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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LA RAZA
WASH. D.C.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LA RAZA
1725 EYE ST NORTHWEST
WASHINGTON DC 20006

THIS IS A COPY OF A MAILGRAM SENT TO:

ATTORNEY GENERAL GRIFFIN BELL
US DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
WASHINGTON DC 20006

DEAR MR BELL,

THE NEWPAPER WIRE SERVICES ARE CARRYING STORIES WHICH SERIOUSLY IMPUGN THE REPUTATIONS OF TWO OUTSTANDING CHICANOS SERVING IN YOUR ADMINISTRATION:

LEONEL CASTILLO, THE COMMISSIONER OF INS
TONY CANALES, A US ATTORNEY IN TEXAS

WE BELIEVE THAT THE ACCUSATIONS MADE AGAINST THESE INDIVIDUALS ARE FALSE.

DESPITE SOME VERY SERIOUS DIFFERENCES OF VIEWS ON IMMIGRATION BETWEEN COMMISSIONER CASTILLO AND OUR ORGANIZATION, WE BELIVE THAT HE COULD NOT POSSIBLY BE GUILTY OF THE ACCUSATIONS MADE AGAINST HIM.

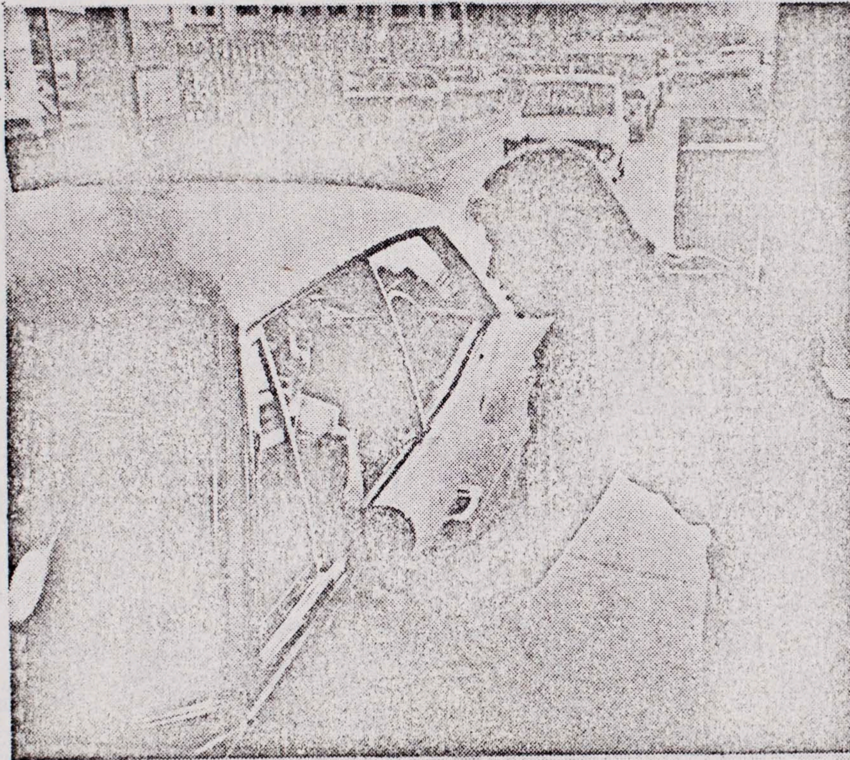
WE URGE YOU TO MOVE DECISIVELY TO ASCERTAIN THE TRUE FACTS OF THE SITUATION AND CLEAR THE NAMES OF THESE OUTSTANDING PEOPLE.

SINCERELY,
RAUL YZAGUIRRE
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LA RAZA
1725 EYE ST NORTHWEST
WASHINGTON DC 20006

16:24 EST

MGMCOMP MGM

TO REPLY BY MAILGRAM, SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR WESTERN UNION'S TOLL - FREE PHONE NUMBERS



By James M. Thresher—The Washington Post

At Tijuana, U.S. customs agent checks "green card" of Mexican crossing border to work. At El Paso, an illegal entrant lost a shirt en route over fence.

MEX AMERICA

A Five-Part Report/ Washington Post

PART I - MARCH 26, 1978
II - 27, 1978
III 28, 1978
IV 29, 1978
V 30, 1978

National Council of La Raza

The Washington Post

3 The Washington Post Co

SUNDAY, MARCH 26, 1978

In Los Angeles, considered the capital of MexAmerica, professional billboards and hand-lettered signs alike are aimed at Latin customers.

Latin Influence Mounts Throughout Southwest

By Lou Cannon
Washington Post Staff Writer

LOS ANGELES—A nation within e nation is emerging in the South- est.

Its language is a hybrid of English d Spanish. Its culture is a blend of odern, technological United States d developing but still rural Mexico. existence is most evident along the 933-mile border that the United ates shares with Mexico, but it is ghly visible as well in such diverse

MexAmerica

Part One:

The New Nation

onborder cities as Los Angeles, hoenix, Albuquerque, Houston and enver. Its existence poses a threat the American melting pot ideal eater than ever faced from the ish, the Czechs, the Italians and the les.

Its name is MexAmerica, and the ssons it is teaching the larger nation e not limited to the Southwest.

By the mid-1980s, the number of ispanic-Americans — including im- igrants from Caribbean islands and outh America as well as Mexico—is expected to exceed the 30 million projected for American blacks.

Today, in the southwestern states of Texas, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and California, Mexican-Americans already vastly outnumber blacks, Asians and all other minorities, reaching as high as 36 percent.

They even outnumber "Anglos" in many of the fast-growing Sunbelt cities that dot the hot, dry, mesquite-covered landscape from San Diego to Brownsville.

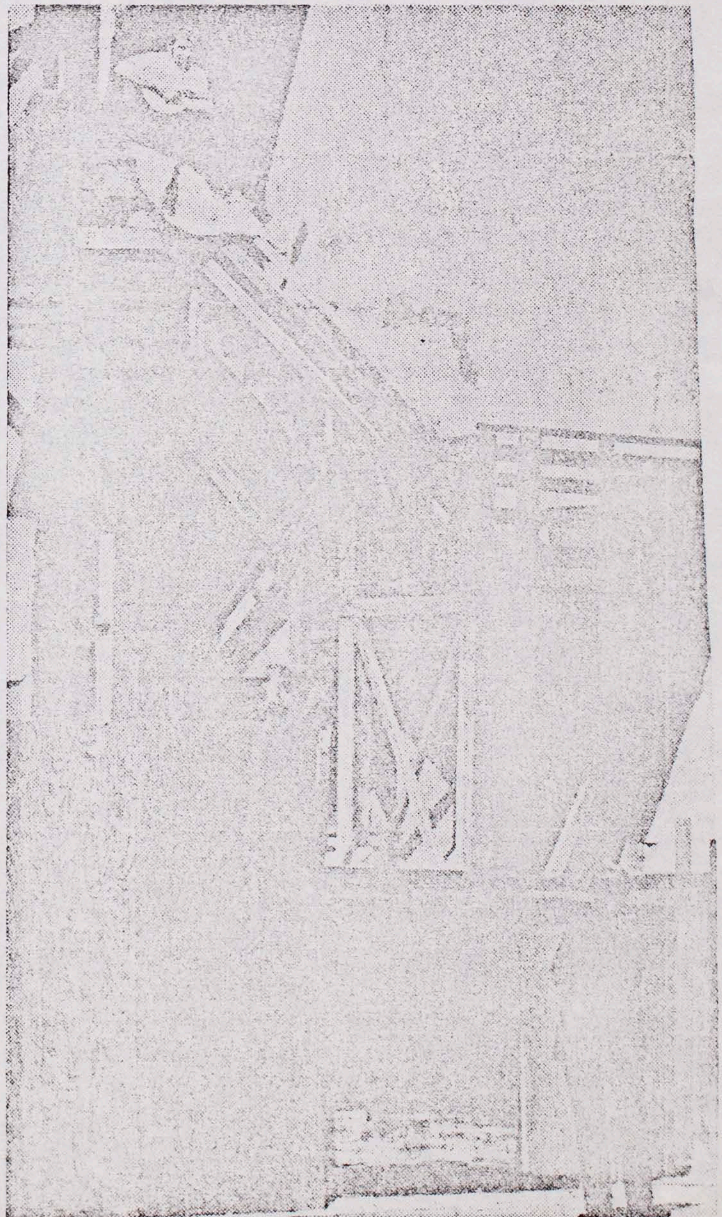
"A binational, bicultural, bilingual regional complex or entity is emerging in the borderlands," says Carey McWilliams, historian and retired editor of The Nation. "Nothing quite like this zone of interlocking economic, social and cultural interests can be found along any other border of comparable length in the world."

The history of MexAmerica dates back to the conquistadores and mission padres who roamed the area that is now the American Southwest. But its startling growth, both in numbers and influence, is a recent phenomenon. The Mexican component of this two-nation society continues to boom on both sides of the border. Mexico itself has a higher birth rate than Bangladesh.

In the United States, the Mexican-American population, which may have been severely undercounted in the 1970 census, is growing steadily and is believed to total more than 7 million in the Southwest alone.

Even in Diboll, Tex., in the Dixie-oriented pinewoods section of the

See MEXAMERICA, A10, Col. 1



A Catholic priest visits an East Los Angeles parishioner.

A Nation Within the Nation Is Emerging in the Southwest

MEXAMERICA, From A1

state near Louisiana, Mexican-Americans are nearly numerically equal to blacks, and the town's largest employer, plywood company Temple EasTex, is considering instructing new employes through bilingual film strips.

Los Angeles, with a larger population of Mexican heritage than any other city except Mexico City, is considered the capital of MexAmerica. It is home to 1.5 million citizens of Mexican ancestry and perhaps 500,000 more illegal immigrants. Large sections of East Los Angeles and the downtown area, sometimes derisively called "Baja Hollywood," are indistinguishable from similar areas in any large Latin American city. The language that is spoken there is both Spanish and English and often, as in the phrase, "Presta mi su credit card," it is a mixture of both languages that irritates purists of either one.

For the first time, Mexican-Americans outnumber either Anglo-Americans or blacks in the Los Angeles school system. The world that will be emerges most clearly in kindergarten where 50 percent of the children claim Spanish as their first language. And the Los Angeles police force for the first time is requiring all of its cadets to take six months of conversational Spanish.

In El Paso, Enrique Perez grew up when public school students were detained after school if teachers overheard them speaking Spanish during school hours. Today, Perez is the school system's director of federal programs, which helps fund a $5.5 million bilingual education program that teaches Spanish to Anglos and English to Mexican-Americans with the goal of making students fluent in both.

In New Mexico, Jerry Apodaca recalls the days 35 years ago when he lived with his family in across-the-tracks segregated housing in Tyler, Tex., where his father was a soldier. Today, Apodaca is the first Mexican-American governor of New Mexico since 1917. Ineligible to succeed himself under state law, he is looking forward to running for the U.S. Senate in 1982.

And in Arizona, Mexican-Americans last week celebrated Good Friday as it was celebrated in Mexico City—by visiting special altars at seven different churches. For the past four years in Phoenix—and for the past 19 in Tuscon, nearer the border—well-off Mexican-Americans have adopted the Mexican custom, following a tradition of 16th-century Spain, of presenting their 15-year-old daughters to society at events known as Quinceanera balls. At the other end of the socioeconomic spectrum, the Mexican-American sections of Phoenix are organized into 16 barrios—or neighborhoods—where residents warn each other of approaching welfare workers or policemen.

The growing Mexican influence is evident in food, fashion and music.

The Mexican milk candy, dulce de leche, is now sold outside the barrios. So are the Mexican embroidered dresses favored by many Anglo women during the long, hot southwestern summers. Tex-Mex fast food stands and cafes, doling out tacos and burritos with hot sauce that many Mexicans regard as barbarously American, abound.

