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THE RISE OF THE HISPANICS

*Isaac Cohen**

I

On the evening of Sunday, May 6, 1991, two police officers patrolling the racially mixed Mount Pleasant neighborhood, of Northwest Washington D.C., approached a person that was drinking from an "open alcohol container." An argument ensued between a Salvadorean man allegedly wielding a knife against a Black policewoman who shot and wounded him. The riots that followed led to widespread looting of more than a dozen stores, as well as rock and bottle throwing against police officers and setting several cars, trucks and buses on fire. After two nights of disturbances, Mayor Sharon Pratt Dixon imposed a curfew at 7 P.M. that brought back calm to the streets.

There was no direct confrontation between Hispanics and Blacks, some of them even joined the action, carried out mostly by Central American youngsters who spared Salvadorean restaurants and Guatemalan handicraft shops.

As with the riots of 1968 that linger in the city's memory, once again, both the intensity and the swiftness of the violent spasms took almost everybody by surprise, although the interpretations did not make themselves wait.

The incidents were immediately interpreted as an expression of the long-held resentment by Central Americans against the District of Columbia's Black power structure, particularly the city police.[1] Some saw a resurfacing of the attitudes against authority that the Central Americans brought from their ravaged homeland.[2] Others explained that this is the way competition takes place, in times of recession, at the bottom of the ladder.[3] Finally, the disturbances were seen as a manifestation of the forceful emergence of a Hispanic agenda.[4]

* Director of the Washington Office of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). The opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect those of the ECLALC.

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Be it as it may, the Mount Pleasant disturbances took place at the time when the 1990 census figures were being gradually disclosed.[5] For the second time, in the census, the Hispanics were singled out as a separate category, encompassing different racial identities.

According to the Bureau of the Census, "persons of Spanish/Hispanic origin are those who classify themselves in one of the specific Spanish origin categories listed in the question—for example, Mexican, Puerto Rican, or Cuban—as well as those who indicate they are of other Spanish/Hispanic origin. Persons reporting "Other Spanish/Hispanic" are those whose origins are from other Spanish-speaking countries of the Caribbean, Central or South America, or from Spain, or persons identifying themselves generally as Spanish, Spanish-American, Hispano, Hispanic, Latino, etc. Spanish origin and race are distinct; thus, persons of Spanish origin may be of any race."[6]

According to this new classification, in 1990, the Hispanics almost reached precisely the proverbial 10% of the total population,[7] considered as the numerical threshold that marks the difference between a passive and a threatening minority. Perhaps the fixation with this percentage is a legacy of the sixties, when Blacks reached 10% of the population in the United States.

II

Who are the Hispanics ?

Sometimes it is overlooked that after the native Americans, the Hispanics are among the oldest settlers of what now is U.S. territory, particularly along the states that border with Mexico.[8]

However, there are also some Hispanic groups who have arrived more recently, such as the Puerto Ricans after the Second World War; the Cubans during the last thirty years; and the Central Americans throughout the eighties.

According to the first figures released by the Bureau of the Census, during the eighties, the Hispanics were the fastest growing minority in the United States, from 6.4% of the total population in 1980 to 9% in 1990.[9]

These figures hide even more spectacular increases, such as the state of California where the Hispanic population grew 70%, from 4.5 million in 1980 to 7.7 million in 1990. Thus, out of the 30 million inhabitants of the state of California, in 1990, almost 26% percent were Hispanics, up from 19.2% in 1980.[10] The composition of the Hispanic minority in the United States also changed drastically during the eighties. Mexicans still constitute two thirds of all Hispanics, the largest and one of the fastest growing segments, increasing by more than 50% during the eighties, to reach 13.5 million.

Also, in 1990, 1 million Cubans and 2.7 million Puerto Ricans represented 5% and 10.5% of all Hispanics, respectively, with each also registering impressive increases of more than 30%. However, the most spectacular increase during the eighties was experienced by a group classified in the census figures as "Other Hispanics," growing 66.7%, from 3.0 million in 1980 to 5.0 million in 1990. This last category comprises mostly Central Americans, although it includes South Americans as well.

