Irene Gomez-Bethke Papers.

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NUESTRO

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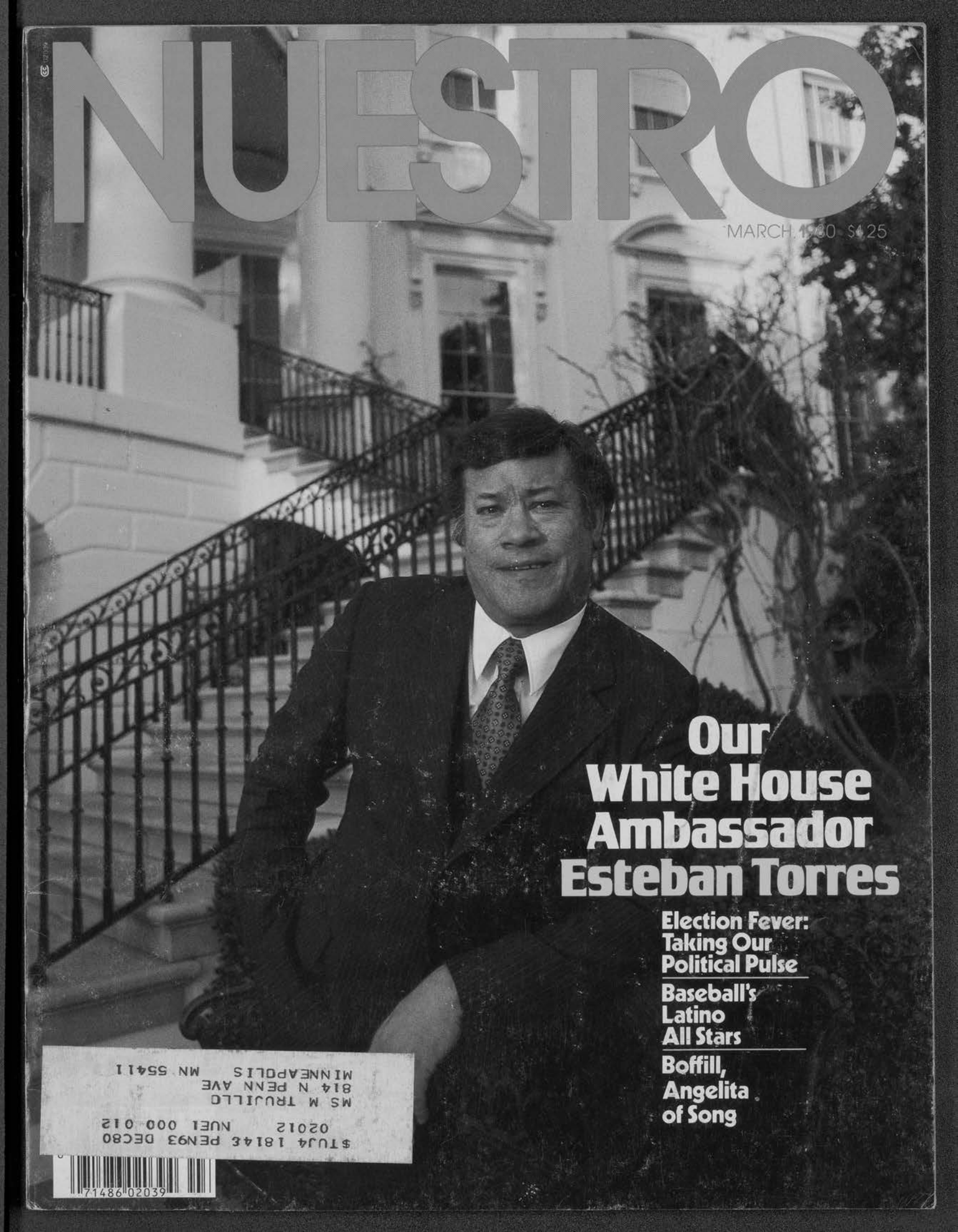

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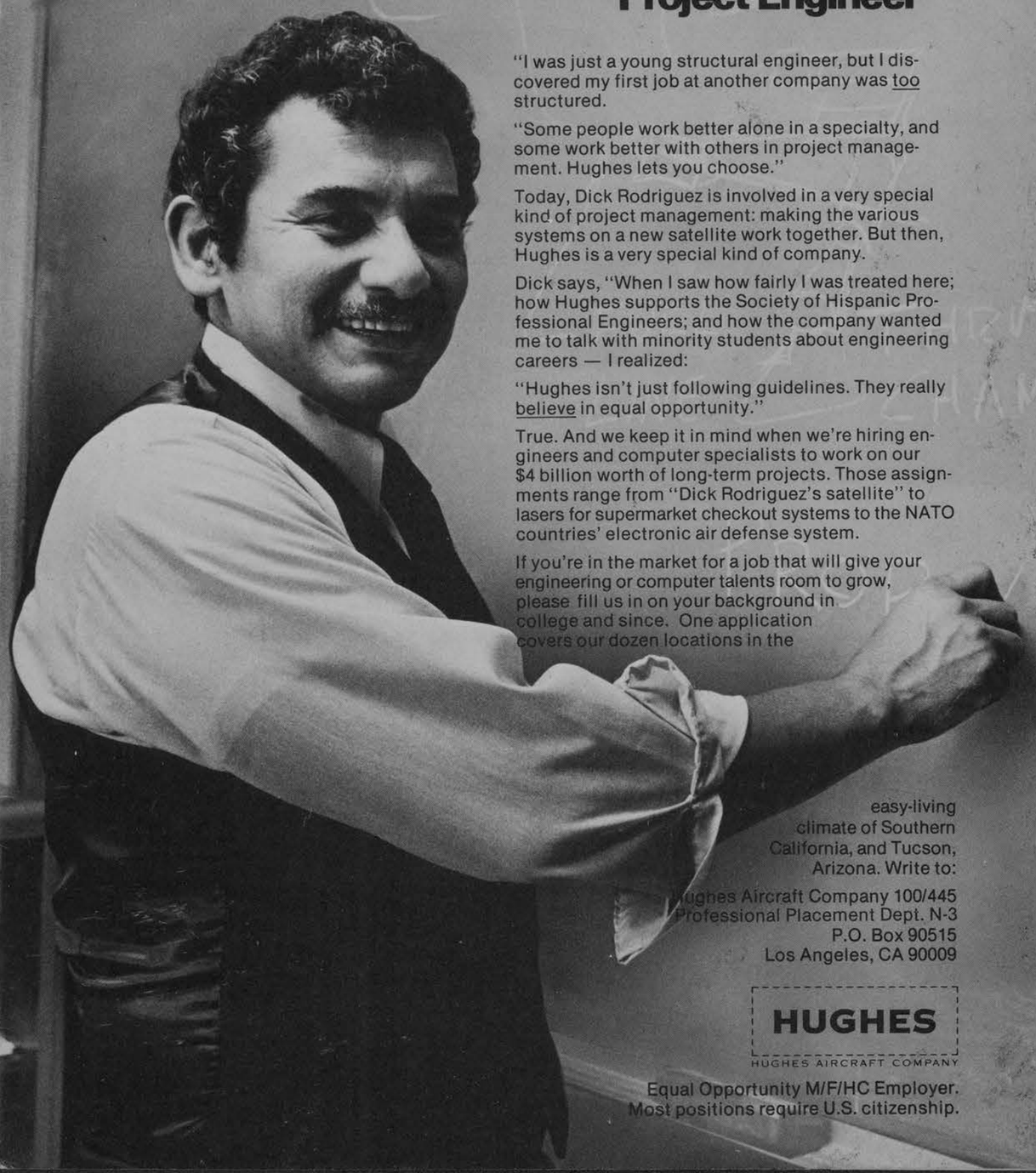
Project Engineer



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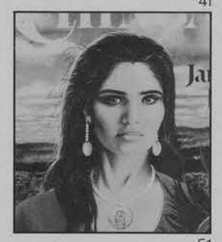

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PUBLISHER'S LETTER

During this election year we plan to bring our readers a series of articles dealing with political issues, candidates and the role Latinos ought to play. If this decade is supposed to be ours, how then will things be different from the past? Because we will make them different.

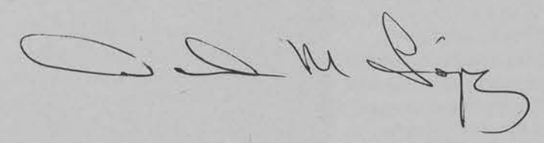
In this issue, the extensive coverage of Latino regional politics ("Latino Politics From Coast to Coast") shows that, although in some areas with a sizeable Latino population our clout is practically nil, foundations are being laid for a better future. Part of that foundation—the subject of another story in this issue—is being built by community organizations which are taking an increasingly more active role in registering Latinos to vote.

In the heat of militant activism of the late '60s, Chicanos in the Southwest decided to take the third party route, and created La Raza Unida. Its ten year struggle, both within and outside of the party, is analyzed in "Is the Party Over for La Raza Unida?"

Our cover story concerns Esteban Torres, the President's Special Assistant for Hispanic Affairs. I think you will discover that never before have we had a stronger voice, commanding more attention, than that of former UNESCO Ambassador Torres. With almost daily contact with the President and Cabinet officers, our latest man in the White House has come to be perceived as our most practical hope of access to the higher corridors of power.

Last, but not least, we explore the question, "Is this country ready for a Latino president?" Benjamin Fernández seems to think so. The presidential candidate for the Republican nomination shows as much energy and self-confidence as any of the others. Whether Fernández is, as he puts it, presidential timber, you can decide for yourself through our interview.

In this issue, and throughout this year, we will present some of the things our community is doing to, indeed, make the 1980s our decade. But these plans, these goals, these dreams cannot be reached without the cooperation of all Latinos. The rest of this country is beginning to realize the political clout we can muster. It is about time we realize it and make it a reality.



LETTERS

Chávez Sí, Orendain No

The article "The Many Battles of Antonio Orendain" (Nov. '79) contained many factual errors. Orendain's described past is a self-serving fabrication of events that never were, but certainly would be nice for Tony if true. For example, Orendain was not an original founder of the UFW. Tony came into the UFW not because of his own ability, but because he is the husband of a woman who was wanted by the UFW for her community-organizing skills and her sympathy toward UFW causes. Tony was exposed to the UFW's nonviolent philosophy, but exposure evidently was not enough because later, in Texas, he reverted to violent tactics. Tony also did not start with the UFW in Los Angeles, as is claimed in the article, but rather in Hanford. Tony is neither a union leader nor a leader in the Hispanic community. Outside of a small area in Texas, he is little known. To compare Orendain to Zapata is an effective ego-enhancing, image-making device, but Zapata had principle and conviction, whereas Orendain is a political opportunist. It will take decades of very hard, consistent work to overcome the problems that face the Hispanic community, and it is Chávez' nonviolent philosophy that will, in the long run, produce the greatest benefits for the Hispanic community. Improvement of the conditions of farmworkers through nonviolent collective bargaining is the goal of the UFW, and that goal is being exemplified in César Chávez. Anything short of that goal is not acceptable. Orendain's ignorance about nonviolent collective bargaining is not simply deplored, it is an extreme danger to the Hispanic community.

Oscar Uribe Jr.
Alexandria, Va.

Editors' Note: *We have received dozens of letters, some of them signed by as many as ten people, mostly from members of Chávez' UFW in Texas, which strongly take issue with the article on Antonio Orendain written by Ignacio M. García.*

Watch On The Presidency

The publisher's letter in the November issue about the Presidential scramble and the Latino's chances of being heard is a very timely one.

First, it should provide us with an opportunity, through NUESTRO and especially in the coming months, to really look at all the Presidential aspirants for the '80 election in minute detail. While I too feel our position is a notch above the K-9 Corps Reserve, I'm still not very optimistic about any one of the front-running candidates, which leads me to the second point.

Back in the '60s and early '70s, a common saying among Latinos in this part of the country was that Gov. Connally had Latino blood. Off-hand, one could think this might not be totally impossible. After all, Connally's home town, Floresville, is about 70% Latino. But our extemporaneous deductions were short-lived when we found out that his Latino blood was at the tip of his boots. Now, anyone can deduce how it got there, but for clarification sake, it was from kicking Latino rear ends.

Anselmo O. Valdéz
San Antonio, Texas

Corrections Please

In your November 1979 article "A Minority Within A Minority," there are a lack of information, gross errors in the quotations and omissions which I would like to clarify:

Incorrect Quotations: 1) "What's really needed is education of the Anglo community, which truly dominates here, that Puerto Ricans are citizens of the U.S. and have certain rights." My statement ended as follows: . . . and have the same rights. 2) "The station was going to remove López anyway." As I indicated to Dan Williams, I was in no way connected to López Clinica Borinquen losing their public service program. I was provided a 30-minute public-service program by the station about two weeks after López' program was canceled. I also indicated that I could not speak for the station.

Incorrect Information: ". . . says Francisco Molina, who heads the Puerto Rican Opportunity Center in Miami, an agency of the Government of Puerto Rico." I have never been employed by, or have been the "head" of, the Puerto Rican Opportunity Center (PROC). This agency was funded by Dade County and the City of Miami, has been closed for months and was in no way or manner related to the government of Puerto Rico.

Francisco D. Molina
Miami, Fla.

The short analysis on the progress of Latinos in Philadelphia (Regional Report, Dec. '79) left me stupefied. It is sad that when something about us in Philadelphia is printed, it is so full of erroneous information. For example, which Spanish Village Project was Ms Peŕez-Luna speaking about—I or II? The first one consists of six-to-eight small single-family homes. We do not know, at this time, the status of Spanish Village II.

Secondly, the city never spent a dime on the "Golden Block Mini-Mall." This was accomplished through the efforts of the Spanish Merchants' Association Economic Development Office with private monies from the owners and through the lending institutions. These same lending institutions are mostly responsible for the revival of commerce on the "Golden Block."

City monies provided only a few dying trees and colored sidewalks. The city, and its administration of questionable renown, has given only crumbs and has blocked the progress, at every turn, of Hispanics here.

Vilma D. Ortíz de Díaz
Philadelphia, Pa.

Editors' Note: *The article "A Filadelfia Story" focused on the efforts of the city to provide services to Latinos. Although it failed to credit the community and the Spanish Merchants Association with the development of the Golden Block Mini-Mall—an omission we regret—it did not state, as Ms Ortíz implies, that the city funded the project.*

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAY SIDEBOTHAM

Sí, Sí To A Latino For The FCC

For some time now, various community groups have battled to secure the appointment of a qualified Latino as a Federal Communications Commissioner. This June, the seat held by James H. Quello is up for re-appointment. (The seven-person FCC is structured so that one seven-year term expires every June 30.) Since December, the National Association of Spanish Broadcasters has been gathering the resumes of qualified Latinos to submit to the White House. "I don't want to be told that there are no qualified Latinos," says María Elena Toraño, NASB president.

The fact that this particular seat is to be filled during an election year has become a double-edged sword for Latinos. There has never been a Latino commissioner and with the impressive growth of Latino media in the last few years it would seem that the time is ripe for one of our *gente* to sit on the regulatory board. On the other hand, some people in the broadcast field perceive the situation as an "ethnic battle" for political spoils [See Racist Crack of the Month]. "We feel that the appointment of a well qualified Latino to the FCC is not a case of partisan election-year politics," says Joe Aguayo, president of the non-profit Latinos in Communication and a Children's Television Workshop vice-president. "We believe such an appointment represents the best interest of the industry, especially in view of its own public advocacy of an increase in our participation and actions furthering it," particularly in helping Latinos to buy TV and radio stations.

Most FCC regulations affect Latinos as part of the overall population, but certain regulatory issues principally concern Spanish-language broadcasting. Yet none of the commissioners can personally provide the Latino perspective at what is the highest decision-making level. Since we are underrepresented in every level of the FCC hierarchy, accounting for only about 1% of the FCC workforce, a Latino commissioner would not only benefit the FCC by providing community input at that level, but would also enhance the agency's ability to attract Latinos and generally increase our participation in broadcasting.

Politics or not, there are enough Latinos qualified to fill that position, and we hope President Carter will be responsive to our request.

HAD At Last!

Traditionally, Latinos have been Democrats. Even recent efforts by the Republican party to increase its Latino constituency, including the creation of the Republican National Hispanic Assembly, have only marginally affected statistics that reveal that 90% of registered Latinos are Democrat. But despite our loyalty, we have never had a permanent organization within the Democratic Party.

Until now.

The Hispanic American Democrats (HAD) became official last December when a group of young Latino Democrats, many of whom hold political office or have key positions in the party structure, convened in Denver, Colo., to adopt by-laws, elect officers and set goals. Though HAD is not an official arm of the Democratic National Committee, DNC Chairman John White agreed to set up an office and provide a $100,000 budget, to which HAD itself will add another $100,000. The new organization will be governed by seven officers, including newly-elected chairman, David Lizárraga, executive director of the East Los Angeles Community Union (TELACU), and a 50-member executive committee based roughly on the ethnic breakdown of the overall Latino population—55% Mexican American, 25% Puerto Rican, 15% Cuban and 5% Central and South American. Each of the 13 states represented at the convention was also guaranteed at least one seat on the board.

The measure of HAD's success will be the number of concessions for Latinos it can get from Democratic presidential candidates in exchange for its endorsement. Significantly, representatives of President Carter, Sen. Ted Kennedy and California Gov. Jerry Brown all showed up at the convention to woo the delegates.

Among the goodies HAD hopes to garner in exchange for its endorsement are: more Latino appointments, including a cabinet secretary; Latino ambassadors to Latin American countries; greater federal involvement in prosecution of police brutality cases, and more humane treatment of undocumented workers.

HAD is expected to announce its presidential endorsement at its second convention this spring, at which it will also discuss further strategies, including an attempt to increase the number of Latino delegates to the National Democratic Convention from 82 in 1976 to 500 this year.

Besides fostering greater Latino involvement in national politics, HAD also hopes to serve as a much needed force for unity among the various Latino groups by focusing on issues affecting all Latinos, such as education, employment and housing.

The youth of HAD's leadership, most of whom are in their 20s or 30s, is an important factor in achieving that goal. As Houston city councilman Ben Reyes noted, "Young folks aren't hung up on those old rivalries."

Though HAD has yet to prove itself, it is welcome both as a tool for bringing about meaningful change in our communities and as a means of putting some *picante* into the Democratic Party, which has for too long taken our quiet loyalty for granted.

The Jury is (Way) Out

A California graduate student recently spent just under $10,000 in public funds to discover what we already knew all too well by bitter experience: that, given the same evidence, Anglo jurors are more likely than Chicano ones to convict a Chicano.

Latinos have long maintained that Hispanic defendants are too often unjustly convicted and that Anglo juries tend to believe us guilty before the trial opens. Jack Lipton, a graduate student of the University of California at Riverside specializing in courtroom psychology, has proved us right by spending $9,679 from the Department of Justice to conduct a study of jury behavior.

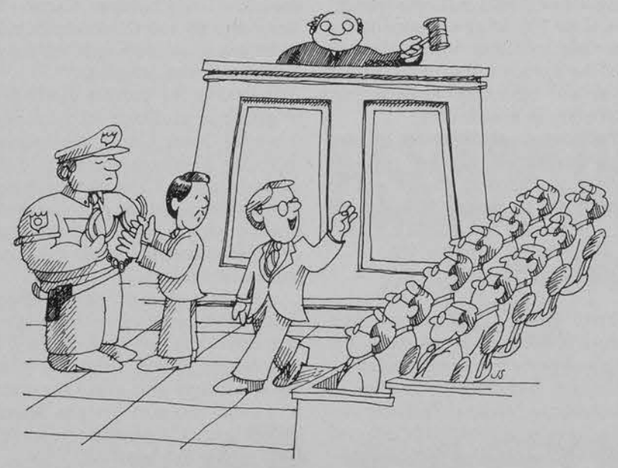
Lipton set up 16 simulated six-person juries, selected at random from UCR students, to judge fictitious cases in which they were given only one clue to the background of the "defendant"—his name. Each jury heard two "cases," one involving a "Richard Nelson," the other a "Horacio García," and the circumstances of the two cases (a student accused of destroying university property or cheating on an exam) were systematically alternated between the two defendants.

It is a matter for pride that the study showed that Anglo prejudice is not matched by equal Chicano prejudice. It also turned up a complex interplay of ingroup/outgroup attitudes:

- Although jurors gave equal treatment to Anglo defendants, 41% of the Anglos voted to convict Chicano defendants, while only 35% of the Chicano jurors did.
- Female jurors were more lenient toward Chicanos. Only 31% of the women voted against them, while 45% of male jurors did.