Department stores in the Southwest feature racks of "disco Mexicanos," long-playing records of Freddy Fender singing in English and Spanish and of such Spanish-language favorites as Julio Iglesias, Silvestre Vargas, Pedro Infante and the Los Humildes 4.

Increasingly in MexAmerica, Spanish is the language of the airwaves. The Southwest used to have only a handful of Spanish-language radio stations. Now there are 37 in Texas, 28 in California, six in Arizona, four in New Mexico.

In Midland, Tex., cable television brings in the Spanish-language channel from San Antonio. In California, Los Angeles-based Channel 34 serves an audience of 2 million from San Diego to San Francisco with all-day broadcasting of news, variety shows and movies. At 7 p.m. daily the news-oriented Mexican-American customarily sits down to watch anchorman Javier Calodosky, known as the Walter Cronkite of Mexico, over the Spanish Information Network.

The written word in the Southwest also is becoming both English and Spanish. Popular magazines such as "Nuestro—The Magazine for Latinos" are written in both languages. So are emergency warning cards on Texas International Airlines, legal advertisements in Houston and dialing instructions on telephone booths throughout southern California.

Spanish is spoken by two-thirds of the Catholics in MexAmerica. Churches where the pictures of past priests named O'Reilly or Murphy adorn the parish office walls are served now by priests named Sanchez or Gonzalez. Bishop Juan Arzube of Los Angeles, a leader in the growing "Latino" movement in the church, regards the Catholic parish as the basic building block for organizing Mexican-Americans whom he sees as a largely unmeltable ethnic group.

Unmeltable they well may be. In the 1960s third-generation Mexican-Americans experienced a rebirth in pride of heritage not dissimilar to that felt by third-generation Americans whose grandparents came to the United States from Europe.

They called themselves "Chicanos," appropriating what used to be a neutral term used to describe Mexicans who lived in the United States. (Many people of Mexican heritage who lived in the Southwest at the time of World War II referred to themselves as "Mexican." The term "Mexican-American" came into wide usage at the time of that war, in which Mexican-Americans fought in disproportionately high numbers.)

But in the '60s "Chicano" became a proud badge of ethnic identification among the young, as "Latino" has become popular in the '70s.

The metamorphosis of self-image has continued because the cultural influence from south of the border has been continually renewed. Unlike European immigrants, who were separated from their roots by an ocean, they are separated from Mexico only by a common, indistinguishable border.

The influence of the United States also is strong in Mexico, particularly in the interdependent border region. While Spanish is taught in the high schools and colleges of the U.S. Southwest, English uniformly is offered in Mexican schools. Clusters of twin factories known as maquiladoras dot the border region, taking advantage of cheap Mexican labor and a custom-free zone to hand-finish radios, toys and calculators.

American foodstuffs and clothes are both necessities and status symbols in Mexico, which is the fourth-largest customer for U.S. exports.

In the border region a crisis in one country frequently means a crisis—or an opportunity—in another. Unemployment in rural Mexico drives illegal immigrants north. The 1973 Arab oil embargo sent American motorists into Mexico to buy its plentiful gasoline. When the Mexican peso was devalued in 1976, business on the American side of the border slumped so severely that Texas Gov. Dolph Briscoe asked the Small Business Administration to declare El Paso and five border counties a disaster area.

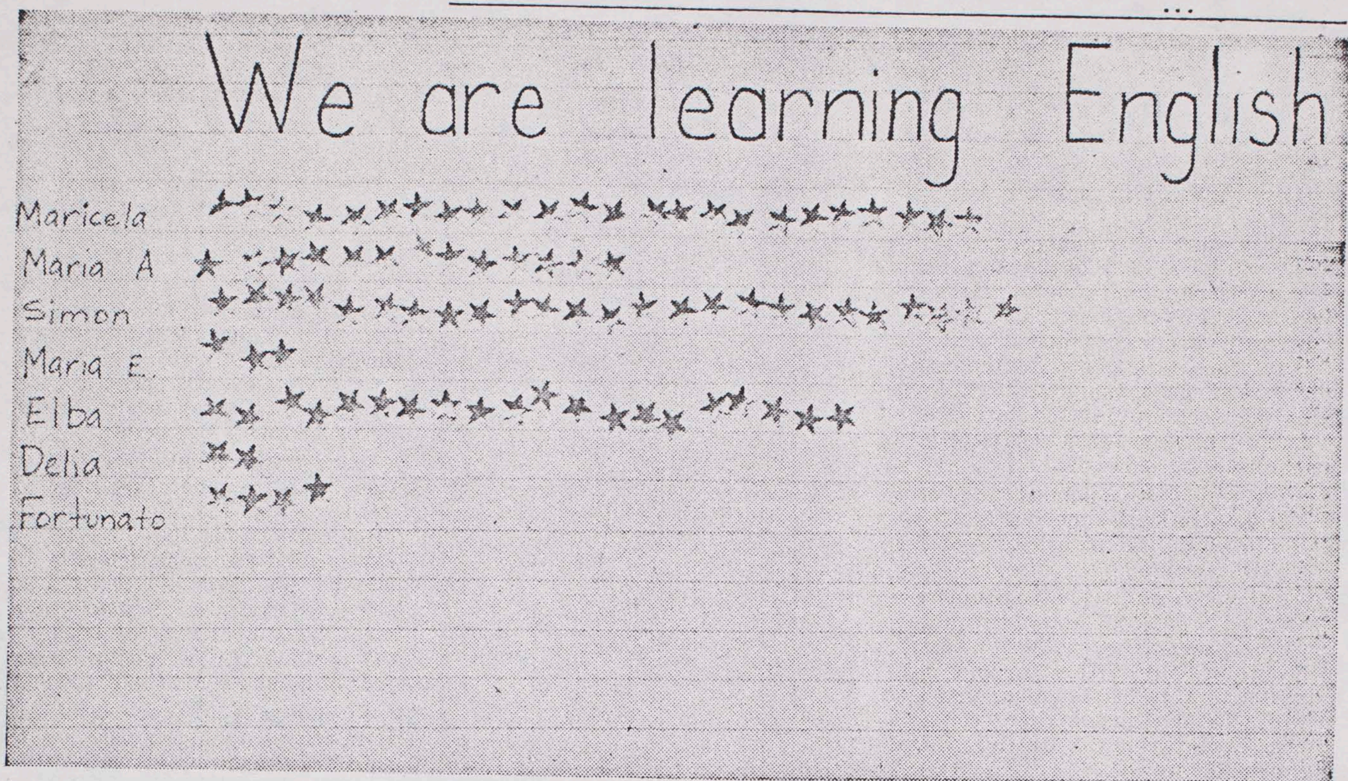
The man who epitomizes the two-nation quality south of the border is Roberto de la Madrid, a charismatic bilingual politician who rose from shoeshiner to banker to governor of Baja California Norte. He once served as vice chairman of the San Diego Planning Commission, and in the opinion of Lucy Killea, who runs the San Diego-based border organization known as Fronteras de las Californias, "could have as easily been elected in this country as he is in Mexico."

Indeed, de la Madrid and his young, aggressive staff favor Americans' political techniques and admire families such as the Kennedys. De la Madrid campaign posters said simply "Roberto." As governor, he has introduced daily press briefings and televised reports to the people.

Every few weeks de la Madrid flies his plane north for a meeting with Gov. Edmund G. (Jerry) Brown Jr., who comes down from Sacramento to meet him at a quiet Hollywood restaurant called El Adobe. It is a meeting of equals between two canny politicians who supporters believe will one day become presidents of their respective countries. The equality is based on mutual need: Brown wants Mexican oil and natural gas commitments as backstops for his antinuclear energy stand in California and de la Madrid wants American tourist dollars and a sceond border crossing at San Diego to bolster

Latin Border Influence Rises

THE WASHINGTON POST Sunday, March 26, 1978



By James M. Thresher—The Washington Post

Chart traces progress of Latin-name pupils in bilingual Humphreys Avenue School, East Los Angeles.

's economy.

"We're inextricably linked with those people,' and the sooner we realize it the better," Brown said in a recent interview. "Mexico's not an island. If something goes wrong in Mexico City, it will be felt in Los Angeles and El Paso."

Recently Brown demonstrated his political grasp of the growing importance of MexAmerica when he kept hundreds at a Democratic convention waiting for him until midnight in San Diego while he addressed a nonpartisan Mexican solidarity rally in Los Angeles that concluded, "Viva la Raza (the Mexican people)! Viva yourselves."

The same day that Brown was making points with Mexican-Americans the state convention of the California Republican Party was passing a resolution condemning bilingual education. On its face this was an act of political folly demonstrating anew why the GOP has become a seemingly permanent political minority. But the action also reflected two other facets of MexAmerica — the longstanding political impotence of Mexican-Americans and the fear of some members of the Anglo majority that a new ethnic awakening is about to occur.

The situation is somewhat different in New Mexico, where a Spanish-American tradition developed before English immigrants landed at Plymouth Rock. In other states, however, Mexican-Americans have never been represented in proportion to their numbers. They are about to become a political majority in San Antonio because of federal pressure to change the election system, but there is not a single Mexican-American councilman in such strongholds of the Mexican heritage as Los Angeles.

There are many in the Southwest who think that this historic pattern of political underrepresentation is about to change. They see protests and political stirrings in Texas, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico and California as signs that Mexican-Americans are on the verge of pressing as strongly for full civil and political equality as black people in the United States have done during the past generation.

This awakening is exciting to people such as Ramon Eduardo Ruiz, a Latin-American historian who returned to the University of California at San Diego from New England—which he regards as "the only truly civilized place in the United States"—because he wanted to be around Mexicans and Mexican-Americans.

Ruiz believes that the Southwest has "everything to gain and nothing to lose" from the cultural infusion, but some Anglo-Americans worry that MexAmerica could in time become a pro-separatist Catalonia or Quebec.

This is a prospect generally discounted by scholars and Mexican-American politicians, who instead envision a pluralistic, Third World society with heavy concentrations of blacks and Asians, a society in which every ethnic group could be a minority.

That such a society may be well advanced in California was demonstrated earlier this month when the state Public Utilities Commission ordered telephone companies to provide statewide emergency service in Spanish. But the commission also ordered that this service be provided in Cantonese in the San Francisco area.

Today, in California, there are bilingal language associations for Spanish, Cantonese, Japanese, Tagalog (Filipino) Thai and Portguese.

A study commissioned by California Lt. Gov. Mervyn Dymally, a black, predicted that California would be a Third-World society by 1990. In this society Anglo-Americans would be the largest minority, but the numerical proportion of Mexican-Americans would increase dramatically.

"There was a time when the white men came in and overran us," says Miguel Garcia, a militant Los Angeles lawyer. "Now it's like history in reverse."

The underrepresentation of the Mexican-Americans in the political system reflects an even greater underrepresentation in such professions as law and medicine. That is changing, too, though less swiftly than Mexican-Americans would like.

Ralph Ochoa, assistant to California State Assembly Speaker Leo McCarthy, remembers being the only Mexican-American to graduate from an accredited law school in California in 1969. Even today, Mexican-Americans tend to celebrate singular breakthroughs: There is one Mexican-American regent of the University of California, one Mexican- American chancellor in the state university system, one Mexican-American cabinet official in state government.

As Mexican-Americans struggle to gain full equality, Bishop Arzube calls upon them to "upsurge like the Irish did."

"After all, we all celebrate St. Patrick's Day," said Arzube. "There will be a fear that we will dominate, as we might do for a while, but in the long run we just hope that the American culture will grow so it isn't Anglo-American but multicultural. That's the way it should be."

Echoing this idea in the secular political arena is California Assemblyman Peter F. Chacon, who made common cause with Asians to push through bilingual education programs over the opposition of some whites and some blacks.

"California, which always has been in the forefront, is going to show the vitality of a mutilingual, multicultural society," Chacon says. "This will be a real metropolitan state where there will be engendered a real respect for differences. It's an exciting prospect."

