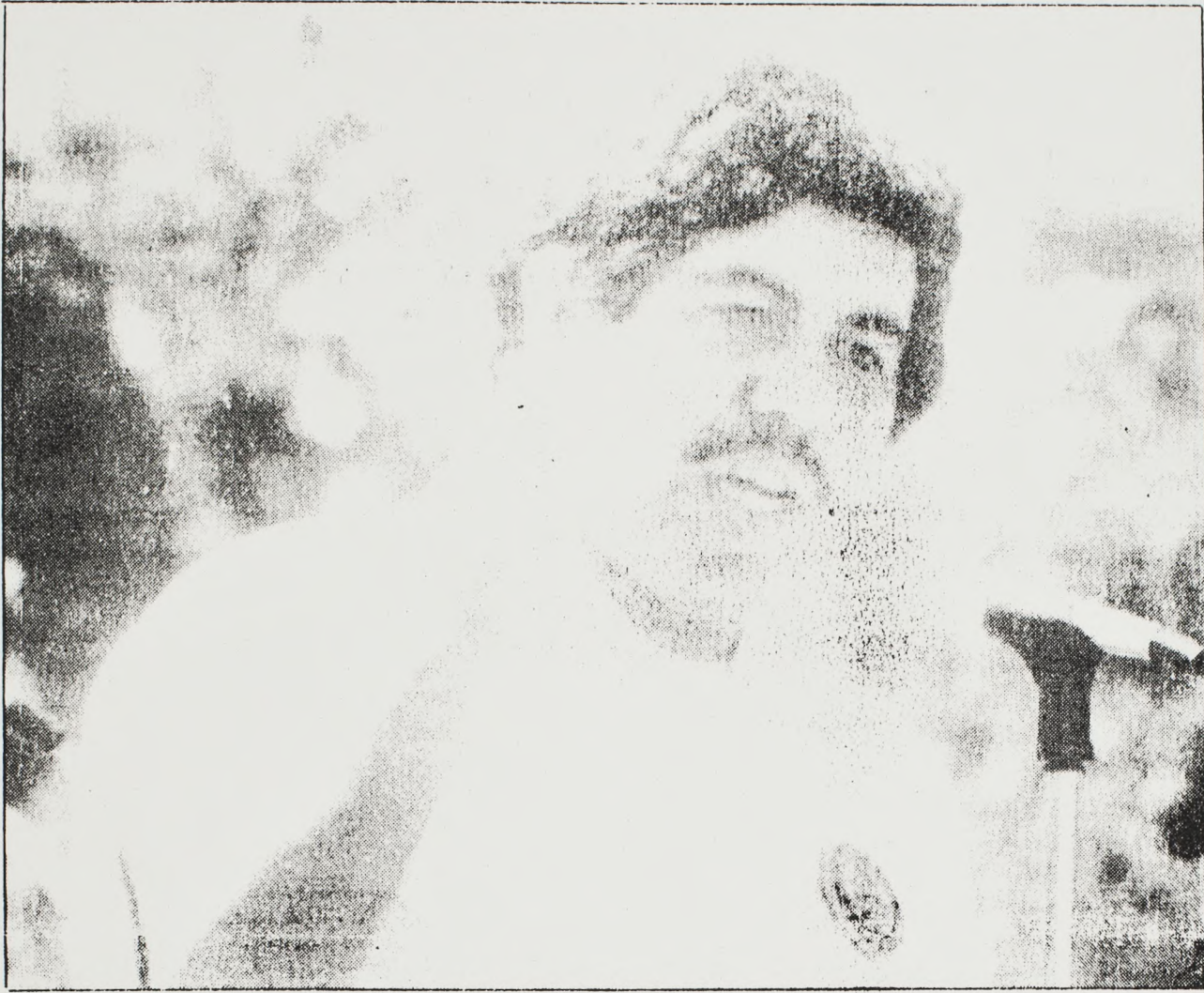


Governor Wilson/Prop 187 Is Not About Immigration but Racial War in California!

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FILE PHOTO

Herman Baca, Chairman of the Committee on Chicano Rights.

By Daniel Muñoz

Herman Baca, Chairman of the Committee On Chicano Rights, met with the Editorial Board of *La Prensa San Diego* to define the current immigration hysteria generated by the extreme Right-Wing and to define what the implications of Proposition 187 are from a Chicano perspective.

