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HISPANIC LUNCHEON

EVENT

Wednesday, September 16. 1981

DELIVERY DATE

DUE

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

September 16, 1981

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT
A LUNCHEON WITH MEMBERS OF THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY

The State Dining Room

1:05 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much and buenas tardes. I had to say that because the reason I was late today, and I apologize to all of you, is because I had a very distinguished visitor in the office and he had a presentation to make and it did run over the time, but it was the Patriarch of Antioch -- I am trying to think again exactly what his title is -- but of the Maronite Christian people in Lebanon. It was fascinating, the story that he was telling. But what fascinated me the most was that he conducted the almost thirty minutes of message to me in our language, in English, and he had simply just sat down and learned English in order to make this trip. And I had to confess that if I was going to Lebanon (laughter) I could not do what he had done. But anyway it couldn't be interrupted, so I was late.

But as a Californian it is a special pleasure for me to welcome you here to the White House and I know it probably would not be proper for me to say *mi casa es su casa* because this is already *su casa* (laughter). I just am a temporary tenant here. But all of us from the West have a special place in our hearts for Hispanic culture. Incidentally, as long as I was talking about language, the day after tomorrow, I am going to be speaking to an audience in Denver, Colorado, and I was going to tell them a little story that happened to deal with a visit that, when I was governor of California, I made to Mexico on behalf of the then administration in Washington. I made a speech and I sat down to rather unenthusiastic and scattered applause and I was a little embarrassed. I didn't know what I might have said that was wrong, and I was doubly embarrassed when the next man up, speaking in Spanish, which I did not understand, was getting enthusiastic applause every other sentence. So to hide my embarrassment I was clapping before everyone else and clapping after everyone else had finished until our ambassador leaned over to me and said, "I wouldn't do that if I were you. He is interpreting your speech." (Laughter.)

Coming from the West and having Hispanic culture in our hearts it is so much a tradition in the Southwest that moving here to Washington was a bit of a culture shock. I understand that whenever there is federal business to be done in any of the southwestern states there is fierce competition among the Californians on my staff to get the assignment. It has something to do with enchiladas and refried beans and the fact that you don't just get those every day in Washington, D.C. In fact, I don't know where you can get them. Somebody, I am sure, will tell me there is a place when I leave here.

But seriously, all of this has given me a deep appreciation for Hispanic culture, including its music, food and qualities, but more than that, the qualities of character that it engenders, especially the sense of personal honor and **integrity**.

In the past election I talked about five important values,

MORE

family, neighborhood, work, peace, and freedom. Campaigning in Hispanic areas I never felt more comfortable about those values. During the last two decades, when our traditions and values were under attack as never before, Hispanic Americans held firm to their beliefs like a solid rock amidst a stormy sea. They demonstrated a commitment to family, a reverence for God, as well as the pride and self-respect that comes from hard work.

Today all of us are rediscovering those values. But the Hispanic community never lost them, and this dedication is beginning to bear fruit. Progress made by Hispanics can be described as nothing less than phenomenal. After years of adversity and, yes, discrimination there is no doubt that Hispanics are taking their rightful place in American society. In my own administration they are playing an invaluable role. Eighty Hispanics have already received appointments at all levels and 18 of them in major positions and I am happy to say in looking back over the records to see how we are doing that these first few months top anything that has happened in the entire administrations that have preceded us. (Applause.) And across this land in the private sector you are making your way into positions of influence and leadership and all of this is a tremendous source of pride for a people who have worked so hard to overcome the obstacles before them.