Washington Post staff writer Bill Curry, special correspondents Joel Kotkin and Richard Morin, and researchers Juliette McGrew and Kathy Dillon contributed to this article.

NEXT: Economics of immigration.

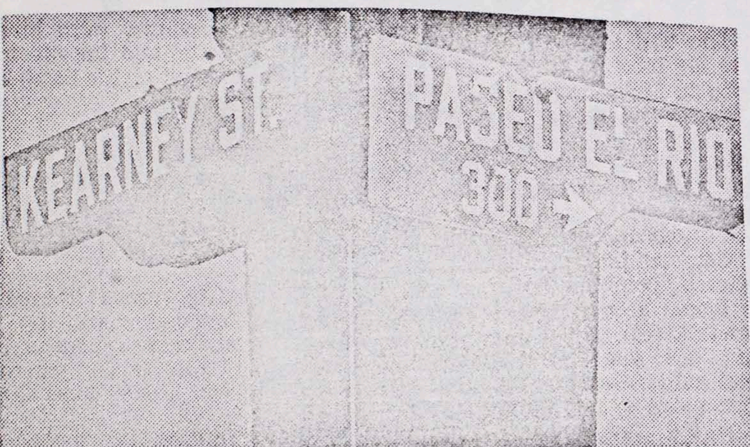
'Spanish is spoken by two-thirds of the Catholics in MexAmerica. Churches where the pictures of past priests named O'Reilly or Murphy adorn the parish office walls are served now by priests named Sanchez or Gonzalez.'

Lunchroom in El Paso, Tex., has binational menu, bilingual sign.

Photos by James Thresher—The Washington Post

'Large sections of East Los Angeles and the downtown area . . . are indistinguishable from similar areas in any large Latin American city.'

Mariachi mass is celebrated at Old Plaza Mission in Los Angeles.



Mexico and America meet at this street corner in east Los Angeles.

MexAmerica's 'existence poses a threat to the American melting pot ideal greater than it ever faced from the Irish, the Czechs, the Italians and the Poles.'

Mexican-American Ventura Macias lives in Wasco, Calif., near Bakersfield, 300 miles north of the border.

'In the border region a crisis in one country frequently means a crisis – or an opportunity – in another. Unemployment in rural Mexico drives illegal immigrants north.'

On U.S. side of border at Tijuana, paths worn in the brush illustrate the continuous international traffic.

Border patrolman with binoculars, flashlight and holstered gun arrests illegal immigrants at San Ysidro, Calif.

Struggling Up the Ladder

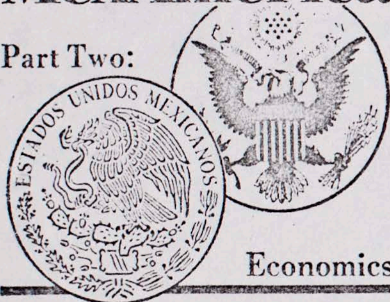
2 Hispanic Entities Flourish Side by Side

By Lou Cannon
Washington Post Staff Writer

SAN DIEGO—Rich Garcia, the son of a Mexican fruit picker turned foundry worker, remembers the days when his father drove him and his brothers down from East Los Angeles to watch the bullfights in Tijuana.

MexAmerica

Part Two:



Economics

Pointing to Mexicans removing the droppings from the bulls and then to well-off Anglo-Americans drinking and having a good time in the best seats at the bullring, Rich Garcia's father said to him: "You can be like those people sweeping up after the bull or you can go to school and be like those people sitting in the good seats."

Twenty years later, Garcia is happy he heeded his father's advice and acquired a college degree in public administration. He is assistant to Mayor Pete Wilson in San Diego, where Mexican-Americans have a city councilman of their own heritage for the first time in more than a century.

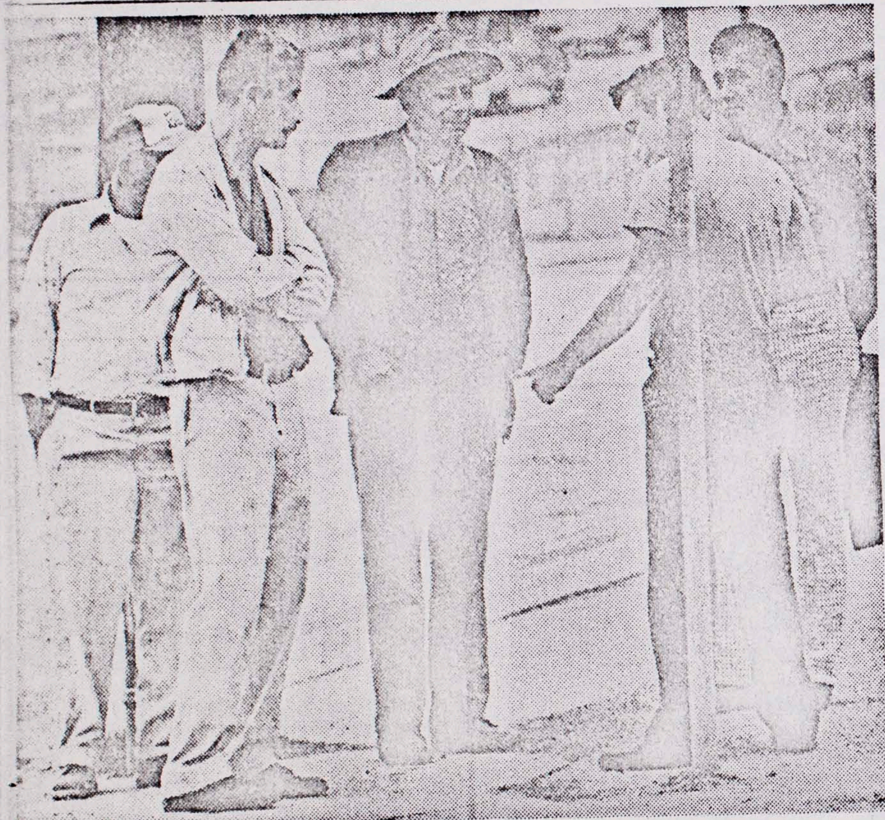
But though there are many such individual success stories, the majority of Mexican-Americans are still figuratively sweeping up after the bull.

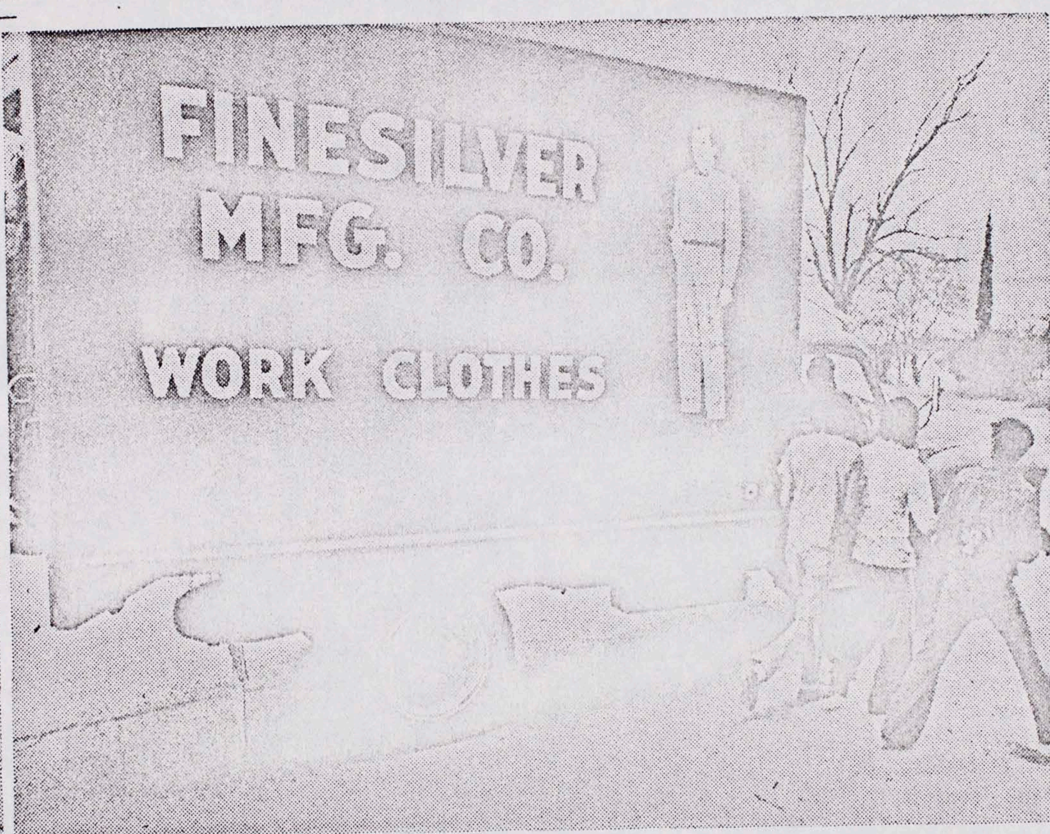
Statistical data is scanty, largely because the Census Bureau classification of "Hispanic origin" yields little precise information about Mexican-Americans. But the available evidence, including a 1976 Census Bureau survey that shows Hispanic-origin families with a median income of $10,000 compared to $15,200 for other families, suggests that Mexican-Americans are poorer, less-educated and much younger than other U.S. citizens. Forty-two percent of the Hispanic-origin population is under 18, a harbinger of the day expected to come in the next decade when Hispanics

See ECONOMICS, A2, Col. 1

By James M. Thresher—The Washington Post

Migrant workers such as these in rosebeds near Wasco, Calif., have become highly visible in agriculture.





Photos by James M. Thresher—The Washingto

Mexican laborers wait on a street corner in San Antonio for anyone in need of inexpensive day workers. As a truck pulls up, they negotiate with the driver to hire them, usually for $2 an hour or less. Some are lucky and get the ride

Hispanics Climb Up Economic

ECONOMICS, From A1

will become the nation's largest minority group.

The face of the national future already is apparent in the Southwest where two realities—that the United States is a rich country and Mexico a poor one—are being blended into what some are referring to as a new nation—MexAmerica.

Two Hispanic economic communities flourish side by side in this region united by an ancestral heritage but separated by a gulf of citizenship. One is the community of U.S. citizens of Mexican ancestry, who occupy a disproportionate number of the bottom rungs of the economic ladder but are struggling to improve their living standards, education, job skills and political influence. The other is the community of the illegal immigrants, whom both Mexicans and Mexican-Americans prefer to call "undocumented workers."

The illegal immigrant occupies a shadow world of fieldhands, bus boys and day laborers working, at $2 an hour or less, for employers who do not speak his or her language in jobs that most native Americans are unwilling to perform. Usually, the illegal immigrant has suffered risks and indignities to acquire these menial jobs, which pay from three to six times a day what the individual would be making in Mexico.

Fear of deportation prevents protest of even the most unfair treatment or the least safe working conditions. The illegal immigrant accepts this exploitation because it is preferable to near-starvation in rural central Mexico and because the person wants a better life for his family back home. He knows, too, that much is forgiven in the United States to those who manage to rise out of poverty. Though most of the immigrants return to Mexico by choice, they are mindful of others (like the Los Angeles restaurant owner who had been deported 37 times) who were allowed to stay after becoming financially successful in this country.

More often than not, the U.S. citizen of Mexican ancestry feels a kinship to this immigrant, at least in the geography of his mind. Many of the oldest citizens themselves were immigrants. Some of the newest citizens still have relatives in Mexico. At the same time, American citizens with brown skin resent the police suspicion of them that illegal immigration brings and the necessity to constantly demonstrate at random checkpoints that they actually are citizens.

Between the extremes of the wages illegals will accept and the wealth of a few Mexican-Americans such as New Mexico landowners who trace their heritage back to the conquistadors, Mexican-Americans are highly visible in agriculture, where their pay and working conditions have been vastly improved during the past decade by the efforts of the United Farm Workers. They also are conspicuous in Texas plywood mills, southern California factories and in garment and electronics plants that are strewn along the border from San Diego to Brownsville, Tex. A growing Mexican-American middle class is making inroads in small business, in teaching and in government jobs.