Baca, has been involved in defending the Human, Civil and Constitutional Rights of persons of Mexican -Latin ancestry of this state and nation for the past 25 years. In the process, he and the Committee on Chicano Rights have established new parameters for the definition of the racial-social problems that confront the Mexican/Chicano American community and the Anglo-dominated society of California and the nation.

Baca has gained the respect of local, statewide and national organizations for his perceptive and incisive understanding of the political and social interaction issues that confront our society.

Twenty-five years ago in a speech at Stanford University, Baca first made the prophetic remarks that Chicanos in the U.S. would either take their rightful place in U.S. society or live under a South African type apartheid system.

La Prensa joined Herman Baca in a dialogue seeking insights into the current situation:

L/P: Because of your ethnicity and culture, your organization has often crossed paths with immigrant rights groups, the INS, Border Patrol, the Justice Department, and the various farm labor groups.

In your view, does the current Mexican Bashing and scape-goating by Governor Pete Wilson and the Prop 187 proponents have anything to do with Immigration?

BACA: No. What I see missing from the dialogue is the Chicano historical political perspective. I see two issues that have to be addressed:

- That those that are going to be affected (persons of Mexican ancestry) by Prop 187 have not been included or have had the opportunity to define the issue from their historical experience and perspective.

- And, what are the long range social and political ramifications for the society that all of us are going to live in?

If you look at Prop 187 and the Mexican bashing by Governor Wilson and company one can see that what they are

discussing is not immigration but us. What is happening today is but a continuation of the struggle between persons of Mexican ancestry and Anglo society which started in 1848. The historical fact is two fold. First, how they, the shrinking Anglo majority, can continue to control the flow of cheap and exploitable labor. Secondly, how they can continue to maintain the 15-20 million Chicanos in a state of disfranchisement. The implications for those of us that have struggled to franchise the Chicano people, the issue posed by Prop 187 is very simple - It is an attack on the civil and constitutional rights of all of our people.

L/P: How do you account for the fact that the polls show that 52% of our own people appear to support Prop 52?

BACA: Our own people have not grasped the simple fact that Wilson, and the proponents of Prop 187, are not talking about immigration but are talking about us; our wives, parents, brothers, sisters and more importantly their children and their

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children's children. Prop 187, if it were about immigration (legal or illegal) it would be talking about immigration from Russia, Europe, Asia, Latin America, etc. Prop 187 would be addressing itself to all immigrants that are coming into this nation not only Mexicans.

Prop 187 would be talking about how we provide visas, passports, student visas, quotas, the Immigration Reform Act of 1986, the rules and regulations of how people come in and leave. Prop 187 doesn't address any of those immigration issues. That message hasn't gotten out to our people. They believe they are dealing with an abstract "they" and not them.

When polls show that 52% of our people support 187. I have a tendency to believe that. They see the same television programs, read the same newspapers, hear the same propaganda that Tom Metzger, and the KKK, have been hearing and reading about for the past 50 years. And what they have heard is the replica of the "big lie" on so call illegal- aliens and all the negatives that they bring about. That kind of mind conditioning has created a mind set amongst our own - that the so-call illegal alien are somehow getting something for nothing at their expense. That has been part of the "big lie."

L/P: In other words, what you point out is that all the negative advertising and propaganda put out by Governor Wilson, the Republican Party, and the Prop 187 people has had nothing to do with the immigration. That the real agenda is far more sinister. What it really is, is an attack against those people who come from Mexico and Latin America.

BACA: Yes. This is a concerted attack against persons of Mexican ancestry. Let us not forget, that last year, 98% of the people that were apprehended, by the only national police force that this country has, were Mexican immigrants. They do not recognize or see any other ethnic or racial group as aliens. In fact, what we have is an immigrant policy that has been held captive by certain political and

The Big Lie



Herman Baca.

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economic interests for them to manipulate in anyway they see fit with us being the recipients or the victims of those actions.

I believe the long range policy of Wilson, and other racist politicians, is the creation of an apartheid system like the one which existed in South Africa or a Jim Crow segregationist system as the one which existed for Blacks in the U.S's Southern States. Wilson and company have planted the seeds for "racial warfare".

