

La Raza and Americans

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EDITORIAL

By Jim Simpson
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A recent proposal in Congress — H.R. 1999, which was cosponsored in April by Reps. Ruben Hinojosa of Texas and Rick Renzi of Arizona — would provide \$10 million a year to a radical immigration group, the National Council of La Raza (meaning "the race"). The bill offers funds for "community development and affordable housing projects and programs serving low- and moderate-income households," for families of "Hispanic origin."

So giving immigrants the same free medical care, education, food, housing and income support available to all low-income groups is not enough. Now we have to single them out for special treatment, empowering a radical organization in the process. And the bill does not discriminate between legal and illegal immigrants. It is bad enough there are already programs like this. The real dig is that La Raza gets to distribute the money, cementing its position of influence within the immigrant community.

La Raza challenges the "radical" label that Michelle Malkin, U.S. congressmen and others have given it. On its Web site, La Raza makes a forceful argument claiming it opposes illegal immigration, disavows separatist or racist Hispanic movements and only seeks to bring Hispanics into the American mainstream by teaching English, respect for our laws, etc. Sounds truly inspiring, but the organizations and causes it supports tell a different story.

Remember the 1994 California ballot initiative that would have denied social services to illegal immigrants? Proposition 187 was fed up California voters' answer to the crippling effects of illegal immigration. It passed with 58 percent support. Any rational taxpaying citizen, Hispanic or otherwise, should support it, right? Not La Raza. Along with other groups, La Raza successfully defeated it in court. Here's the view, as expressed in an address by former La Raza President Raul Yzaguirre at the organization's 2003 annual conference: Proposition 187 in California and similar proposals elsewhere were ugly efforts to hurt the Latino community.

But we fought back then, and now the Hispanic community is being assaulted once more. This time they don't want to make you angry, so their tactics are subtle.

La Raza has relied almost entirely on generous American foundation and government grants since its inception in 1968. It received \$5.8 million from the feds in 2005, according to its annual report, and now may well get an additional \$10 million a year for its trouble. How nice.

It gets better. Have you heard of Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan, better known by its acronym MEChA? If you live in California, you have. This group's Web

site states: "We are Chicanos and Chicanas of Aztlan reclaiming the land of our birth," which according to their revisionist history, includes areas of the Southwestern United States.

In its answer to critics' charges of support for this radical separatist group, La Raza explains that MEChA is really just a "student organization whose primary objectives are educational" and that their founding charter's radical goals don't matter. To make its pathetic case, the group cites, of all things, a passage from a Los Angeles Times article by one Gustavo Arellano that "few [MEChA] members take these dated relics of the 1960s seriously, if they even bothered to read them."

So we're supposed to take the word of an LA Times reporter as an answer to this serious charge? The first page of MEChA's Web site states in bold print "The following documents are essential to the philosophy of MEChA. Every MEChista should be familiar with them," One of these, the MEChA "Constitution" states in its preamble: "Chicano and Chicana students of Aztlan must take upon themselves the responsibilities to promote Chicanismo within the community, politicizing our Raza [race] with an emphasis on indigenous consciousness to continue the struggle for the self-determination of the Chicano people for the purpose of liberating Aztlan (emphasis mine)." Can't see how members would ignore that.

NCLR has also teamed up with other openly radical groups like the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) to thwart illegal immigration reform at every turn. To push the current legislation under consideration, they have joined a host of groups under one banner called the Coalition for Comprehensive Immigration Reform. Founded in 2003, this group has received \$7 million from Atlantic Philanthropies, a multibillion dollar foundation led by Gare LaMarche, the former vice president and director of U.S. programs for George Soros' Open Society Institute. The coalition's objectives, according to Atlantic Philanthropies' Web site, are "guided by a core set of rights-based immigration principles and priorities, including: a path to permanency for the undocumented, family re-unification and labor protection for future flows."

So much for moderation.

La Raza's Web site has a clean, professional look, and its propaganda carries all the buzzwords designed to make it look moderate, very much like the equally radical Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). La Raza has similarly wrapped itself in the mantle of moderation by cultivating friends in both parties, flattering gullible lawmakers.

But is it moderate? No.

According to insiders, the National Council of La Raza had "virtual veto power" over the most recent Senate immigration proposal. These are the folks pushing immigration policy in America.

Is there anywhere left to turn?