A most admirable quality is the sense of honor and duty that is rooted so firmly in that culture. Few others can claim the patriotism demonstrated by our Hispanic citizens. Consistent with this they have received rewards for heroism and bravery far in excess to their proportion of the population. Two of my first ceremonial functions as President were, interestingly enough, directly related to heroism of Hispanic Americans. First I was honored to welcome back the hostages from Iran and two of the marines had been especially heroic, both of them were Hispanic Americans. One of them, Jimmy Lopez, is remembered not only for risking his life to help several embassy employees escape, but also for his spirit of defiance in captivity. Before they left to come home he wrote on his cell wall in Spanish, which the Iranians did not understand, "Viva la roja, blanca, y azul." His devotion will not be forgotten. And then on February 24th we discovered that there had been neglected for several years the presentation of a Congressional Medal of Honor, given only for service above and beyond the call of duty, and it was to go to a brave man, Master Sergeant Roy Benevidez, raised on a farm down near the border in Texas. His heroism in Vietnam earned him that highest award, the Congressional Medal of Honor, and I had the honor to present it to him. I had the honor to sit and visit with him for awhile about this and let me just say a word or two about it. If you tried to put it in a television show, no one would believe it. He was manning a desk when helicopters came in from an attempted rescue mission of a patrol surrounded by the enemy. The crews were shot up. The helicopters were shot up. They were readying others to go back in and try again and he just walked away from his desk and climbed in the first helicopter, and he was the first man to -- he is the only man to drop down from the only helicopter to get in and he went 75 yards through heavy fire to get to this patrol of 12 men, 4 then dead and 8 wounded. And one by one, he carried the 8 out through that fire, wounded, shot four times. And after he had been shot four times, he had to put down one of the men he was carrying and draw his bayonet and engage in hand-to-hand combat with a Vietnamese who had clubbed him with a rifle and then was trying to stab him with a bayonet. And I think that you would appreciate this when I tell you that he said, "I know that we are taught to parry the bayonet by shoving it aside," but he said, "you don't always think of that," and he said, "so I grabbed it and held it against him and in the sawing effort to get it loose, my left arm was totally disabled." But what I loved most of all was -- he had been shot four times, remember, when this happened -- he said to me, "that is when I got mad." (Laughter.)

The proclamation that we celebrate today about the strength that the Hispanic people have given to this country, all of this is based on the strength of character which I spoke of earlier. Recognizing this, I am proud to have proclaimed this National Hispanic Heritage Week. In doing so, I hope that all Americans will reflect on how lucky we are to have such a wonderful people as a part of our country and a part of ourselves.

I could confess something and my people of my own background would not hold it against me. I think that if the country were just left to us Anglos that it would be kind of dull. (Laughter.)

Thank you all very much and God bless you. (Applause.)

END

1:16 P.M. EDT

(ROHRBACHER/TD)

HISPANIC LUNCHEON--SEPT. 16, 1981, NOON

BUENAS TARDES. AS A CALIFORNIAN, IT IS A SPECIAL PLSR FOR ME TO WELCM U TO .. W.H. ALL OF US FROM..WEST HV A SPECIAL PLACE IN OUR HEARTS FOR..HISPANIC CULTURE. IT IS SO MUCH A PART OF OUR TRADITN IN..S.W. THT MOVING HERE TO WASH. WAS A BIT OF A CULTURE SHOCK.

I UNDRSTND THAT WHENEVER THERE IS FED'L BUSINESS TO BE DONE IN ANY OF..S.W. STATES THERE IS FIERCE COMPETITN AMONG MY STAFF TO GET..ASSIGNMNT. IT HS SOMETHNG TO DO WITH ENCHILADAS & REFRIED BEANS -- &..LACK OF THEM IN WASH., D.C.

SERIOUSLY, BEING FROM..WEST HAS GIVEN ME A DEEP APPRECIATN FOR..HISPANIC CULTURE, INCLUDING ITS MUSIC, ..FOOD, &..QUALITIES OF CHARACTER IT ENGENDERS, ESPECIALLY..SENSE OF PERSONL HONOR & INTEGRITY.

PAGE 2

IN..PAST ELECTN I TALKED ABOUT 5 IMPRTNT
VALUES: FAMLY, NEIGHBORHD, WORK, PEACE &
FREEDM. CAMPAIGNING IN HISPANIC AREAS,
I NEVER FELT MORE COMFORTABL ABT THS VALUES.

DURING..LAST 2 DECADES, WHEN OUR
TRADITNS & VALUES WERE UNDER ATTACK AS
NEVER BFOR, ..HISPANIC-AMs HELD FIRM TO
THEIR BLIEFS LIKE A SOLID ROCK AMIDST A
STORMY SEA. THEY DEMONSTRATED A COMMITMNT
TO FAMLY, A REVERENCE FOR GOD, AS WL AS THE
PRIDE & SELF-RESPECT THT COMES FROM HARD WRK.
TDAY, ALL OF US ARE REDISCOVERING THS VALUES,
BUT..HISP. COMMUNITY NEVER LOST THEM.

