### Tallying support for sales tax

About half of likely L.A. County voters in survey favored measure to fund homeless relief. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

**Weather** Mostly cloudy; cool. L.A. Basin: 67/54. **B8**

For the latest news, go to **latimes.com**.



**Timely reminder** Daylight saving time ends Sunday at 2 a.m.



### A FAREWELL TO FERNANDO

The Dodgers legend, who died last month, is remembered by friends and colleagues in a special eight-page section. **SECTION V**

### ANALYSIS

## The questions that could decide the election

What to watch for in final days of unusually tight presidential race.

By DAVID LAUTER

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Wes Bair, a 74-year-old Black man from Pennsylvania’s capital city, has personal experience with young Black voters wavering on whether to support Kamala Harris for president. “Even my son was saying, ‘What’s she done?’” Bair

said as he waited in the shade on an unseasonably warm day this week to get into a rally here for the vice president. But, he added, “I’m on team positive.” As the remaining fence-sitters focus on the major candidates and their positions, Harris will gain the backing she needs, he predicted. The night before, he said, his son and daughter-in-law had called. “We thought they were going to tell us that she’s pregnant,” Bair said. But it

was a different sort of welcome news: “Mom and Dad, we’ve decided we’re voting for Harris.” Multiply that by a few million, and you have the tension of the final week of what polls show is one of the closest presidential races in American history. Across the U.S., especially in the seven states where the outcome appears up for grabs, two opposing armies face off, battling over a relative handful of people still uncertain about whom to support, or more com-

monly, whether to vote at all. In an agonizingly close race, the result may pivot on the individual decisions of that tiny slice of the electorate — mostly voters who have tuned out the cacophony of the campaign until recently and are only now coming to grips with their decision. **How can the race still be so close?** I can’t tell you who will win. Polls are simply too [See **Analysis**, A5]



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