Rich Garcia heeded father's advice, now is an aide to San Diego mayor.

Construction worker Jose Soto rides home from his job in San Antonio.

The rise of this middle class and the overall Mexican-American population increase have been sharply reflected in the marketplace. The magazine Sales Marketing Management estimates that the Hispanic market has grown 23 percent since 1970, while the national market has grown 4 percent. Now, there are national television ads in Spanish for Chrysler cars and Kentucky Fried Chicken. In MexAmerica, Spanish or bilingual billboards and store displays are used to sell beer, radios and razor blades.

Poor or insufficient education seems to be the major barrier to continued growth of the middle class and to full economic opportunity for Mexican-Americans. The statistics tell the story in Diboll, Tex., where 16 percent of the eighth-graders and only 9 percent of the ninth-graders are Mexican-Americans. "We need to develop an academic tradition like the Jews," said Garcia. Instead, there often is a tradition of teenagers dropping out of school to help their large and close-knit families.

George Pla remembers coming to East Los Angeles at age 6, the son of an illegal immigrant laborer who became a contractor. Pla was placed in classes for the retarded because he couldn't speak English. As he learned the language, he moved out of the retarded classes. When he was 18 his parents debated whether he sould work to help the family or continue his education. Pla wound up going to the University of Southern California and, at 28, becoming assistant director of business and economic development for the state of California. He also heads the Mexican-American Alumni Association at USC, a group of 250 that is raising $100,000 a year to fund 400 scholarships.

The Anglo-American community appears ready to accept the achievements of a well-off Garcia or a Pla. Many Anglo-Americans, however, are freightened by the idea of unceasing immigration from south of the border. Throughout the Southwest, the issue of illegal immigration arouses deep emotions among Anglo-Americans and reinforces stereotypes that portray persons of Mexican ancestry as pickers of fruit and drawers of water.

"State Threatened by Alien Horde," read the banner headline in the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner last Aug. 8. The story, carried on The New York Times service and appearing the same day in several western newspapers, said that "a horde of destitute migrants from the Mexican interior" was massing at the border determined to reach the United States before a limited amnesty plan for illegal immigrants proposed by President Carter was passed by Congress.

Neither the "horde" nor the amnesty plan has emerged in the seven months since this story, but the fear is a recurring one that until recently also reflected official U.S. policy.

"It's a national dilemma that threatens to worsen rapidly," said Leonard Chapman, director of the federal Immigration and Naturalization Service during the Ford administration. "We're facing a vast army that's carrying out a silent invasion of the United States."

Chapman in 1976 estimated that the "invaders" had succeeded in establishing a beachhead of 12 million illegal immigrants in the United States. This estimate topped the earlier high figure of 8 million in a well-publicized report by Lesko Associates of Washington, D.C.

In the past two years, a variety of less-publicized studies have been steadily revising these estimates downward. Leonel Castillo, the pres-

Ladder

ent INS director, uses an estimate of 3 million to 6 million, a range so broad it is nearly meaningless. A recent report by the Population Research Center at the University of Texas estimates that there are 4 million illegal immigrants in the United States.

Nobody really knows the extent of illegal immigration from Mexico. Says Barry Fadem, director of the California Office of the Southwest Border Regional Commission: "If you talk about hordes, you use the 12 million figure; if you talk about economic contribution, you use the 4 million."

But if little is known about the actual numbers of the Mexican migration, much has been learned about the character, motiviation and economic impact of the migrants.

Studies by U.S. and Mexican sociologists show that most of the migrants come from poor, rural areas in the Mexican interior and that, in the tradition of earlier immigrants to the United States, they are apt to be the "risk-takers" of their communities. These studies show that as many as 70 percent of the migrants return home after working a few months in the United States.

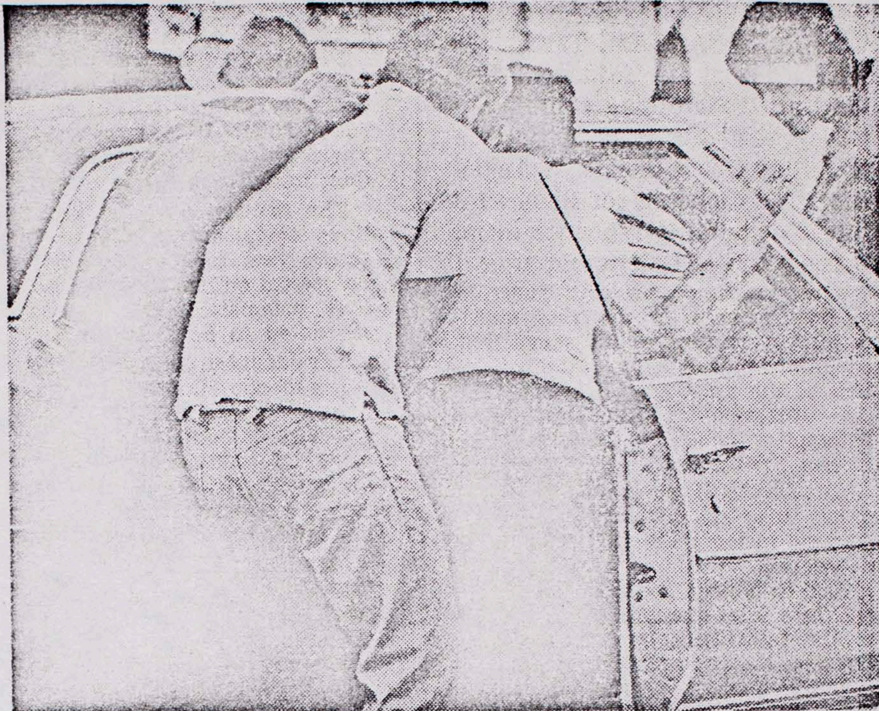
Other studies, including a recent one in Orange County, Calif., dispute the notion that illegal immigrants are a burden on U.S. taxpayers. Most of the migrants, this report found, pay considerably more in state and local taxes than they take out in social services.

One of the most intensive studies, by Wayne Cornelius of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, also contradicts the prevailing view that U.S. citizens are displaced from their jobs by the migrants. Once this may have been true; but improvements in welfare benefits and unemployment insurance have made the low-paying jobs held by the illegal immigrants distasteful to native Americans, whether white, black or Mexican-American.

"Most of the jobs in question are the least desirable in the U.S. labor market," found Cornelius. "They involve dirty, physically punishing tasks, low wages, long hours, generally poor working conditions, low job security and little chance for advancement."

Illegal immigrantion can perhaps best be regarded as a covert economic bargain that benefits everyone involved. It is beneficial to the immigrants, who even at $2 an hour earn three times what they might make in their homeland. It is beneficial for the big growers, the hotel owners and the factory managers, who have a huge, cheap source of readily available labor that is in no position to complain about pay or working conditions. And it is undoubtedly beneficial to Mexico, providing a safety valve for that country's rural poor and discontented.

Within the Mexican-American community itself, the continuing illegal immigration is a source of pride and concern. Most Mexican-Americans express ethnic satisfaction at the achievements of the migrants and revulsion at the scare stories that depict them as an alien people. Some Mexican-Americans believe that the presence of too many illegal immigrants in this country diminishes the chances of their own children for an education.



Four workers try to get in a car whose driver needed only a few day laborers.

Ruiz. "That isn't going to happen. Aside from what it would do in this country, think of what it would do to the stability of Mexico, the peace and order of Mexico, to all the American investments in Mexico. You'd have an explosion there. No one in his right mind is going to be foreclosing the border."

NEXT: Oppression

Many Hispanics have found work in the garment industry, for example, making swimsuits in an East Los Angeles shop.

Others see the continued migration as a source of pressure to maintain bilingual education programs and other services helpful to Mexican-Americans and Mexicans. And for many the reality and memory of Mexico is near enough that they are inclined to cheer, publicly or secretly, for the success of the more recently arrived. "I'm kind of proud that my parents were illegal immigrants," said Pla. "Maybe it's because I made it."

In the years to come, hundreds of thousands of persons like Rich Garcia and George Pla seem certain to "make it" in the middle-class world. Other thousands will do what Pla's parents did two decades ago and come north in search of a better life. For the one overwhelming reality on which everyone seems to agree is that the migration will continue as long as the United States is a rich country and Mexico a relatively poor one.

"The obvious thing to do if you listened to the people burning crosses would be to put up a wall down there," says historian Ramon Eduardo

Correction

An article in Sunday editions said incorrectly that Sen. Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.) canceled plans to visit the Soviet Union. It should have said that Soviet officials withdrew the invitation they had extended the senator.

An Unequal Society

Brutality, Bias Afflict Hispanics

By Bill Curry
Washington Post Staff Writer

ODESSA, Tex.—Larry Ortega Lozano died in the county jail here on Jan. 22. The sheriff said Lozano committed suicide by banging his head against a cell door. A pathologist said it was homicide after finding 92 injuries to the body, some "in places where he would have had to be contorted" to inflict injuries on himself. Six to eight lawmen were in the cell with Lozano for 45 minutes before his death.

Juan Veloz Zuniga died in a hospital in west Texas on May 19. He had been beaten by the Hudspeth County sheriff with a sawed-off pool cue during what the sheriff said was an outburst by Zuniga in the county jail. Fellow inmates said the beating was unprovoked. A grand juror was heard, two days before taking testimony, to assure that no action would be taken against the sheriff. He was right.

Andres Ramirez died on the way to the hospital in Albuquerque on Nov. 10. He had been beaten on the head repeatedly with a flashlight by a policeman trying to restrain him. Charged with involuntary manslaughter, the policeman was acquitted by an all-Anglo jury, which felt testimony was inconclusive on whether the blows from the five-cell flashlight caused the death of Ramirez.

Robert Fernandez died at the home of his estranged wife in Pueblo, Colo., on Aug. 26. He had been struck repeatedly on the head with nightsticks by two city policemen called to remove him from the house. Last Wednesday, they were acquitted of a minor homicide charge.

In the past year alone, nine southwestern lawmen have been tried or are scheduled to stand trial on charges stemming from

MexAmerica

Part Three:

Oppression

the deaths of Mexican-Americans. Others have been exonerated despite a seeming use of excessive force. The death toll in the Southwest exceeds 15 in just the past few years.

Claiming an "epidemic" of "official police violence" against Americans of Mexican ancestry, leaders in the nation's increasingly restive Mexican-American communi-

See OPPRESSION, A8, Col. 1

Brutality and Segregation

OPPRESSION, From A1

ty have pleaded to an as-yet-unresponsive U.S. Justice Department for a widespread federal civil rights drive against police violence. This alleged brutality, they say, is routinely exacted with virtual impunity at the local level.

But claims of police violence are only the most dramatic pattern on a broad fabric of discrimination against Americans of Mexican ancestry in the Southwest, where they are by far the largest minority, and thus show the face of the future for the United States.

Like the blacks of the South, Mexican-Americans—this country's second minority and with other Hispanics expected soon to be its biggest—are poorer, less educated and more apt to be closed out of political power than other Americans who, in many places in the Southwest, by hook or by crook still govern disproportionately to their numbers.

"The prediction of the Kerner Commission [on violence] is coming true," says Sen. Edward W. Brooke (R-Mass.). "But with *three* societies separate and unequal—black, white and Hispanic."

Of the nation's estimated 11.3 million Hispanic population, more than half are Mexican-Americans concentrated largely in five states: California, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and Colorado. Their language, culture and sheer numbers give the region the flavor of one new nation that could be called MexAmerica.

But the two peoples who make up MexAmerica do not live as equals. For in all five states, according to state advisory committees to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, discrimination against Americans of Mexican ancestry pervades education, housing, voting, jobs and law enforcement.

