

00:00:18:18 - 00:01:58:01

Unknown

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome our keynote speaker. Accompanied by a little and and a little bit later, you.

00:01:58:04 - 00:03:30:15

Speaker 2

Are in the audience. I'd like for them to stand and be recognized. Ali Zuniga, past national chairperson for Michigan. Mariana Tinoco, past national chair from the state of California. Maria Ramirez. Past National chairperson from the same individuals who probably you all know, and we like to recognize them at this time. Colonel Gil Coronado Ha Speaker from this morning, Commissioner of EOC, Mr. Tony Gallegos and Squadron of and special guests, the Congressional Medal of Honor recipient.

00:03:30:17 - 00:03:48:20

Speaker 2

At this time, I have a we have a small treat for one of our Medal of Honor recipient is Hector Samuel down in the audience. Do you come up to the front, please?

00:03:48:22 - 00:04:01:22

Speaker 2

Ladies and gentlemen, we've been advised that one of our Medal of Honor recipient, Sergeant Ben Y Benevides, is celebrating a birthday today.

00:04:01:24 - 00:04:13:04

Unknown

So in his honor, taking stock of all the ladies and gentlemen, an.

00:04:13:06 - 00:04:16:21

Speaker 3

We're leaders do.

00:04:16:24 - 00:05:08:11

Speaker 4

Exactly have stars, all of them on him. Those on the right of O along with play on your thumb who saw him here in the beautiful New York. Your bonus your yellow sports on your you know here also Matthew Goodling Mr. Lawman you know turn Governor was all new law third and many most all of Congo's law people third of all is healthy and.

00:05:08:14 - 00:05:16:01

Unknown

Who knows me to you know feel at home almost you and.

00:05:16:01 - 00:05:29:16

Speaker 4

Love me Law Order about his law firm but all law and order he of any I'm honors or your law will also be almost.

00:05:29:16 - 00:05:31:20

Speaker 2

No.

00:05:31:23 - 00:05:53:03

Speaker 4

Love on all the other morning on all meet okay. Oh oh, Hector and.

00:05:53:10 - 00:06:15:09

Speaker 2

Sergeant Benevides, on behalf of the American here at home, we wish you many, many, many more years. Thank you.

00:06:15:11 - 00:06:39:23

Unknown

To one that helped me.

00:06:39:26 - 00:07:24:24

Speaker 5

The men are you remember? See number one in California. All right.

00:07:24:27 - 00:07:29:12

Unknown

Harper plays on to the U.S. Department of Education in Washington.

00:07:29:12 - 00:07:30:11

Speaker 5

D.C..

00:07:30:13 - 00:08:06:15

Speaker 2

Please tell me all the when I said that before I get started, we have another birthday boy in the house and it's my father who is turning 71 years old today. I started out my morning. My mother and I did a sit in at the home of my father. He was coming out of the shower and we that's not quite as nice as all of you.

00:08:06:15 - 00:08:32:13

Speaker 2

But at 9:00 this morning, I spoke to you, the youth that are here at the conference, and I told them my father was with me and I introduced my dad and told them told the kids that it was his birthday. And spontaneously they sang happy birthday to him. It was it was very nice. So, Dad, happy birthday. Raise your hand.

00:08:32:15 - 00:09:36:21

Speaker 2

I want to share with you an important announcement. And this is an important announcement for our community. The White House announced on July 25th, 1994, that Alfredo Ramirez would be the new executive director for the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. The initiative the initiative has 25 Commission members on it, and the purpose of the Commission is to seek ways of eliminating educational inequalities and disadvantages faced by our community to eliminate unintended regulatory barriers and to improve the outreach and announcement of programs and opportunities for our community.

00:09:36:24 - 00:10:15:16

Speaker 2

At the registration area, you will find some fliers that will tell you how to contact the initiative in Washington, DC. I wanted to take these last few moments to say a few words about your keynote speaker as a fellow Washingtonian. He's going to be formally introduced in a few minutes by Inez Galvan. You may have noticed that when he first walked in and he sat down, all of a sudden these cameras were flashing and I leaned over to her and I said, Is this what it feels like to be a rock star?

00:10:15:19 - 00:10:46:21

Speaker 2

But what I want to tell you about Secretary Cisneros is something that doesn't normally show up. In the official bio from Washington, DC, He's been the recipient of numerous awards. But most important of all, he has moved forward when others have retreated. Remember his trip to Heider, Texas? If you see the wrong, he does not hesitate to challenge us.