When good money is spent to prove something that seems as obvious as the position of the nose on the human face, the first instinct may be to hand out the equivalent of Sen. William Proxmire's Golden Fleece Award for conspicuous waste of taxpayers' dollars. But in fact it is welcome, because its conclusion cannot be laid to minority-group paranoia or whatever. It can therefore be a small but useful tool in changing an unjust judicial system.

Now for the tough one: How do we use it?



The Refueiados of Broadway

What with the success of "Evita" and the revival of "West Side Story" one would guess that another of its periodic Latino nostalgia kicks had possessed the Anglo commercial stage. On Broadway, the latest effort along such lines is called "Goodbye, Fidel" and deals (you guessed it!) with the displacement of a group of upper class Cubans who are caught up in the changes brought about by the revolution. The play—which will open in early March—was, alas, written by an Anglo: author Howard Sackler (of "Great White Hope" fame). And what, you may ask, does Mr. Sackler know about U.C.C.'s (Upper Class Cubans)? It seems he has met quite a few of them in Spain, where he now resides—enough, it is claimed, to base his story "loosely" on fact. But fear not, dear reader, for the ethnic accuracy of Mr. Sackler's play: we have been assured that it won't be marred by the sight of Upper Class Cubans in charro outfits or banana hats. In fact, it is not very much of an ethnic (or political) statement, but rather a romantic story which zeroes in on a wealthy Cuban woman's efforts to bag a married British diplomat. "This play is about people," says associate producer Sam Crothers. "The fact that they're displaced could happen anywhere." Crothers affirms that the producers have used Cuban consultants for accuracy. But when it comes to actors... you guessed it again! The leading role is played by one Jane Alexander!

Racist Crack of the Month

In an editorial last fall, *Broadcasting* magazine deplored the Latino community's efforts to have a Latino commissioner appointed to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as a "narrowing of the field". It further stated that the FCC should not be "a political dumping ground." Latino media groups such as the National Association of Spanish Broadcasters and Latinos in Communications responded indignantly to these remarks. So far, there have been no apologies or retractions from *Broadcasting*.

REGIONAL REPORT

THE COMMUNITY

The INS vs The Census

Los Angeles. Approximately three months after the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) officials here decided to resume neighbor-

dences without probable cause or warrants and that local police improperly acted as immigration agents during neighborhood raids. The suits are

ing in an increase of roughly 30% in the total number of apprehensions, to 865 a week. A team of 35 agents was covering Los Angeles and Orange Counties from 6 a.m. to midnight, seven days a week.

A federal judge had issued a temporary restraining order restricting the activities of immigration officers in the residential areas after suits were filed in behalf of persons detained during the raids. The suits alleged that the INS acted improperly in detaining U.S. citizens and legal resident aliens, that immigration agents broke down doors and searched resi-

zárraga and state secretary of Health and Welfare Mario Obledo all sent letters to President Carter. Obledo characterized the sweeps as "gestapo-like storm trooper" raids of Latino neighborhoods and noted the quick action by immigration officials to grant asylum to Russian ballet dancers and the like while Latinos are arrested for immigration infractions. Martínez concurred, calling the sweeps both morally and legally objectionable and counter to the President's professed goals.

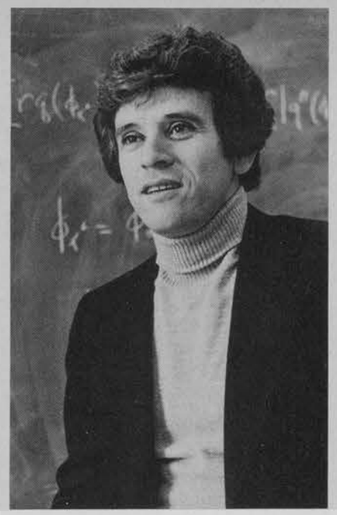
About 5,000 people at the East Los Angeles College Stadium heard Chávez denounce the INS at a rally sponsored by the Hispanos Unidos, an organization of Latino leaders. Terming the INS "a cancer that destroys the entire body and must be stopped once and for all," he called for its abolishment and suggested it be replaced with a department of culture which could deal more humanely with the illegal-immigration situation.

While the neighborhood raids have ceased and the focus has shifted back to employment sites, they may already have damaged chances

Hispanos Unidos rally • Los líderes comunia que se dejen contar por el censo.

MAX NUNEZ

Richard Martinez, Research Chemist



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REGIONAL REPORT

THE COMMUNITY

The INS vs The Census

Los Angeles. Approximately three months after the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) officials here decided to resume neighborhood raids for undocumented immigrants, the practice was halted when sharp criticism from the Latino community reached Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti.

Civiletti, whom Latinos initially opposed at his Senate confirmation hearing, but who has since become more sensitive to Latino issues, ordered INS officers to focus on employment sites rather than residences when they search for undocumented aliens. He said his policy directive was made with this year's census in view.

"Accurate counting, so essential to the census, might be severely handicapped and full census responses chilled" by misunderstanding of door-to-door census visits and fear that census information would get back to the INS, Civiletti said, adding that the Justice Department does not have access to census information that could lead to deportation of undocumented aliens.

INS district director Joseph Howerton had resumed what he called "sweeps" of residential areas, resulting in an increase of roughly 50% in the total number of apprehensions, to 865 a week. A team of 35 agents was covering Los Angeles and Orange Counties from 6 a.m. to midnight, seven days a week.

A federal judge had issued a temporary restraining order restricting the activities of immigration officers in the residential areas after suits were filed in behalf of persons detained during the raids. The suits alleged that the INS acted improperly in detaining U.S. citizens and legal resident aliens, that immigration agents broke down doors and searched residences without probable cause or warrants and that local police improperly acted as immigration agents during neighborhood raids. The suits are being carried through, despite the termination of the raids, in an attempt to provide legal precedents against future neighborhood sweeps.

Aside from this legal action, the raids had roused an outcry in the Latino communities. Louis Velázquez, mayor of Fullerton, said he witnessed one in his own neighborhood and became "deeply concerned about sloppy enforcement of the law" by officers who allegedly violated the rights of both undocumented aliens and U.S. citizens.

Demonstrations in front of the Federal Building demanded Howerton's ouster, and MALDEF President Vilma Martínez, UFW President César Chávez, TELACU president David Lizárraga and state secretary of Health and Welfare Mario Obledo all sent letters to President Carter. Obledo characterized the sweeps as "gestapo-like storm trooper" raids of Latino neighborhoods and noted the quick action by immigration officials to grant asylum to Russian ballet dancers and the like while Latinos are arrested for immigration infractions. Martínez concurred, calling the sweeps both morally and legally objectionable and counter to the President's professed goals.

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While the neighborhood raids have ceased and the focus has shifted back to employment sites, they may already have damaged chances

Obledo, Chávez and actress Isela Vega at Hispanos Unidos rally • Los líderes comunitarios tratan de convencer a los latinos para que se dejen contar por el censo.

MAX NUNEZ

of an accurate census count. Vincent Barraba, director of the Census Bureau, has made an appeal to Latino organizations and the National Conference of Bishops to urge the undocumented aliens to participate in the count. "We have done everything we can to make it clear there is no relationship between the INS and the Census Bureau," Barraba says.

But the raids have renewed fear and insecurity in this community, and how quickly they can be erased is uncertain. As Martínez said, "The bureau is bound by law to keep the information it collects confidential. But how can we convince Latinos of that when they see people being taken by force from their neighborhoods?"

—Xavier Menéndez

Watching The Letter Of The Law

Philadelphia. This city's Police Department has approximately 8,000 employees. Of these, only 30 are Latinos. As a result, the Latino community has been in litigation with the Police Department for the past two years, demanding that more Latinos be hired and that changes be made in the admission exams.

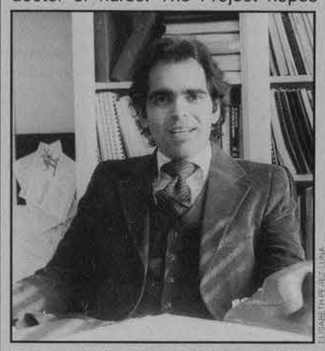
Behind this legal action lies the all-important question of numbers. According to the last census, there are only 44,000 Latinos in Philadelphia—but both city and state officials agree that the community has been grossly undercounted. A study by various community organizations indicates that the true figure is between 110,000 and 150,000.

More than 30 Latino groups have united under the name Hispanics for Accurate Survey Coalition to push for a recount and to educate the community on the importance of a more exact census, a census which would affect allocations of public funds and services. Among other things, it should mean the hiring of more than 400 Latinos by the Police Department. Meanwhile, all police hiring has been stopped until the trial is completed, in about a year's time.

The suit against the Police Department was filed by the Latino Project, a public-interest law group focusing on issues affecting Philadelphia's Latino community. The Latino Project is currently working on two other fronts: education and health.

In education, the group is documenting how and why so many Latino children are placed in classes for the mentally retarded. According to the latest surveys, the dropout rate among Philadelphia's Puerto Ricans is 60%, and a statistically disproportionate number of Latino children wind up in "special" classes. The Project is also analyzing the effectiveness of bilingual education programs and their effects on the community.

The inability of doctors to communicate with their patients is a major health problem. The Latino Project is working on a case involving a health center, 90% of whose patients are Latinos but whose staff (aside from a few translators) does not speak Spanish. Preliminary studies indicate that in diagnostic work the use of translators is not adequate and that nothing can replace direct communication between the patient and the doctor or nurse. The Project hopes



ISABEL TAVERAS-LUNA

Díaz: a legal approach to a social change • Su Proyecto Latino defiende los derechos de los hispanos en las cortes de Filadelfia.

that this case will help to develop health-care standards for Latinos that will eventually provide a model for centers throughout the country.

The Latino Project, which began life in 1976 as part of the Public-Interest Law Center of Philadelphia and became independent in 1978, is one of three organizations in the county involved in litigation with the public and private sectors in behalf of the Latino community. The others are the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund in New York and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund in California.

Says Luis Díaz, executive director of the Latino Project, "Our approach is different from other public-interest law firms. We take an overall approach to social change, not just a legal one. We do a lot of independent research on different aspects of the Latino community and analyze the data in such a way as to have an impact on the community. We try to see the broad context of the problem, and as a result we get involved with community organizing and education."

The Latino Project, which is funded by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation and the Campaign for Human Development, consists of three attorneys, a community organizer, a social scientist plus administrative and secretarial staffs. Because of limited funds (last year's budget was $212,000), it takes on only clients whose claims involve issues affecting a significant number of Latinos in the city. Other inquiries are referred either to the public defender's offices or legal services or to attorneys and law offices willing to take cases at reduced rates or without fee.

"If existing laws were applied, there wouldn't be any need for the Latino Project," explains Díaz. "But the complexity of society is such that it takes a certain analysis to figure out where things come from, who is responsible and how you are supposed to get things done.

"The reality is that there is discrimination against Latinos, either as a conscious act or as an act of severe negligence. It really doesn't matter which because the results are the same: Latinos are not served; they are not counted; they are not properly represented."

Fortunately, Latinos in Philadelphia now have a voice and a mechanism to address these problems.

—Elisabeth Pérez-Luna

Freedom To Suffer

Miami, Fla. Despite what most of us might expect, freedom is not necessarily paradise for the hundreds of political prisoners released by the Cuban government in the past year. Soon after they set foot on U.S. soil, they are often forced to face problems almost as painful as the ones they experienced in prison.

Loneliness is one of the worst burdens of the Cuban ex-political prisoner. Many were deserted by their families and friends; some have been in prison so long that they have lost track of their relatives; still others have left everyone they know behind in Cuba. Money is also a problem. The U.S. government gives the ex-prisoners some financial aid, but in many cases not enough to cover the basic needs of food and shelter until they can find a job.

In an effort to alleviate this crisis, Cuban housewife Ester Martínez created The House of the Cuban Ex-Political Prisoner. Martínez is neither well-to-do, nor a social worker, but she did see the need for a "halfway house" where these newcomers could catch their breath before starting over. She contacted several organizations for help, only to find that her idea apparently was not welcome.

When she realized that no one wished to sponsor such a project, Martínez decided to do it on her own. "I became interested in this because one of my relatives was imprisoned in Cuba for several years," she says. "I went to Tropical Bank to welcome some prisoners, and I was shocked by the problems that these men and women face. Some friends and I got together and rented a house for the homeless ones."

Their new home, at 3244 S.W. 3rd Street in Miami, is a two-bedroom, one-bath structure which has been painted and made livable by some of the ex-prisoners. Martínez and her friends filled all the rooms with beds, couches and sofa-beds, and the project began. "While they're in The House, we try to find them clothing, furniture and a more permanent home so that they can start a life on their own in this county."

"We had a very hard time finding a house. No one wanted to rent us a place, once they found out that it was for a group of political ex-prisoners," she added.

One of Martínez' methods of finding homes is driving up and down the Little Havana section of Southwest Miami. When she sees a for rent sign, she talks to the owner of the place and coaxes him to help and give these people—who don't have enough money for a rent deposit—a chance. Being a very persuasive woman, she usually accomplishes what she sets out to do.

Twenty-year-old María del Carmen González Rangel, who had only been in The House for a day, had been imprisoned in Cuba since she was 17 for trying to leave through illegal means. She is now completely alone in exile.

"I have no friends or relatives in the U.S.," she sighed, her hands trembling a little. "I arrived from Cuba five days ago. The authorities sent me to a hotel. That was only for three days. Then I had to leave because a new planeful of prisoners was coming in. They sent me to a very bad neighborhood. It was dangerous. I couldn't go out of the house! The welfare office told me of this house for ex-prisoners, and I came."

María del Carmen was on the verge of tears as she showed me a check for $112. "I haven't eaten since yesterday because nobody has told me how to cash it. All I want is a decent place to live and a decent way of making a living."

Del Carmen is only one of many with similar problems. When one ex-political prisoner arrived from Cuba with his wife and daughter, he told officials that his mother had been living here for years. Because he had a relative who supposedly could help him, they saw no need to find him a home. But when his mother—an old woman who lived in a small studio apartment—took them in, the owner promptly evicted all four.

Though Martínez owes two months' back rent on the house and her cupboards are empty, she has sometimes been accused of profiting from her work. "I am doing this because it is my duty as a Cuban and because I vowed I would do it and offer it to a saint to whom I am devoted. When you deal with a solemn promise like this, you don't kid around," Martínez said.

The House of the Cuban Ex-Political Prisoner is open to public inspection; it is being used by those who need it. Even the local welfare office in charge of Cuban refugees is unofficially referring people there. Yet it has received little or no aid from the prosperous Miami Cuban community. And that it certainly deserves.

—Raquel Puig Zaldivar

MEDIA

Teacher On The Tube

Phoenix, Ariz. As a KPNX-TV news anchorwoman, 37-year-old Linda Alvarez is one of the most visible Latinas in this city. She is also a woman who believes in using her medium to its fullest.

"I see my job not just as something that I enjoy tremendously, but also as a fantastic means of educating the masses," says Alvarez, who switched to television from teaching seven years ago.

GERCYNSKY/KPNX

Alvarez: not just an anchor • La ex-maestra es comentarista de televisión.

Unlike other TV anchors, she likes to get into the field to dig for the raw news. Her diligence has earned her an Emmy for a documentary on childbirth and awards for her reports on cosmetic surgery and hospices. "I've covered life from birth to death," she says.

In her work, she tries for a balance of news, entertainment and documentaries. "I strive for good quality entertainment, but if a piece doesn't lend itself to this balance, then I use educational think stories," she explains.

Alvarez' journey to the anchor desk began in 1965 when the UCLA graduate received a teaching certificate and worked for a while at her former high school in Venice, Calif. She spent the next eight years in education-related jobs, helping to establish an English-language program in 1966 at the University of Carabobo in Valencia, Venezuela, and then heading for New York, where she worked at the United Nations.

After a year of teaching foreign languages and speech in Connecticut, Alvarez joined the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in Chicago, where she helped Latinos with adult education and English-language

programs.

She got her first TV exposure in Chicago. "A friend was doing an educational program on WTTW," she says. "I helped and saw the fantastic educational potential of television." Following a stint on WTTW, she switched to NBC-affiliated WMAQ, where she was a talk-show host and did weather and news.

Alvarez left the Windy City in 1977 to join KNBC in Los Angeles, where she sharpened her reporting and newscasting skills. She then joined KPNX in Phoenix as a talk-show producer and reporter and was later elevated to the anchor position on the nightly newscasts.

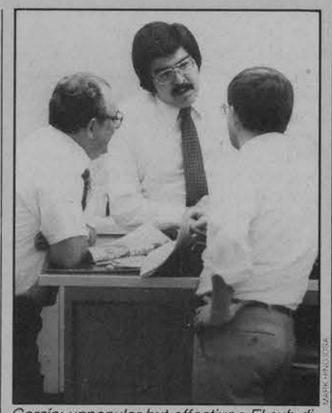
Her involvement with education is not confined to her anchor role. She recently moderated an experimental program linking a multinational group of educators and is enthusiastic about the potential of this kind of hookup. "I would jump at the opportunity to enlarge the scope of video education," she says. "I can envision a child in South America linking up with one in Iowa and the two learning about each other that way."

—David Molina

Black Tuesday

Kansas City, Mo. Media people here still refer to Jan. 3, 1978 as "Black Tuesday" and to the events of that day as "The Tuesday Morning Massacre." It had nothing to do with organized crime or the stock-market crash; it was simply the day Gerald García walked into *The Kansas City Star* and *The Kansas City Times*, this city's afternoon and morning newspapers, respectively. García had been hired to eliminate waste at the newspapers, both owned by Capital Cities Communication, Inc., a New York-based conglomerate. His title was director of newsroom operations. His nickname soon became "The Hatchet Man."

"I wasn't hired to make friends," says García, who arrived from another CCC-owned paper, *The Fort Worth (Texas) Star Telegram*, where he held the post of assistant managing editor. "I knew what I was getting into when I took the position," he says. "I knew I would encounter resistance. I was coming with only two years of management experience, but I was confident I could do the job."



García: unpopular but effective • El sub-director de los diarios Kansas City Star y Times ha mejorado la calidad de ambos.

García was right on both counts: He made few friends, but got the job done. Besides the unpopular task of dismissing some staff members, García improved the style, content and layout of the two newspapers, reassigned some of the personnel, brought in new machinery, expanded the photo department and brought back some of the former prestige of the nation's eighth largest newspaper.

Today, García is assistant to the publisher of *The Star* and *The Times*, which makes him part of a small group of Latinos in newspaper management. He also heads CCC's minority-training program, which selects college graduates to work at four CCC-owned newspapers for a year.

In 1977, the first year of the program, the six participants included no Latinos. Last year, four out of the seven interns were Latino. "In the past, 'minority' was always equated with 'Black,'" García says. "But the media are beginning to realize the importance of and need for Latinos."

The scarcity of Latinos in the media, according to García, is also partly due to a common reluctance to leave familiar surroundings and venture into new horizons and opportunities. "It's very much a cultural thing," says García, a fourth-generation Mexican American from Beeville, Texas. "The parents foster this feeling without realizing that it is detrimental to their children. Parents should be very understanding and should encourage their children to leave home, if they must, in order to get a good education and achieve success."

García speaks of what he knows. Despite receiving job offers from some of the biggest newspapers in Texas after having graduated from Texas A&M, he chose smaller papers closer to home. It took him 12 years to overcome what he calls The Barrio Syndrome, the philosophy of which could well be: "Stay close to home. Then if you fail, you won't have so far to run!" He has not forgotten his experience and emphasizes its dangers whenever he speaks to Latinos at media workshops.

García's current goal is to join the minute group of Latino publishers. James Hale, his mentor both in Fort Worth and presently in Kansas City, thinks he is well on his way. "Gerald is very confident, professional and aggressive," says Hale. "He has a vast knowledge of technology and does his job very well. I think he will be a fine publisher."

The Hatchet Man has certainly come a long way since his high school days, when his goal was to join the army, put in his 20 years, retire and live off the pension. "I was lazy then," he says. Obviously, he cured that defect—along with his Barrio Syndrome!