III

Despite some impressive gains, the Hispanics still lag behind in almost any average U.S. social indicator.[11]

For instance, during the eighties, only modest gains were registered among the Hispanics in educational attainment, with the rate of progress even slowing down when compared to the seventies.

In March 1983, almost 16 percent of Hispanics had completed less than five years of schooling, while in 1990 only 12% had done so. About 51% of all Hispanics completed four years of high school or more in 1990, compared with almost 78% of the total U.S. population. In 1983, 8% of Hispanics completed four or more years of college, compared to 9% in 1990, which contrasts with 21.3% of the total U.S. population.

In March 1990, the unemployment rate among Hispanics was 8.2%, higher than the 5.3% that prevailed among non-Hispanics. In 1989, the median money income of Hispanic households was $21,900, compared with $29,500 for non-Hispanic households. This was higher than the Hispanic household median income for 1982, which amounted to $19,503 in 1989 dollars. Still, the median income of Hispanic families in 1989 was about 67% of the median income of non-Hispanic families, amounting to $23.400 and $35,200, respectively.

In 1989, 23.4% of Hispanic families lived in poverty, more than double the proportion of non-Hispanic families, amounting to 9.2%, which meant that one in every six persons living in poverty in the United States was Hispanic.

IV

Impressive as they are, these increases in numbers experienced by the Hispanics in the United States during the eighties did not translate themselves immediately into more influence. In a sense, this shortcoming, added to the

social disadvantages described above, define the agenda of the nineties for this rapidly increasing minority. One of the main limitations to Hispanic political participation is that a large proportion are still either "illegal aliens," or have not yet become naturalized citizens. Estimates of these percentages vary widely.

For instance, Harry Pachon, executive director of the National Association of Latino Elected Officials, has estimated that, in the 1988 presidential election, 4.9 million Hispanic residents were ineligible to vote, exceeding the 4.8 million who were registered to do so.[12] Another estimate by Robert Paral, also from the National Association of Latino Elected Officials, places above one third the percentage of all Hispanics living in the United States as "aliens."[13]

Also affecting their political participation, Hispanics constitute the youngest segment of the U.S. population, with about 30 percent under 15 years of age, compared to 21 percent of non-Hispanics. The same effect is caused by the median age of Hispanics, at 26.0 years, about eight years lower than the median age of non-Hispanics, because among the youngest are found the lower percentages of political participation.

One of the best indicators to illustrate how the recent increase in the number of Hispanics has not led immediately to greater influence can be found in the 101st. Congress, where the Hispanic Caucus was constituted by nine voting members of the House of Representatives, three from Texas and three from California, and one each from Florida, New Mexico and New York.[14]

In 1991, there were no Senators or Governors of Hispanic origin, although there have been some in the past. Only two U.S. Senators have ever been of Hispanic origin, both were from New Mexico - Dennis Chavez, from 1935 to 1962 and Joseph Montoya, from 1964 to 1977.[15] Also, since 1900, there have been six state governors of Hispanic origin.[16]

The record of Hispanic presence in the power structure of different cities is not better. For instance, during the eighties, Los Angeles-Anaheim-Riverside exhibited one of the fastest rates of growth in Hispanic population, a spectacular 73.4 percent, from 2.7 million in 1980 to 4.8 million in 1990.[17] Even so, only in February, 1991, the Los Angeles County elected Gloria Molina to be the first Hispanic supervisor, and her election came only after a Federal court ordered a redistricting that guaranteed the victory of a Hispanic candidate.

In Florida, Miami-Fort Lauderdale experienced also a spectacular increase of 70.4 percent in Hispanic population, from 621,309 in 1980 to 1.06 million in 1990.[18] Still, it was only after an impressive recruiting effort, basically aimed at helping Cubans gain citizenship, that the first Cuban ever, Ileana Rohs-Lehtinen, was elected to the U.S. Congress.