& THIS DEDICATN IS BEGINNING TO BEAR
FRUIT. PROGRESS MADE BY HISPANICS CN BE
DESCRIBED AS NOTHNG LESS THN PHENOMENAL.
AFTER YRS. OF ADVERSITY & DISCRIMINATN, THERE
IS NO DOUBT THT HISPANICS ARE TAKING THEIR
RIGHTFUL PLACE IN AM. SOCIETY.

PAGE 3

IN MY OWN ADMIN., THEY ARE PLAYING AN
INVALUABLE ROLE. 80 HISPANICS HAVE ALREADY
REC'D APPT.s AT ALL LEVELS;
18 OF THEM TO MAJOR POSITIONS,
& ACROSS THIS LAND IN..PRIVATE SECTOR,
HISP-AMs ARE MAKING THEIR WAY INTO POSITNS
OF INFLUENCE & LDRSHP. ALL OF THIS IS A
TREMENDOUS SOURCE OF PRIDE FOR A P. THT HV
WORKED SO HARD TO OVERCM..OBSTACLES BFOR THM.

A MOST ADMIRABL QUALITY OF HISPANICS
IS..SENSE OF HONOR & DUTY THT IS ROOTED SO
FIRMLY IN THEIR CULTURE. FEW OTHERS CN CLAIM
THE PATRIOTISM DEMONSTRATED BY THS CITIZENS.
CONSISTENT WITH THS, THEY HV REC'D AWARDS
FOR HEROISM & BRAVERY FAR IN EXCESS TO THEIR
PORTION OF..POPULATN. 2 OF MY 1st
CEREMONIAL FUNCTNS AS PRES. WERE,
INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH, DIRECTLY RELATED TO ..
HEROISM OF HISPANIC-AMs.

PAGE 4

1st I WAS HONORED TO WELCM BACK..
HOSTAGES FROM IRAN. 2 OF..MARINES HAD BN
ESPECIALLY HEROIC -- BOTH OF THM WERE
HISP-AMs. 1 OF THEM, JIMMY LOPEZ, IS
REMEMBERED NOT ONLY FOR RISKNG HIS LIFE TO
HELP SEVERAL EMBASSY EMPLOYEES ESCAPE,
BUT ALSO FOR HIS SPIRITED DEFIANCE IN
CAPTIVITY. HE WROTE ON..CELL WALL, IN SPANISH,
"VIVA LA ROJA, BLANCA Y AZUL." HIS DEVOTN
WILL NOT BE FORGOTN.

THEN ON FEB. 24 I WAS HONORED TO PAY
TRIBUTE TO ANOTHR BRAVE MAN: MASTER SGT.
ROY BENAVIDEZ. HIS HEROISM IN VIETNAM
EARNED HIM HIS CO.'s HIGHEST AWARD, ..
CONGRESSIONL MEDAL OF HONOR. I AM PROUD
TO HAVE HAD..OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT IT TO HIM.

PAGE 5

THE PROCLAMATN WE CELEBRATE TDAY TALKS
ABOUT..STRENGTH HISP. P. GIVE TO THS CO.
ALL OF THIS IS BASED ON..STRENGTH OF
CHARACTER OF WHICH I SPOKE OF EARLIER.
RECOGNIZING THIS, I AM PROUD TO HAVE
PROCLAIMED THIS NAT'L HISPANIC HERITAGE WEEK.
DOING SO, I HOPE ALL AMs WILL REFLECT ON
HOW LUCKY WE ARE TO HAVE SUCH A WONDERFUL P.
AS PART OF OUR CO. & PART OF OURSELVES.

THANK YOU AGAIN.

HISPANIC LUNCHEON -- SEPTEMBER 16, 1981

Buenas tardes. As a Californian it is a special pleasure for me to welcome you to the White House. All of us from the West have a special place in our hearts for the Hispanic culture. It is so much a part of our tradition in the Southwest that moving here to Washington was a bit of culture shock.