—Julio Morán

LIFESTYLES

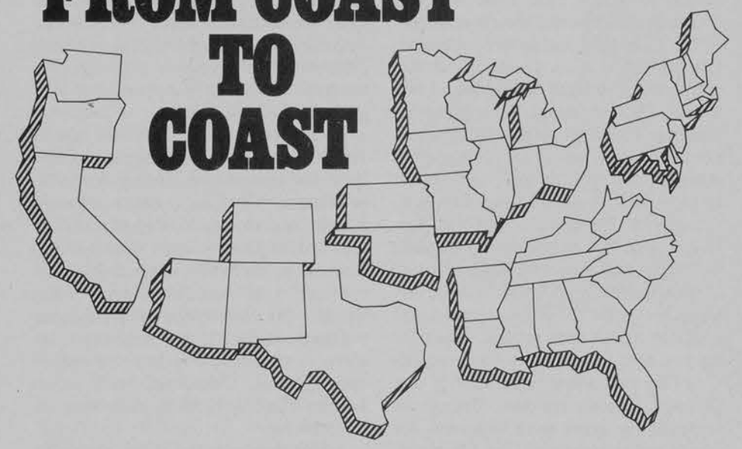
A Touch of the Carpenter

Kenner, La. If skilled cabinetmakers are rare enough in an age of mass production, blind ones seem almost inconceivable. Yet José Torres

continued on page 45

Torres: resigned • Pese a toda la publicidad que ha recibido este carpintero ciego, su negocio no acaba de prosperar.

LATINO POLITICS FROM COAST TO COAST



Although Latinos have been part of the U.S. population since the end of the war with Mexico in 1848, it has only been in the last 20 years that we have achieved any national political influence.

It began in the '60s with the "Viva Kennedy" organization. Since then, presidential candidates have been wooing Latinos with varying degrees of energy. Texas and California elected the first Latino Congressmen in 1962, New York did the same in 1970, and the '70s also saw the election of two Latino governors and a U.S. Senator.

But Latino participation in the national political arena has been inconsistent, often focusing exclusively on local issues. We have a sizable number of Latino mayors, councilmen, aldermen, supervisors, commissioners and board members, but these are primarily in small communities. In larger cities like Los Angeles, Houston, Chicago and New York, with the sole exception of Miami, our influence is almost non-existent when compared to the local Latino population.

On any wider scale, we lack the political clout to elect our own people into office and the influence to garner meaningful promises from other candidates. Our votes are divided through gerrymandering and petty jealousy among ourselves. Yet reasons for optimism do exist, and 1980 will provide an opportunity to test their validity.

In this issue, and in succeeding issues up until the presidential election in November, we will provide a series of articles about our potentially powerful political influence. On pages 20 to 28, we look at the political influence Latinos exert in five different regions of the country. Though the findings are depressing, they also hold out hope for a future in which our communities will grow more aware of what political muscle can achieve.

An interview with Esteban Torres, our new Special Assistant to the President for Hispanic Affairs, reveals a man dedicated to bringing about change for Latinos and a new interest on the part of the Administration to work toward those same goals.

"Is The Party Over for La Raza Unida?" explores the past, present and future of La Raza Unida Party, which sprang up as alternative to the traditional two-party system. And in a question-and-answer session, Republican presidential hopeful Benjamín Fernández affirms that some Latinos may return to the traditional two parties, specifically his own Grand Ol' Party. Fernández also tells us why he feels, as an "American of Hispanic origin," that he would make the best candidate for President of the U.S.

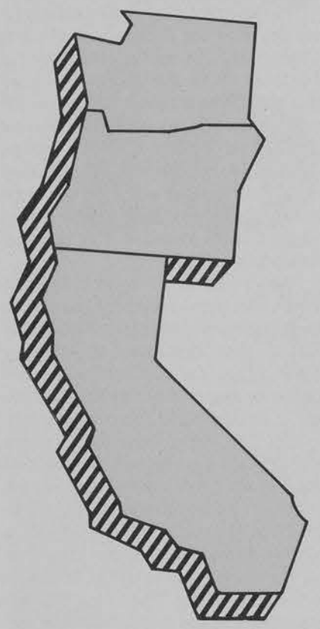
Lastly, as the base for what we are trying to accomplish this year, "The Legwork that Will Keep Us in the Running" tells us what different Latino organizations are doing to register our people to vote—and what that vote can mean.

In future years, the number of Latinos reaching voting age will be roughly two-thirds higher proportionately than the number of other Americans turning 18. The combination of population growth and improved voter participation can increase Latino strength at the ballot box from the 2 million who voted in 1976 to almost 8 million in the 1996 elections. The next 20 years should also see a rise in Latino Congressmen from the five that the last two decades have produced to 25

and an increase from one U.S. Senator to four.

It has become almost a cliché among political writers across the U.S. to refer to the 20 million Latinos in this country as a "sleeping giant." Every election year, there are predictions that the giant is waking up. He may still be far from fully awake this year, but he seems to be growing restless. Politicians will not be able to ignore Latino voters for very much longer.

The West Coast



A major reason for Latinos' lack of political influence in Washington, Oregon and California is the seasonal migration of workers who follow the harvests along the coastline. Most are not in any one place long enough to establish residency to vote, many are poorly educated and others feel no need to get involved because they are not part of the local community. In the large cities, from Seattle and Spokane to Los Angeles and San Diego, Latinos still have not felt the benefit of their considerable numbers because of gerrymandered residential districts and a failure to register. On the other hand, many politicians are starting to address Latino issues as insurance against the future, and several Latinos are shaping up as potential candidates.

California, with 3 million Latinos out of a total population of over 22 million, still has only one Latino congressman, Edward Roybal, a liberal Democrat who has represented the heavily Chicano eastside of Los Angeles for 17 years. That same area has also provided three of the six members of the California legislature's Chicano Caucus—Sen. Alex García, and Assemblymen Richard Alatorre and Art Torres, all Democrats. Their potential influence has been weakened by intermittent failure to work closely with other Democrats, or even with other Latinos like Assemblyman Peter R. Chacón, a Democrat from the San Diego area. An embarrassing impasse developed last year when Alatorre and Chacón introduced rival bills to reform the state's bilingual education program and it took several weeks for the two men to iron out a compromise.

The two other members of the Chicano Caucus are also Democrats representing areas with potential for future political growth for Chicanos: Sen. Joseph Montoya of Monterrey Park and Sen. Rubén Ayala of San Bernardino. Many Chicanos hold posts on city councils and local boards of education in the dozens of fast-growing suburbs in this part of Southern California.

While they are highly visible in their communities, Los Angeles political leaders wield very little clout: There is still no Latino on the 15-member city council, the seven-member board of education and the five-member county board of supervisors.

Local representation is just as weak in California's other big cities. The only Chicano to serve recently in the San Diego city council was Jess Haro, who was forced to resign two years ago when he was indicted on charges of customs fraud. Similar problems have dogged the only Chicano on the five-person city council of San José, which will soon be northern California's biggest city. Councilman Al Garza has been the focus of a grand-jury investigation into allegations of improprieties in a complex local zoning case. Cosmopolitan and heavily political San Francisco is governed by a 15-member board of supervisors whose only Latino member is Bob González.

San Francisco's dilemma could stand as a symbol for the problems faced by Latinos as a whole: the fact that as they become more politically active they will have to compete with a large Black population, a growing Asian community, an active Jewish minority and "special-interest" groups ranging from agribusiness to gays.

California Latinos' limited electoral role may well change after the 1982 statewide elections, in which Latinos are being mentioned as possible candidates for governor, state superintendent of schools, state treasurer and perhaps the U.S. Senate.

Outside the electoral field, Gov. Jerry Brown, who campaigned strongly in the community during his 1978 re-election bid, has made numerous Latino appointments. Republican Lt. Gov. Mike Curb named assistant Al Zapanta as his liaison to the community, and Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley has Grace Montañéz Davis as a deputy mayor. If any state needs to serve as an example of growing political influence, California, with more Latinos than any other, will have to lead the way.

Heading north, Latinos consider **Oregon** a "pit stop" on the way to Washington to follow the crops. There are an estimated 50,000 in a state with a total population of just under 2.5 million, but many are transients with no permanent residency. Though Oregon has no statewide or federal Latino officials, there are many politicians at the local level. But the community has very little political influence in this state, which is considered "liberal, laid-back and mellow." For the most part, Latinos are scattered, and the clusters that do form in such cities as Eugene, Woodburn, Salem and Portland tend to blend in with the rest of the population. "It seems most of the Chicanos who have made it and have been accepted by the community do not want to make waves, and often do not identify themselves as Chicanos," says a Latina who resides in Eugene. On the other hand, Oregon Latinos have the same housing, employment and legal problems as their fellows in other states, and these may provide a rallying point. Many community organizations already exist to help solve such problems and to make people aware of the importance of exerting political pressure to fulfill their needs.

The political influence and progress of Latinos in the state of **Washington** (almost 100,000 out of 3.7 million) is often dismissed as trivial. The statistics support the belief that Latinos exercise little clout, though some veteran observers say the statistics are deceiving and progress, at least on the political front, is relative. Latino candidates fared poorly in the state's general election in 1978. No major offices were won, and the expected community vote failed to materialize.

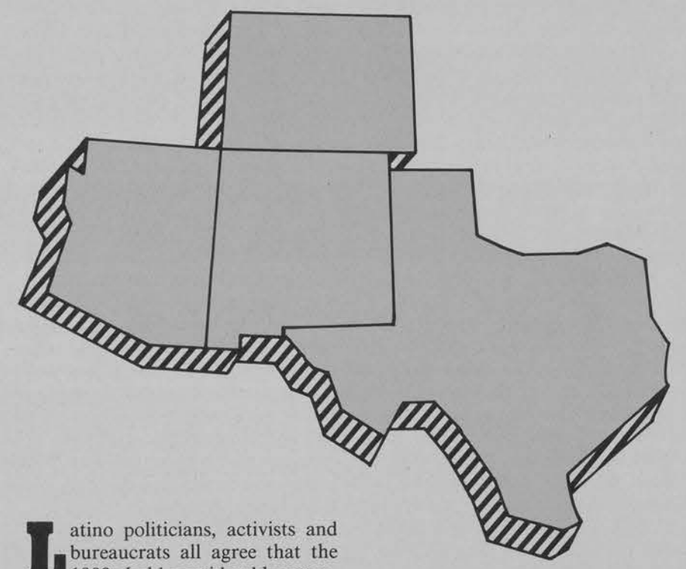
The most significant gains were at the local level and are mostly significant in light of Latino political history in this state. The Washington Chicano heartland is in the Yakima Valley, a stretch of fertile farmland in the east-central region of the state whose Mexican American residents are still tied to the land, many of them farm workers or children of farm workers. Only in recent years have they begun to put down roots and get involved in the administration of their community. Despite their overall numbers, the Mexican American voice remains minimal because of the slow progress of voter registration. Moreover, of those that are registered, relatively few bother to cast their ballots: In Washington's 15th legislative district, which covers the lower Yakima Valley, the overall voter turnout generally runs about 30% of those registered.

All this may be changing. Rolando Loera, an unsuccessful candidate in the last election, believes that each election brings out more awareness in the Chicano constituency and that each election has served as a catalyst for more political involvement. Anglo candidates no longer ignore the Chicano community. As Jesse Faria, a Yakima County official, says, "Within the last few years, candidates have come out to the valley to talk. Ten years ago, that was unheard of. Politicians know Mexican Americans are just becoming aware of their muscle."

Still, relatively few Latinos seek office, and many of those that have done so have been accused of political naiveté, demonstrating poor organization and presenting poor platforms. Latino political influence is at its strongest in the various community organizations which effectively lobby for Chicano causes at county and state levels. Washington is believed to be the first state to create by legislative mandate a commission for Mexican American affairs, and the Latino lobby today constitutes a stronger influence than the state's other ethnic groups. Though efforts to date have yielded minimal results, an air of confidence prevails.

Gabriela Castelán, Ray Chávez, Frank del Olmo and Estela Ortiz contributed to this report.

The Southwest



Latino politicians, activists and bureaucrats all agree that the 1980s hold considerable potential for Latinos in the Southwest, both because of their sheer numbers and because of the efforts of organizations such as the Southwest Voter Registration and Education Project (SVREP) to register and mold them into an influential group. In each of the Southwestern states—Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado—the number of eligible Latino voters has increased sharply since the last presidential election. On the other hand, the percentage of registered Latino voters in these four states is even now only slightly over 50%. Since the community is already a minority, this creates a double handicap for Latino candidates, particularly in statewide elections. Currently, the SVREP legal department and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund are suing as many as 120 counties throughout the Southwest because of grossly gerrymandered districts.

Another concern among Chicano leaders is that Latino voters only turn out in force in major races where their own candidates are involved. The turnout is often greater in the primaries than in the actual election.

Since neither the Democratic nor the Republican party seems intent on supporting any major Latino candidate for statewide office, the Chicano vote may be low unless the presidential election attracts voters. This happened in 1976, and it helped many Latino candidates for minor posts.

In **Arizona,** with its 850,000-plus Latinos in a total population of 2.3 million, strategists for the dominant Democratic Party consider it crucial that a Chicano name be among the standard-bearers in the 1980 and '82 elections if they are to continue to pick the political plums. In a state that has been among forerunners in bringing Latinos into the political mainstream, there remains one major flaw: voter apathy. Long-time political observer Benny Abeytia says, "We could be

very influential in the outcome of elections in Arizona, but getting this bloc amassed has been problematical." State Democratic office manager Jeannie Cox agrees: "If all the eligible Chicanos voted, they could control every election in Arizona." Citing data from the last general election in 1978, Cox noted that, of Chicanos eligible to register, only 25% did so, "and of that 25%, only 10% cast a ballot." Worse yet, Cox says, of the 25% who registered, 63% have been purged from the rolls for failure to vote.

These figures help to explain why Latinos, despite their great numbers, are so badly represented in the state government. Only five of the 30 state senate members are Latino. The same number of Latinos sit in the 60-member house, and there are none at all among elected state officials, including U.S. senators and congressmen, the corporation commission and the attorney general's staff.

Among promising Latino politicos, one name in particular keeps surfacing. Though Alfredo Gutiérrez, the State Senate majority whip is only in his early 30s, he is given a good chance at a congressional seat, either replacing Republican incumbent John Rhodes, if he chooses not to seek reelection or in the new congressional district Arizonians expect to get after the 1980 census. Other up-and-coming Latino politicians are Mike Morales of Tucson, a freshman legislator, and Luis González and Jaime Gutiérrez, both state senators and seasoned veteran politicians.

In **New Mexico,** a conservative backlash has cut into Latino political power and influence. The small Anglo vote in New Mexico has always played an important role in any Chicano campaign for high office. But early last year, the liberal and Latino coalition that had been in power since 1971 was ousted by Republicans and conservative Democrats. Speaker of the House Walter Martínez was replaced, and major committee assignments were shifted to conservatives. Another blow to New Mexico Latinos is that the community's relative size has dropped from 40% of the population to 35%, owing to an influx of Anglos into the state.

To compound the problems of Chicanos with statewide aspirations, no community organization has been able to establish the kind of machinery that backed Jerry Apodaca when he ran for governor. Apodaca's expected bid for the U.S. Senate would undoubtedly help Chicano Democrats, but that will not be until 1982. Democratic Lt. Gov. Roberto Mondragón has a good chance of climbing the political ladder before then, but only if Governor Bruce King decides to back him. Aside from that, Mondragón has not developed his own machine.

But New Mexico is still by far the leader in the number of Latino elected officials. Besides the 11 state senators and 21 state representatives, a Latino, Dan Sosa, Jr., sits as the Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court, another sits in the Court of Appeals and several serve as district judges along with numerous Latino appointees.

Colorado Latinos (100,000 out of 2.6 million total) seem to have received about all they can currently hope for in a racially polarized state. Although they have good representation in the Denver metropolitan area, where the majority of the state's Latinos live, the rural poor have had almost no voice, largely because of gerrymandering. Most local Latino politicians are concentrating on major registration and education drives. About ten organizations are currently promoting voter registration, one of the biggest being the new chapter of the Hispanic American Democrats.

Colorado Latinos have very little chance of capturing any statewide office, although there are still three Latino state senators, including Polly Baca Barragán, and five state reps. The last Latino who tried—Rubén Valdéz for Lt. Governor—lost very badly. Pete Mireles, county commissioner in Adams County, is considered a good bet for statewide office, but not yet. The next major Latino push may come in 1982, when U.S. Representative Pat Schroeder of District 2 is expected to vacate her seat. There are those who feel a Latino may have a good chance to replace her, though the community has not responded well in off years in the past. Another big political prize for Latinos may become available in 1983, when the present mayor of Denver leaves office. Sal Carpio, a popular Chicano city councilman, is considered a strong challenger, even though Latinos make up only 20% of the Denver population.

Texas looms as a major battlefield for Latinos, who number 2.5 million out of a total of 13 million. But here, too, prizes will include no statewide offices. Most of the major confrontations will be at the county, city and school-district levels, for two reasons: First, reapportioned legislative districts make it almost impossible for Latinos to win seats in the state house or senate; there are only 17 Chicano representatives out of a house membership of 150 and only four in the state senate. Second, Chicanos have concentrated for several years on contesting local elections, which affect the lives of most Chicanos most closely.

Even on the local level, Chicanos face a severe problem: Some 30 counties are currently under investigation or in litigation over alleged gerrymandering, and actions might succeed in at least another 30.

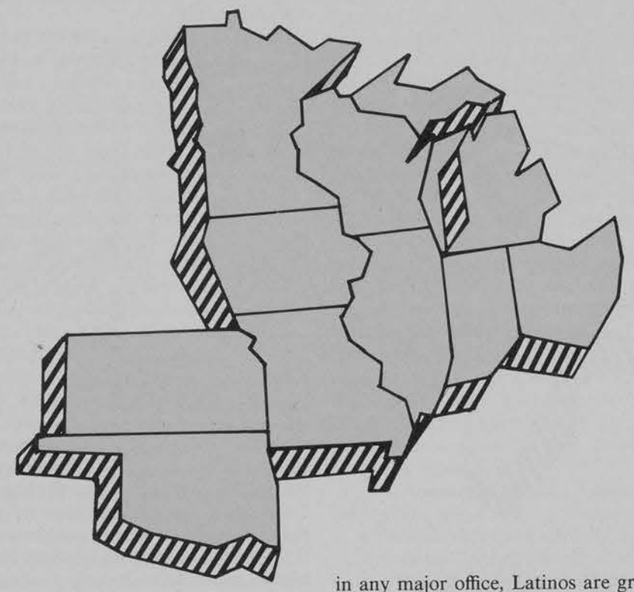
Nonetheless, some key political battles are shaping up—most of them in rural Texas. A coalition of LULAC, La Raza Unida, G.I. Forum and others is preparing to recapture control of Kingsville. "We have established a *Convención Municipal,*" says Raza Unida activist Raúl Villarreal, "because Chicanos want to regain the power they once had [Chicanos had a mayor and majority city council in 1973]." He adds that most Chicanos support the coalition with a degree of unity never before attained. In nearby Robstown, Chicanos are also considering a challenge to an Anglo mayor who has been in office for 30 years. In Crystal City, La Raza Unida will try to regain control of the county government which was lost last year in the courts, and anticipates strengthening its grip on the city government in the April elections. The party is also expected to field other county slates.

In central Texas, Chicanos will be running for several county offices closed to them until recently because of malapportioned districts, and their chances are rated good in many.

In the non-electoral political arena, the Mexican American Democrats will be trying to gain muscle in the state hierarchy through the precinct conventions and by forming coalitions with other liberal Democrats. They will also try to win influence in the Presidential campaign committees, but this will be made harder by the fact that Chicano Democrats are split in their choice of candidates—as seems to be true throughout the Southwest, where President Carter has shown more strength than expected.

Leo Cárdenas, Ignacio García and David Molina contributed to this report.

The Midwest



In the vast region that ranges from Oklahoma in the south to Michigan in the north, Latinos exert less political influence than in any other area of the country. Here, the main concern is economics, not politics. There are no Latino members of Congress from this region and only four among the ten state legislatures.

Oklahoma, (total population 2.8 million), **Kansas,** (2.3 million) and **Missouri** (4.8 million) each have Latino populations of over 50,000 with very little political influence, although—or perhaps because—many are of the third and fourth generations. There are scattered Latino politicians in the smaller cities and budding political machines in the larger ones. In Kansas City, Mo., Chicanos were able to get Robert Hernández into the city council, block the re-appointment of a city attorney who allegedly made racist remarks and were also able to send Paul Rojas to the state legislature. Tony Casado was elected mayor of Wichita, the largest city in Kansas, in 1977, though it has only 8,000 Latinos in a population of almost 348,000. Chicanos from this city were also able to elect Paul Feliciano to the state senate. And even in Oklahoma, where there are no Latinos in any major office, Latinos are growing numerically and politically.