By states, the picture is just as desolate. California, with 26% of Hispanic population, has only three Hispanic Congressmen out of a total of forty five. Also, in the California state legislature only three out of forty state senators and four out of eighty members of the state assembly are Hispanic. "This is shameful underrepresentation," according to Arturo Vargas, from the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund.[19]

Out of twenty seven seats in the House of Representatives from the state of Texas, with 24% of Hispanic population, only three are Hispanic. Also, with 19% of Hispanic population, no Hispanics occupy any of the 5 seats that Arizona has in the U.S. House of Representatives. Finally, the state of New York, with 12 percent of Hispanic population, has only one Hispanic Congressman out of thirty four.[20]

V

Consequently, the disclosure of the last Census figures has generated a fascinating political debate, as Republicans and Democrats compete to capitalize from these impressive changes in the number of Hispanics.

For instance, a comparison at different times of the political map of the United States reveals that major changes have happened, during the second half of this century, in the patterns of population settlement.[21]

In 1940, with 131.6 million inhabitants, the most populous states were concentrated east of the Mississippi River, with New York, Pennsylvania and Illinois standing out. In 1990, with a population of almost 250 million, although large urban concentrations remained in the East, the most spectacular growth is found in the West Coast, as well as in Texas and Florida. These states will contribute a decisive number of electoral votes in the coming Presidential election and they are precisely the states that lately have experienced the most impressive growth in Hispanic population.

Also, as a result of these changes, more than a dozen minority seats will be added to the House of Representatives, while many more will become available in state legislatures.[22] Thus, in the next elections, addressing the elements of a Hispanic agenda has become almost unavoidable.

This is already happening and the name of the game is "redistricting." An intense debate is taking place among representatives of different minorities, within and outside both the Republican and the Democratic Party, about redrawing the political map of the United States on the basis of the figures of the 1990 census.

At this point, nobody can be sure who will benefit from the outcome, or even if there will be clear winners and losers. However, just the release of the first census figures has already increased tensions between Republicans and Democrats, incumbents and prospective challengers, as well as between minorities.

One key aspect of the political history of any minority in the United States, as the Irish in Massachusetts, the Italians and the Jews in New York, or the Poles in Illinois and the Blacks throughout the country since the sixties, can be found in the efforts made to move them into the mainstream by means of their registration to vote. In these terms, it can be safely assumed that, this time, some cases of redistricting will clearly benefit the Hispanics, as the fastest growing minority.

For instance, it is known that the size of congressional districts will change in at least twenty one states. This will give California, Florida and Texas about one fourth of all the seats in the House of Representatives. Only California will have seven additional seats in Congress and Hispanics have been reported to be "already laying claim to four of them."[23]

What is not yet clear is which political party, if any, will come out a clear winner. It used to be that the Democratic Party was considered the most responsive to the interests of minorities. This is evident, for instance, from the fact that only one Republican appears among the nine voting members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus - the recently elected representative from Florida.

Projecting from this situation, always a risky political exercise, could lead to the conclusion that the Democratic Party stands to benefit the most from the redistricting that is following the publication of the results of the 1990 census. However, this does not necessarily seem to be always the case. At least in one instance, in Chicago, the creation of a Congressional district dominated by Hispanics would take away enough votes as to endanger the powerful Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, Dan Rostenkowski (D-Ill).[24]

Also contradicting the projection that the Democrats will benefit is the new activism that is being practiced by the Republican Party in favor of redistricting. An "unusual alliance" is already emerging that manifests itself, for instance, in the provision by the Republican Party of software packages to prepare different minority groups for the intensification of the "redistricting battles" that are expected.[25]

Also, the Justice Department has openly opposed a new redistricting plan for the New York City Council, saying that it "consistently disfavored" Hispanic voters.[26]

This objection was contained in a letter from Assistant Attorney General, John Dunne that deserves to be fully quoted.[27]

First, according to the letter, the New York City Districting Commission was "faced with a job of staggering proportions, namely, to divide a city of over seven million people into 51 new Council districts while addressing the historical inability of the many minority communities of the city to elect candidates of their choice." Second, the letter also recognizes that the New York City Districting Commission "made great strides in drawing Council districts which greatly enhance minority strength overall." Nonetheless, third, the Attorney General expressed concern "with the choices made throughout the districting process with regard to Hispanic voters. The 1990 Census reveals that the minority population of the city has increased dramatically, particularly the Hispanic population. However, it seems that in at least two areas of the city, the inappropriate choice was made to draw particular districts at the expense of Hispanic voting strength..."

