

**The original documents are located in Box 38, “9/16/76 - Remarks at the Hispanic Heritage Week Reception Held at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

REMARKS AT HISPANIC HERITAGE WEEK RECEPTION, THE NATIONAL SHRINE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1976

It is a great pleasure to be here this evening at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception to join in the celebration of National Hispanic Heritage Week.

I am delighted to have Bishop Flores -- who has come all the way from San Antonio, Texas -- and Monsignor Murphy here with me. Congratulations are in order, too, for the entire Hispanic community of the Washington area for organizing this reception.

In this Bicentennial year, it is particularly appropriate for us to consider how much the representatives of many races and cultures here contributed to the American spirit and character. Our Hispanic heritage was strong even before we achieved our independence.

Men and women of Hispanic origin fought in the Revolutionary War. Hispanic Americans have enriched our culture, arts and scholarship. They have helped build an America where freedom and equality are the practice as well as the ideal.

This year, Hispanic Heritage Week has been a special success. Presentations of Hispanic music, theatre and other cultural activities have taken place at various government buildings here in Washington and at locations throughout America.

There is much to celebrate.

Recently, the more than eleven million Americans of Hispanic origin have made substantial new contributions and accomplishments.

More than 50 Hispanics have been appointed to ranking positions in the Federal Government.

Federal funds for bilingual education have been increased.

A system of Spanish speaking co-ordinators has been established to help Hispanic Americans get worthwhile jobs.

The Voting Rights Act has been extended to protect the rights of the Spanish speaking.

Hispanic Heritage Week celebrates the many contributions of the Hispanic-American community to America's social, cultural and economic growth. Through appointments and in other actions my Administration has attempted to reflect the diversity of the Hispanic community by including Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans and other Hispanics in meaningful roles.

"Juntos" (Hoñn-tose) together we will move forward to even greater achievements.

Thank you very much.

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