In **Michigan** (9.2 million), **Ohio** (10.7 million), **Indiana** (5.3 million) and **Illinois** (11.2 million), the Latino populations are larger—all over 100,000. Despite their numbers, Latinos have not fared well except, to a limited extent, on the local level. Latino candidates have run unsuccessfully for a seat on the Saginaw city council ever since 1971. But as more migrant workers are attracted to the Michigan auto industry and establish permanent residencies, they will provide the infrastructure for a potentially powerful political machine, and a similar process is taking place in Indiana and Ohio.

In **Illinois,** with more than 600,000 Latinos, the situation is equally bleak. In Chicago, where Latinos make up 10% of the population, not one of the 50 aldermen is Latino, though there are three Latino municipal judges and a county commissioner. Although Mayor Jane Byrne broke tradition by not appointing a special assistant for Hispanic affairs, she did name Dr. Hugo Muriel as the commissioner of health. He, in turn, has appointed many Latinos within his department, some to positions Latinos have never before held. But the future of Latino politics will depend on the ability to break into the Chicago Democratic party machine. Meanwhile, Latinos are increasing their pull in appointed posts and community organizations. The state government, aware of their power potential, has established a Spanish-speaking People Study Commission and named a special assistant for Hispanic Affairs, Rose Mary Bombela. She and other Latinos have publicized issues affecting the community. In addition, Miriam Cruz, an influential Chicago Latina, was appointed to the White House staff. Several Latinos will be running in this year's elections. August Salas and Raymond Castro are candidates for the Democratic Party committee, and Castro, a Chicano federal child-care supervisor, is courting Puerto Rican voters in an attempt to avoid repeating past splits between the two Latino groups Also aiming for a Latino "first" is Andy Goytia, running for state representative.

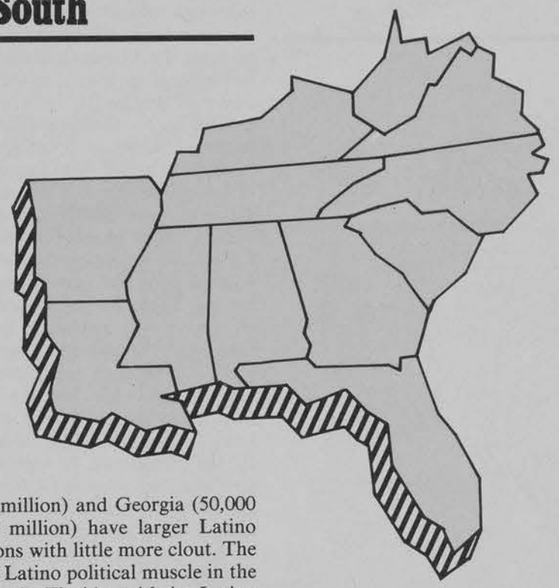
In **Wisconsin** (4.7 million), **Minnesota** (4 million) and **Iowa** (2.9 million) the Latino populations are smaller, about 50,000 each, but apparently more influential. Latinos in St. Paul, Minn., have Conrad Vega in the state senate and Frank Rodríguez in the state house representing them. While there are no major Latino elected officials in Wisconsin or Iowa, Anglos, if not Latinos, are becoming aware of the potential power of Latinos and have established commissions and councils to address our needs.

María Chávez, Isidro Lucas, Antonio Rocha, Becky Romero and Tony Sánchez contributed to this report.

The South

With the notable exception of Florida, there is not only very little Latino political influence in the South, but—compared with other areas—very few Latinos. Fewer than 105,000 Latinos live in the states of Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, South Carolina, Kentucky and West Virginia, whose combined total population is just under 21 million. Virginia (about 60,000 out of 5 million), Louisiana (100,000

The South



out of 4 million) and Georgia (50,000 out of 5 million) have larger Latino populations with little more clout. The center of Latino political muscle in the South lies in Florida, with its Latino population of over 700,000 out of a total 8.6 million.

While Latinos have some power in most of the major cities in **Florida,** they have yet to elect a Latino congressman and only one state rep., Elvin Martínez from Tampa. Alfredo Durán, the state Democratic Party chairman, does exert some national influence for the party, but not for the communities. On the local level, Miami stands as an encouraging example of what could happen in other major cities with large Latino populations. In last fall's elections, the city's predominantly Cuban community flexed its political muscles to capture a majority on the city commission for the first time in history and re-elect Puerto Rican Maurice Ferré to his fourth two-year term as mayor. Ferré has endeared himself to the Latino community by supporting minority hiring and promoting business ties to Latin America. In addition, he has obtained federal grants totalling $2 million for the development of Little Havana, the heart of Miami's Cuban community. The Latinos were able to sway the election because 55% of their more than 44,000 registered voters turned out on election day, compared with only 25% of the 50,000 Anglos and 20% of the 37,000 Blacks who were registered. In nearby Hialeah, Cubans elected a third Latino, Silvio Cardozo, to the seven-member city council. And in Tampa, Bob Martínez was elected mayor. At the county level, the community's political influence is much less. Latinos make up 56% of the population of Miami and 50% of Hialeah, but only one-third of Dade County as a whole, and the entire county commission is elected at large. As a result, there are no Latino elected county officials at all. On the other hand, the toughest part of obtaining political clout—the ability to turn out the vote—has been mastered, and non-Latino candidates are beginning to court the community.

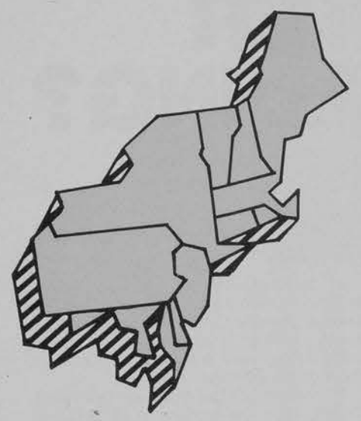
What Florida has achieved today, **Georgia** may achieve tomorrow. During the past six years, Atlanta's Latino population has jumped from 20,000 to about 50,000 (out of a total of just over 430,000), and while there are still no Latino elected city officials, there is a growing awareness of the need to form political coalitions within the community, and AVANCE, a year-old organization working for Latino advancement, is rapidly gaining political clout. A 1979 survey documenting the characteristics and needs of Atlanta's Latino population has also been a unifying factor. This study, which Latinos proposed and for which they sought the financing, brought together several local institutions, including the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia State University College of Urban Life. It provided a breakdown by nationality of the Latino community (53% Cuban) and revealed that: 74% of the residents have been there six years or less; 64% have a family income of less than $16,000; no bilingual or bicultural services are provided, and there is a lack of an identified Latino leader. This information provides a basis both for local government planning relevant to Latinos and for community political strategies.

Sasha Futran and Dan Williams contributed to this report.

The Northeast

Puerto Ricans dominate the Latino population of the northeastern states from Maine down to Pennsylvania, Maryland and Washington, D.C., and their population shift to the west and frequent migration between the mainland and the island are key factors in the lack of Latino political influence in the region. The northeastern states also have large concentrations of Cubans, Dominicans, Central and South Americans, both legal and undocumented, who account for a large number of non-citizens. In addition, politics is the last priority in the fight for survival. Economically, northeastern Latinos are among the poorest in the country, and they have yet to equate politics with change. Only New York City, with a Latino population of about 2 million, has any community representation at state and national levels, and even that is far from proportionate to a community that makes up almost one-seventh of the total city population. The lack of representation is more to be expected in **Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire** and **Rhode Island,** where the Latino population is quite small.

One of the problems facing **New York City** Latinos is a declining population in areas where they have traditionally had some power—particularly in the South Bronx, which accounts for more than half of the elected Latino officials. Four congressmen, including perhaps the only Latino, Robert García, and several state seats may fall prey to legislative remapping after the 1980 census. Not even the two other state seats held by Latinos, Angelo del Toro from East Harlem and Víctor Robles from Brooklyn, are safe from reapportionment. The same numbers game may also have hurt Herman Badillo's third attempt to become mayor of New York City in 1978. Yet many Latino community leaders regard the future optimistically and predict Latino candidates will compete for comptroller, city council president and Bronx borough president in 1981, when the three current Latino councilmen will be up for re-election. Besides fighting to get into the political action, South Bronx Latinos are also struggling for survival against indifference, arson, urban blight, massive internal migration, and the contraction of the district's economy at a rate faster than that of the city's. Elsewhere in the state, there are Latino communities in Buffalo and Albany, but they are not organized enough to have an impact.



The problem facing **Washington, D.C.** is almost exactly the opposite of New York City's. The last official count put the Latino population there at about 13,000. Today, the lowest estimates run to 75,000. This increase was one reason for the creation of an Office of Latino Affairs to help address the accompanying problems of a growing community. A major difficulty is identifying many Latinos' residency, because so many people work in Washington and live in neighboring Virginia and Maryland. Adding to the problem is a large population of non-citizens, both legal and undocumented, who keep the proportion of voters low. On the other hand there is also a burgeoning Latino middle class. Long time residents see them, and the many national Latino organizations that are based in Washington, as levers to augment Latino influence in Washington, not only nationally but locally.

The Latino population in **Pennsylvania** has also grown, to at least 150,000, but its political influence has not. Philadelphia has offices for Latino affairs at both the state and city levels, but their directors do not have the full support of the community, and the two Latino candidates for the city council last year both lost badly. Salvation in Philadelphia may lie in a coalition with Blacks. Last year the two communities joined forces to elect a Black councilman from a Latino and Black district and that victory has given Latinos a taste of what political clout can accomplish.

In **Massachusetts** and **Connecticut,** where the Latino population is over 100,000, they have virtually made no impression on the political scene. A Latino was elected to the Hartford city council, but there are no elected Latino officials at the state level and specific Latino issues are handled by general affirmative-action and civil-rights organizations. But local politicians are beginning to court Latino support.

In Boston, Mayor White, who has had the support of the Latino community in the past, was caught off-guard when his challenger tried to woo some of his Latino supporters at the last election. But that only seemed to strengthen White's commitment to the community and he won handily.

New Jersey's large Latino population, which numbers nearly a half million, is virtually without influence. It has no state representatives, and at the municipal level only Henry Martínez, of Trenton, has made it to city council. But the drive to bring gambling casinos into Atlantic City has sparked some activity as Latinos fought for homes being demolished to make room for new hotels. Despite its numerous Cuban community, Bergen County, which includes Union City, the Little Havana of the North, does not have any Latino elected official. The majority of Cubans are not citizens, and thus are unable to vote.

Elizabeth Perez-Luna and David Vidal contributed to this report.

Manny Gómez

ESTEBAN TORRES: Our Hot Line to The President

By Julio Morán

Cada vez que un latino ocupa una posición importante en la Casa Blanca, las esperanzas de la comunidad de ser mejor atendida por la administración de turno aumentan considerablemente. Con el nombramiento de Esteban Torres como Asistente Especial del Presidente para Asuntos Hispanos, esas esperanzas se han acrecentado más que nunca, ya que Torres cuenta con mucho más poder y acceso diario al Presidente Carter.

Torres, chicano de 50 años de edad, llega a esa importante posición con una vasta experiencia política y administrativa. Fue embajador de los EE.UU. ante la UNESCO en París, donde jugó un importante papel a nivel internacional. Años atrás ocupó el cargo de asistente del presidente del poderoso sindicato de los trabajadores de la industria automobilística. Siempre se ha mantenido cerca de la comunidad latina, ya que también fue fundador de TELACU (The East Los Angeles Community Union), una de las más grandes agencias de desarrollo de la comunidad latina del país.

One of the most common sources of frustration for Latinos is the sense of being ignored, of being "seen but not heard." When we say *"Oye,"* we like at least to feel that someone is tuned in, especially someone "up there" in the corridors of power. That's why, for years, Latinos have nagged, pushed and shoved to have a person in the White House to represent their interests, to be the spokesperson, the wheeler-and-dealer for the community. Although since the Johnson administration there has—under different guises and titles—been a Latino in the White House who has attempted to be that ombudsman, that *palanca* we felt would help solve some of our problems, none of them had the degree of power and access to the President that was required to do an effective job. Most of them left in frustration, while the Latino community continued to wait for that "hot-line" to the President to be opened up.

Enter Esteban Edward Torres. As the President's special assistant for Hispanic affairs, Torres' job is to deal specifically with Latino issues. And that's the way he likes it. As one of nine senior members of President Carter's personal staff who meet daily to discuss the domestic and international problems facing this nation, Torres has, in the short time he's held that position, gained the respect of the Latino community, wielding an influence that eluded his predecessors in the White House.

The big question is, of course, can any Latino appointed to that White House job fulfill the hopes that our community invests in them? If so, can Esteban Torres succeed where the others have failed?

It is much too soon to tell, and his early accomplishments may have to be seen in the context of an election year. But there is a strong sense of optimism among Latino leaders from California's green valleys to New York's urban canyons that Torres is a man on their side. Someone who will spend most—if not

Bob Moeser

The Torres at home: (sitting) Daughter Celina, Torres, his wife Arcy and daughter Camille. Shown standing are his three other children, Carmen, Esteban, Jr. and Rena. • El embajador Torres, como aun le llaman, está casado hace 25 años y tiene cinco hijos.

all—of his time dealing with Latino concerns and, most significantly, someone who enjoys his work.

As the Special Assistant to the President for Hispanic Affairs, Torres comes into the White House with 20 years of experience in dealing with Latino issues from the grass-roots to the international level. Although he has never held elected office, he is undoubtedly a politician. He knows his way around Washington, where, in turn, his ways are known. Being outside the electoral process has allowed him to throw rocks at his own as well as the opposing party without fear. He has the respect of both community and political leaders.

Just seeing the man justifies some of the enthusiasm about his appointment. As his massive frame moves slowly down the corridor from his office in the East Wing of the White House, the 50-year-old Torres exudes a reassuring, earthy vitality. Unlike his bookish predecessor, Joe Aragón, he seems—literally and figuratively—ready to roll up his sleeves to *meterle mano* to whatever task may be at hand. "I have come here to do a job," he says. "To carry out what I think is a noble plan on the part of the administration. We have established a precedent from which no one can turn back now. We have brought attention to the fact that, indeed, we are a community to be dealt with in the future and now."

The potential impact of Torres' new post is a difficult one to weigh in advance. Latinos tend to see the person in that position almost as a "Latino President," expecting leadership and guidance. Already one community leader has complained, "I don't see any coherent strategy emanating from his office." Few seem to understand that his role as an adviser is not to set priorities or initiate programs. He is a middleman, a mouthpiece whose job is, as he puts it, "to know what the community's problems are and relay them to the President." It is a job with plenty of frustrations, but also one with enough stretch to fit the man inside it. Which makes Torres' personality important.

That personality is a blend of rugged calmness, maturity and charm. A family man who enjoys a good rapport with his wife of 25 years and his five grown-up children. He is soft-spoken, yet authoritative. He listens intently, even to small talk, weighing every word. Most important, he is approachable and seems to be accepted by all Latinos.

"I am happy with the man," says Luis Alvarez, the Puerto Rican executive director of the National Urban Fellows. "He is a good coalescing factor for Latinos. He is very reflective and sober in his deliberations. He is attempting to bring Latino leaders together."

Besides keeping his door and ears open to his constituency, Torres' record has been one of a man who gets across. He spent more than 12 years with the United Auto Workers and in 1977 became the U.S. ambassador to UNESCO in Paris, the post he gave up to assume his present position. He is in fact seen by many as the strongest adviser we have had in the White House.

The general reaction to Torres' appointment was expressed by Raúl Yzaguirre, executive director of the National Council of La Raza. "He has a good sense of the issues and of the people. He could have furthered his own political ambitions by staying in Paris or becoming ambassador to Mexico, but he chose the position where he will have the most impact—and face the most criticism," he says.

Somewhat immodestly, Torres concurs: "It is a question of experience, a question of style. When one can approach the President on specific issues based on the kind of experience I have had, one is speaking with a stronger voice and more authority."

That experience and authority allowed Torres to make certain demands before assuming his new post. "I took into account the vulnerability of a person in this position," he says. "I assessed the sincerity of the administration and what my mandate would be. I had to be assured of access to the President and the cabinet, of being a member of the senior staff, of having my own staff and of playing a meaningful role in behalf of our community."

The fact that these demands were met is in itself a measure of Torres' real and potential clout. "I see honest delivery of what was promised to me. I am sitting in daily at policy-making levels from the chief of staff on down, and being given the chance to provide for policy on questions in all of the areas for which my charter, so to speak, is designed. I have direct access to cabinet secretaries in major issues that affect us and because of this, things that have fallen through the cracks in the past are being looked at again. There is a continuing talent search for Latinos, not just at the civil service grades, but also at the policy-making levels in cabinet roles."

The infrastructure is only beginning to be built up, and the influence itself is another question-mark. Given the nature of most Latino problems, their solution is a long term matter, not one lending itself to the quick fix and the media-oriented bandage. But evidence of Torres' weight began to accumulate rapidly, the earliest examples being the White House signal to the INS to call off its neighborhood raids, the appointment of Víctor Marrero as undersecretary of HUD and the positive tone of President Carter's speech at the Hispanic Caucus dinner last year.

There have also been early frustrations. "To be sure I have had some disappointments," Torres says. "Many of us expected that this time around there would be a cabinet secretary. But the administration is not over yet, and I have high hopes that we will see a cabinet secretary by the end of it. In order for our community to have a participatory role in the political processes, there has to be a deliberate partnership."

It is that partnership that Torres has been trying to create since his earliest political involvement in the mid '50s. His climb to the White House began in 1954, soon after he was discharged from the Army's European command, where he served in the Corps of Engineers. His family had moved from the small copper-mining town of Miami, Ariz., to East Los Angeles. Shortly thereafter he took a job on an auto assembly-line with the Chrysler Corporation in nearby Maywood.

About a year later he left for Cutler, in central California, to administer a 45-acre ranch his father had left him. But being an *hacendado* was emphatically not his goal in life, and he went back to the auto plant with some relief.

It was there that Torres began the process that would eventually make him the most influential Latino politician in the U.S. today. Fired by the injustices suffered by Latinos on the assembly line, he ran for chief steward of Local 230 of the UAW and became the union's first Chicano representative while attending evening classes at East Los Angeles College. He then went on to California State University in Los Angeles, where he received his degree in education in 1963. After a stint as a regional international representative, he made his first trip to Washington, D.C., as the Inter-American representative for the UAW's International Affairs department, working primarily with Latin American unions and political movements. During this time, he picked up two graduate degrees, one in economics and the other in international law.

In 1968, developing a desire to return to domestic issues, Torres went back to East Los Angeles to set up The East Los Angeles Community Union (TELACU), an organization created to address the economic and social problems of the barrio. Today, TELACU is one of the most powerful community organizations in the country, utilizing over $6 million annually in government grants.

Though Torres enjoyed immense success in Los Angeles during the early years of TELACU, it was also there that he suffered his two biggest political setbacks. The first was an attempt to incorporate East L.A. as a separate city with its own government, which failed miserably, going down by a margin of two-to-one on election day. The second was his bid for a new congressional seat from Monterey Park in 1974, which he narrowly lost to George Danielson, a congressman from Los Angeles who had moved into the area to challenge the seat. Torres went back to the UAW in Washington, that year, heading the union's educational program, in which he dealt with issues of world trade, international labor standards, democratic political movements and human rights. It was then that he caught the Carter administration's eye and was appointed Ambassador to UNESCO. According to insiders, his term in Paris was very successful. He gained the respect of the Third World nations for his sensitivity to their needs and that of the administration for his role in the Arab-Israeli situation.

When pressure from the Latino community convinced President Carter to rescind his statement that a special assistant would not be named after Aragón left, the search led directly to Torres.

Aside from issues more directly related to doing the job, one question that confronted Torres was the possibility of the President facing re-election against Sen. Ted Kennedy, with whom Torres personally, and Latinos generally, have had good rapport.

Now that the race between the two men is a reality, Torres will be supporting President Carter. "In conscience, I have to remain with a president committed to enhancing our numbers in the federal government and the number of programs that benefit our community," he says.

Whatever criticism people may have of Torres, he is undoubtedly a man dedicated to improving the lot of Latinos both domestically and internationally, and his mere presence in the White House has already accomplished what proved beyond any of his predecessors.

"Sometime in my lifetime I am going to see some economic, social and political justice for my people," he says. "I don't care that some people say that the President just wants to use me. Let him! I am going to use him too. Whatever I can do to influence the direction that things will take, I will do. That is what drives me."

The words sound good, and the record to date looks good—but the test, of course lies in the future. Meanwhile, with the skeletons of promising precursors rattling in their minds, Latinos will be watching Torres with great expectations, but with unblinking eyes. □

IS THE PARTY OVER FOR LA RAZA UNIDA?