Meanwhile, the debate has also reached the inner circles of the Republican Party, concerning what The Wall Street Journal in an editorial criticized as "racial gerrymandering,"[28] or what another observer characterized as "the GOP's Hispanic contradiction."[29]

The issue is if the redrawing of districts to concentrate minorities will not end up dividing the country along racial and ethnic lines. The hope of those Republicans in favor is that the drawing of minority districts will hurt the Democrats, given some impressive gains scored lately by the Republican Party, particularly among Hispanics.

By contrast, some prominent Hispanic Republicans, such as Linda Chavez, a former Reagan appointee as Executive Director of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, have come out openly against guaranteeing the existence of districts in which the Hispanics will constitute the majority. Because in this way the Hispanics will never belong to the mainstream and they will remain "speaking their own language, living in protected enclaves, enjoying certain privileges based on disadvantage," instead of following the path of assimilation, as other successful minorities.[30]

Rather, the alternative is to bring the Hispanics into the mainstream, as it happened in the case of Governor Pete Wilson's victory in California, who won with 47% of the Hispanic vote.[31]

In the end, as The Wall Street Journal editorialized, warning against the dangers of proportional representation, to force minorities into "electoral reservations" may have the opposite effect and "may wind up eroding minority influence in politics," because more whites will be elected without minority votes.[32]

VI

Now that the census figures indicate that the Hispanics have attained the numbers needed to make themselves heard in the political arena of the United States, the question that remains unanswered is if they will be capable of translating those numbers into concrete gains.

It has been argued that one of the factors that has acted against the attainment of national relevance by the Hispanics in the United States is their fragmentation. A long-standing observer, in the beginning of the eighties, already saw the Hispanics "on their way to becoming the most dramatic demographic event of the next two or three decades...the nation's single largest minority," Even so, he also saw them as "widely dispersed and far from homogeneous."[33]

This same observer, in 1991, found that Hispanics are "far from considering themselves part of a larger homogeneous whole," because "members of the various major groupings knew very little about each other, were largely unfamiliar with the leadership or principal organizations of other groups, and had not made any serious effort to identify issues of common concern."[34]

Several factors have been identified as responsible for this heterogeneity and lack of coherence. First of all, there is their fragmentation into at least four different groups, based on national origin - Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans and Central Americans - each with their own interests and identifications. Second, even within each community, identified by national origin, there exist profound differences on basic issues. Finally, these differences sometimes have been intensified by the patterns of geographic settlement that have contributed to their dispersion and fragmentation.

For instance, certain issues are of interest for some groups without being of equal concern for the rest, such as the overthrow of Fidel Castro among the Cubans, or the status of Puerto Rico for the Puerto Ricans. Other issues can also be divisive even within each one of the communities, as for instance in the case of immigration or bilingualism. Finally, the geographic concentration of Mexicans in California and Texas, Cubans in Florida and Puerto Ricans in New York has hardly contributed to enhanced communication and cohesiveness.

There are still other issues that, given the decentralization that characterizes the federal system in the United States, are better dealt with at the state or even at the county level. Consequently, with the exception of the issue of immigration, the absence of the Hispanics is most conspicuous in some of the issues that form part of the national agenda, particularly those dealing with the external

relations of the United States. Even a deliberate effort by the State Department, in 1981, to encourage Hispanic participation in foreign issues, that led to the creation of a Hispanic Council on Foreign Affairs, did not survive the last year of the Carter Administration.[35]

In a certain way, beyond the parochial issues that are dealt with at the county or state level, to gain access to the normal trade-offs that take place within the national agenda, or to gain national relevance, it is essential for a minority to become involved in foreign affairs. This is evident from the active participation of Jews in the defense of Israel, as well as that of Blacks in challenging apartheid in South Africa.