00:10:46:24 - 00:11:34:09

Speaker 2

He does not hesitate to challenge us to make it right. He is a man of action, of leadership, of courage. He continues to search for innovative and creative solutions to a difficult problem. His presence as Secretary at HUD is injected a new energy, a new sense of optimism, not just in Washington, but through the rank and file. I know because some of them are my friends and they tell me many of us, young and old, continue to find them as a source of inspiration.

00:11:34:12 - 00:11:52:05

Speaker 2

And I, along with all of you, look forward to his comments. So welcome to California, which is my home state of.

00:11:52:08 - 00:12:22:02

Speaker 2

Ladies and gentlemen, guests are the sponsors. It is my honor to be able to introduce someone, especially with Henry Cisneros, who was nominated by President Clinton to serve as the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development on December 17th, 1992. He was confirmed unanimously by the United States Senate on January 21st, 1993, and sworn into office by Chief Justice William Rehnquist on January 22nd, 1993.

00:12:22:04 - 00:12:57:01

Speaker 2

He was born on July. On June 11th of 1947 in San Antonio. And Mr. Harris is married with Mary Mary Alice Paris in 1969. They have two daughters, Resa and Moses and a son, John Paul. Mr. McNair began his career in public service, working as an administrative assistant in the San Antonio City manager's office in 1971. He was elected, selected as a White House fellow and worked as an assistant to the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, Elliot Richardson.

00:12:57:01 - 00:13:27:25

Speaker 2

In 1975, he was elected to the San Antonio City Council, serving until 1981. In 1981, became the first Hispanic mayor of a major US city where he was elected mayor of San Antonio, the nation's 10th largest city. As he four term mayor of San Antonio from 1981 to 1989, Mr. Cisneros rebuilt the city's economic base recruiting convention business, attracting high tech industries, increasing tourism and creating jobs.

00:13:27:25 - 00:13:50:11

Speaker 2

In San Antonio in 1985, he was elected president of the National League of Cities. Now, Mr. Cisneros has graduated from Texas A&M with a B.A. and a master's of urban and regional planning. He earned an MBA in public administration from the John F Kennedy School of Government at Harvard and a doctorate in public administration from the George Washington University.

00:13:50:13 - 00:14:18:14

Speaker 2

There are so many, many things that Mr. Cisneros has accomplished on behalf of the women of the American GI Forum. I feel very honored that you have taken time to come out here and address us, and we are all very, very grateful for that. So without any further ado, please, Mr..

00:14:18:16 - 00:14:22:12

Unknown

Okay.

00:14:22:15 - 00:14:29:07

Unknown

Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you.

00:14:29:10 - 00:14:51:00

Speaker 3

Thank you very, very much, Mr. Galvan, who is a great honor to be asked to be here. When I saw the invitation inviting me to come before the women's luncheon and the GI Forum, generally, I jumped at the chance, even though it meant coming across the country to California, because I am a great admirer of the GI Forum.

00:14:51:02 - 00:15:22:26

Speaker 3

As a matter of fact, my very first public speech after having been elected mayor of San Antonio was to a GI Forum SIR conference. And I'll never forget the sense of accomplishment that I was able to share with the GI Forum GI Forum, as an organization that I've been close to over the years. I've known Antonio Morales through good and bad, thick and thin, and I am an admirer and fan of Antonio, as well as the leadership of the GI Forum.

00:15:22:26 - 00:15:49:21

Speaker 3

I had the opportunity to speak a number of times over the years, and it just seemed to me the right thing to do to come to California to be with you today. So I'm very glad to be able to be here. Congratulations to you on your leadership of the women's program. I'm also a fan of Margarita

culminates. I don't know how many of you have a chance to know this young lady who said such kind things about me earlier.

00:15:49:23 - 00:16:14:23

Speaker 3

But I want to tell you, she is the epitome. One of the finest examples of what Latina womanhood means in the United States of America. She is just that quality of cooking at. I first met her I first met her several years ago when she was the head of SCHIP, the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, and she did a very good job.

00:16:14:23 - 00:16:36:05

Speaker 3

She is herself an engineer by training, a scientist by training. She became a White House fellow very select program in which out of 3000 applicants, only 16 are selected every country every year to serve as an assistant to one of the cabinet officers or in the White House. And she did a very good job after having been selected.