Ramon Vásquez y Sánchez

By Ignacio García

Cuando en el año 1970 se creó el Partido La Raza Unida en Texas, muchos jóvenes chicanos se sintieron atraídos por la filosofía nacionalista que les ofrecía una alternativa dentro del sistema político norteamericano.

Bajo el capaz liderato de José Angel Gutiérrez, La Raza Unida se convirtió en un partido viable en varios estados del suroeste. En Cristal City, Texas, logró elegir un gobierno local, en su mayoría chicano. Los triunfos iniciales alentaron a ciertos elementos dentro del partido a extenderse a través de todo el país. Esta decisión debilitó la organización. Luchas internas, fracasos en las urnas, así como acusaciones de izquierdismo radical, y hasta de marxismo, comenzaron a afectar al partido, hasta que muchos decidieron abandonarlo. Gutiérrez considera quela La Raza Unida es aún una alternativa viable, pero es honesto al criticar los fallos del pasado.

The notion of doing away with the two-party system has occurred to many people throughout the history of the U.S.—especially to the politically, economically or ideologically disenfranchised. Many have tried—some with a certain success—to create alternative parties, parties which although they may not get candidates elected may have an impact, particularly at the local level, by swinging their endorsement and votes to other parties' candidates in exchange for political concessions.

Ignacio García, NUESTRO's Southwest regional editor, was a county chairman for La Raza Unida Party in Texas.

The time had to come when Latinos would go the route of a third party. A party that would represent their interests and make it meaningful to participate in the electoral process, a party that would incorporate in its philosophy the elements of nationalism and self-determination that would attract the ethnically isolated Chicano. La Raza Unida Party was to be such a party.

Looking back to the early successes and subsequent setbacks of La Raza Unida provides ample food for thought at the beginning of a political year and a decade that many insist on calling "the Decade of the Latino." In the late 1960s, La Raza Unida's nationalism attracted many acculturated young Chicanos whom the New Left and Black Power caught in an identity crisis. Neither white enough to join the mainstream, nor black enough for the civil-rights movement, and largely ignored by liberal Anglos and civil-rights lawyers, they were also not attracted by established Mexican American organizations like the League of United Latin American Citizens, the American GI Forum, the Mexican American Political Association and others.

As pioneer Raza Unida activist Carlos Guerra put it, these groups had "fallen into the rut of respectability, espousing to ever-dwindling audiences the value of speaking good English and acquiring the trappings of advancement." And to the far left, groups like the Los Angeles based CASA-Hermandad General de Trabajadores, with its hard-line Stalinist ideology and its one-issue immigration platform, seemed equally unsuitable as bases for rallying the people.

Thus when La Raza Unida was founded, it filled a vacuum and became a viable third force for Chicanos in Texas, California and New Mexico and a banner under which their fellows in the Midwest could rally. When the party crashed onto the political scene in 1970, Chicanos who had experienced discrimination and prejudice jumped on the bandwagon. Its call for bilingual programs and Chicano cultural awareness was an answer to Latinos' identity crisis and the rhetoric of self-determination—which later became a reality in Crystal City—lured many to the challenge of building *Aztlán.*

Perhaps as appealing as the party's nationalist ideology was its founder, José Angel Gutiérrez, whose articulate oratory attracted middle-class Chicanos, the working class, students and the elderly.

Equally appealing, Gutiérrez and his Raza Unida *compañeros* had challenged and defeated the Anglo political establishment of his hometown Crystal City, which had been ruled by an Anglo county judge and an Anglo-controled city council for more than 30 years though its population was 90% Chicano.

Soon after Raza Unida came to power in "Cristal," a bilingual school program was established, a free clinic for migrant workers opened, city renewal projects were completed and streets were paved. Public projects such as these had been unheard of be-

"To Survive the Party Must Return to its Basic Principles."

fore in Crystal City and neighboring south Texas towns.

So it was not surprising that Raza Unida chapters sprang up through Texas and the party took control of several communities.

Soon afterwards, La Raza Unida decided to spread its new-found political wings statewide. But Gutiérrez opposed the move, arguing that the party's resources would be spread too thin. Instead, he favored a regional party that would gradually gain control of south Texas and other rural areas where Chicanos were the dominant population. But the majority of the party's activists decided otherwise.

Soon after this statewide expansion, Chicano activists in the Southwest and Midwest met with Texas Raza Unida leaders to discuss joining the party, and the National La Raza Unida Party was born. At its peak, it had 23 chapters nationwide and ran gubernatorial candidates in five states.

Like its Texas precursor, the national party was plagued by problems ranging from lack of resources to divisive ideologies.

Only in the Southwest, in fact, did La Raza Unida party ever acquire enough political muscle to challenge the Democrats and Republicans. In Texas, Ramsey Muñíz, a lawyer with a Gutiérrez-like charisma, ran for governor in 1972 and 1974, twice siphoning from the Democratic incumbent critical votes that were necessary to hold the Republicans at bay. Republicans finally took advantage of this situation in 1978, when the GOP won the governor's mansion for the first time since the post-Civil War Reconstruction period. In those elections, La Raza Unida became a swing party and proved decisive in gaining political leverage.

But as La Raza Unida became a force to be reckoned with in Texas, the Democrats used Mexican American hatchetmen to brand the new party as racist, Communist and subversive—which is tantamount to the kiss of death in conservative Texas politics. At the same time, Gutiérrez' leadership was being questioned and party infighting among several rival La Raza Unida factions in Crystal City was shaking the party.

This, plus its failure to make further gains in the 1974 elections, disillusioned many Chicanos looking for quick victories at the polls.

It did not help La Raza Unida when party members began losing jobs and fell victim to false criminal prosecution by the state and federal governments. The FBI kept files on party organizers, and the Texas attorney general's office opened a Crystal City branch—to investigate alleged political corruption in South Texas and apparently to intimidate party members. Of the 12 indictments stemming from the probe, none were substantive enough to convict party members.

By 1975, many rural members felt the party had been overrun by urban Chicanos. The fact that most of the state's executive committee members were from the urban centers—which had the largest delegations under state rules governing political parties—prevented grass-roots organizations like Ciudadanos Unidos of Crystal City and Familias Unidas of Robstown from having a stronger input in state conventions.

Party infighting and political persecutions, coupled with the emergence of the newly formed Mexican American Democrats, whose rhetoric was similar to La Raza Unida's, resulted in a large exodus from the party. Many left burnt-out and frustrated because of the party's lack of resources—which included essential money depleted by each gubernatorial election.

Many also credit the arrest and conviction of Ramsey Muñíz in 1977 for drug smuggling as a fatal psychological blow to party regulars. "It was the straw that broke the camel's back," said a disappointed activist.

"People in La Raza Unida were naive to think we could use the system and effectively gain control and not have the system come down on us as hard as it did," says party chairman María Elena Martínez.

Although Gutiérrez believes the party is a viable political alternative, he is more critical of its shortcomings, which he attributes to its failure to instill discipline, militancy and commitment and to its lack of a definite program of action beyond the general platform.

"There were nice words written about how pure we were in terms of ideology and principles," he says, "but it never got translated into a program of action." Yet, he feels that the efforts made by Mexican American Democrats and Republicans to organize voters on an ethnic basis only confirms La Raza Unida's basic viability.

Gutiérrez believes these groups' lack of maturity has hurt Chicanos as a whole, not just La Raza Unida. "Mexican American Democrats have viewed us as the enemies," he comments. "They should view us as the natural ally because, the more we rock the boat, the more leverage and concessions they get for Chicanos."

Unfortunately, Chicano Democrats do not see it that way. As LULAC leader Rubén Bonilla, a *tejano* as is Gutiérrez, put it in 1978, "La Raza Unida is where it belongs—in the political cemetery."

In reality, La Raza Unida is not dead yet—but, in private, Gutiérrez admits it may die if it fails to return to its basic principles. He hopes the infusion of new blood will come in the form of *"el movimiento familiar,"* which he himself initiated.

"We have always organized around the family, but we have never organized the family itself," he says. He sees the new movement as a complement to the party and as a way of making members more self-sufficient by establishing an economic-development plan.

"If this works, it will provide the economic base we never had," Gutiérrez predicts. The party has also gone back to his original concept of a regional organization, forsaking (for now) its official state structure. From now on, La Raza Unida will exist as a grass-roots political movement—as originally intended—that will not be limited by the Texas election code. Many believe this will put it at the forefront of the Chicano movement again.

It is hard to tell whether party members have the stamina necessary to survive another ten years of political persecution and personal sacrifice—no matter what the structure is. If they do, they will have to go back to the grass roots, to come out from the shadow of the Chicano Democrats' middle-class militancy and to renew the commitment to *la causa* they made a decade ago. □

An Interview With Ben Fernández

"I Am Presidential Timber"

Late in November of 1978, Benjamín Fernández became the second announced Republican candidate for the Presidency of the U.S. Since then, of course, the number of candidates has grown considerably. But Fernández still stands out from his political colleagues for one simple reason. He is a Latino—or, as he puts it, an American of Hispanic descent. However he describes himself, whatever his political views, Fernández' candidacy is important for all Latinos because it is indicative of our move into the political circle.

Though he has never held an elected office, Fernández learned how to play the game of politics by working ten years with the Republican National Committee. Even his life story sounds as though it was dreamed up by some political public-relations man. He was born in a boxcar in Kansas City, Kan., in 1925, the son of poor Mexican immigrant parents. He worked his way through college, earning an economics degree in only two years, and an M.B.A. in one. He formed his own management-consulting firm in 1960, and today has a net worth of $1.1 million.

Though political observers say Fernández has only a candle's chance in a snowstorm to win the presidency, he himself is both determined and confident. He qualified for matching federal funds by raising at least $5,000 in 20 states, expects to have $15 million to run his campaign and plans to compete in all 36 primaries.

Late last year, Fernández discussed his ideas and goals with a panel of NUESTRO editors.

Q. How is your campaign coming along?

A. Hispanic support has not been very good. The excitement and enthusiasm of my campaign is coming from the Anglos.

Q. Why is that?

A. As I see it, the shock of my running has been mind-boggling. Last year, when I was campaigning in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, I would be on television, radio and newspapers. In the evening, the stories would get back: *¡Que presumido! ¿Quién se cree? No sabe su lugar*. That's the kind of mentality I found in the market, but it did not surprise me. I just kept plugging away, giving my speeches in English and Spanish. Most of the Hispanic media people have treated me fine. Some who should know better have not, as though it is unheard of that there should be an *hispano* running for President.

Q. Why do you say they should know better?

A. Well, why not? I'm an American running for President of the United States. We still have among the *inteligencia* a mental block regarding where we are. We are Americans, for heaven's sake! We happen to be of Mexican descent, of Cuban descent, of Central or South American descent. But we are Americans.

Q. Wouldn't you say the mental block is on the other side? Is this country ready for an Hispanic President?

A. The mental block is with us. I am viable presidential timber. I have gone *mano a mano* against the best in the Republican Party. When I was campaigning last year, the media referred to me as the Hispanic candidate. I stopped it immediately. I am an American candidate. I never hear about Irish American candidate Reagan, or English American candidate Ford. So don't give me any of this Hispanic American candidate Fernández.

Q. You don't feel you are being used by the party simply to attract Latinos?

A. Absolutely not. I decided I wanted to become President, so I threw my hat into the ring. I did not discuss it with the party hierarchy.

Q. Would you make Hispanic appointments if you were President?

A. Of course. Our folk have the right to serve this country just as well as anyone else. We are going to find the most qualified folk, men and women, and bring them into my administration at every level, not just as token appointments.

Q. Why do you feel the previous administrations have not done this?

A. Because we are *tontos:* We don't understand this system. There are over 2,000 federal agencies in this country, and each of them has three key positions affecting our day-to-day lives: 1) the general counsel. The way they interpret the law will affect the life of every *hispano* in a positive or negative way. Yet we have no *hispanos* in the Carter Administration serving as general counsel; 2) the director of personnel in each of these agencies, the guys who do the hiring and firing. That sounds so basic to me, but there is not one *hispano* in the whole Carter Administration serving in that critical position; 3) the procurement officer, the guy who signs the contracts. Not one single Hispano is serving in any of these critical positions—none out of 6,000! I would like to change that.

Q. Wouldn't it be better to have Cabinet appointees?

A. You give me a guy who is in charge of personnel and you will see a lot of changes in every agency. You give me a fellow who is dealing with procurement and he can change things overnight. A man who interprets the law in favor of the *hispano* immediately affects 16 million of our lives.

Q. Let us talk about your platform. What about inflation?

A. The most serious problems in this country are in the field of economics. My No. 1 one priority has to be in the area of inflation. It affects the people who can afford it the least, the poor and senior citizens. I do not want to get it done through government, I want to do it through the private sector. First, we must eliminate waste, inefficiency and mismanagement in the federal government. A good place to begin is with the Department of Health and Human Services, which lost $8 million last year through waste and inefficiency. I believe we can cut back in that department without affecting a single program.

Second, we must veto every major deficit-creating bill that lands on the President's desk. For example, socialized medicine. Call it what you want, I am absolutely against it. It doesn't work; there is no Santa Claus. Look at England and Canada—total disaster areas in the field of social medicine.

I challenge every MD, every dentist, every hospital to join me in the development of a program of low-cost medicine, low-cost dental care, low-cost hospitalization through the private sector. Let's form a special corporation. Let them make money. The Republican side of the aisle has a philosophy of minimal government interference in the day-to-day life of its citizens. I totally concur: The less government interferes in our lives, the better.

Q. What about our energy problems?

A. We need a tough energy program, beginning with conservation. It is going to be tough to re-educate the people of the U.S. The alternative sources offer great promise. I am referring to coal, shale oil, solar energy, gasohol and the recycling of garbage. But, ultimately, the bottom line is in Mexico. We need a President in this country who can deal with Mexico on a fair and equitable basis. Who better than Fernández in the White House to deal with Mexico?

Q. Does this country need to establish better relations with the countries of Latin America?

A. Absolutely. The future of the U.S. lies in the countries of the Western Hemisphere. We are tied geographically, economically and culturally, yet this country has not done its homework. It has basically ignored the countries of this hemisphere—and that is sad because today we have Communism proliferating all over the Caribbean. Fidel Castro openly exports Communism all over the hemisphere, particularly in Central America, without fear of stoppage on the part of the Carter administration.

Carter is sound asleep at the switch. Communism is a system of economic thought that is diametrically opposed to capitalism. The best way to fight it is not with a bullet, but with a program for economic assistance. This country is being surrounded by a direct Communist movement, and I will do everything in my power to stop it.

Q. How?

A. I have developed the Fernández Doctrine, a program to assist every free country that seeks our technical assistance to help develop their economy. The program would lead to full employment, improved housing and better educational opportunities. It is in the best interests of the U.S. that we have strong, healthy, viable economic units in our hemisphere.

Q. Would you consider normalizing relations with Cuba?

A. We would hope to begin discussions on normalizing relations with Cuba the moment all its political prisoners are released, when the 35,000 Cuban troops in Africa return to Cuba and when Castro ceases the exportation of Communism throughout the hemisphere. Those are my terms. Then we can start talking.

Q. What will the U.S. concede?

A. We will help Fidel Castro's Cuba get back into the free-enterprise orbit. I am not prepared to abandon Cuba. I want them back under the umbrella of the U.S. I want them back as a free-enterprise nation.

Q. What about Puerto Rico?

A. Puerto Rico will have a plebiscite in 1981. The people of Puerto Rico will decide their own direction. I will respect whatever direction they choose. When I campaign in Puerto Rico, I tell the *boricuas* that I personally would like to see the island become a state. But I have different reasons: I would be delighted to have seven congressmen and two U.S. Senators from the state of Puerto Rico to help push my programs through. Puerto Rico is a unique area within the framework of the U.S. system. They have an experience that I wish we had on the mainland. They have an 85% voter turnout for elections. They understand *la política.*

Q. Let's talk about your domestic plans. What about housing?

A. I have developed a three-part plan for the rebuilding of the South Bronx. First, I want to motivate developers to go into the South Bronx and rebuild it from the ground up, in condominiums and townhouses. You motivate them with a tax incentive. I want them to make a ton of money and leave a good product behind. Second, I would like to see the units sold to creditworthy borrowers. The fact that you are poor does not mean that your credit is bad. Third, we need special mortgage-financing programs permitting them to come in with a low down payment and low monthly payments that they can afford so they can maintain their dignity and their self-respect and so they don't lose the home they have finally got. I want to start with the environment. The first five years for a kid are the most important of his entire life. If they can move into a decent and clean environment, those kids can push through to complete their schooling.

Q. Won't inflation put those homes out of the reach of many unless they want to spend the rest of their lives paying them off?

A. So what? Where do they live right now? In the rotten barrio! Maybe we are talking about a 50-year mortgage. But the probability is that their monthly payment would still be less than they are now paying for rent.

Q. What would be your policy on undocumented workers?

A. I propose a two-part plan which demonstrates our compassion and our toughness. First, 100% amnesty for all illegal aliens in this country. They can register with the INS and live here under the protection of the U.S. Constitution. They could then save up their money and go back home or apply for citizenship in this country. Second, I would slam the door shut. The whole world is trying to move into our country, and we cannot absorb the whole world. We have a quota system that permits approximately 20,000 from each country. We would enforce that. It can be done through the INS by providing them with the budget to get the manpower, the equipment, all of the tools to enforce the law of the land. As the President, I would be responsible for the execution and implementation of the law, and I would certainly do it.

Q. If it has not been done up to now, what would make you successful?

A. A special relationship would have to be developed with Mexico. We are neighbors; we need each other. Mexico needs employment for its poor people in this country, and I'm prepared to give it to them—legally. At the same time, I want an oil program for the U.S., a program that will give us a source of oil over a long period with an adjustable formula for price to both countries. I want to set up a bilateral commission consisting of Mexican and American citizens. They would work together to form a program leading to mutual advantage. I believe that, if the *mexicano* is content with a decent job, decent home and his kids getting an education, he would make no attempt to come to the U.S.

Q. What are your options if you lose the election?

A. I have already been offered the vice presidency by three of the so-called front-runners. I chuckle because if they are offering me the vice presidency right now, what is going to happen when we start bringing in some bucks? When I start winning some of the primaries? Interesting! But I'm not interested.

Q. You would not accept the Vice Presidency?

A. Oh, good Lord! That is the most worthless job in Washington, D.C. because it has no budget. Power in Washington comes with a checkbook. I also don't want a Cabinet job; I'm not looking for a job. Suppose the unthinkable were to happen and I lose. I have a laundry list of things I want done—the things I mentioned before.

Q. Wouldn't a Cabinet post assure obtaining the things on your laundry list?

A. No. Because I don't want the folks to say *que se vendió,* that is all he was doing in the first place. Also, if you are a Cabinet officer your hands are tied. You cannot go out and campaign. I am determined to be President of the U.S. I have studied the political history of presidents in this country, and I know that my background is superior to most. I think that I would be an excellent President for this country. □

VOTER REGISTRATION—THE LEGWORK THAT WILL KEEP US IN THE RUNNING

CARMEN I. DE JESÚS

"Let's get out the vote!" New York State Senator Olga Méndez tells a gathering of the National Convention of Puerto Rican Women. La participación de las mujeres en el proceso electoral aumenta a diario.

By Mark Villanueva

En vísperas de elecciones estatales y presidenciales, muchas organizaciones cívicas latinas se preparan para añadir hispanos a las filas de los votantes. Usualmente, la campaña de inscripción es el método que mejores resultados produce cuando se trata de aumentar la participación latina dentro de la política. Algunos organismos, como el Southwest Voters Registration and Education Project, cuentan con los recursos adecuados para montar este tipo de campaña masiva, mientras otros con fondos más limitados se ven obligados a unirse a grupos afines. Al contrario de lo que muchos creen, no es solamente la apatía lo que impide que los latinos votemos en mayores números. Miami, con su población cubana y la influencia política que esta ha demostrado tener, es buen ejemplo del entusiasmo activista que ha invadido a algunas comunidades hispanas últimamente. Allí, la prensa y los medios de difusión en español han jugado un papel importante en educar al público sobre la situación política.

A complaint commonly heard in conversations about Latinos' lack of political muscle is that we do not register to vote. In Miami, the Cuban community turned out to vote in such numbers that they control a majority in the city of Miami government. But Miami is an exception. New York's good-sized Latino community, for example, is not translated into a comparable electoral clout.

Many reasons are given for the apparent political apathy of Latino communities. But theory is for the long term. On the eve of many state primaries and the Presidential election, the crucial questions are: What are we doing about voter-registration drives, and how are we trying to get people to vote?