External issues seem to have the capacity of amalgamating even disparate national groups, to the point that despite the persistence of differences at the local level, it is around the external issues that national coherence and cohesiveness is ultimately attained. Consequently, the passage into national relevance, beyond the parochialism of different national origins, will not happen unless the Hispanics are able to become active in foreign affairs.

Be it as it may, Hispanic heterogeneity should not be carried too far. The three requirements that have been identified as necessary for a collective identity to exist can be found among the Hispanics in the United States, despite their diverse national origins and decentralized patterns of geographic settlement.

First of all, there must be self-identification, as well as, second, a feeling of belonging to a distinct culture, as there must be, third, objective recognition by others. Finally, these constitutive elements must be present together, simultaneously.[36]

Probably one of the reasons for doubting the existence of a Hispanic identity in the United States was the absence of the element of objective recognition. However, the categorization adopted since the 1980 census, by grouping all those that come from certain countries together, beyond racial cleavages, has furnished this missing element.[37]

For instance, in the 1970 census other criteria were used that did not allow for grouping together all Hispanics, but fragmented them along racial and language lines.[38] It is also interesting to note that the category "Other Spanish/ Hispanics" was included separately, within question 7 of the census questionnaire, until the 1990 census.

Consequently, the categorization of the 1980 census may be considered a hiatus indicating that, only after their objective recognition, the Hispanic minority as such has arisen. Furthermore, this also demonstrates that a person becomes a Hispanic only after crossing the Rio Grande.

VII

Moreover, beyond definitions, certain recent events indicate that there is movement in the direction of an increasingly coherent Hispanic participation in national issues.

First of all, there is the emergence of organizational efforts deliberately aimed at transcending national origins, by bringing together representative leaders from at least three of the most important segments of the Hispanic minority into a single umbrella organization.[39]

These efforts towards unity have resulted in the creation of a new organization called the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA), drawn out of the fusion of what were considered two of the most successful previous efforts aimed at unity: the National Hispanic Leadership Conference and the National Hispanic Agenda.[40]

The first of these unifying organizations, the National Hispanic Leadership Conference, was created in 1976 with the purpose of formulating, before every U.S. presidential election, what was known as "a consensus document on Hispanic affairs." Four of these documents were produced before every presidential election held in the United States since 1976.

The other unifying organization, the National Hispanic Agenda, was promoted in 1987 by the then Mayor of San Antonio, Texas, Henry Cisneros, with the purpose of uniting Hispanics around issues that required national attention.

The new NHLA aims at the creation of "a structural base to provide Hispanic Americans with a clear, central voice and thereby, a more powerful impact on issues of public policy." The NHLA, is described as the "most ambitious step to achieve national unity," undertaken by leaders "driven by the realization that Hispanics today are no longer a parochial 'special interest' group to be dismissed or ignored."

The "core concept" that inspired the creation of the NHLA is "inclusiveness," because "it seeks to transcend regional, political, national heritage and other special interests in order to address the needs of 'all' Hispanics."

The membership of the NHLA's Board of Directors includes an impressive list of twenty representatives of the most significant national Hispanic associations, as well as twenty five individuals representing elected officials, business leaders and other professionals. The Board's functioning will be directed by six co-chairpersons, listed alphabetically: Henry Cisneros, former

mayor of San Antonio; Fernando Ferrer, Borough President, The Bronx, New York; Antonia Hernandez, President, Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, Los Angeles; Ileana Rohs-Lehtinen, member of Congress, Miami; Raul Yzaguirre, President, National Council of La Raza, Washington D.C.; finally, ex-officio, Solomon P. Ortiz, member of Congress, Texas.