00:16:36:05 - 00:17:04:18

Speaker 3

And now she's been asked to stay on in the administration. And I just want you to know what a special young person this is. We're going to hear a lot more over the years from Margarita communities. I guarantee you that. It's also a special treat to be in the presence of fellow public servants and people whom I admire, Gil Coronado, who is the who is presently in the Veteran's Administration.

00:17:04:21 - 00:17:28:11

Speaker 3

But there is much more that Gil Coronado is going to do in our government. He travels across the country inspiring the Latino community, as he did in his address here to you last night, Gil. Thank you and congratulations for your work. Tony Gallego from the EEOC, who has done a solid job of holding over these last months under difficult circumstances.

00:17:28:16 - 00:17:56:25

Speaker 3

Thank you, Tony, for good public service. We appreciate your and a dear friend of mine who is a colleague and a friend. He is the former mayor of San Francisco who serves with me today. He is the state director for HUD Housing and Urban Development in California and for the western United States. We call them secretaries representatives. I could not be represented more ably by anyone.

00:17:56:28 - 00:18:14:07

Speaker 3

And certainly this man, having had the experience as mayor of San Francisco, is one of the most admired public servants in this part of the world. Art Agnew's art, would you please stand and let me recognize you?

00:18:14:09 - 00:18:39:17

Speaker 3

I want to say a special word of appreciation to the men of a squadron of, you know, in your post-presidency. I know Don Rumsfeld is gone through valor squared since Paul Lozano graciously has put We need a competition on which you seem aggressive from United.

00:18:39:19 - 00:19:30:21

Speaker 3

And as much as I mean every single word of admiration and respect that I have just uttered. There are no words to express the depth of respect and admiration and appreciation for the six men who are here wearing the symbol of the highest award that the United States can give to any citizen for courage, for bravery, the United States Medal of Honor, these six men who are awarded that reward by the president, the United States, only when they have exercised such an act of courage that it involves the risk of their own lives, that the definition of a medal of Honor, you don't get it unless you have made the decision to lose your life

00:19:30:24 - 00:19:57:23

Speaker 3

to save someone else. Frequently, it's given posthumously. It's the highest award our country can give. And it is a tremendous thing that we would see on such an occasion. Six men arrayed together who have been heroic in the way that they have. These words roll off the tongue. But let me just say to you, it is difficult to describe the individual decisions that these persons made.

00:19:57:23 - 00:20:21:05

Speaker 3

You cannot prepare to win the Medal of Honor. You cannot train to win the Medal of Honor. You cannot plan to win the Medal of Honor. It's not like the Olympics where you train for a lifetime and then you compete. It's not that way. There is a moment. There is a decision. It occurs, a situation. You cannot have thought of it.

00:20:21:08 - 00:20:54:10

Speaker 3

What you'd call upon in such a moment is your own reserves of courage and loyalty and duty. And in those moments, some people fail the test. They run, or they take the easy course. Others of them go back and ask for more risk, more difficulty, expose themselves in order to save or to help someone else. And that's what these six human beings did in the moment when they were called upon to make that decision.

00:20:54:10 - 00:21:29:00

Speaker 3

They are the highest possible elevation of what an American can be. And we are proud that they are Hispanic Americans who have earned the United States.

00:21:29:03 - 00:21:51:10

Speaker 3

I also want to acknowledge on an occasion such as this, my good friend and fellow Texan and and a pioneer in the Latino Movement for Rights, for opportunity, for fairness. I speak of Dr. Hector Garcia, the founder of the American GI Forum, who built this organization into one of the largest and most active veterans and family organizations in the country.

00:21:51:11 - 00:22:20:02

Speaker 3

He's not able to be here with us today. His spirit is in this hall. Wherever veterans gather, Latino veterans gather to remember the past and to remember the few to do it, to plan the future. The spirit of Dr. Hector Garcia is present. This is a wonderful man. Some of the younger people may not know him. He went to the war and fought, returned, got a medical degree, had a practice where he doesn't bill half the people who come to see him.

00:22:20:05 - 00:23:11:20

Speaker 3

His room is the waiting room is always full of people who are in need in Corpus Christi, Texas. And there as a veteran. He founded the American GI Forum to bring the values of the returning veterans to the Latino community. He founded the GI Forum in an era when men who fought in World War Two and shared canteens and sea rations in foxholes with their fellow Americans and who were in the Pacific and shared literally transfusions with their fellow soldiers, came back to South Texas and couldn't be buried in the same cemeteries because they were Hispanic Americans.