I understand that whenever there is Federal business to be done in any of the Southwestern States there is fierce competition among my staff to get the assignment. It has something to do with enchiladas and refried beans -- and the lack of them in Washington, D.C.

Seriously, being from the West has given me a deep appreciation for the Hispanic culture, including its music, its food and the qualities of character it engenders, especially the sense of personal honor and integrity.

In the past election I talked about five important values: family, neighborhood, work, peace, and freedom. Campaigning in Hispanic areas, I never felt more comfortable about these values.

During the last two decades, when our traditions and values were under attack as never before, the Hispanic Americans held firm to their beliefs like a solid rock amidst a stormy sea. They demonstrated a commitment to family, a reverence for God, as well as the pride and self-

respect that comes from hard work. Today, all of us are rediscovering those values, but the Hispanic community never lost them.

And this dedication is beginning to bear fruit. Progress made by Hispanics can be described as nothing less than phenomenal. After years of adversity and discrimination, there is no doubt that Hispanics are taking their rightful place in American society.

In my own Administration, they are playing an invaluable role. Eighty Hispanics have already received appointments at all levels; 18 of them to major positions. And across this land in the private sector, Hispanic Americans are making their way into positions of influence and leadership. All of this is a tremendous source of pride for a people that have worked so hard to overcome the obstacles before them.

A most admirable quality of Hispanics is the sense of honor and duty that is rooted so firmly in their culture. Few others can claim the patriotism demonstrated by these citizens. Consistent with this, they have received awards for heroism and bravery far in excess to their portion of the population. Two of my first ceremonial functions as President were, interestingly enough, directly related to the heroism of Hispanic Americans.

First, I was honored to welcome back the hostages from Iran. Two of the Marines had been especially heroic -- both

of them were Hispanic Americans. One of them, Jimmy Lopez, is remembered not only for risking his life to help several embassy employees escape, but also for his spirited defiance in captivity. He wrote on his cell wall, in Spanish, "Viva la roja, blanca y azul." His devotion will not be forgotten.

Then on February 24 I was honored to pay tribute to another brave man: Master Sergeant Roy Benavidez. His heroism in Vietnam earned him his country's highest award, the Congressional Medal of Honor. I am proud to have had the opportunity to present it to him.

The proclamation we celebrate today talks about the strength Hispanic people give to this country. All of this is based on the strength of character of which I spoke of earlier. Recognizing this, I am proud to have proclaimed this National Hispanic Heritage Week. Doing so, I hope all Americans will reflect on how lucky we are to have such a wonderful people as part of our country and part of ourselves.

Thank you again.

(Rohrabacher)

September 15, 1981
First Draft

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In the past election I talked about five important values: family, neighborhood, work, peace, and freedom. Campaigning in Hispanic areas, I ^{never felt more comfortable} ~~could sense that the people~~ ^{about} ~~shared~~ these values.

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never lost them. X

And this dedication is beginning to bear fruit. Progress made by Hispanics can be described as nothing less than phenomenal. ~~It is happening~~ after years of adversity and discrimination, ~~but~~ there is no doubt that Hispanics are ^{at last} taking their rightful place in American society.

In my own Administration, they are playing an invaluable role. Eighty Hispanics have already received appointments at all levels; 18 of them to ^{key} ~~key~~ positions. And across this land in the private sector, Hispanic Americans are making their way into positions of influence and leadership. All of this is a tremendous source of pride for a people that have worked so hard to overcome the obstacles before them.

~~One of the~~ ^g most admirable quality of ~~our~~ Hispanics is the sense of duty ^{that is} ~~rooted~~ ^{so} firmly in their culture. Few others can claim the patriotism demonstrated by these citizens. Consistent with this, they have received awards for heroism and bravery far in excess to their portion of the population. Interestingly enough, ^{interestingly enough} two of my first ceremonial functions as President were, directly related to the heroism of Hispanic Americans.

First, I was honored to welcome back the hostages from Iran. Two of the Marines had been especially heroic -- both of them were Hispanic Americans. One of them, Jimmy Lopez, is remembered not only for risking his life to help several embassy employees ~~to~~ escape, but also for his spirited defiance ^{even} ~~in~~ ^{in captivity} ~~once captured~~. He wrote on his ~~cell~~ wall, in Spanish, "Viva el rojo, blanco y azul." His devotion will not be forgotten.