The list of topics of major concern for the NHLA was drawn from the national conferences held, in 1988, by the NHLC and the NHA and includes the following issue-areas:

1. Empowerment and political participation
2. Education
3. Civil rights and justice
4. Economic opportunity and business development
5. Health services
6. Immigration and relations with Latin America
7. Military service and veterans affairs
8. Cultural affairs

The mention of immigration and the relations with Latin America, side by side with other major domestic concerns, reveals that there exists an interest in having something to say about foreign affairs. Finally, the NHLA will be endowed with a permanent staff, to carry out the following tasks:

"1. Present, shape and advocate public policies on Hispanic issues based upon the consensus of Hispanic leaders and organizations across the nation;

2. Promote public awareness of Hispanic concerns by implementing a proactive media strategy;

3. Provide a network that coordinates the initiatives of national Hispanic groups by facilitating cooperative efforts, better communication and mutual support;

4. Organize regional and national conferences that identify, prioritize and analyze issues of major concern to Hispanics;

5. Maintain close, consistent communication with the Hispanic community, government offices, corporations, political groups and other public institutions about key Hispanic issues; and

6. Help Hispanic leaders engage in dialogues with the top decision-makers in government, industry, and other fields."

VIII

Also happening, albeit discreetly, is the mobilization of Hispanic organizations around issues that are at the top of the foreign affairs agenda. This was the case recently, during the intense debate that took place when the President requested the renewal of the authorization to undertake trade negotiations, whose results would be submitted in Congress to fast track procedures of approval. Specifically, the President requested authorization to continue negotiating the Uruguay Round, to initiate negotiations with Canada and Mexico, towards the creation of a North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), and to proceed with the negotiations required by the trade dimension of the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative (EAI).

The early opposition that emerged against the approval of fast track authorization, emanating particularly from midwestern and eastern states, as well as from an alliance between organized labor and a formidable coalition of environmental groups, gave the initial impression that the approval of the package as a whole was in danger.

In response, the Administration reacted by mobilizing an impressive array of business organizations, among which figured prominently the Hispanic Alliance for Free Trade. In the end, fast track authorization was granted with the decisive bipartisan support of representatives from the southern and western border states.

The alignment of forces generated by the debate over fast track authorization may be illustrative of trends that are already under way. Simultaneously, as signaled by the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative, there is a displacement in the agenda of Inter-American relations towards economic issues of mutual benefit, away from the security concerns that dominated this agenda during the Cold War years.[41]

In this context, there is ample space for the Hispanic minority in the United States to perform a mediating role in the economic issues that will dominate the concerns of the private sectors of the Western Hemisphere, within a free trade area expected to encompass "from Anchorage to Tierra del Fuego."

In the terms of President Bush, when he met with the leaders of the Hispanic Alliance for Free Trade to request their support for fast track, "you've been at the forefront of our trade, many in this room, right there in the forefront of the trade with, not just Mexico but with Latin America. You speak the language; you understand the culture. And it's your determination, ingenuity

and vision that have driven you to create business that fuel our economy and enrich our lives. And that's why we need your help."[42]

Support for the Uruguay Round, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Enterprise for the Americas, the President continued, "can mean good news not only for the people of your hometowns, but also for the people of your homelands."[43]

Inviting them to participate in a wider vision, the President concluded saying, "across the continent from the Yukon to the Yucatan, you can be part - all of you - of this vision for the new world. A community of nations prosperous and free, the cornerstone of the world's first fully democratic hemisphere."[44]

Finally, the calendar of the negotiations for a North American Free Trade Area seems also to be influenced by the coming presidential elections. The expectation seems to be that, by next summer, the negotiations will be concluded and the outcome, in the form of a free trade agreement, will receive strong support in the southern border states.

This will also propel the Hispanic minority to play an active role in a foreign policy issue that, as anticipated by the debate over the fast track authorization, promises to be highly controversial.[45]

IX

To summarize the salient points made in the preceding pages:

1. The results of the last census reveal that the Hispanics in the United States have become the fastest growing minority.