Today, however, Mexican-American civil rights groups are waging a fight for equality on a broad front across the Southwest, much the same as black civil rights groups did two decades ago in the South.

"The issues are the same," says Vilma Martinez, president of the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund. "The denial of an equal education opportunity, the denial of jobs, the denial of effective participation in the voting process and police brutality.

"We are very much an oppressed, discriminated-against group in this country . . . and Texas is our Mississippi."

For it is here in Texas that more than half of the Mexican-American pupils attend virtually segregated, predominantly Hispanic schools; it is here that McAllen, the nation's lowest-income metropolitan area and overwhelmingly Mexican-American, is located; it is here that counties with large or majority Mexican-American populations have no Hispanic elected officials and it is here in Texas alone that at least seven Mexican-Americans have met death while in the custody of lawmen in recent years.

Larry Lózano is shown in family picture and in sheriff's file photo taken

But the plight of the Mexican-American is not uniquely Texan. For example, in California, which has never suffered its minorities gladly, investigators found classes for retarded children comprised solely of Mexican-American children whose only problems were language and reading ability.

And at one time, East Los Angeles, with 600,000 Mexican-Americans, was scattered among an array of state legislative and U.S. Congressional districts so that Hispanic voting power was no more than 35 percent in any one district.

"The same month that the Supreme Court decided Brown vs. Board of Education [outlawing public school segregation in 1954], it ruled in Hernandez vs. Texas that Chicanos (Mexican-Americans) could not be excluded from juries," says Peter Roos, also of the Mexican-American legal defense fund.

"Black civil rights took off. Nothing much happened with Chicanos."

"We're just now emerging," Martinez adds. "We are very much an emerging people."

What these Americans are trying to emerge from is more than a century of oppression that once took such open form as being regularly abused by Texas Rangers or being codified in a California law as "greasers." That state also once distributed its school funds on the number of white students, and did not count Mexican-Americans.

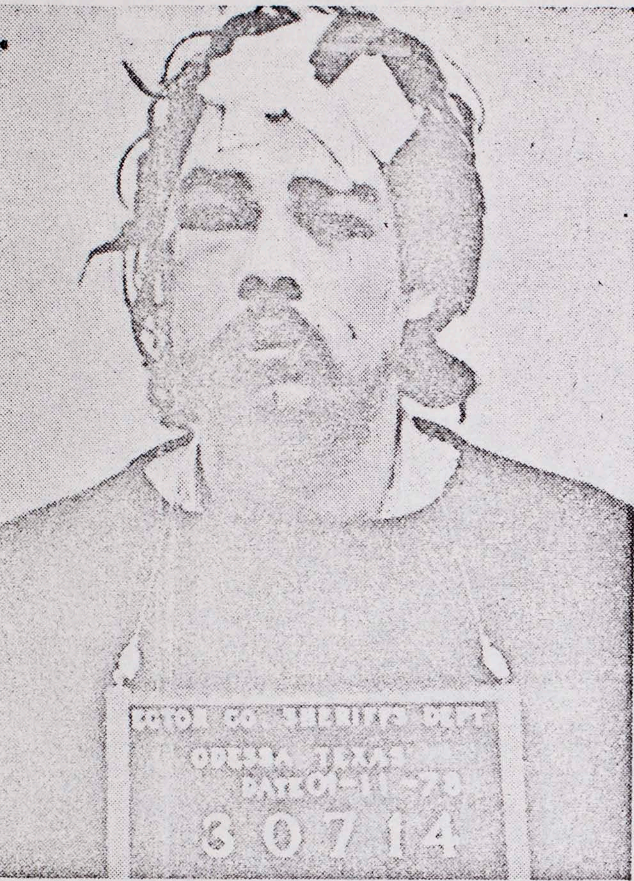
And while an estimated 50 per cen[t] of Mexican-American first graders d[o] not speak English as well as their Anglo classmates, Texas, for 51 years until 1969, prohibited school instruction in any language but English. Corporal punishment followed for children caught speaking Spanish on school grounds.

Although rooted in history, discrimination against Mexican-Americans is not a thing of the past.

Today, it can be petty. El Paso attorney and state Rep. Paul Moreno recalls the time he and his brother sa[t] silently in the city airport waiting fo[r] the midnight flight to Los Angeles Next to them was a group of Oriental talking in their native language. A[n] immigration officer approached. H[e] asked the Morenos, not the Vietnamese, about their citizenship.

Or the discrimination can be devastating. "So massive a failure" has occured in education for Mexican-Americans, said the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, that for every 10 who sta[rt] school only six will graduate. One o[f] every four Mexican-Americans ha[s] less than five years' schooling. Th[e] commission pronounced southwester[n] school systems educationally bankru[pt] and cited in part school officials wh[o] blame "failure on (Mexican-America[n]

Afflict Hispanics



Associated Press

11 days before he died in Texas jail.

children rather than on the inadequacies of the school program."

The U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare found that from 1970 to 1975, Hispanic school children increasingly attended schools that were predominantly minority groups, even as segregation of blacks was decreasing.

The U.S. Census Bureau recently estimated that half of the nation's Spanish-surnamed population over 18 has less than an 11th grade education (50 percent of blacks are high school graduates, as are 70 percent of whites). And census figures show that Mexican-Americans tend to have lower educational levels than other Hispanic families. Thus, of the nation's 15 largest metropolitan areas, it is Houston that has the lowest educational level for Spanish-surnamed people—half of them have less than 10 years of school.

Not surprisingly then, a larger share of Mexican-Americans lives in poverty and holds down menial jobs—clean-up work in the city, farm labor in the country. They can be seen from the road, dozens bent in half under a blistering sun picking fruits and vegetables by day; returning to shanties at night; piling into buses and trucks and cars for the harvest pilgrimages north.

Of every 13 Mexican-American men over 16, one makes his living like that.

Twenty-two of every 100 Mexican-American families live below the poverty line, compared with nine out of 100 for others.

The result is that some of this nation's poorest communities are concentrated in heavily Mexican-American areas, particularly along the Texas-Mexico border.

The McAllen metropolitan area of Hidalgo County has the lowest average per person income in the United States—$2,220 a year, or $42.69 a week for every man, woman and child.

Neighboring Starr County is the poorest county in the United States; San Antonio, Texas' second largest city, and El Paso have the lowest family income among the nation's 50 largest metropolitan areas. Brownsville and Laredo join McAllen as the three lowest family-incomes of all metropolitan areas.

What progress there has been toward improving the life of Mexican-Americans has been largely the result of action by federal courts, federal agencies and Congress. School desegregation has been ordered, election practices scrutinized and school programs required.

The Department of Health, Education and Welfare in 1970 declared that failure of schools to provide instruction in a child's native language, if he couldn't speak English, was discriminatory and thus could lead to a loss of federal funds.

In 1974, the Supreme Court ruled that offering education in English only was a violation of the rights of children who cannot speak it. The same year, Congress enacted legislation providing for bilingual and bicultural school programs.

The result today is that El Paso, for example, some $5.5 million in state, federal and local money is being spent to provide varying degrees of bilingual education to 23,361 pupils, some of them being taught in Spanish, some Anglos learning Spanish.

In 1975, Congress extended the Voting Rights Act to protect Hispanics and certain other language minorities from seamy voting practices. That and the Supreme Court's one-man, one-vote ruling are being used by the Mexican-American legal defense fund and the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project to redraw electoral districts right down to the county commissioner level.

But change comes slowly. "We've won all the redistricting cases. But it's so damn time consuming," says William Velasquez of the voter registration project.

As they have gained help at the federal level in the past, Mexican-Americans are now also turning to Washington for massive civil rights protection against what they see as unwarranted use of force, and outright abuse, by lawmen in the Southwest.

What the Justice Department has offered so far has been a plodding, case-by-case review of several Mexican-American deaths, investigations carried out virtually at the whim of FBI offices and U.S. attorneys in the Southwest.

Martinez, in a plea to Attorney General Griffin B. Bell, cited 30 well-publicized cases of possible police misconduct—some of which the Justice Department says it never heard of. Said Drew S. Days III, assistant attorney general for civil rights: "On some of these cases we have no record, we have never received any kind of complaint, we never got the FBI report, nothing from U.S. attorneys.

"I don't want to try to allocate blame. The fact is that some of these matters come to us slowly."

If ever. The FBI initially refused to investigate Lozano's mysterious death in the second-floor jail of the county courthouse here in Odessa, deferring to the Texas Rangers. Only after someone complained to Tony Canales, the U.S. attorney 450 miles away in Houston, did a federal investigation start.

Here, the investigation into Lozano's death awaits an inquest by Justice of the Peace Virgil Lumpee, who on Jan. 22 hastily ruled the death a suicide. Lumpee is now waiting for a third medical examiner's report before convening the inquest, in which jurors will rule on whether the death was suicide, homicide, natural or accidental.

The local prosecutor, John Green, says that if the verdict is homicide, prosecution will follow, but he has his mind made up: the Mexican-American groups alleging that Lozano was beaten, he said, "will eat their words."

"There is not anything unusual that happened."

And that is exactly what has concerned Mexican Americans.

NEXT: Politics.

Lack of Clout

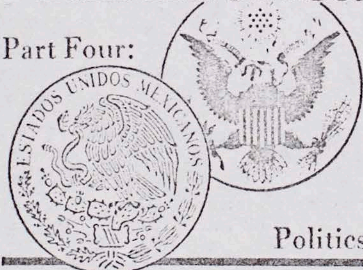
Leaders Blame Reluctance To Use Electoral Process

MAR. 29, 1978, WASH. POST

By Joel Kotkin

Special to The Washington Post

WASCO, Calif. — For generations they have lived in this dusty San Joaquin Valley town of 8,900, drawn by the promise of steady work on the area's vast corporate farms. Laying out the long irrigation pipelines and pruning the trees under the valley's unremitting sun, they have helped make



this among the world's richest agricultural regions — only to return home to Wasco, to peeling paint, stray dogs, and hostile police, a voiceless people.

This was the year things were supposed to change for Wasco's Mexican - American community, which makes up close to half of the town's population. Urged on by militant organizers from Los Angeles, 135 miles to the south, two local Mexican-Americans became the first community members to attempt running for the city council. But they were disqualified weeks before the March 7 municipal vote for violating, on minor technicalities, the state election code.

"It's blatant discrimination against us," charged an angry Marshall Rangel-Equilera, a usually soft-spoken 43-year-old school custodian whose candidacy was declared invalid because he submitted his nominating petitions 10 minutes after the filing deadline. "They try to stop you with their little rules. The Anglos know we're becoming the majority in the Southwest. They're afraid of the sleeping giant that might be waking up."

He is right, in that Mexican-Americans already are by far the largest minority in the Southwest and growing fast. It is a prelude to the future for the entire country, which will see Hispanics more numerous than blacks in this country by the next decade.