Latinos tend to perceive their "leaders" as people involved in community groups and to look up to organizations in the forefront of Latino issues. But many of these organizations are ineffective at registering people. Some are even fearful they will lose government funds if they participate in politics.

Nevertheless, there are Latino organizations which have been conducting voter-registration drives for many years and have developed a good deal of expertise. Some, like the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, cannot get involved in electoral politics because of their tax status. A few organizations have the resources to mount aggressive campaigns; others, with limited resources and staffs, either conduct small-scale drives or join forces with similarly placed groups.

One of the most successful Latino voter-registration campaigns has been mounted by the Southwest Voter Registration and Education Project, headed by Willie Velásquez. In the five years of its existence, the San Antonio-based SVREP has added almost 260,000 potential voters to the rolls, and the group expects to add 40,000 more Latinos by November. Velásquez favors concentrating on local elections, where the chances of having a real political impact are greater. "The local level is where Latinos are most effective. Who gives a damn about how many congressmen we have?" he asks.

Since 1975, SVREP has carried out 275 drives in 125 cities throughout California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Colorado and Utah. Some 125 more are planned by election time.

SVREP also gets numerous calls for assistance from groups in other areas. Though the Texas-based organization is committed to the Southwestern states, it does provide help. "We don't fund organizations because that is

bad politics," says Velásquez. "We form coalitions and a steering committee made up of representatives from the organizations." SVREP staffers then visit the groups that have requested help to teach volunteers the hows and whys of registration drives.

Successful campaigns require money, well-trained staffs and volunteers, in addition to highly skilled organizers, according to Velásquez. Gone are the days of conducting registration drives from the corner store, an approach whose results, Velásquez says, are marginal. "The most efficient way is to go door to door."

Another group active in voter registration is the National Conference of Puerto Rican Women, whose nine chapters include some 1,000 members in New York, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Miami, Hartford, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Boston and Puerto Rico. The New York chapter, for example, sets up tables and volunteers at every possible barrio fiesta and has conducted major drives in Williamsburgh, Harlem and the South Bronx.

"1978 was the first time a Puerto Rican Latina has been elected a state senator," says national president Angela Cabrera. While Olga Méndez' election may not have been caused by the Latino vote, Cabrera says that it spurred interest in the chapters. "After we register people, we follow up and tell them to vote through public-service announcements." Other individuals—through a developing Latina "new girls network"—form coalitions for voter-registration drives.

Besides mounting its own sporadic campaigns, the New York-based National Puerto Rican Forum has participated in drives conducted by the New York Federation of Urban Organizations and other urban-oriented groups, such as the Urban Coalition, in 1976 and 1977.

The New York Federation gave the National Puerto Rican Forum training and technical assistance, including materials and staffers to help in the drives. But, says spokesperson Jeanne Baer, "The Forum is not generally involved because we receive funding from government agencies."

Among the newest organizations looking to increase Latino clout at the polls is the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials. Based in Washington, D.C., NALEO opened its doors last February, with a three-person staff, as a lobby for Latino affairs. "We'll be able to turn the world around," only if NALEO stays out of politics, says U.S. Rep. Edward Roybal of California. "Once we support candidates, the effectiveness of the lobby is gone," he adds.

Voter-registration drives will be among NALEO's main activities because, as Roybal puts it, labor and political parties have not been doing the job. "In years past, Latinos have been told that hundreds of thousands of dollars were spent to register Latinos," he explained. Labor and political parties claimed that some 350,000 Latinos had been added to the polls, "but we looked at the records, and the figure was closer to 10% of what they had claimed."

To help with voter-registration drives, NALEO disseminates information to Latino groups nationally on issues affecting the community, including housing, bilingual education, the national health program and voting.

In the Midwest, where Latinos are politically weakest—Illinois has only three Latino judges and one Latina county commissioner—little organized voter registration is under way. In the Chicago area, the candidates for re-election and two Latinos seeking Democratic-committeeman posts in the March primary are managing their own drives, mostly on a very small scale.

Aside from a general lack of political muscle, Latinos in many areas—particularly in the Southwest—are effectively disenfranchised by gerrymandering on a flamboyant scale. This is a major preoccupation of SVREP.

"Mexican American areas are so gerrymandered that the effect in the '80s will be the same as in the '70s unless we talk about re-districting at the county, city, state and federal levels," Velásquez says. Voter-registration organizers feel that it is futile to conduct voter-registration drives in gerrymandered districts because the Latino vote is diluted. "There are 128 districts in Texas and California that are gerrymandered. In 19 of them, we have filed re-apportionment lawsuits; we have settled in seven and are negotiating in 15," Velásquez reports.

Texas county commissioners' districts are among the most flagrantly gerrymandered. The Mexican American vote is often diluted by dividing a barrio into, say, four parts—one for each commissioner district. In this way, there are never sufficient Latino voters to elect even one commissioner.

In areas where gerrymandered districts exist, re-apportionment suits have been filed by MALDEF in behalf of SVREP. Political jurisdictions are said to be malapportioned if the districts are plus or minus 10% gerrymandered. "Some districts have been imbalanced by more than 1,000% to perpetuate Anglo rule," says Velásquez. "This demoralizes the people. It's not a question of Chicanos being apathetic; the deck is stacked against us, and after 90 years, that has taken a toll—people have gotten alienated from politics."

Even so, observers say, Latinos are ready to participate in elections if they are convinced they can win, if the registration drives are serious and if the efforts are geared to people's priorities. "People want to have an impact on their local elections," Velásquez says. "They are concerned about their streets being paved and whether their sons are working for the city or county."

The media's role in creating the right political atmosphere is an important factor in bringing out the vote. In last year's elections in Miami, 55% of Cuban American voters cast their ballots, electing a Latino majority on the Miami board of commissioners—the first time such a majority has been achieved in the Florida city. A major reason may well be the very active part that the Spanish-language media played in informing the community about issues and candidates. In most Latino communities, that information is not readily available.

Unlike Miami or New York, San Antonio, for example, has no major Spanish-language newspaper, and studies have found that Mexican Americans do not trust the daily Anglo papers for their political information. Instead, they turn for their information to Spanish-language radio and TV, whose programming consists mainly of news, music and—in the case of television—canned programs from Latin America.

It is obvious that registering voters is not enough. What really counts is informing Latinos about issues and candidates, and in this area our community still seems to lack know-how. □

IMAGES OF MEXICO

"Imágenes de México" es una exhibición de arte extraordinaria, pues no solo muestra la rica variedad de estilos y técnicas dominadas por los pintores mexicanos de todas las épocas, sino que también nos ofrece la oportunidad de admirar obras de pintores europeos que se inspiraron en el paisaje y el pueblo mexicano. Esta colección, que contiene cerca de 150 cuadros, cubre un periodo de 300 años de arte y constituye, además, una hermosa crónica de la historia de ese país.

En la actualidad, "Imágenes de México" está exhibiéndose en varios museos de los Estados Unidos, cortesía de Fomento Cultural Banamex, la división cultural del Banco Nacional de México.

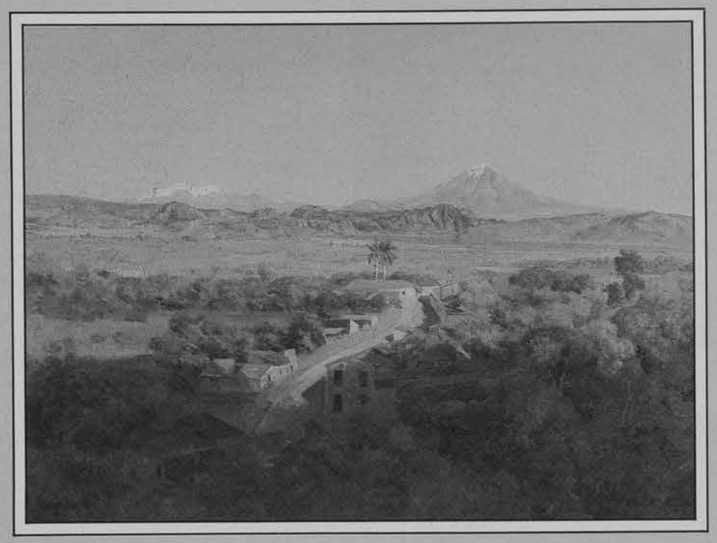
(Clockwise) "San Pedro," by Miguel González. Mother of pearl on wood and oil, 17th Century; "Doña Ana María de la Campa y Cos," by Andrés de Islas. Oil on canvas, 18th Century; "Cuauhtemoc's Arrest," Anonymous, Oil on canvas, 18th Century. "Caste," Anonymous. Oil on canvas, XVIII Century.

The vision of art during the 16th, 17th and 18th Century ranges from a strict adherence to the European schools, to the free interpretations of the creoles and mestizos, as well as that of the Indians themselves.

"Images of Mexico" is a special art exhibit, not only because it covers 300 years of Mexican painting, but because it records the gradual integration of the European and Mexican Indian cultures that have shaped the Mexico of today. Although the exhibit spans a period starting from the colonial 17th century down through modern times, the influence of pre-Columbian artists is still very evident in some of the works. All easel paintings, the almost 150 pieces exhibit a great variety of styles and techniques, from the rustic to the sophisticated. However, they all

(Clockwise) "House of the Hidalga," by Javier Alvarez. Oil on Canvas; "Popular Market Scene" by Agustin Arrieta. Oil on canvas; "Gust of Wind at the Summit—Iztaccihuatl," by Daniel T. Egerton. Oil on canvas; "Cuernavaca Landscape," by José María Velasco. Oil on canvas. All from the 19th Century.

During the 19th Century, political revolution brought about a transformation of the Viceroyalty into the Mexican nation. Likewise, art experienced a series of changes which paralleled those taking place in the country. The baroque was replaced by the severe neo-classical and artists began to seek inspiration in themes of everyday life.



accurately represent the ideas, mentality, taste and fashions that have dominated Mexican history over the centuries and show the evolution of Mexico through religious themes, historical episodes and landscapes.

Mexican art is divided into four periods that correspond to its four historical epochs. The first (not included in "Images of Mexico") covers the indigenous art which flourished before the conquest. Next came three centuries of Spanish rule, reflected in this collection by portrayals of episodes of the conquest itself and of the customs that were evolving in the new hybrid society. The third period came with the 19th century, when many European artists discovered the beauty of the Mexican landscape, thus spurring their local counterparts to develop a national art that would evoke the spirit of their newly liberated country. The political changes at the beginning of the 20th century ushered in a fourth period, in

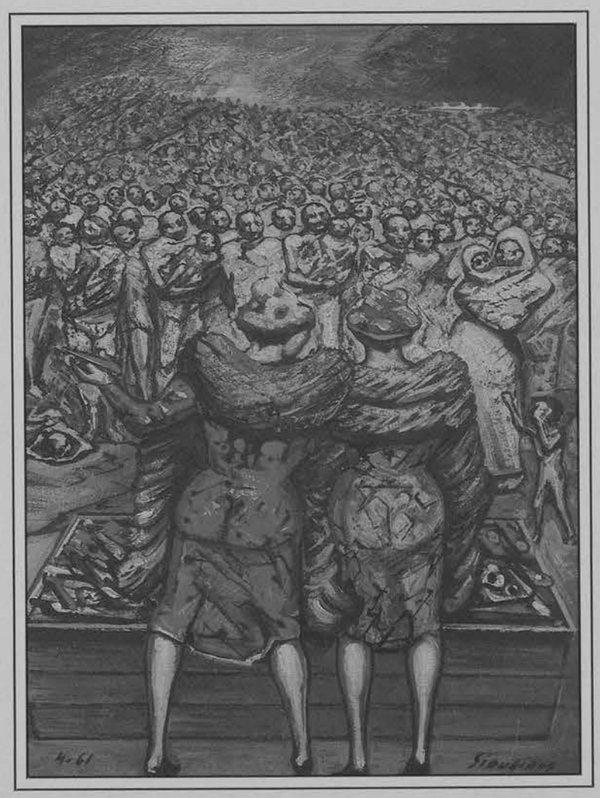
(Clockwise) "Woman with Flying Figure," by José Clemente Orozco. Oil on canvas; "The White Sheet," by Jesús Guerrero Galvan. Oil on canvas; "Mayas," by Diego Rivera. Watercolor on leather; "Veteran Guerrilla," by Jorge González Camerena. Oil on canvas. All 20th century. "Charro and his Lady," by Edouard Pingret. Oil on paper. 19th Century.

The political changes at the beginning of the 20th Century altered the artistic expression of the Mexicans who were already exposed to all the new trends in art. For, while they were immersed in the ideological and social struggles of the day, they projected these ideas into their work.

(Clockwise): "The Burning of Judas," by Diego Rivera. Watercolor on paper; "Distribution of Toys at El Mezquital," by David Alfaro Siqueiros. Acrylic on fibracel; "Man's Head," by Rodriguez Lozano. Oil on canvas; "Brook Confluence," by Diego Rivera. Watercolor on paper. All 20th century.

which many Mexican artists projected the ideological struggles of the day onto works that are almost political statements. (Famous names like that of Diego Rivera and Rufino Tamayo figure in this part of the collection).

"Images of Mexico" is sponsored by Fomento Cultural Banamex, the cultural foundation of the Banco Nacional de Mexico. It has been transferred from New York's Union Carbide Building to the San Jose Museum of Art, where it will remain until the end of March. Afterwards, the collection will travel to the San Diego Municipal Art Museum in Balboa Park, San Diego.—*X.M.*



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handles power saw and lathe by touch alone, and his homemade measuring rule is scaled off in Braille.

When Cuban-born Torres lost his eyesight in a teenage skating accident 35 years ago, he determined to make the best of his situation. "Rather than feel sorry for myself," he says, "I learned cabinetmaking so that I could be self-supporting. I trained myself to work with wood and to develop special feel, so my hands could replace my eyes. It was difficult at first, but I gradually developed the right touch."

In 1967, Torres left Cuba for the United States with his wife and daughter and was settled in New Orleans by the Cuban Refugee Emergency Center. One hour after arriving, José Torres met Edna Heft, one of a group of volunteers helping refugees. She and her husband eventually helped him obtain a Small Business Administration loan toward equipment for his own carpentry shop.

For a while, Torres did quite well working out of his own home in New Orleans. Then he was forced to move his business elsewhere because he was in violation of zoning laws. After an unsuccessful attempt to set up shop in the city's French Quarter failed, he moved to the outlying town of Kenner—but there too, he has run into problems.

"I cannot get work because nobody will insure me," Torres says. "Also, competition is stiff. Why order a custom-made dining room set when you can get something in a furniture store for much less?"

Though he has received plenty of publicity from local radio and TV, none of it has helped his shop to prosper. The Torres family now lives off Social Security—and are still paying off the SBA loan that set them up in business.

Torres recognizes that he might do better elsewhere, but he is comfortably settled in Kenner and his daughter, Norma, lives in nearby New Orleans with her husband and two children.

In his spare time, the blind cabinetmaker sings tenor in the local Baptist church's choir. He claims to be resigned to his current situation, but his disillusionment sometimes shows through. "I don't know," he shrugs at such moments. "Maybe people just don't have any faith in what a blind person can do."

—Roberto Dabdoub

Lowriders Ride High

Phoenix. It's a typical Saturday night on Central Avenue, this city's main drag. Young adults are cruising the street in their handsomely painted cars, trying to outdo one another by attracting the most attention. Suddenly, a police siren fills the air and the squad car's flashing lights go on. The low-slung car comes to a stop. The scene is typical of what lowriders insist is police harassment. The city sees it as merely more aggravation. Either way, the situation has become a festering sore in this city. But now a group of lowriders is striving to improve its image behind the driving force of Ida Peña, a diminutive woman who works as a counselor at a Phoenix youth recreation center.

With a group of older lowriders, Peña helped found the Arizona Lowriders Association. The group met with the city's police chief, Lawrence Wetzel, and the two sides hammered out programs to improve relations. Already there are signs of progress.

The association has attracted over 20 clubs from throughout the city. About 400 youths are working in this project to improve the image of lowriders, who have been wrongly stigmatized with the negative aspects of gang activities, among other things. The association has also been successful in breaking down animosity between different lowrider groups.

Peña believes club members want to present themselves in a manner acceptable to society. They have, somewhat, by staging auto shows, setting up blood drives and doing neighborhood clean-up work.

A recent blood-donor project sparked such competition between the different groups in the association that one club member proudly bellowed, "Hey man, only one of our guys didn't show up."

While all the problems surrounding the lowriders have not been solved, people here are looking at these young people a little differently. As Peña says, "It has to be a good image when these club members are donating blood, not spilling it, as they are so often accused of doing."

—David Molina

Classroom Comics?

Los Angeles. At the corner of 5th and Broadway, in front of this city's predominantly Latino-patronized Grand Central Market, one can find a colorful barrage of pulp literature that could match any Mexico City street-corner. But not all of them are what you might suppose. The growing popularity of *fotonovelas* and the like has inspired a local group of artists to go the comic-book route in an effort to bring art and education to the barrio.

"Our people watch a lot of television and read a lot of comic books," says Carlos Almaraz, who, along with Frank Romero, Judith Hernández and Leo Limón, form the art collective *Los 4.* "We feel it is the duty of the artist to go where the people are, rather than to expect them to come to us."

That is the purpose of "Tales from the Barrio," a comic book designed to bring greater social awareness to the youth of East Los Angeles. "Tales" covers several issues facing young Chicanos: *"U.S. History, Puro Pedo"* focuses on the U.S. annexation or conquest of Mexico's northern states under the name of manifest destiny as alienating our schoolchildren in today's schools; *"In Her Home"* reveals the double standard of *la casa grande y la casa chica; "Christopher's Movement"* takes the question of who was the first "wetback" to extremes—both comic and insightful.

The publication's use of such familiar elements as *corridos,* poetry, graffiti and tattoo designs, makes "Tales," according to its producers, a powerful educational tool in the barrio.

"A lot of people might see 'Tales' as highly radical, even agit-prop," says art director Almaraz. "However, we think it opens up avenues of experience that have never really been addressed by traditional institutions, especially the schools. Our contention is that, for a comic book to be healthy, it has to be controversial."

As to its value in the classroom, Almaraz feels that "Tales" can help break down the alienation experienced by Chicano youth in L.A. schools. "Education here is mostly babysitting and indoctrination of the working-class ethic—that is, long hours, TV and weekend beer," he

says.

But "Tales" goes beyond addressing the educational problems of Chicano youth. It also seeks to introduce them to poetry and the fine arts. For example, illustrations of Olivia Sanchez' poetry are not cartoons in the traditional sense but are included in the hope of bringing poetry to people who otherwise might not give it a second thought. Says Almaraz: "Consider the possibilities of illustrating the poetry of Pablo Neruda, Alurista or Ernesto Cardenal. This to me is education!"

The success of "Tales from the Barrio" is part of a significant trend in Los Angeles' Latino art community. Whether it is the richly costumed processions of *El día de los muertos,* East Los Angeles' murals or new popular art forms, such as the *fotonovelas* of Ojo Production's "Amor sin fronteras," the idea of involving the community in the creation of its own art and culture has become a distinctive trait of L.A.'s Chicano artists.

To Almaraz, true success would mean an edition of "Tales" written and designed by its readers: "a concrete application of Paolo Freire's belief that education is an interchange of ideas between two different viewpoints, 'between the educated and the educable.' "

—Victor M. Valle

BARRIO COMICS

Comic book collective, (from left) Frank Romero, Judith Hernández, Carlos Almaraz, Juan Geyer, Leo Limón. • Han creado una tira cómica con conciencia social.

CONFLICT

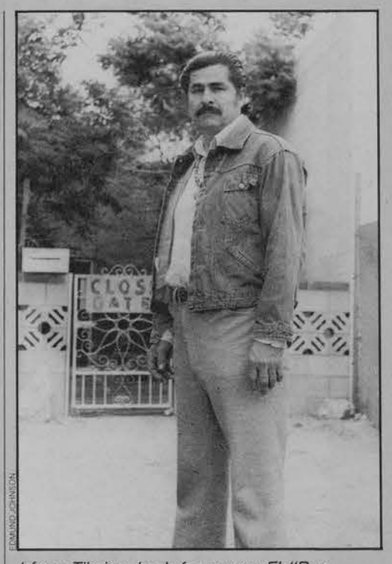
"This Land Is Our Land"

Santa Fe, N.M. Here, the name of Reis López Tijerina is a household word again. "El Rey Tigre," who was forced underground 12 years ago, has returned to the limelight. Although his tactics have changed—protests and blockades have replaced raids and shootouts—he is working, as he puts it, "at the threshold of violence." Once again, as he did in 1967 with his famous raid on Tierra Amarilla, N.M., he is creating public awareness of Hispanic land-grant claims.