Then on February 20 I was honored to pay tribute to another brave man: Master Sergeant Ray Benarides. His heroism in Vietnam earned him his country's highest award, the Congressional Medal of Honor. I am proud to have had the opportunity to present it to him. X

The proclamation I am about to sign talks about the strength Hispanic people give to this country. All of this is based on the strength of character of which I spoke of earlier. Recognizing this, I am proud to sign this document proclaiming National Hispanic Heritage Week. Doing so, I hope all Americans will reflect on how lucky we are to have such a wonderful people, who add so much to our way of life, with us. X

Thank you again.

Buenas Tardes. As a Californian it is a special pleasure for me to welcome you to the ~~White House--We are gathered to prece~~ White House. All of us from the West have a special place in our hearts for the Hispanic culture. It is so much a part of our tradition in the Southwest that moving back here to Washington has been a bit of culture shock.

~~Whenever there is so-~~ I understand that whenever there is some Federal business to be done in Cali-- any of the Southwestern states there is fierce competition among my staff to get the assignment. It has something to do with ~~not-being-able-to-get~~ enchiladas and refried beans, and the lack of them in Washington D.C. .

Seriously, being from the West has given me ~~a-perspective-on-the--~~ Hispanic-culture-that---- a deep appreciation for the Spanish Hispanic culture.

~~During~~ ^I the ~~last decade~~ ^I election ~~we~~ talked about five important values: family, neighborhood, work, peace, and freedom. ~~These are values-~~ that I remember that- while campaigning in Hispanic areas that I could sense that the ~~community was-~~ people ~~were--understood-what-those-words-meant,-~~ and-they-were-- shared these values. ~~and~~

During the last two decades when our traditions and values were under attack as never before, the Hispanic ^{Americans} community held firm to their beliefs like a solid rock amidst a stormy sea. The ~~commun---~~ Hispanic ~~Americans never wavered in thier--d---~~ ^{They} demonstrated a commitment to family, a reverence for God, as well as the pride and self-respect that come from hard work. Today many of our citizens are rediscovering those ^{values} truths, but the Hispanic community never lost them.

~~And this dedication is beginning to bare fruit.~~
~~The~~ progress made by Hispanics ~~in the last---~~ has-been- can be described ~~only-as-~~ as nothing less than phenominal. It is happening after

years of adversity and discrimination, but there is no doubt that ~~it is~~ ~~happening~~. Hispanics are taking their rightful place in American Society.

In my own administration they are playing an invaluable roll. 80 Hispanics have already received appointments at all levels, ~~and 18 Hispanics--~~ of them to PAS positions. ~~And across this land Hispanic influence in the~~ in the private sector ~~private sector--~~ And across this land Hispanic Americans are making their way into positions of influence and leadership. All of this is a tremendous source of pride for a people that have worked so hard to overcome the obstacles before them.

~~Of course the Hispanic community has always been a source-~~ most admirable quality of our Hispanics is the sense of

duty rooted firmly in their culture. have shown the love One of the things I most ~~admire~~ admire about Hispanics is their devotion to country. Few other ~~groups~~ Can claim the patriotism can claim the love of country that has been demonstrated by these citizens Consistent with this when their country it really counted. They

have received ~~a top side proportion of the~~ awards for heroism and bravery far in excess to their ~~proportion~~ of the population. In fact, ~~One of my first Early on in my administration I had two important ceremonial functions--~~ Interestingly enough, two of the first ^{my} ceremonial functions as President ~~I presided over as President~~ were directly related to the heroism of Hispanic Americans.

First, I was honored to welcome back the hostages from Iran. Two of the Marines had been especially heroic--both of them were Hispanic Americans. One of them, Jimmy Lopez, is remembered ~~fondly~~ not only for risking his life to help several embassy employees to escape, but also for his spirited defiance once captured. He wrote on his cell wall, in Spanish, "Viva el rojo, blanco y azul." His devotion ~~That expression of love~~ will not be forgotten.