But far more than Anglo hostility is preventing the Mexican-American from rising out of his

See POLITICS, A6, Col. 1

Hispanic Leaders Cite Failure to

POLITICS, From A1

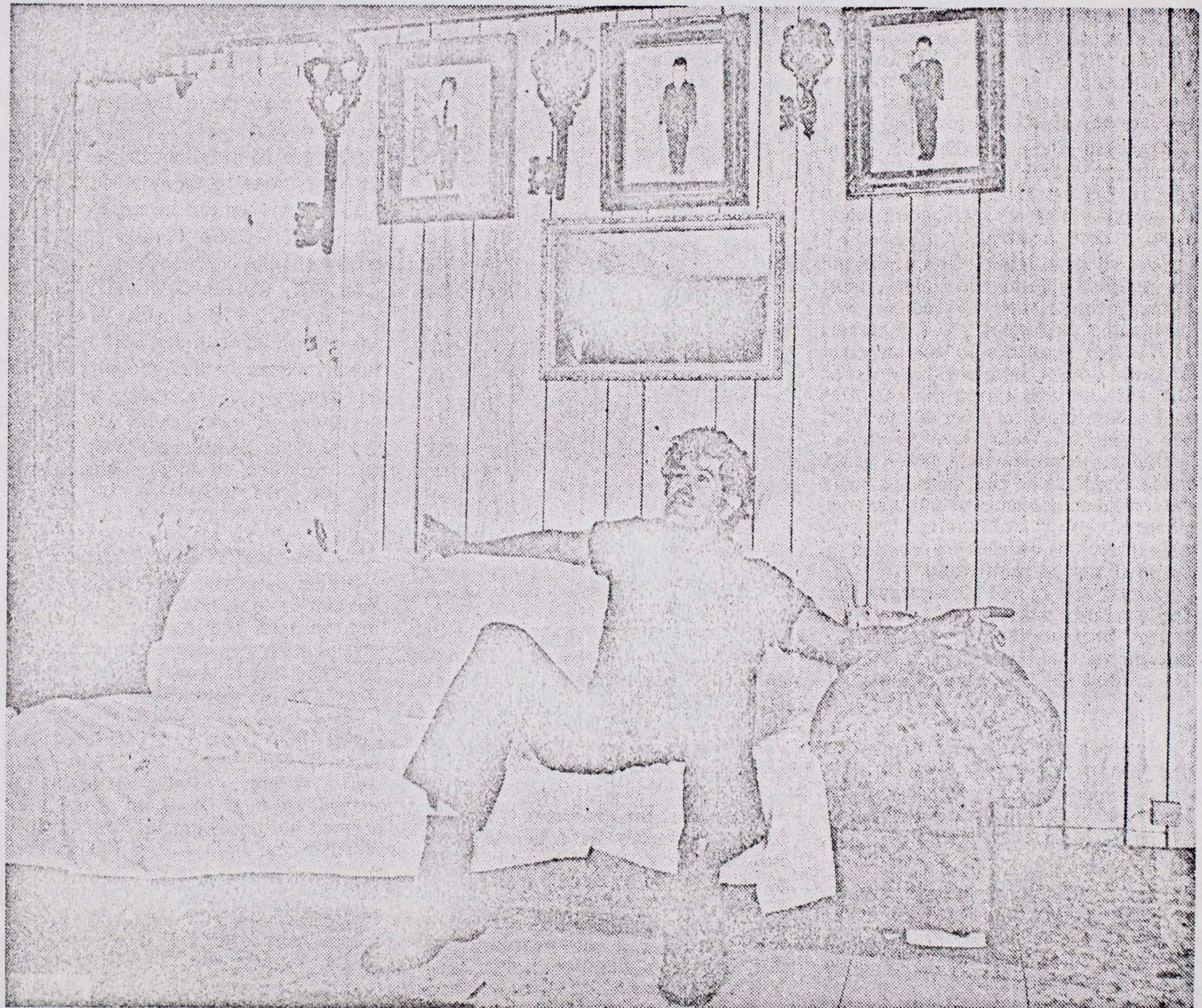
political slumber. Ingrown habits of political passivity, produced by centuries of oppression and violence in this country and in Mexico, have produced a population that many Mexican-American leaders believe is almost impossible to organize.

For instance, upon hearing about Rangel-Equilera's tardy election petitions, one veteran Mexican-American organizer shook his head knowingly. "It's that damn *manana* thing again, that Indian sense of fatalism," he said dejectedly, raising his eyes toward the ceiling. "They don't worry about today because God will take care of us tomorrow. It gets us all the time."

Perhaps no one was more frustrated by the failure to qualify of Rangel-Equilera and his co-candidate, Rudi Polares, than Miguel Garcia, a 35-year-old militant lawyer from the East Los Angeles barrio who engineered their campaign. "Man, those people are so primitive down there, they don't know about the law or any stuff like that," Garcia said as he steered his van through the brightly painted streets. "Next time, someone's going to have to stay with them all the time so the people there won't get so tripped up."

What keeps activists such as Garcia going, despite the frustrations, is a certain feeling of destiny—a sense that, with their burgeoning numbers, Mexican-Americans someday will take their proper place in the corridors of power, both across the Southwest and in national politics.

They point with pride to the few Mexican-American politicians who have succeeded, such as New Mexico Gov. Jerry Apodaca.



By James M. Thresher—The Washington Post

Marshall Rangel-Equilera of Wasco, Calif., whose candidacy for the city council was declared invalid.

"We know our numbers are increasing," Garcia said, looking out at the crowded Brooklyn Avenue shopping district, a jumble of advertisements in a mixture of Spanish and English. "By 1990 we'll be the majority of the state. We were in this land first—and we know it is our destiny to control it."

Yet, while they dream big dreams, Mexican-American militants so far have been notably unable to transfer their brave rhetoric into political reality. From Texas to California, Mexican-Americans are underrepresented from the lowest levels of government to the statehouse—often holding as little as one-fifth of their proportion of the population in key local elected positions.

This lack of representative clout is felt as well on Capitol Hill. The congressional Hispanic Caucus, which is attempting to speak for Spanish-speaking citizens nationwide, says there are only four Mexican-Americans in Congress. In comparison, Jewish-Americans, a smaller ethnic minority, hold 27 congressional seats, and even the tiny Arab-American community can boast six members of Congress.

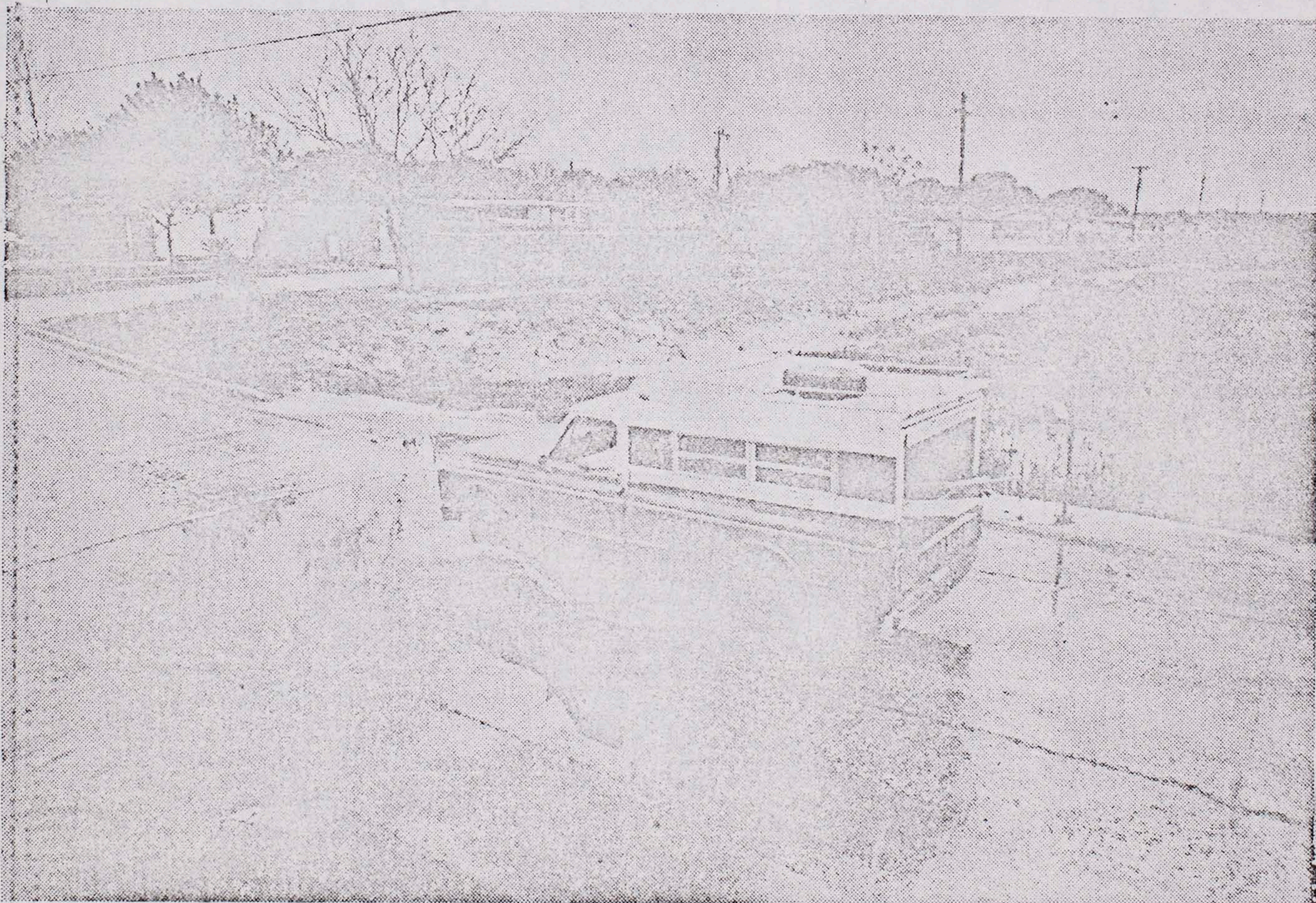
But it is by looking at the dramatic political gains made by black Americans that Mexican-American leaders measure their own progress and find it wanting. "The black community is far better organized than we are," admits Rep. Edward R. Roybal (D-Calif.), chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. "When they speak to a congressional committee, they do it with one strong voice, like the NAACP or the Urban League. What we need is a unified political front like the blacks have had for 15 years. We're at least 15 years behind them."

Behind this political impotence, many Mexican-American leaders believe, is a reluctance among their people to get involved in the electoral process. In many recent elections, for instance, Mexican-Americans have gone to the polls at rates sometimes half that of the local Anglo population and a third less than the black community.

This reluctance among Mexican-Americans to register and vote is so deep-rooted that Art Torres, a California assemblyman, couldn't even get his mother to vote when he first ran for office in 1974.

"You have to understand," Torres explained, "it's just very hard for people of that generation to get involved. It's always seemed like something a little foreign."

Torres and other Mexican-American activists believe this failure to go to the polls grows out of a history of harassment and abuse against their people by the very institutions of government the elections are meant to control. "We've been scared so long, of the police, of the whole Anglo system," said Margaret La Rue, a Wasco farmworker and leader of the activist



By James M. Thresher—The Washington Post

Voter rejection of bond issue means this area of south San Antonio will continue to be flooded in heavy rains.

Register and Vote

La Gente Unida group in that rural town. "We didn't get involved because we didn't want to cause problems for our families and because politics always seemed to mean trouble for us."

Today in towns like Wasco this suspicion of authority comes from a widespread fear of the police, who many Mexican-Americans claim hit them without cause, and hatred for the local schools, which are consistently accused of discriminating against young Spanish-surnamed students. But the roots of political noninvolvement go further back, across the dry lands of the Southwest, to the bloody aftermath of the Mexican revolution in the early part of this century and the mass deportations of Mexican workers from this country in the 1930s.

"Man, you know, for a long time Chicanos never really knew if they were going to be deported one day or the next," said Matt Garcia, chairman of the 21-member Chicano Caucus of the Texas legislature. "It's had one hell of a lingering effect."

Recoiling against this history of fear and oppression, the Mexican-American community has turned to itself, seeking in cultural solidarity what it seemed unlikely to gain in politics. Today, across the Southwest, in the barrios and in clusters of little wooden houses on the edge of vast agricultural ranches, it is possible for a Mexican-American to feel himself apart from the general American society around him.

"We are another country," insisted Miguel Garcia, as radios blared Spanish on Brooklyn Avenue in East Los Angeles and long lines of people poured out of a nearby church. "We have our own culture, our own language. We feel different from the rest of America."

In their ethnically homogeneous barrios of the Southwest, many Mexican-Americans have felt no need to risk their Mexican identity by getting involved in the American political system. "You can get into a good fight about this in any bar in south Phoenix," said Alfredo Gutierrez, majority leader of the Arizona Senate. "I went to segregated schools where in many ways we were reluctant to enter the majority culture. We felt we were better than them. It didn't matter to a whole lot of people what happened in the majority society. We had to learn we didn't lose our souls by learning English and getting into society."