L/P: Is this what State Senator Bill Craven alluded to with his call for a National I.D. card.

BACA: Of course, Bill Craven made it clear that what they want is for all "brown-looking people" regardless of citizenship, to be treated like the Blacks who had to carry I.D. Cards in South Africa. Whites didn't have to carry I.D. Cards. That is what Mexicans will have to do. Old "senile" Craven let it out, that this is what "some" policy makers are attempting to do with Prop 187. What you see, if not an outright apartheid system, is some "Jim Crow" system.

When you put it in perspective what we see is a profile of a conquered people, the results of the U.S.- Mexico War. It is now a burgeoning population of people that have had a different set of historical experiences confronting a very privileged group. A group similar to Africaners

from South Africa who are bound and determined to hold on to their privileges. It now becomes very clear what a sinister plan Prop 187 is and what underlies most of the actions of Wilson and his crop of white supremist.

L/P: It should have been very clear to the simplest of minds, that the Governor was carrying out his racist agenda within the "Trojan Horse" of illegal immigrants.

BACA: It would seem that people would question why Wilson and company are doing this? Why has Pete Wilson grabbed onto this issue when what they are proposing is unconstitutional and is out of their purview. It is a Federal matter. It is a national issue that should be debated in the Congress. He knows full well that the solution would involve by-lateral, by-national negotiations at the highest national levels.

Prop 187 and the orchestrated attacks upon the persons of Mexican ancestry are part of a move by white Supremist to ensure that the status-quo remains. To assure that our growing numbers, sophistication and power do not challenge or usurp the established rule that has existed in this country since the American Revolution.

L/P: It is disheartening to see Mexican Americans, Latinos, Hispanics still supporting those who support and openly espouse the concepts of Prop 187.

BACA: We still have modern day Malinchies or Vendidos. If you look at Wilson's contribution list we see Hispanic names contributing to his campaign. In the process they are abetting and supporting their polices to segregate us, regulate us, or at a minimum make us carry identity cards.

We have sellouts like Gaddy Vasquez, Ralph Pesqueira, Ruth Jarmillo, Mike Padilla, John Sanchez and others who would put a party, that has told them in no uncertain terms that they are "nobodies,"...Like Senator Craven who called them "lower species of humanity," in a recent statement...and yet they put them ahead of their own people. Somehow or other, these people think they will escape the racist drag net that will be thrown over our people.

Perhaps, they should re-read the experiences of Linda Chavez, a recent darling of the Republican party who was denied entry into this country from Canada because she was brown! Here we have a person who led the fight for "English Only" in the U.S., put in her place by the INS because she was brown! It really must have wounded her to be told that "we don't care who you are...you're just another Mexican!" How long before Ruth Jaramillo and the other vendidos look in the mirror and discover who they really are?

L/P: What is the flip side of all this?

BACA: One thing that we can be thankful for is that Wilson and the Cravens' have done what we haven't been able to do with our people which is to wake them up!

I remember a speech that Martin Luther King made to the Blacks in the South. He said "We might not like segregationist public safety commissioner Bull Connor. But I have to tell you that Bull Connor has done more for the Black Civil Right movement than all the marches, demonstrations and all the boycotts.

Because what Bull Connor did was close all the back doors where we couldn't get out. We had to make a decision whether we would remain where we were in a segregated society or move forward." Wilson is our Bull Connor. He has closed all the back doors for us. Too long many of our Mexican Americans have thought they could pass and be white...Now, they know better.

Wilson has set the stage for student walkouts, boycotts, civil disobedience, we will once again be tear gassed, beaten and in some instances shot. Mexicans are a patient people...but when a family's children are threatened they will defend themselves.

L/P: Prop 187 in a sense has backed the persons of Mexican ancestry against a wall with nowhere to go.

BACA: No doubt about it. Governor Wilson and company have made a grave political error. Whether Prop 187 wins, loses or draws, they have awakened the "sleeping giant" because they have chosen to attack our most prized possession...."OUR CHILDREN"!

In recent days, perhaps seeing what he has created, Governor Pete Wilson has begun to soft paddle his immigration stance. We suggest that it is too late. THE FUSE IS LIT!



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