The press has labeled Tijerina a modern Robin Hood, a prophet troublemaker and a political opportunist for his role in leading the land-grant heirs (*vecinos*) in their struggle to reclaim nearly a half-million acres of land in northern New Mexico.

However, to the *vecinos,* whose land is their devotion and livelihood, Tijerina is their crusader. Together, they have risked their lives for the land they passionately believe is their heritage.

The history of Tijerina and the heirs' land-reclamation fight, including the *vecinos'* occupation of a national park in 1966 and the Tierra Amarilla shootout, unfolds like a saga



DONALD JOHNSON

López Tijerina: back for more • El "Rey Tigre" de Nuevo México lucha por recuperar tierras perdidas por los latinos.

of the Wild West. Tijerina was sentenced to 31 years in prison following the raids and the park takeover, but he was freed after having spent only three years behind bars.

Recently, Tijerina was appointed manager of the "town" of San Joaquín, a community founded by *vecinos* following the recent discovery of the original San Joaquín land grant. That has rekindled the land-grant issue, adding a new legitimacy and urgency to the *vecinos'* claims.

Last summer, barricades blocked access to Mesa Alta, a timber area managed by the U.S. Forest Service. The forest is claimed by the *vecinos,* who put up notices prohibiting the removal of timber. Loggers tried to break the blockade, but violence was avoided.

Like the occupation of Echo Amphitheater Park in 1966, the Mesa Alta blockade attempted to force the federal government to prove ownership of the land. The government avoided the ownership issue in 1966, charging Tijerina and his followers with converting government property to personal use instead of with trespassing.

This time, however, Mesa Alta was closed by the U.S. Forest Service until the dispute was resolved. Though the discovery of the San Joaquín land grant has strengthened the *vecinos'* claims to more than 472,000 acres of land, a settlement is a long way off.

"We have sent letters to President Carter giving him notice of the town's rights of continued possession," says Tijerina, who wants to avoid a long court fight, "and we're waiting for his answer."

Meanwhile, the town has elected its own officers, including mayor, field *mayordomo,* government liaison, sergeant-at-arms, judge and secretary-clerk.

Tijerina's popularity locally is just as strong now as it was 15 years ago. Recently, two teenagers walking in a Sante Fe barrio were heard singing his name. "El Rey Tigre" has returned to fight for *tierra y libertad.* He is now more certain of victory than ever before.

—Diane Callum

WORKING

The Gold Watcher

New York. With the price of gold sky high, a 43-year-old Nuyorican sits atop some $20 billion worth of the stuff, unconcerned by the fact that he is the only Latino in the world responsible for that much wealth.

Manuel A. Sánchez Jr., superintendent of the U.S. Assay Office in this city's financial district, was appointed by President Carter in 1978. As head of the Assay Office, Sánchez oversees a staff of 172 workers and is also responsible for a minting annex at West Point. At the Assay Office, gold and silver are refined to their purest state and then melted into bars. The bars are stored in a vault to await shipment to buyers, such as West German banks, which may be purchasing them in behalf of oil-rich Arab customers. Gold sold at the General Services Administration's monthly auction is also taken from the New York office.

Sánchez is responsible for keeping tabs on where the gold is shipped and how many ounces are taken out—with great precision, since one ounce of gold on the market may soon be worth as much as $1,000. The loss of a few specks of gold dust adds up.

When he was appointed to this high-security job, Sánchez was given the standard background check by the FBI. In addition, he and the other Assay Office employees undergo daily searches and checks by security guards. Shoes and belts are taken off, and all the loose change and metal objects such as rings and watches are removed before the employees pass through a metal detector. More sensitive than the airport models, this detector—which Sánchez has nicknamed "Big Mac"—is a prototype manufactured specifically for the Assay Office. It has plenty to protect, too: About 2.5 million ounces of gold worth about $1 billion were refined at the Assay Office in fiscal 1979.

Although Sánchez does not shed his three-piece suit for production-worker clothes, he demands of himself a high level of efficiency. He worked overtime along with the production workers last September during the office's annual settlement, when workers take inventory of all the gold in the mini-Fort Knox and recover micrograms of gold shavings and dust from every conceivable spot in the facility.

The workers' competency was demonstrated when the federal government considered closing the Assay Office and contracting the work to private industry. Although cut by about 50 employees, the office increased production and lowered production costs. "It wasn't a labor problem," Sánchez recounts. "It was a labor and management problem. They realized they had to work harder to lower the cost or lose their jobs."

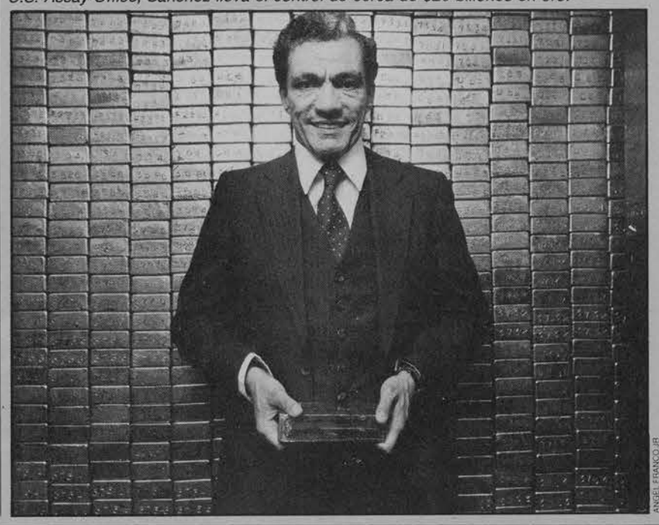
Sánchez is a first generation Nuyorican who grew up in El Barrio. At age 17, his family moved to The Bronx. During the '50s, when drug and crime problems escalated in those areas, he kept out of trouble. An only child, Sánchez was encouraged by his teachers to attend City College of New York, where he qualified for a full teaching certificate.

After five years in the classroom, Sánchez was appointed a special assistant to the New York City Board of Education in 1968. There he got a panoramic view of the school system, intertwined with politics. "It was an eye-opener," he explains. "That whetted my appetite for politics." He helped his neighbor, Robert Abrams, in his successful bid for The Bronx borough presidency, took a one-year leave of absence to be Abrams' assistant, then returned to the school system, climbing up the bureaucracy to community superintendent.

Sánchez has come a long way, and if his plans keep up with his pace, he expects to accomplish more. For him, it has been quite an education.

—Mark Villanueva

Manuel Sánchez: keeping tabs on the bars • En su capacidad de superintendente del U.S. Assay Office, Sánchez lleva el control de cerca de $20 billones en oro.



ANGEL FRANCO JR.

REVIEW

Books

Expedition Through Aztlán by David Sánchez. Perspectiva Publications. $7.87.

Los Angeles Times, September 16, 1972: "Brown Berets Occupy Santa Catalina Island." The invasion of Catalina that elicited that headline is only one of the incidents described in "Expedition Through Aztlán," in which the founder and former prime minister of the Brown Berets details the struggles and triumphs of the 26 Berets who marched throughout the Southwest spreading the word of *la causa.*

In so doing, Sánchez gives a historical and political perspective to one of the Chicano Movement's strongest and most misunderstood organizations.

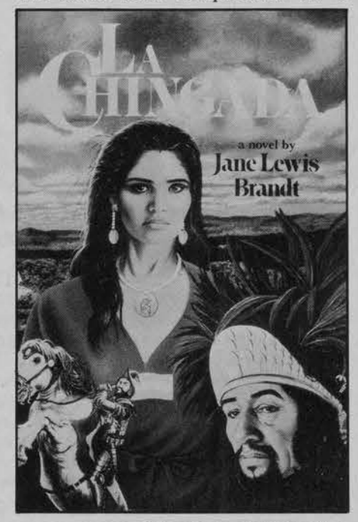
At the age of 15, David Sánchez was selected as one of Los Angeles' outstanding youths by that city's mayor. An "A" student, Sánchez was well on his way to making a name for himself. In the summer of 1966, he directed his efforts to stopping police harassment of Chicano youth in the East Los Angeles barrios and became a victim of the brutality against which he was organizing protests. Out of those early struggles was born the most militant Chicano organization of our times, los Brown Berets. At the organization's height, in the early '70s, the Berets' membership was estimated at around 3,500 and had chapters from Chicago to Tijuana. Barely out of his teens, David Sánchez had organized an impressively large number of *vatos locos,* students and community people into a disciplined group of *"soldados."*

Today, Sánchez is still active in the community, seeking new solutions to never-ending problems. He states that "the history of our people must be written by our *raza,* so our children will know that we have never stopped fighting for *justicia."* Sánchez has just completed his doctoral degree and is now working on his second book. He is also writing a play based on the "struggles of those that dare to stand up and lead their people." Meanwhile, this powerful work, which includes 85 dramatic photographs, offers an unusual glimpse at the world of symbolic action.

—Daniel Castro

La Chingada by Jane Lewis Brandt. McGraw Hill. 465 pages. $12.95.

If there ever was a book not to be judged by its cover, this is it. If the title does not offend you, then try to ignore the cover illustration depicting a Raquel Welch type, in Aztec get-up, who is supposed to be la Malinche. The comic-book conquistador on a



merry-go-round horse is Hernán Cortés, and presumably the other sad face, wearing the gold headdress, might be Moctezuma, although the European-style goatee is out of place.

After you have hurdled these visual obstacles and decided to plunk down 13 bucks for this book, you may be pleasantly surprised. "La Chingada" is a historical novel told alternately from the point of view of the Indians (through la Malinche) and the Spaniards (through a young conquistador). It is an engrossing account of the conquest of Mexico that glamorizes neither *conquistadores* or *conquistados.*

The controversial figure of la Malinche, or Doña Marina, the Christian name Cortés gave her, is allowed to speak and explain her role in the submission of her own people to the pillaging foreigners. As Cortés' interpreter, adviser, confidante and concubine, Malinche has been blamed for the conquest of Mexico and made into a symbol of the Mexican woman (see NUESTRO June/July 1979).

This being fiction written by a non-Mexican (though Brandt lived for many years in Mexico City) one must allow for a high degree of poetic license, but the author manages to recreate a fascinating period of American history. Taking it for what it is, **"La Chingada"** is worth reading, though, at the risk of sounding chauvinistic, one can't help wishing it had been written by *una mexicana.*

—D. P.

Bookends

Other recent books of interest to Latinos:

"In Evil Hour" by Gabriel García Márquez, translated by Gregory Rabassa. Harper & Row, New York. 183 pp. $8.95.

Finally, after almost a quarter of a century, *La mala hora* appears in English. As expected, it fills a significant gap in the *obra* of the author of "One Hundred Years of Solitude."

"The Education of a Woman Golfer" by Nancy López, with Peter Schwed. Simon and Schuster. $9.95.

An engaging portrait of our smiling *campeona.*

"Victoria Ocampo: Against the Wind and the Tide" by Doris Meyer. Illustrated. Braziller. 314 pp. $15.

Argentine Victoria Ocampo (1890-1979) was a writer, publisher and all-around *literata.* Founder of the magazine *Sur* (in 1931), she ran a publishing house that was a pioneer in bringing world literature in translation to South America.

"Strange Things Happen Here: Twenty-six Short Stories and a Novel" by Luisa Valenzuela. Translated by Helen Lane. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 220 pp. $9.95

The work of this contemporary Argentine writer has been described by a critic as "divinely inspired."

NUESTRO MERCADO

BOOKS

AREITO, quarterly in Spanish focuses on Cuba and Latin America. Latest issue: García Márquez, Cuban foreign policy, Nicaragua, poems by Eliseo Diego, Fernando Alegría. Subscription: $8.; $2. single issue. Write to: AREITO, GPO Box 1913, New York, N.Y. 10001.

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ANY AFTERNOON

There is the dry cough,
the dry earth,
hard in my ears
and under my feet
I remember, Oh I would
run towards it on
any afternoon, running
crushing moist grass
then brittle yellow,
and over there on
a battleground of
sun and land was
the house—defeated in
palm leaves like
old bones.

And the one sweet potato,
always shared, as red
as the earth and
as dry, was not the less
satisfying,
it was rich with
the blood of Will,
Will had tilled it,
demanded some offspring
for its labor.

One day,
amidst some sun-steeped
afternoon,
they left
to walk long-kilometers

Spinous green masts
The wind mingles the pennants of the leaves
but the course is fixed by the stars

A whip-bursting tide
is the stock.

Grey-blue-rusted cypresses
trim the sail

Silence is all. . .

Hilda Rodrigañez.

Hilda Rodrigañez is an Argentine-born poet.

THE FIRE

A man opens his mouth.
Inside is a fire.
The firemen respond.
Someone pulled an alarm.

They prop up a ladder
against his lower lip.
They go up with axes
t of cheeks glowing.

oo late.
tarts singing
eth in flames.

Jorge Guitart

Jorge Guitart teaches literature at iversity of New York at Buffalo.

were whores
ent
ds and fruits
ne calls
until she agreed to meet with him
And when she walked through the door
pale and anxious in black
her heart full of colors
He flashed his teeth and said
You see, all women are whores

Lynne Alvarez

Lynne Alvarez, a New York-based poet, is a frequent contributor to NUESTRO.

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poetry — Afternoon Fires

ANY AFTERNOON

There is the dry cough,
the dry earth,
hard in my ears
and under my feet
I remember, Oh I would
run towards it on
any afternoon, running
crushing moist grass
then brittle yellow,
and over there on
a battleground of
sun and land was
the house—defeated in
palm leaves like
old bones.

I never saw,
the hunger which ate
at the skin like a rat,
or the patch of leaf-wall
worn through with
the life which left him
with each dry cough.

I only ran
to the love which
lived there,
there was no starving that.

Aunt Hortensia,
tall and beautiful,
a dangling pin on her
was a perfectly carved cameo,
white-white,
like freshness, birth
and newness.

And the one sweet potato,
always shared, as red
as the earth and
as dry, was not the less
satisfying,
it was rich with
the blood of Will,
Will had tilled it,
demanded some offspring
for its labor.

One day,
amidst some sun-steeped
afternoon,
they left
to walk long-kilometers
of goodbye to
all hut and dry-earth
madness.

To cure the cough
which had almost eaten
the soul and the swelling
of the children's bellies,
to their spiritual "Zion,"
Habana.

And I, young, could not
feel gladness for their fortune
for I had no place to
run toward on any afternoon.

Mariaurelia

Mariaurelia is a Cuban-born poet based in Miami. This poem is part of her forthcoming book "Not in my Sleep."

THE FIRE

A man opens his mouth.
Inside is a fire.
The firemen respond.
Someone pulled an alarm.

They prop up a ladder
against his lower lip.
They go up with axes
in the light of cheeks glowing.

Alas, it is too late.
The man starts singing
with his teeth in flames.

Jorge Guitart

Cuban-born Jorge Guitart teaches literature at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

ABOUT THE COUNTRY

The country is a ship
sinking in the night
  Spinous green masts
The wind mingles the pennants of the leaves
but the course is fixed by the stars

A whip-bursting tide
is the stock.

Grey-blue-rusted cypresses
trim the sail

Silence is all. . .

Hilda Rodrigañez.

Hilda Rodrigañez is an Argentine-born poet.

HE SAID. . .

He said all women were whores
and to prove it he sent
his mother lacy cards and fruits
and whispered phone calls
until she agreed to meet with him
And when she walked through the door
pale and anxious in black
her heart full of colors
He flashed his teeth and said
You see, all women are whores

Lynne Alvarez

Lynne Alvarez, a New York-based poet, is a frequent contributor to NUESTRO.

THUMBS UP THUMBS DOWN

Wherein NUESTRO offers a few Bravos y Bastas

For government agencies that maintain services in English and Spanish and publish pamphlets in Spanish that benefit the public.

For Spanish teachers—who, in most cases, are not Latinos nor speak Spanish well—who forget to present materials which are of most importance for the Spanish-speaking students.
Leticia López, Chicago, Ill.

For Latinos who set goals early in life and strive toward them regardless of obstacles.

For Latinos who spend thousands of dollars on their cars instead of on an education.
Boni Portillo, El Paso, Texas

For Pope Paul II, who during his visit to the U.S. voiced on national television his concern for the undocumented worker.

For U.S. officials and Latino leaders who are oblivious of undocumented workers' problems.
Juanita V. Rodriquez, Chicago, Ill.

For U.S. companies who correctly label their products in Spanish and English.

For the Joan of Arc Company, Peoria, Ill., which labels canned beans "caliente-style" and refuses to be corrected.
Rev. David E. Deppe, St. Louis, Mo.

For those Anglo NCOs in the army who show consideration for our Latino ways and let us speak our language.

For those who don't like Latino customs and show no respect for our heritage.
Jimmy R. Espinoza
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For Nuyoricans who can appreciate the beauty of Puerto Rican music, especially songs composed by "El Jibarito," Rafael Hernández, whose themes include unrequited love, nostalgia and the misery of the country people of Puerto Rico.

For Nuyoricans who think Puerto Rican music is "hicky" and believe Donna Summer and Disco 92 are the only things that are happening.
Lucy E. Soler, New York City

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TOMORROW

A Bilingual Success Story

By Ursula Piñero

DEAN ABRAMSON

Bilingual schooling in Rochester - Con el nuevo método, los niños aprenden más rápido.

Rochester N.Y. is an old industrial city of about 360,000 people, where many well-known, large corporations—most notably Eastman Kodak, Bausch & Lomb and Xerox—have grown and thrived. It is a conservative city, not at all the kind of place one would expect to find taking bold and imaginative steps in its school system. But that is precisely what has happened in Rochester and the motive power for change has come from, of all people, Latinos.

The city is not renowned as a Latino center, of course. But being located in one of the best farming areas in the state, Rochester's farms became a magnet for migrant farm workers, many of them Puerto Rican. Many have settled in the city, in areas only recently vacated by immigrant groups such as Jews, Ukrainians and Poles. What started as a barely discernible trickle has gradually but steadily swelled; Latinos now account for roughly 10% of the city's population.

As early as the late '60s, the Latino community in Rochester had gained a new consciousness and acquired a voice. And one thing that voice demanded was better schooling for its children. When the Bilingual Education Act was passed in 1968, the Puerto Rican community in Rochester saw an opportunity for meeting its schooling needs. After negotiations with the City School District, a bilingual program was established in 1969 with federal support.

But the Bilingual Education Act caught Rochester unprepared. There were no experienced teachers or administrators, no materials, no models. It should not be surprising that the first few years of the program were a disappointment. The Act and the bilingual program were offered as the answer to all the problems of the Latino community.

My personal experience in the Rochester program began in October of 1972, when I was asked to assume the principalship of Public School #20. The school was the first in the city to attempt bilingualism; it had a bilingual program from kindergarten through the fourth grade.

As a Puerto Rican, bilingual principal, I was both welcome and suspect. Welcome by the bilingual program teachers who wanted help and understanding. Suspect by many others who must have wondered whether I was there only as a result of community pressures on the district.

My first concerns were to bring the staff together and to improve the instruction of reading, especially in the bilingual component. At that time, children entering kindergarten were taught pre-reading skills in both Spanish and English.

I was convinced then, and continue to be convinced now, that learning to read is enough of a problem in one language. To try to learn two at once seemed to me an impossibility. Yet I knew our students could learn both languages if taught properly.

Fortunately, at that time, we also identified a new program in bilingual reading that appeared very well suited to our students' needs. Specifically developed for bilingual classes, the books and other materials take advantage of all the similarities in the two languages. The students learn the letters and sounds from pictures. Once they have learned the Spanish and begin English, they see the same picture for all those letters in English that sound the same in Spanish. For example, the "m" sound is represented by a little girl enjoying an ice cream cone at the beach: this makes her say, "mmmmmm."

After three years, students completing the third grade in the bilingual program demonstrated clearly the program's potential. As a group, they exceeded the achievement of the students in the all-English program by one month, even though six new arrivals from Puerto Rico were included in the testing. Of the 45 students completing the third grade, twelve achieved from one to five years above grade level, according to the national standards, and two received perfect scores!

The staff of School #20 has demonstrated that bilingual education programs can work. It has shown that the students can gain academically and socially from a bilingual education. Their ability to speak and write Spanish does not detract from their ability to achieve in English. All that is necessary is a flexible program, one which becomes shaped to the children's needs. Now that we have experienced staff and effective materials, it is time to begin looking differently at evaluating bilingual programs. Rochester's Public School #20 is a good place to start. □

Ursula C. Piñero is now a Senior Research Associate at the National Institute of Education.

