

ARC - 41, TC 01:00:00

NBC #2 [reporter: Joe Ramirez, NBC News]

1970, L.A. CHICANO POLITICIAN?, interviewed:

01:02:43 ...special laws uh, in effect that made it difficult for Spanish-speaking people to enter into politics, and finally alienation and cynicism. All of these things help explain why the Mexican - American has not been as successful as other minority groups have in American politics.

01:02:59 REPORTER: Do you think that a conspiracy exists that's designed to stunt the political growth of the Mexican - American?

01:03:05 Well, in as few words as possible uh, what I would call a conspiracy I would define as the collective effect of the special interests in the Southwest who have had for over 100 years a vested interest in keeping the Mexican - American in his place as an ignorant, poor, mobile, uh, manageable labor pool. Now whether it is ranching, corporate agriculture, manufacturing, or any other political enterprise, as well as an economic one, Mexican - Americans have been used as peons, as a free form of slave. Where as a matter of fact it's much better to have a Mexican - American than it is to have a slave, because you have no responsibility for his welfare.

01:04:00 REPORTER: Do you agree or disagree with the tactics of the Brown Berets?

01:04:03 The Brown Berets, young people, are acting as red-blooded, 100% American youth. [CUT TO IMAGES OF UNIFORMED BROWN BERETS MEMBERS MARCHING] And it's surprising that their conduct has shocked many older, conservative, uh, Mexican - American figures. The Brown Berets, young people that I know at least are good young people, and they are speaking frankly, they are speaking honestly, they are in short denouncing injustices in American society, and they are acting in the American manner.

LOS ANGELES HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER, during school walkout, interview:

01:05:43 ...because of the walkout, the awareness was created, not only here in Los Angeles, the awareness for a need for change, but the awareness was also created in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado. Uh, the urban Chicano, the urban Mexican began to see that there were things wrong, not only in as far as politics, but in police over-enforcement in the communities. And then, began to see the fact that in education, he was so far behind, and there had to be changes in education in order for the Mexican to get a real equal opportunity.

CHICANO speaking before council hearing:

01:06:31 ...the County Courts pass the buck, and we're tired. We're tired of everybody saying it's not our jurisdiction, it's not up to us to act. And I am tired and I just really hope that the people in here will see what has been done, and has been done to us in the past. I don't know what you expect us to do.

OLDER WHITE POLITICIAN, speaking in interview:

01:06:56 ...I just think that uh, great strides have been made in the last 10 years in the Mexican - American community, I think much more will be done, I think that he, the Chicano now, says that the uh, movement is on, he is now awakened, and he is going to get more active in the community, and I think they are. And I welcome it, I think they should. The day when, may well come when there will be a Mexican - American supervisor, uh, I won't be here forever.

L.A. HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER:

01:07:36 ...political bigwigs in the Democratic Party have continually taken the Mexican for granted, and now the Mexican has begun to oppose this taken for granted and beginning to yell within the framework of the Democratic Party.

OLDER WHITE POLITICIAN:

01:07:49 ...the Mexican - American he lives all over the county, he is not confined, he assimilates with the rest of the community, much more easily than the Black does.

CHICANO POLITICIAN:

01:08:02 ...there is a very great resentment among Mexican - Americans towards the Negro because of the great attention and assistance the Negro has gained nationally to help improve his conditions. I'm referring to, for example, the War on Poverty programs. Many of the formula for allotting War on Poverty

assistance to disadvantaged groups, clearly favor the Black man as against the Mexican - American, because these uh, formulas and procedures were established by Easterners who are unaware of particular circumstances that affect the Mexican - American. And so, in the allotment of resources, uh, the Mexican - American has gotten far less than his share. And more and more are becoming to realize this and they just are plain damn mad.

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER:

01:08:48 REPORTER: Some constructive things have come out of the Watts riot. Why doesn't the Mexican resort to violence to get what he wants?

01:08:55 Our culture, the Mexican culture, has in it respect for authority, and respect for people who have authority. Consequently, it's very difficult for the Mexican to see himself out in the street as a violent individual. However, looking at Mexican history, the Mexican Revolution was a violent revolution. So, in spite of the fact that the Mexican and his culture is a, individual who respects authority, his history also shows that when he's pushed too far, he will also resort to violence.