

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JULY 29, 1976

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

---

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
TO THE  
REPUBLICAN NATIONAL HISPANIC ASSEMBLY  
OF THE UNITED STATES

THE MAYFLOWER HOTEL

9:34 P.M. EDT

Fernando, my good friend, Minority Leader of the House Congressman John Rhodes, Congressman Manny Lujan, Ben Fernandez, distinguished members of the Administration guests and ladies and gentlemen:

It is wonderful to be here tonight, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your very warm and friendly welcome. Obviously, I am honored to be here with the Republican National Hispanic Assembly in this month of our national Bicentennial when we are giving special recognition to our rich national heritage, including our Hispanic heritage.

America's recognition of its Hispanic components involves much, much more than history itself. It includes your vital and growing role, as well as your contribution at all levels of leadership of the United States of America, our country.

Your organization has provided an inspiration -- and results, I might say -- for men and women of Hispanic origin. With your help, we have done much, a great deal, to mobilize the great wealth and talent and dedication of Hispanic-Americans in our Federal Government, and I am especially proud of your contributions, your dedication, your leadership.

In recognition of our mutual desire to increase the number of Hispanic-Americans in leadership positions, I am particularly proud in this Administration to have appointed many of those that I see here tonight.

But, as I look across the room, I see not only those who have been appointed and recognized in the past, but I am very pleased to introduce some of my most recent Hispanic appointees. You are proud of them, just as I am.

MORE

First is my new Special Assistant for Hispanic Affairs at the White House, Tom Aranda, Jr. If you have any trouble in the White House, call Tom. (Laughter) We hope you have no reason to call him, and we will try to avoid it, but that is his job and we are proud to have you on board, Tom.

My new Assistant Secretary of the Department of Interior is Albert C. Zapanta. I think most of you recognize that the Department of the Interior has vast responsibilities, and I can assure you that we have great faith in the fine job that Albert will do, and congratulations.

We have two diplomatic appointments, Phil Sanchez-- he is our new Ambassador to Columbia, a very important post, and congratulations, Phil--and Ignacio Lozano, whom I have nominated to be our Ambassador to El Salvador.

It likewise is a position of responsibility in an area where we must have a greater and greater influence and interest, and I am sure that both of these two outstanding appointees will do a fine job, and the very best.

Of course, we have Sam Martinez. Sam, of course, came from Denver, and we brought him to Washington to fill a very important post. I am confident that this very difficult, very vital position of responsibility as Director of the Community Services Administration will be in excellent hands, with Sam's experience and ability and dedication. Thank you very much, Sam, for coming to Washington.

I think these appointments, plus the others that have been made, are very indicative that this Administration wants a vigorous involvement of Hispanic-Americans in governing our nation.

Just as you need more advocates in Government -- and we are seeking to achieve and accomplish that -- Americans need more Hispanic representatives in Congress, like my good friend Manuel Lujan of the great State of New Mexico.

I would like to thank Congressman Lujan for not only his help and assistance when I was the Minority Leader -- and I know he is doing the same for Congressman John Rhodes -- but to thank him for the extraordinary effort that he made under most difficult circumstances when we had a State convention down in the State of New Mexico.

Manny, I think that your efforts will be vindicated in several weeks.

MORE

But let me say that our common goal is to make life better for the Hispanic community in the United States by assuring a number of very broad, but very important rights, such as the full voting right, by improving the standard of living for all, expanding the educational opportunity -- particularly the quality education, including bilingual programs, by including greater participation in the minority business enterprise program, and by continuing our successful efforts to reduce inflation and unemployment for all Americans.

These are programs that have a special focus and a particular interest to all of you, but they improve the quality of life and the betterment for all of us throughout this country.

Several months ago, some of you may recall, I issued an order that resulted in speeding up the naturalization process, or proceeding, for new citizens from Cuba, and I might add parenthetically, we are monitoring that to see that the greater number of employees produce more results. But nevertheless, on a broad scale, I strongly welcome the growing political involvement and vigorous, talented efforts by new Americans at all levels of Government -- State and local, as well as Federal.

On a broader basis involving an issue where all of you are interested, and I am certainly deeply concerned, let me say in the following several sentences what this Administration stands for.

My Administration will continue a policy of friendship toward the people and I underline the people, of Cuba. But I add very emphatically, we will not accept intervention by the Fidel Castro regime in the affairs of other countries.

We will not accept the counsel of those who would give in to Fidel Castro. Let me illustrate another example. The free choice of the Puerto Rican people will be vigorously defended. My Administration and the Government of Puerto Rico could view any outside intervention into Puerto Rican affairs as an unfriendly act. We shall strongly resist any such intervention. Freedom of choice is precious, not only for the Puerto Ricans, but for all Americans.

After 200 years of freedom, we are approaching another day when the American people again give their consent to be governed and choose their elected representatives. I call upon all Hispanic Americans to join me in my campaign to achieve a greater realization of that wonderful American dream.

MORE

I think you know where I stand. You know who I am. You know my record in our national Government -- a record that I am glad to say you helped to achieve.

Let us go on working together as partners to obtain full participation for all citizens in the political process. I ask your help. I need your personal involvement to complete the work of the last two years. Hispanic genius, Hispanic energy, Hispanic pride and the Hispanic dedication have strengthened our political system. You have advanced our goals in the best interests of the highest aspirations of all Americans.

I need your abilities and your skills for America and for the Republican Party. The Republican Party is a channel for a new era of Hispanic involvement. From California in the Southwest, from Florida, from New York, from Arizona and from all over this great land, we are united here to preserve the principles of America and dedicated to continuing our progress next January.

And I think in the words of Cervantes, "Todavia no habeis visto nada," which translated, as I understand it, "You ain't seen nothing yet."

END

(AT 9:49 P.M. EDT)