Then on February 20 I was honored to pay tribute to another brave man: Master Sergeant Ray Benarides. His heroism in Vietnam earned him his countries highest award, ~~I am p-~~ the Congressional Medal of Honor. I am proud ^{have} ~~that I was~~ had the opportunity to ~~do~~ ~~represent all the~~ present it to him.

The proclamation I am about to sign talks about the strength Hispanic people ~~add~~ give to this country. ~~It-is-something--This-strength-is-something-that-comes-from--derives-from---~~ all of this is based on the strength of character of which I spoke earlier. Recognizing this, I am proud to sign this ~~proclamation--~~ this document proclaiming National Hispanic Hertiage Week. Doing so, I hope all Americans will relfect on how lucky we are to have such a wonderful people ^{who add so much to our way of life,} with us.

Thank you again. ~~for being with us.~~

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 14, 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: TONY DOLAN
FROM: DIANA LOZANO
SUBJECT: Talking Points for Presidential Remarks
Hispanic Heritage Week Luncheon
September 16, 1981

or
Henry Zuniga
x 6246
x 6585

Purpose of Hispanic Heritage Week: To recognize the contributions Hispanics have made to our country throughout history and continuing through today.

Key Data and Facts about Hispanics:

- * 1980 census shows 14.5 million Hispanics
- * Most statisticians agree that sometime during the 1980s Hispanics will become the largest ethnic minority in the United States.
- * Hispanics are a very young group, with 42% under 18 years of age and only 4% over age 65. With most America growing older, the influence of Hispanics, as younger Americans, will be increasingly important.
- * Key Hispanic traditions: strong work ethic, self-reliance, aversion to government interference, and fierce patriotism.
- * Patriotism: Hispanics have earned more Congressional Medals of Honor for valor and bravery than any other group.

One of President Reagan's first ceremonial activities was on February 20, 1981 when he awarded the Medal of Honor to Master Sergeant Ray Benarides.

Two Iranian hostages were Hispanic. Jimmy Lopez is remembered most fondly because of the following subtle act of defiance -- he wrote on his cell wall the following phrase, "Viva el rojo, blanco y azul", long live the red, white and blue. He also risked his life to help several embassy employees escape to the Canadian Embassy. Both Lopez and Sgt. Gallegos denied the terrorists the propaganda value of having released all so-called "oppressed minorities" by refusing to be set free and remaining with their colleagues at the embassy.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM

9/11/81

TO: ELIZABETH DOLE *****
FROM: GREGORY *gf* NEWELL
SUBJ: APPROVED PRESIDENTIAL ACTIVITY.

PLEASE IMPLEMENT THE FOLLOWING AND NOTIFY AND CLEAR ALL PARTICIPANTS. SUBMIT THE BRIEFING PAPER AND REMARKS TO RICHARD DARMAN BY 3:00 P.M. OF THE PRECEDING DAY.

MEETING: Hispanic Luncheon

DATE: September 16, 1981

TIME: 12:00 Noon

DURATION: 75 minutes

LOCATION: East Room

REMARKS REQUIRED: Yes

MEDIA COVERAGE: Coordinate with Press Office

FIRST LADY PARTICIPATION: Optional

REMARKS REQUIRED

**** Coordinate with Peter McCoy/Muffie Brandon

cc: J. Brady	D. Gergen
M. Brandon	C. Gerraia
J. Canzeri	P. McCoy
R. Darman	L. Nofziger
M. Deaver	L. Speakes
E. Dole	Speechwriting and Research
H. Donaldson	S. Studdert
M. Evans	F. Ursomarso
D. Fischer	R. Williamson
J. Fitzgerald	N. Wormser
M. Friedersdorf	WHCA Audio/Visual
C. Fuller	WHCA Operations
E. Hickey	Rex Scouten

- * Hispanic Appointments: President Reagan has already made 80 Hispanic appointments at all levels. He has appointed 18 Hispanics to PAS positions, which is a record. At the end of his first full year as President, Jimmy Carter had only named 10 Hispanics to these spots.
- * September 16 is a very special day, even in spite of Hispanic Heritage Week. September 16 is Mexican Independence Day -- the day that Mexico declared independence from Spain. It is a very big holiday among Mexican Americans in the Southwest as well as in Mexico.