NUESTRO'S 1980 ALL-STAR BASEBALL TEAM

By Carlos V. Ortiz

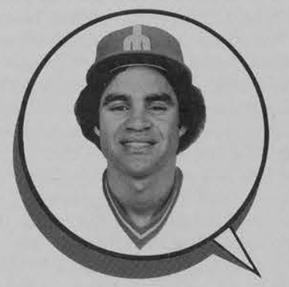
Baseball didn't wait for the beginning of the new decade to change what many fans felt had become an oft-repeated act. In 1979, all four defending division champions failed to retain their titles, bringing a taste of much thirsted-for new blood to the playoffs and World Series. In addition, the topsy-turvy '79 season produced two new batting champs and a new pair of home run leaders.

As sports columnist Carlos V. Ortiz reveals in his selections to NUESTRO'S third All-Latino All-Star baseball team, this changing of the guard did not fail to touch Latino players. Few of this year's faces can be recognized from the '78 All-Star squad, an indication that there's an influx of new Latino sangre *ready to stir things up as we move into Baseball 1980.*

ST. LOUIS CARDINALS

For the folks who run the St. Louis Cardinals, 1979 was the year first baseman **Keith Hernández** lived up to his enormous potential. The lefty-swinging Hernández, a Chicano from San Francisco who turned 26 after the season, zoomed from a mediocre .255 in 1978 to a National League-leading .344 in '79. In the meantime, he smashed 48 doubles, 11 triples and 11 homers, upped his RBI total from 64 to 104 and tied with the Pittsburgh Pirates' Willie Stargell as the NL's most valuable player. That all adds up to quite a season, but experts will tell you that for this young man, possessor of one of the purest line-drive swings in the game and a Gold Glove winner in '78 and '79, the best still lies ahead.

The chief competition at the position came from '78 All-Star Rod Carew. Despite various injuries which limited him to 107 games in '79, the Panamanian Carew batted .317 and led his new team, the California Angels, to their first division championship.



SEATTLE MARINERS

Last year, the second base All-Star slot was filled by the Seattle Mariners' **Julio Cruz,** who wowed American League followers with his speed afoot and his fielding acrobatics but who managed to bat a meek .235. Well, Cruz is one of the few '79 repeaters, and this year the 25-year-old, Brooklyn-born Puerto Rican's batting average is not the lowest on the All-Star squad. Although he got into only 104 games because of injuries, Cruz raised his average to a much more respectable .274 and, with 49 stolen bases, once more led the Mariners in that department.

The Philadelphia Phillies' Manny Trillo (.260, 6 HRs, 42 RBIs) and the Chicago White Sox' Jorge Orta (.262, 11, 46) came up with fine offensive seasons, but neither could match Cruz' fielding wizardry or basepath larceny.

CINCINNATI REDS

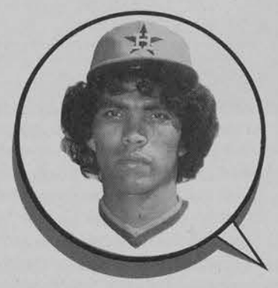
For the third consecutive year, boosters of 31-year-old **Dave Concepción** as the most complete shortstop in the game can make a strong case for their man, and for the third consecutive year, the Cincinnati Reds' Venezuelan dandy is NUESTRO's All-Star. True, Concepción's average dropped from his 1978, career-high .301 to .284, but he increased his RBI total from 67 to 84 while stealing 19 bases and maintaining his sterling reputation as a gloveman.

Three other National League shortstops and one American Leaguer enjoyed fine seasons. The Chicago Cubs' Iván de Jesús batted .286 and drove in 52 runs while adding 24 stolen bases. As for New York's Frank Taveras, he set a Met record for stolen bases with 43 while batting .259. Meanwhile, down in Atlanta, 31-year-old Pepe Frías quietly batted a career-high .291 and drove in 44 runs in his first full year as a big-league regular. And up in Toronto, 22-year-old Dominican Alfredo Griffin became a fan and front-office favorite by hitting .283, with eight triples and 20 stolen bases.

CHICAGO CUBS

At third base, never a hotbed of Latino talent, 1977 NUESTRO All-Star **Steve Ontiveros** of the Chicago Cubs regained his crown from the Detroit Tigers' Aurelio Rodríguez, who has since been dealt to the San Diego Padres. While it's probably true that Rodríguez will see 65 candles on his birthday cake before Ontiveros (or most other third basemen, for that matter) can compete with him afield, Ontiveros, a Chicano from Bakersfield, Calif., returned from injuries that limited his 1978 playing time and put together a much better season offensively than his counterpart from Sonora, México. The 28-year-old Ontiveros, a switch-hitter, batted .285 and drove in 54 runs in '79, compared to the 32-year-old Rodríguez' .257 average and 35 RBIs.

The only other Latino who saw a reasonable amount of action at the hot corner last season is the Padres' Kurt Bevacqua, a *cubano* from Miami Beach, who batted .254 with 33 RBIs in only 287 at-bats.



HOUSTON ASTROS

José Cruz of the Houston Astros is the sole repeater in the '79 All-Star outfield, and he just barely made it. Cruz, a 32-year-old from Arroyo, Puerto Rico, went down in virtually all departments from his stellar 1978 season but still wound up with an admirable set of stats: .289, 9 HRs, 72 RBIs and 36 stolen bases.

Still, selecting Cruz as the left-fielder over Panamanian Ben Oglivie of the Milwaukee Brewers was not easy. Oglivie batted .277, with 29 homers and 78 RBIs, but the fact that he drove in only six runs more than Cruz while totally eclipsing him in the home-run department suggests Cruz' hits came more often with men in scoring position. Cruz also enjoyed a distinct defensive advantage over the weaker-armed Oglivie and the much slower Lou Piniella of the New York Yankees, a model of year-to-year consistency who batted .297, with 11 homers and 69 RBIs.

The centerfield slot was much easier to decide on. The fleet-footed 26-year-old *panameño* **Omar Moreno** of the Pirates finally put it together in '79 for an excellent season—.283, 8 HRs, 69 RBIs and a league-leading 74 stolen bases. No other Latino centerfielder even came close, which may have been predictable since Houston's César Cedeño was converted to first base, where he improved defensively with every game but had a subpar season at the plate.

PITTSBURGH PIRATES

MILWAUKEE BREWERS

In rightfield, **Sixto Lezcano,** a 26-year-old from Manatí, P.R., easily received the nod. The Milwaukee Brewer superstar-in-the-making batted .321, with 28 HRs and 101 RBIs, despite the fact injuries caused him to miss at least 20 games. Lezcano's only true competition came from the New York Yankees' Reggie Jackson, who was limited to 128 games but hit .294, slugged 27 homers and drove in 83 runs.

NEW YORK METS

Catching, like third base, has been pretty much a non-Latino position the past few years, and 1979 proved no exception to that rule. A new name did emerge, however, and actually hinted at sticking around major-league box scores for longer than the proverbial cup of coffee. That newcomer is **Alex Treviño,** a 22-year-old backstop from Monterrey, México, who hit .268 in 205 at-bats for the New York Mets. He impressed the front office so much that regular Met catcher John Stearns' name kept popping up in Hot Stove League trade rumors. Treviño beat out Milwaukee's Buck Martínez, a Chicano from Redding, Calif., who hit .273 while getting to bat only 194 times as a Brewer backup.

PITTSBURGH PIRATES

The Pirates' **John Candelaria** is the only '78 All-Star pitcher to return in '79, and this time the fact he is still the only Latino lefthanded starter in the majors is incidental. While falling short of his 20-win season of 1977, the 6-foot-7 Candelaria, a Brooklyn-born Puerto Rican, had an above-average year for the new world champs: 14 wins, 9 losses and a 3.22 earned-run average.

ST. LOUIS CARDINALS

The Candyman's righty counterpart is not only a newcomer to the NUESTRO All-Star team, but is also pretty much an unknown to all of baseball. The Cardinals' **Silvio Martínez,** a 24-year-old Dominican, made his first pro-ball splash when he debuted in 1978 with a complete-game one-hitter against the Mets. But he ended that season with a mediocre 9-8 record. That mediocrity came to a screeching halt in '79 as Martínez spun off a 15-8 season and a 3.26 ERA, easily overshadowing Philadelphia's Niño Espinosa (14-12, 3.65), the Baltimore Orioles' Dennis Martínez (15-16, 3.64), the Boston Red Sox' Mike Torrez (15-13, 4.55) and the Yankees' ageless Luis Tíant (12-8, 3.90).

CLEVELAND INDIANS

The Cleveland Indians' **Sid Monge,** a runner-up for the lefty reliever spot on the '78 squad, earned the nod outright this time around. Monge, a 28-year-old native of Hermosillo, México, posted an 11-10 record with 18 saves and a 2.52 ERA to nip the Orioles' Tippy Martínez, who was 10-3 with three saves and a 3.24 ERA.

DETROIT TIGERS

Righthander **Aurelio López** of the Detroit Tigers rounds out the bullpen—in more ways than one. The 31-year-old portly one from Tecamachoico, México, logged his finest big-league season with a 10-4 record, 21 saves and a 2.16 ERA. Other standout righty relievers included: the Montreal Expos' Elías Sosa (7-7, 18 saves, 1.91); the Pirates' Enrique Romo (10-5, 5 saves, 2.93); the Brewers' Bill Castro (3-1, 6 saves, 2.05), and the Los Angeles Dodgers' fine rookie, Bobby Castillo (2-0, 7 saves, a 1.11 ERA and 23 strikeouts).

TORONTO BLUE JAYS

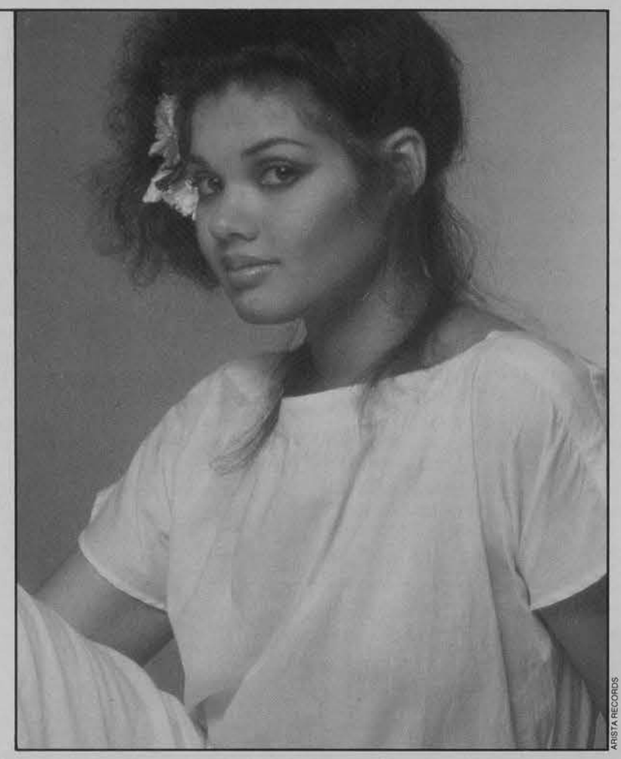
Yet another new face appears as the '79 designated hitter. **Otto Vélez,** once described by then-Yankee general manager Gabe Paul as one of that club's "crowned jewels," glittered for the Toronto Blue Jays last season. Vélez saw action at first base and in the outfield, but the fact that he is not the most graceful of fielders made him a near-natural DH whenever veteran Rico Carty, the '78 All-Star at that spot, was injured. Vélez, a 29-year-old from Ponce, P.R., hit a career-high .292, with 14 HRs and 47 RBIs in 264 at-bats. For his part, the Dominican Carty chipped in with a .256 average, 12 homers and 55 RBIs.

L.A. DODGERS

And one old face that appears, unfortunately, for the last time on the All-Star team is that of venerable pinch hitter **Manny Mota,** the 42-year-old Dominican Dodger who called it quits after 18 years in the big leagues. As could have been expected, Mota, one of the most popular athletes ever in his native Santo Domingo, went out smokin'. He shattered Smoky Burgess' mark for lifetime pinch hits, making the record books as baseball's all-time premier pinch swinger. Thanks for *las memorias,* Manuel. □

New York's Angel of Song

By Patricia Duarte


ARISTA RECORDS

The audience has been well warmed up, and expectation is thicker than the smoke filling New York's Bottom Line. The yellow spotlight hits the tiny stage, and suddenly the singer is there, moving like a Balinese dancer among the band's paraphernalia. The audience roars. *"Angelita*, sing, baby!" someone squeals. And she does: *"See the world/ Through a seagull's eyes/ Come with me and fly."* *

Angela Bofill is flying, and her audience flies with her. Her clear, bell-like voice dips down to alto or soars to soprano with ease; her phrasing and scatting are perfect. Her songs, most of which she has written herself, brim with sentiment and fetching imagery. And as if this were not enough, she is an engaging performer who acts out her tunes, bouncing around the stage in a rollicking samba number or pretending to cry during a torch song.

In less than two years, Bofill has developed a cult following which, if it continues to expand, could turn her name into a household word. But for now, despite raves from most of the music media, this 25 year-old Latina remains one of those "inside" tastes that all trendy New Yorkers share—like Chinese woks and Perrier water.

Local critics, such as *New York Daily News* columnist Pete Hamill, started that particular ball rolling by tagging the singer "a New York phenomenon." It is easy to see why. Her album covers and publicity shots reflect a highly glamorized version of a familiar local image—the young, citified Latina—and some of her best songs are echoes of the gritty urban lifestyle.

But to peg Bofill as strictly New York is to deny the much broader appeal of one of the most talented new artists to cut a record or strut a stage since Ella Fitzgerald lost her "yellow basket." Although repeatedly dubbed a jazz vocalist, she shies away from the label. "I kinda feel like I'm just singing," she shrugs. "It's other people that like to put categories on what I do. I may be jazzy, but I'm 'Latiny,' too . . . there are a lot of different elements to me."

Indeed, Bofill's two LPs have been eclectic mixtures of pop, jazz, Latin and blues. Her debut album, *Angie,* stayed on the jazz charts for weeks and sold over a quarter of a million albums. Her second, *Angel of the Night,* sold 200,000 copies in two weeks shortly after its release.

Angie's commercial success has come lavishly garnished with laurels. *Cash Box* magazine named her #1 top new jazz artist and #5 top female vocalist, and *Latin New York* gave her its most promising female vocalist award. Most recently, *Billboard* listed her as one of its 1979 top jazz artists.

Despite the usual Cinderella-story publicity hype, Bofill did not just pop up out of nowhere. "Before my first album, I did my share of singing around in clubs, concerts, backup sessions—the usual," she recalls. She started warbling when she was four, encouraged by her Nuyorican mother (who taught her her first tune in Spanish) and her Cuban father, a former club singer.

By the age of 12, she was composing her own songs, and later she formed a band while still at Hunter College High School. After graduating from the Manhattan School of Music, she did a stint with New Wave salsa musician Ricardo Marrero and The Group, touring the obligatory *cuchifrito* clubs. It was then that the young singer befriended another talented young Latino, flautist Dave Valentín, who eventually steered her to her first recording contract by way of producers Dave Grusin and Larry Rosen.

Since her first album, and perhaps because of it, things have gone smoothly for Angela Bofill, who has appeared with popular vocalist Al Jar-

** "The Voyage" by Angela Bofill, "Angel of the Night," Arista Records.*

reau and jazz great Dizzy Gillespie and has hit the daytime-TV talk-show circuit.

"I really feel good about myself," she says. "And if this is the peak of my career, well then . . . it's the peak!"

While the Angie persona of stage, photographs and lyrics suggests an exotic, slightly mysterious and waiflike entity, the off-stage Bofill is rangy and coltish. In speech, that dream voice has a raspy, nasal quality, tinged with street inflections. "Everybody expects something completely different of me," she giggles. "If I were to take a poll of what people think I'm like, I'd probably crack up!" She has a wacky sense of humor and a certain childlike quality which can sometimes tip over into childishness. (*Question:* What else do you do besides singing? *Answer:* "I go to the bathroom quite regularly.") Perhaps this is because the crucial area of press publicity is the only one in which she still lacks professionalism. "I just don't like talking about myself that much," she sighs, staring out of her record publicist's office window. "I've been doing a lot of that lately."

Bofill, who sees herself as "pretty down to earth," claims the spotlight has not changed her that much. "Oh, sure, there are always people who say: 'Now that you're famous, you don't call us.' But, you know, I never called them much anyway!" She still lives with her parents and younger sister in a West Bronx apartment. "My family has a very stabilizing influence on me," she says, "I can't just leave them! I want to be able to make enough money so that they'll be all right."

Her mother, a community worker, and her father, now retired, constitute her biggest fans in true proud-papi-mami fashion: "They have all these pictures of me hung on the living room wall—it's really funny!"

Beneath the exuberance lies a spirituality evidenced by her private life—she regularly fasts and meditates—and by many of her songs, which consistently express a sense of inner happiness and well-being. Bofill is an unabashed idealist. "I have this utopian belief that we're really together under the skin. And through music, I can feel in touch with people."

She hopes her music will eventually lead to a career in drama. "I'd like to be able to incorporate different elements—like dancing and acting—into what I do. So I guess I'm building my foundations by writing songs that lend themselves to imagery."

In the meantime, she keeps busy with singing engagements and tours aimed at introducing her to the rest of the country. She recently completed a West Coast swing and expects to go to Japan "sometime this year." She is also "working on a cartoon" and planning to do guest spots in some more TV programs—projects about which she is rather close-mouthed.

But when it comes to talking about managers Vincent Romea and Bill LeCoin (who also handle the group Kiss) she is considerably more voluble. "They formed a partnership just to manage me," she bubbles.

Romea and LeCoin function, in effect, as Bofill's mentors. "They tell me whether I should do this gig or sing that song, what I should say or wear on this or that occasion. It's just refinement, which I feel is really necessary. Schooling never hurts."

If her mentors savvy can make such a good thing even better, maybe some not so distant day Angela Bofill will rate right up there with Dinah Washington and Lady Day. □

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Robert R. Max and Sally P. Cerny are co-authors. Mr. Max is one of the leading communications consultants in the world. His clients include American Express, Johnson & Johnson, New York Life Insurance Company, American Stock Exchange, AT&T, Eastman Kodak, Union Carbide, Hoffman-LaRoche Pharmaceuticals, Equitable Life Assurance Society and many others.

VOICES

The Ethnic Joke: Can we afford to laugh at ourselves?

By Arnold Bojórquez

An Italian, a Jew and a Latino were on a plane when the engines suddenly caught fire and the craft plummeted to earth. When the souls of the three men got to heaven, they were met by an embarrassed St. Peter. "Gentlemen," St. Peter began, "I'm afraid that, through some error, you've been brought here before your time. However, I may have a solution to this problem. For $500 each, I can return you to earth." As the scene shifted back to the wreckage, the crowd was amazed to see the body of the Italian begin to stir and, finally, to sit up. The once-dead man quickly told the shocked onlookers about the meeting with St. Peter. "What happened to the others?" someone asked. "Well," said the Italian, "when I left, the Jew had him down to $250 and the Latino was looking for a co-signer!"

The kind of ethnic humor that has become fashionable recently, of which this is an example, is all supposed to be in the spirit of good-natured fun. But many people think jokes like this are not only insulting to Latinos, but also harmful. The major reason is that the Latino community does not yet have a positive self-image strong enough to counteract these jokes' effects. In addition, the nation's image of us is so distorted that such jokes are not seen for what they are—exaggerations of culture made to make people laugh—but are taken instead as accurate observations. The Latino public has been encouraged to go along with these gags and not take itself "too seriously". After all, we're all Americans, right? Well, the catch—as we all know—is that there are Americans and there are Americans.

It is not easy to break away from stereotypes. The image of Latinos, as portrayed in American humor as well as by the media, is in general a negative one. And there is a danger that Latinos themselves may begin to believe the stereotypes. The dropout rate for Latinos in high school remains very high, while the media continues to focus attention on Latino street gangs and illegal aliens.

The strides that have been made by Latinos in this country are nothing to joke about; nor should they be compromised for the sake of a laugh at the expense of the entire Latino community. This does not mean that we have to become somber-faced and humorless. Genuine humor and laughter have always been staples of our heritage. But the kind of denigrating humor that is inherent in ethnic jokes serves only to perpetuate dissatisfaction and racism.

Obviously, U.S. Latinos' problems cannot be solved simply by eliminating all derogatory ethnic humor. But we should all protest when we see it in the media or hear it in a joke, and we should help other Latinos recognize it as an insult to our history that furthers a negative image. After all, taking ourselves too seriously and wanting to be taken seriously are not the same thing.

Arnold Bojórquez is a freelance writer residing in San José, Calif.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