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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

December 10, 1975

TALKING POINTS: REPUBLICAN NATIONAL HISPANIC ASSEMBLY  
DECEMBER 11, 1975

I'm happy to welcome you to the White House this morning.

I've looked forward for some time to this meeting with the Republican  
National Hispanic Assembly. I am glad you're here.

I am well aware of one of your most urgent priorities -- increasing the number of Hispanic Americans in leadership positions in this Administration. I share this objective with you. Fernando De Baca, one of my principal assistants who specializes in Hispanic affairs, has been a most effective advocate in this regard. Doug Bennett in our Personnel office has kept me posted on efforts to improve the recruiting of Hispanic Americans.

In addition to Fred, Hispanic Americans in key posts in this Administration include Fernando Oaxaca (Wa-hock-a), Associate Director of OMB, Bert Gallegos (Guy-aig-oss), Administrator of the Community Services Administration, and Ricardo Nunez (Noon-yez), who will be ~~sworn-in~~  
~~today as~~ Director of HEW's Cuban Refugee Program.

Hispanic Americans deserve a strong voice in this Administration and in the conduct of national affairs. Altogether, 58 presently serve in policy-making posts. You also need more advocates and representatives in the Congress, like my good friend Manuel Lujan of New Mexico, who I am glad to see here.

In this connection, the Voting Rights Act which I signed into law last summer can be a very effective instrument for progress in this area.

I strongly support its special provisions for breaking down language barriers and guaranteeing full voting rights for Hispanic Americans.

Make sure the legislation is utilized for your maximum advantage, not just because you represent an important segment of the Republican Party, but because you represent an important segment of our national population.

Our common goal is to make life better for the Hispanic community in America -- by improving the standard of living of all, expanding the quality of education, which includes stressing the value of bi-lingual

education programs; by encouraging greater participation in the Minority Business Enterprise program; and by whipping the problems of unemployment and inflation which concern us all.

As Republicans, you know that we face a very important challenge in the next eleven months. Whether or not we withstand that challenge and achieve victory depends, in large part, on your efforts to win support for the party within the Hispanic community. It depends, too, on this Administration's record of help and encouragement for Hispanics. We will do our part. I know you will do your part,too.

Since I'm here to listen more than to talk this morning, I'm anxious to hear any concerns or suggestions you may wish to present at this time.

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