(Rohrabacher/TD)

June 16, 1981
Third Draft

BUSH: HISPANIC CONFERENCE
JUNE 18, 1981

It is a pleasure to be with you today. The Mexican-American community is becoming a powerful force in American politics and your organization has much to do with the recognition of this important fact.

Of course, the Hispanic influence in America involves much more than mere politics.

During the last decade when the country seemed to be straying from traditional values, the Mexican-American community held firm. Indeed, Hispanics bring to this country an unmatched devotion to family, commitment to maintain pride and self-respect, a reverence for God, and a dedication to self-improvement through work. These are things for which Mexican Americans are known. These are things for which Mexican Americans can be proud.

If you don't mind a bit of partisanship, I am convinced that as time brings about a natural political realignment -- that more and more Mexican Americans will find it is the Republican Party that more closely represents the things which Hispanics hold dear.

I am talking about values. That is a word well understood in the Barrio because there values have been put to the test.

During the years of adversity and discrimination, Mexican Americans maintained pride and self-respect. In more recent years when an omnipresent welfare state challenged both family and work ethics, the Mexican-American community triumphed -- preserving both family ties and the strength of character that comes from honest work.

It is unfortunately true that for too long your contribution to America was not recognized by your fellow citizens. But that is changing. And it is changing in a big way.

It is no accident that three of America's latest heroes are Hispanics. The first is Marine Sergeant James Lopez. This young man held off a mob of Iranians at our Embassy in Tehran in time for five American diplomats to escape. And, during his captivity, his courage inspired the Nation.

Second is Army Master, Sergeant Roy Benavidez. He is the Nation's newest recipient of the Medal of Honor, the country's highest award for bravery. President Reagan awarded him this decoration for his courage in Vietnam. It was in the finest tradition of the Mexican Americans who have served this country whenever it was threatened.

And, finally, the newest sports hero in the United States was born in a small farm town in Mexico. His name is Fernando Valenzuela, and he is pitching for the Los Angeles Dodgers. He was a guest of President Reagan at the White House recently during a luncheon held there for visiting President Lopez Portillo.

During that visit President Reagan told President Lopez Portillo that Mexico was part of America's soul. He was, of course, talking about the important role Hispanics have played in developing the diverse culture we have here in the United States.

And Hispanics are playing an important role in the Reagan Administration. Michael Cardenas is the new Administrator of the of the Small Business Administration; Jose Casanova is the designated Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank; John Hernandez is the Deputy Administrator of the EPA; Everett Alvarez is the designated Deputy Director of the Peace Corps -- just to name a few.

Hispanic involvement in a Republican Administration should surprise no one. The political realignment I spoke of earlier is already starting to happen. In 1980 President Reagan received a whopping 52 percent increase in Hispanic votes than our candidate in 1976 -- reflecting a major change in the Mexican-American vote in the Southwest. A similar shift can be observed in recent polls that place the Republican Party only 1 percent behind the Democrats in public identification. Five years ago, that spread was 28 percent. The change came, admittedly, among many Anglo blue-collar workers. But also significant are the Mexican Americans who, in greater numbers than ever before, are identifying with the Republican Party.

During the last campaign, Republicans talked about five important values: family, neighborhood, work, peace, and freedom. These are things Americans, whatever their background, hold dear. But, they are especially important to Hispanics, who, time and again, have demonstrated their devotion to these concepts.

This is especially true in the economic arena. Mexican Americans are not looking for a handout. Instead, they want opportunity. And that is just what the Reagan Administration is dedicated to providing all our citizens.

The economic stagnation of the last decade was intolerable. Yet, it was tolerated by politicians who believed they could insure their political power base by keeping the population dependent upon Government programs. It was an ever increasing Federal Government that sapped the strength of the once vibrant American economy. You know it, and I know it -- and the Reagan Administration is dedicated to doing something about it.

Today, we are, of course, involved in a major effort to secure passage of an essential component of the economic recovery program: tax reduction.

SPECIAL NOTICE

THE NEW WEDNESDAY &
FRIDAY RECORDED MESSAGE
PHONE NUMBER IS:

406-862-6673

PLEASE KEEP THIS NUMBER
FOR YOUR PERSONAL
USE ONLY.

THANKS,

R.E.

91181