In the early 1970s some Mexican-American activists, weary of the pluralistic politics of the Democratic Party, attempted to translate some of this separatist fervor into political action with the Texas-based La Raza Unida party. But after some stunning successes, particularly in the heavily Mexican-American communities of the Rio Grande Valley, La Raza Unida has been reduced to controlling one small rural Texas community, Crystal City. "We got our teeth knocked in," said one former La Raza Unida organizer from Texas.

"The people just got discouraged. It was like Charlie Brown, man, how can we lose when we try so hard?"

The failure to build any sustaining political organizations has meant that in small towns like Wasco, as well as in big cities like Los Angeles, Mexican-Americans continue to exist in a sort of twilight citizenship—contributing to the economy, paying taxes, owning houses but having virtually no say in the political life of their community. In Los Angeles, for instance, where more than a million Mexican-Americans reside, not one community member has sat on the city council in the past 15 years.

Even in San Antonio, the Texas city most observers see as having the best-organized Mexican-American community in the Southwest, whites continue to dominate the political process. Although Mexican-Americans outnumber Anglos by better than 4 to 3, the whites still constitute a substantial 56 percent of the registered voters.

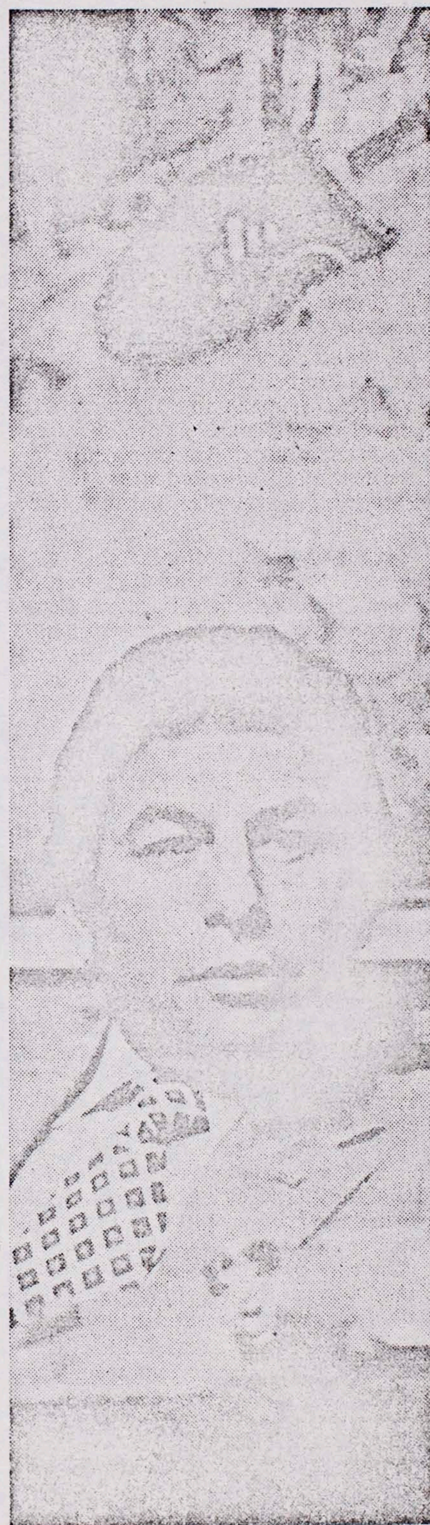
Better organized and financed, the white community earlier this month was able to defeat, by a ratio of more than 3 to 2, a $98.4 million public works bond issue, most of which would have been spent in Mexican-American neighborhoods. It was supported vigorously by the city's five Mexican-American council members and by the powerful Communities Organized for Public Service.

The results discouraged many Mexican-American leaders in Texas, particularly City Councilman Henry Cisneros, an all-but-announced candidate for mayor.

"It doesn't help us one bit that our people won't register and don't vote," Cisneros said, sadness underlying his natural buoyancy. "It shows us we really do have a long, long way to go before our numbers start adding up into power."

About 1,500 miles away, here in the desolate little town of Wasco, another aspiring Mexican-American politician contemplated political defeat. But for Marshall Rangel-Equilera, there was pride mixed with remorse, a feeling that just by running he had broken a chain of quiescence that is generations old.

"You have to understand what a big step we've taken here, even if we lost this time," he said as he watched a group of Mexican-American youths smoking cigarettes in front of a run-down wood-frame house. "I've lived here all my life and never did I think anything like running for office was even possible. Maybe someday a Mexican will come out here who knows things about politics, and then watch out. It will be like the gunfight at the OK Corral."



New Mexico Gov. Jerry Apodaca, a source of Hispanic pride, in Santa Fe office.

Staff writers Lou Cannon and Bill Curry contributed to this article.

NEXT: The future.

'We Belong Here'

Hispanics Strive for Assimilation While Retaining Ethnic Identity

By Lou Cannon and Joel Kotkin
Special to The Washington Post

LOS ANGELES — As Mexican-Americans struggle to achieve full political and economic equality in the Southwest settled by their forebears, they frequently see themselves as foreigners in their own land.

In a region where the Spanish language and the Mexican culture are apt to be regarded as a badge both of separateness and inferiority, Mexican-Americans seek to become full and active citizens while simultaneously preserving their heritage, their way of life and their church. Sometimes the strain of trying to accomplish all this seems too much to bear.

"There is still oppression and discrimination," cried Mario Obledo, a California state government official at a recent Mexican-American rally in Los Angeles. "What happened to our pride, our spirit, our unity, our inner selves? Why did we give up so easily? What happened to our culture and our very being?"

Obledo's words touched the hearts of an audience that knew that its Spanish, Mexican and Indian ancestors ruled a half million square miles of the Southwest—all of the present states of California, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Colorado and most of Texas—for three centuries before it was taken away from them by force of arms.

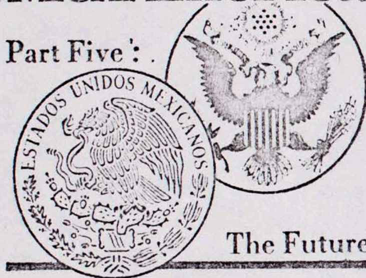
Sometimes this knowledge is expressed defiantly, as it was this same evening by Rep. Edward R. Roybal of Los Angeles, one of four Mexican-Americans in the House of Representatives.

"Our roots were planted in the soil of the United States long before they [the Anglo-Americans] arrived," Roybal said. "Our boys fought on the battlefields of Europe and Korea and Vietnam—and we intend to remain here."

Roybal's speech was a reminder that MexAmerica is a phenomenon both old and new. Before the

MexAmerica

Part Five:



The Future

Southwest was American it was Spanish and, after that, Mexican. But for the first time since the Treaty of Guadalupe Hildalgo in 1848, Mexican-Americans are becoming an influential minority within the borders of the United States. This minority is the largest in the first and third most populous states, California and Texas, and with the help of other Hispanic immigrants from the Caribbean islands and South America, soon will attain this status in the entire country.

See FUTURE, A10, Col. 1

Many Mexicans think of the move from Juarez, across the Rio Grande from El Paso, more like moving to a richer neighborhood than going to another country.

Hispanics Try to Assimilate

FUTURE, From A1

Indeed, there are those who say that the Mexican-Americans will be able to reconquer by high birth rate and unceasing immigration what they lost on the battlefield more than a century ago.

All migratory waves arouse fearful nativist feelings in the United States. "Old-stock Americans have become restless," warned a journal in 1924. "They are dissatisfied with the denationalizing forces at work in this country. There is something wrong, and the American people know there is something wrong . . ."

These words are from a Ku Klux Klan magazine, Fiery Cross. They were the prelude to an anti-Catholic article in which the author worried that Catholics, Jews and blacks would make common cause against native white Americans. Now, crosses occasionally burn again on California hillsides, and respectable people warn against being "denationalized" by bilingual education.

The Klan still is small potatoes in the West. Mexican-Americans who have never seen the burning crosses are reminded in subtle ways—and sometimes in ways not subtle at all—that they are not fully accepted citizens in the United States.

The car of a distinguished-looking Mexican-American businessman was halted at the Immigration and Naturalization Service's San Clemente, Calif., checkpoint, and the Los Angeles-born industrialist was interrogated about his citizenship while cars full of unkempt Anglo surfers heading to the beach were waved by without being stopped.

Such humiliations remind Mexican-Americans that they are suspended like tightrope walkers between two nations and two cultures. If they go to Mexico, they are apt to be regarded as "gringos." Some, like the southern Californians described by Jose Antonio Villerreal in the novel "Pocho," express contempt for Anglo-Americans and hauteur toward Mexicans, becoming "truly a lost race."

With history on their side, Mexican-Americans are apt to argue that they are different from other immigrants to the United States. As the continent's most senior immigrants, they say they are "Americans"—in the sense that Jefferson or Monroe used the word to describe all North Americans—as fully as the Anglos who came after them. And yet Mexican-Americans face many of the same problems as the earlier European immigrants and, like them, have responded in varying ways.

Some have assimilated while others have retreated into their culture. Some have sought to "be like everyone else" while others have proclaimed their heritage with pride. Some have protested and others have gone along with the inequities, hoping that time would blur the differences and the discrimination. And some, perhaps the majority, have attempted to assimilate and to keep their culture at the same time.

The old "melting pot" ideal of the United States fell on hard times in the ethnic 1970s. But don't try to tell that to the thousands of Mexican-Americans who live side by side with Anglo-Americans in middle-class communities in San Antonio, Albuquerque, Phoenix and Los Angeles. Don't try to tell it to the tens of thousands of Mexican-Americans in California whom Ronald Reagan in 1966 found so receptive to his conservative message that he took to ending speeches with the Spanish phrase "Ya basta!" Its rough equivalent in English: "Had enough?"

Photos by James M. Thresher—The Washington Post

Bishop Juan Arzube greets worshipers on way to Mass at church in Los Angeles.

of any political persuasion have not had enough of is respect for their own cultural heritage from the Anglo-American majority.

"I don't believe we're going to fall into the melting pot," says Democrat Alfredo Guiterrez, the state Senate majority leader in Arizona. "All we're going to fight for is a piece of the pie, but in a pluralistic society. We want to keep our culture and our language so that we can survive culturally in the United States."

Vilma Martinez, general counsel of the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, believes that national leaders have a "black-white orientation," reflecting a lack of national understanding or interest in Mexican-Americans.

"Look at television, for God's sake," says Martinez. "The first program about a Mexican-American was Chico and the Man. And they hired a Puerto Rican-Hungarian to play Chico, and then they hired a Puerto Rican artist to write the music. I like Jose Feliciano, but that's not Chicano music."

Martinez thinks that Mexican-

While Retaining Culture

Americans suffer because they are coming of age politically "not in the Age of Aquarius but the age of [Allan] Bakke." She means they are clamoring for full civil rights at the very time that the tide is running against civil-rights protests by minorities.

Whether or not their timing is right politically, Mexican-Americans have a better chance than other immigrants to preserve their cultural heritage. Both the Mexican-American culture and the Spanish language are constantly replenished in the Southwest by new arrivals from Mexico who speak little or no English.

Unlike many of the European immigrants, the Mexican migrates into an area related to his history and experience. Much of the Southwest is physically similar to northern Mexico—hot, dry and barren with vast expanses of mesas, mountains and mesquite. The place names are Spanish. For many Mexicans, it is more like moving to a richer neighborhood than migrating to another country.

Nonetheless, Mexican-Americans experience the same generational conflicts and inner-group prejudices as other groups. "The younger ones sometimes are embarrassed by their elders," said Jaime Rodriguez, a historian at the University of California-Irvine. "They don't think they dress right or speak well."

Among Mexican-Americans — but rarely in the presence of Anglos — a crude and unlettered person is sometimes called "a Tijay," deriving from the Mexican border city of Tijuana. It would be the equivalent of saying of a European immigrant of an earlier day that he just got off the boat.

