

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 16, 1976

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
SHRINE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

8:20 P.M. EDT

Bishop Flores, Monsignor Murphy, ladies and gentlemen:

It is a very high honor and a very great privilege for me to come to the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and to join with all of you in the celebration of the National Hispanic Heritage Week.

It has been a wonderful week for a wonderful purpose. As we look back over our 200 years, it is tremendous to see what wonderful contributions have been made by all those who came to the shores of the United States.

There is an old story that was told to me by one of my Sunday school teachers who said that the history of the United States was the contribution of people from many cultures and many lands. Then he said, "There is a story that is told about the Bible, that the beauty of Joseph's coat is its many colors, and the strength of America comes from those who came from so many lands and so many cultures."

Of course, the contribution made by those of Hispanic heritage is very significant. I know, of course, that before we got our independence those with Hispanic origins made a tremendous contribution to our society. History tells us that those with Hispanic origins fought in our revolution with distinction and honor and, of course, in the last 200 years the pages of history are filled with what has been done by those with those backgrounds.

Whether it is in the arts or sciences, whether it is in industry or education, those with Hispanic origins have contributed tremendously to what we think is the greatest land in the history of mankind.

MORE

We are so blessed in America because, yes, of the material things we have, but really more significantly than that is the spiritual dedication and beliefs that are so ingrained in all of us, 215 million of us.

It has been my opportunity to travel in many lands, but it is always wonderful to come home to America because we see in America all the good that comes from other countries. I can't help but repeat with emphasis, to reiterate on behalf of all of us, the tremendous benefits we have had come to us because of the contributions of those of you with Hispanic origins.

You are wonderful people. You are like all of us -- proud of our country, proud of your accomplishments. As we look forward to the next 100 years -- and we are just over the threshold -- we have had 200 superb years, but our vision of America ought to be to improve, and we can improve that heritage and that progress and those accomplishments by what you have done and what we all must do.

I thank you for the opportunity of being with you tonight. I thank you, Bishop Flores, to come from San Antonio for this wonderful occasion and you, Monsignor Murphy, for this inspirational Shrine. I am just so pleased to see you and to be with you all.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 8:25 P.M. EDT)