2. Yet, this numerical transformation has not necessarily meant that the Hispanics have overcome the shortcomings that persist between their social indicators and the national averages, neither have they attained levels of political representation congruent with their numbers.

3. The gaps that still persist between these sets of indicators, in the immediate future, impose giving priority to domestic concerns, sometimes at the state, city or county level. Added to the heterogeneity that prevails among the Hispanics, due to geographic dispersion and concentration according to lines of national origin, this results in provincialism and lack of participation in national issues.

4. However, if the precedent of other minorities is useful, one of the most crucial instruments to attain national relevance will be found in foreign policy issues. These issues offer many possibilities of transcending national differences, or provincial concerns, by generating degrees of cohesiveness that can hardly be attained when focusing exclusively on those concerns that can be dealt with at the state or city level.

5. The recent creation of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA) indicates that a search is under way, at the national level, for an organizational alternative that could give the Hispanics the capacity to transcend their present heterogeneity and provincialism.

6. Simultaneously, the greater political significance achieved by those states where the Hispanics have experienced the most spectacular rates of growth makes almost unavoidable, in the next elections, to address those issues constitutive of a Hispanic agenda.

7. This concern with minority representation seems to have already intensified in the form of redistricting, which is expected to generate significant benefits for the Hispanics.

8. Also, as revealed by the mobilization of Hispanic organizations during the debate over fast track, there are certain foreign policy issues that are already becoming of interest for the Hispanics.

9. The recent emphasis on economic issues in Inter-American relations, in the form of the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative, may furnish a foreign policy agenda that will contribute to Hispanic cohesiveness, by allowing them to perform a mediating role within the Western Hemisphere.

10. Finally, the nineties will reveal if the Hispanics will be able to transcend their national origins, demonstrating that they can become a cohesive and coherent minority north of the Rio Grande.

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37 U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Race and Ethnic Origin*, (Content Determination Reports, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, CDR-6), February 1991. This report reproduces a facsimile of the 1990 Census sample questionnaire that includes the key questions that constitute the objective recognition of the Hispanic minority. First, question 4, on racial self-identification, does not include the Hispanics as a racial group. Second, question 7 deals specifically with the self-identification of the "Spanish/Hispanic" origin, pp. 12, 28, 50-51.

38 Harvey M. Choldin, "Statistics and Politics: The 'Hispanic Issue' in the 1980 Census," *Demography* (Volume 23, Number 3) pp. 403-418. This paper contains a very revealing description of the efforts that several Hispanic groups had to make, at the Bureau of the Census, to gain recognition as a separate category.

39 Frank Cota-Robles Newton, *Update on NHA Activities*, (Memo to Friends of the National Hispanic Agenda), March 14, 1991.

40 Frank Cota-Robles Newton, *The National Hispanic Leadership Agenda: A Background Statement* (n.d.) Most of the information on the NHLA that follows comes from this statement. Also, Roger Hernandez, "Hispanic Organizations Searching For Unity," Hispanic (September 1991), pp. 18-22.

41 Isaac Cohen, *Latin American and Caribbean Relations With the United States in the Nineties: The Primacy of Economics*, Paper presented to the Symposium on "The United States and Latin America: Redefining U.S. Purposes in the Post-Cold War Era," sponsored by the Distinguished Visiting Tom Slick Professorship of World Peace, The Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, The University of Texas at Austin, February 28-March 1, 1991.

42 The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, *Remarks by the President in Meeting with the National Leadership of the Hispanic Alliance for Free Trade*, March 19, 1991, p. 2.

43 *Ibid.*, p. 3.

44 *Ibid.*

45 Bill Mongelluzzo, "Free Trade Agreement Wins Hispanic Support;" "Hispanic Leaders Push Economic Over Emotional Trade Pact Issues," "US Hispanics Differ Over Free Trade Accord," *The Journal of Commerce*, September 3, 4, 5, 1991.