But a strong case could be made that even the newest Mexican arrivals in the Southwest are a stabilizing and socially beneficial addition, particularly in a southern California associated with hedonism and a disintegrating family structure.

Despite upsurges of nationalism, the Mexican-American's greatest attachment has been to his home, his family and his church—hardly harbingers of revolution. At the same time, Mexican-Americans and others from Latin America have constituted a major political influence within the Roman Catholic Church, one institution already reacting strongly to the rise of MexAmerica. In 1970 there were no Spanish-surnamed bishops in the region. Now there are six.

Much of the pressure to enlist the prestige of the church in behalf of campaigns for social justice has come from the Padres, a southwestern association of activist Hispanic priests. These priests find their voice in leaders such as Bishop Patrick Flores of San Antonio and Bishop Juan Arzube of Los Angeles. Arzube, an Ecuadorian, has been an exponent of the so-called "liberation theology" developed in Latin American countries, which combines religious preachings with socio-political action.

Father Juan Romero is one of the Padres. He comes from a New Mexican family that traces its ancestry back to the 17th-century Spaniards. Now he is a Los Angeles parish priest who, with others, spent 14 years trying to convince their superiors to let them serve the people in their own langu-

"I would sit in the confessional hearing the people complain in Spanish, but we had to hold Masses in English," Romero remembers. "To some of the pastors, teaching English was more important than teaching the gospel. It was tearing us up."

Romero seems to be struggling toward a synthesis between the seemingly conflicting poles of assimilation and ethnic identity. He would understand the words of Thomas Wolfe, who wrote: "I think the true discovery of America is before us. I think the true fulfillment of our spirit, of our people, of our mighty and immortal land is yet to come."

This fulfillment is approaching in MexAmerica. "We have come to an equilibrium by understanding who we are—Mestizos ('mixed-blood') and Americans, something different," says Romero. "We are a new people that has a destiny. It's a sense of peoplehood that is just now coming . . . We've been here longer than anyone else. We belong here."

Staff writer Bill Curry and special correspondent Bruce Cory contributed to this report.

Participants in San Antonio program that provides lunch for elderly citizens.

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Illegal Aliens Received On Visit at White House

By Christopher Dickey
Washington Post Staff Writer

Fourteen Latin Americans were invited to the White House yesterday to talk with presidential assistant Margaret Costanza.

Several of them had trouble identifying themselves to get past White House security because they are illegal aliens, without any documentation that allows them to live and work in the United States. One said he has been deported four times.

The issue of documentation is what brought them there in the first place. Grapefruit pickers from Arizona, sugar cane workers from Louisiana, domestics and dishwashers from the District of Columbia and their representatives have been gathering since Friday in Mt. Pleasant for a conference of the National Workers Project.

Those who spoke yesterday with Costanza vehemently attacked President Carter's proposed immigration legislation. They also protested what they called the brutality and harassment of the Border Patrol and police forces in the Southwest that have been rounding up illegal aliens.

Five people on their way to the conference from Phoenix last week were picked up by the Border Patrol in Arizona, according to a spokesman for Immigration and Naturalization Service and members of the Project.

Five more, who made it into the White House yesterday, told Costanza that they oppose the Carter immigration plan. They called for a general amnesty. Carter is asking amnesty for those who have lived here since before 1970, a restricted 5-year amnesty for those here since Jan. 1, 1977, and sanctions against employers of undocumented workers.

"We are punished by that (proposed) law very much," said Manuel Maria Bernal, who, like several of the others at the White House, came to work in the citrus groves of the Southwest because he could not support his family in Mexico. Bernal told Costanza he hoped the government would grant visas to workers so they may come and go as their work demands.

Other members of the conference criticized the Carter plan's sanctions against employers of illegal aliens because they believe such measures —already in effect in Virginia and about 20 other states, and under consideration in the District of Columbia —lead to discrimination against all workers with foreign-seeming features or accents.

Costanza was told that foreign nationals would prefer unionization of workers rather than the Carter proposal.

Though some labor groups have blamed illegal aliens for failure of some efforts to unionize workers, because with the threat of deportation they are reluctant to oppose their employers, there recently have been successful strikes of undocumented workers in Arizona citrus groves.

Lupe Sanchez, who helped organize those strikes, told a reporter that his workers won the right to blankets and bathroom facilities, a minimum wage, and warnings before the trees under which they sleep are sprayed with pesticide. "It is obscene," said Sanchez, "to have to negotiate such things."

Costanza said she would visit the groves soon. After hearing repeated charges of harassment and brutality against Immigration Service agents and local police, she said she would send a report of the meeting to the Attorney General.

A spokesman for the Immigration and Naturalization Service said it takes "maximum steps to minimize brutality. But we can't control what the local police forces do. We don't encourage them, we discourage them."

3d Generation, But 2d-Class Citizen

Killings by Police Stir Unrest in Denver, Northernmost MexAmerican City

By Cynthia Gorney
Special to The Washington Post

DENVER — In winter the park is two long plots of frost-dried grass with a distant view of the mountains and a closer view of the projects. They call it Curtis Park, which is its official name, or Mestizo ("mixed-blood") Park, which is not. Andy Espinoza, the 29-year-old son of a man who is now a Colorado statistic, sat in a community center by the park last week and said, his voice flat and hard:

"I don't know if my dad was there sleeping and just got blasted away, or did he wake up and start dodging all them bullets?"

Espinoza's father Arthur died at 48, on a warm evening last summer in Curtis Park. He was killed by a policeman's bullet. He was drunk when he died—so drunk, his relatives say, that a little while earlier he could not be roused from a stupor—and the bullet hit him while he was lying on the grass. The man lying next to him, another Mexican-American named James Hinojos, was killed at the same time, in the same way.

Those two deaths, and the great shudder of Mexican-American anger that followed them, are now referred to in Denver as the Curtis Park Incident. Police shootings have been questioned before; Mexican-Americans have claimed racism before. But something about the Curtis Park Incident, this killing of two drunken men in a public place, touched a raw nerve in a city perhaps one-fifth Mexican-American. "All of a sudden all the little harassing things people experience," reflected city councilman Sal Carpio—*[illegible]: never trust a Mexican; what's your hurry, the tamales getting cold?*—all of that went public, pulling council members, state representatives, and finally a Denver grand jury into the aftermath of Curtis Park.

What is especially striking about the Curtis Park incident is the myths it shatters about the nature and location of some of this country's Mexican-American population. Espinoza and Hinojos were both third-generation Americans—not aliens, not naturalized immigrants, but men whose roots in this country predate those of many Anglos. Both families, like many Colorado Mexican-Americans, trace back to New Mexico and the years before the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, when the United States was ceded most of the Southwest from Mexico.

As Carpio pointed out, the name of the state is a Spanish word: Colorado means, literally, colored, and in this context describes the beautiful red colors of the Colorado River Valley. Today Denver is the northernmost city in MexAmerica—an urban magnet for Mexican-American families abandoning the towns farther south where their grandparents worked the land.

Arthur Espinoza and James Hinojos had tangled with police before last summer. Both had criminal records, and Espinoza's relatives say a police officer once took out his gun in a Denver bar, unloaded the bullets, and held one up to Espinoza: "See this, Artie?" the officer is supposed to have said. "This has your name on it."

The police reports made public the morning after July 30 emphasized those criminal records. Police said that they had been told a drug dealer and murder suspect was in Curtis Park, and that in the course of their search they saw the suspect driving away with another man. They said they tried to stop the car but one of the men opened fire and they shot back.

That was the first report. The story changed considerably over the next few days. The men, it seemed, had not been in a car. Then it seemed the men had not been standing up. By the time the autopsy was completed and Denver City Council Chairman Elvin Calwell had promised a full investigation —"The public is entitled to know the facts," he said—the police account said two vice squad officers had responded to an Espinoza family complaint and had come upon the two men lying in Curtis Park.

Hinojos had a gun, pointed it at the officers, and was ordered to drop it, police said. The officers fired, killing Hinojos (the autopsy found eight gun shot wounds in his body). One of two more officers who had arrived on the scene fired at Espinoza and killed him with a single bullet through the groin. Both bodies later showed blood alcohol levels far beyond the Colorado minimum for intoxication.

Curtis Park turned ugly within minutes of the shooting. Several hundred black and Mexican-American youths gathered quickly in the area and were dispersed only after dozens of police —the estimates range upward of 60, some in full riot gear—sealed off the park and used tear gas. But it was back the next day, only bigger; demonstrators listened to an 18-year old Mexican-American youth describe the shooting he said he had seen: "The police jumped out of their cars and opened fire on them without even saying a word. The police murdered them."

A march followed the rally and community leaders demanded murder indictments: "If you're a cop and you kill a Chicano you get off scot free," one activist shouted. Calwell called it "one of the most delicate and explosive situations since I have been on council," and appointed an investigative task force made up largely of Mexican-American state and local leaders.

Espinoza's seven children filed a multimillion-dollar damage suit in Denver District Court, charging malicious and reckless violation of their father's civil rights. And on Dec. 8, by a 9-to-3 vote, patrolman David E. Neil was indicted by a grand jury for felony manslaughter in Espinoza's death.

Neil's trial is scheduled to begin in May—it is unclear why no other indictments were issued, because the grand jury's transcript is sealed—and although he was briefly removed from his position, he is now back on duty at full pay, which enrages many Denver Mexican-Americans. Police say it would be unfair to penalize Neil before a verdict.

Neil is not on patrol now, though. "He'll get killed if he's in a car," Carpio said. That feeling and the comment by a Denver policeman shortly after the shooting—"You can see the hate when you drive by"—may set the tone for the city as it waits for his trial.

Former Houston chief held on U.S. charges

HOUSTON (UPI) — FBI agents arrested a former Houston police chief Monday and charged him with obstructing justice in a bizarre bribery-extortion plot into which the names of a U.S. attorney and a high-ranking Washington federal official were drawn.

Assistant Chief Carrol M. Lynn, who took a lesser post after he resigned as chief in 1975 because of a controversial investigation of police wiretapping, was brought to the U.S. courthouse in handcuffs.

Asked if he thought the handcuffs were necessary, Lynn said, "I guess somebody thinks so.

"I HAVE NO comment," Lynn told reporters. "I'm just following this gentleman (an FBI agent) right here."

FBI special agent-in-charge Robert Franck refused to name the case involved.

But an affidavit in the case released by other officials outlined an elaborate scenario in which Lynn allegedly solicited $45,000 to "take care of a case" reportedly pending in the office of U.S. Atty. Tony Canales.

The affidavit stated that John V. Holden, under a federal indictment (reportedly involving securities), and his attorney, Gerald Birnberg, allegedly were approached at the University Club by Lynn. The affidavit said Lynn told the two men the money would go to Leonel Castillo, a former city controller in Houston who now heads the Immigration and Naturalization Service, who in turn would reportedly "put the fix" through to Canales.

An FBI spokesman, however, said there was no evidence nor any charge that either Castillo or Canales were involved or knew anything about the case.

ACCORDING to the affidavit, a go-between for Birnberg later contacted Castillo in Washington. Castillo then allegedly contacted Canales, who called Birnberg to his office. At that time, the lawyer gave his testimony to officials.

In another aspect of the case, two assailants reportedly fired several shots last week at Birnberg outside his residence, hitting him once in the hand.

According to the affidavit, Birnberg subsequently was told "that Lynn could remove the threat of Holden and Birnberg possibly suffering further physical harm for payment of $45,000."

According to the affidavit, Holden reportedly was taken to Lynn's office at the police station by one of Lynn's subordinates to discuss the matter further.

"HOLDEN WAS then advised by Lynn that Lynn felt very strongly that Tony Canales and/or Castillo were the individuals responsible for having Birnberg shot. He then told Holden that Holden was on the hit list and that a payment of $45,000 would keep him from being shot," the affidavit said.