

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 8, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE WEEK, 1975

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BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

Men and women of Hispanic origin -- Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans and other Spanish Speaking Americans -- have contributed significantly to the growth of America. They have served with courage and distinction in our Armed Forces. In endeavors as varied as music, architecture, medicine, law, education, literature and religion, Hispanic-Americans have contributed wisdom, beauty and spiritual strength.

No manner of tribute to our country's Hispanic heritage could be more appropriate in this Bicentennial year than to acknowledge the importance of the Spanish contribution to the success of our own War of Independence. Spanish-led military forces protected the Colonies' southern front and kept the Mississippi River open for navigation and the delivery of supplies to the Americans in the southwest. Don Bernardo de Galvez, Spanish Captain General and Governor of Spanish Louisiana, led these successful campaigns and, in 1781, captured the heavily fortified city of Pensacola from the British.

The assistance to our Revolution from Galvez and the Hispanic troops he commanded has not always received the recognition it deserved in our history books. But the name Galvez has enjoyed commemoration through the Texas city we know as Galveston.

We can look forward to discovering other contributions from the Hispanic civilization so long and well established in our land and from the millions of Americans of Hispanic origin who enrich our society.

The Congress, by a joint resolution approved September 17, 1968 (82 Stat. 848), requested that a period in September be annually designated in recognition of that heritage.

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NOW, THEREFORE, I, GERALD R. FORD, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate the week beginning September 14, 1975, as National Hispanic Heritage Week. I call upon the people of the United States, especially the educational community, to observe that week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundredth.

GERALD R. FORD

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