00:23:11:23 - 00:23:37:16

Speaker 3

And in the 1950s in our country, there still existed that kind of segregation, that kind of hatred, where there was the Mexican school and the Texans school, the Mexican cemetery and the Texans cemetery. It was a railroad track that ran through the middle of most of those small towns. And on one side of the town, the streets were paved and on the other side they were not on one that was running water.

00:23:37:16 - 00:23:58:05

Speaker 3

And there it was. On the other side, there wasn't a Dr. Garcia said. We fought for the right for freedom and for all the people of this country. We fought for fairness. And that means fairness for the Hispanic Americans as well. And he founded the American GI Forum. And we don't have those conditions in those small towns in South Texas anymore because this organization.

00:23:58:05 - 00:24:03:16

Unknown

Has been on the job for the last eight years.

00:24:03:18 - 00:24:29:06

Speaker 3

For 46 years, the American GI Forum has fought for equal rights and opportunities and housing and education and employment. And thanks to the efforts of the American GI Forum, along with other organizations, millions of Americans of Hispanic descent have moved into the mainstream of our society, of our economy, of our educational system, and today share all of the benefits of American life.

00:24:29:08 - 00:24:58:21

Speaker 3

One of the great things about the GI Forum is that you've always thought about the future. And the future means that young people, through job training for forums, the National Youth Motivation Seminar, to encourage young people to pursue graduate degrees through their jobs for progress education programs that establish literacy and family learning centers through the women in Community Services work to help young, low income women advance their learning and their earning power.

00:24:58:22 - 00:25:21:22

Speaker 3

All of these efforts stand as testament to the commitment to education, to preparation, to basic American values, to the future. Education is truly the great equalizer. It's the key that has opened doors of opportunity for Americans since the founding of our country. And G.I. Forum has recognized that it's up to those of us who have already made the journey.

00:25:21:24 - 00:25:44:25

Speaker 3

It's our moral obligation to keep the road open and widen it so that others may follow the Latino future is not about a few people who have good fortune making it to stark class. It's not about a few people who started with some family money and are able to put together a chain of family businesses. It is about the mass of our people moving into the middle class.

00:25:45:02 - 00:26:11:07

Speaker 3

That's what the future holds for us. But it requires a commitment to education and to our young people. And I want to commend the G.I. Forum for what is going on in an adjacent room in this convention center where young people, young Latinos and other minorities have been brought together to hear messages of inspiration and enthusiasm and commitment to education, reality.

00:26:11:09 - 00:26:38:17

Speaker 3

We're losing too many of our young people. We're losing too many of our young people to drugs. We're losing too many of our young people to gangs. We're losing too many of our young people to drive by shootings. We're losing too many of our young people to the cynicism, the skepticism that they believe that they don't count. Nobody cares for them.

00:26:38:19 - 00:27:11:29

Speaker 3

A system doesn't work anymore, that life is going to be worse for them. My friends, these men didn't fight a war wars. They didn't make the decisions that they did. Dr. Garcia didn't struggle through all these years so that we could watch the Latino future explode in a drive by shooting. We didn't. These people haven't worked this hard so that their generation would be the generation that accomplished the most and every generation of Latinos after this does worse.

00:27:12:02 - 00:27:43:00

Speaker 3

No, we are going to have to create jobs and economic development, and we're going to have to create training programs and education. And my friends, this population that is becoming larger in every state in America where Latinos are located and becoming so powerful that our country must reap its full potential, this or this this population, which has been called a sleeping giant for years and it's finally starting to stir.

00:27:43:02 - 00:28:20:09

Speaker 3

22 million people grew by 53% in the decade of the 1980s. We'll reach 30 million people in the year 2000 will be the largest minority group, not only in the United States generally, but will be a powerful force in the largest states of America. In California, in Texas, in Florida, in New York. This population must not lose its dreams to drug, to drive by shootings, to gang to dropout rates, to underemployment.

00:28:20:12 - 00:28:46:07

Speaker 3

We need the G.I. Forum on the job to continue the fight that it has begun. And we need to reach these young people. We have examples right in this room of who they are and what the future is. But we have a tremendous job to do. One of the big questions before our country is what this nation really believes about its future.

00:28:46:10 - 00:29:17:09

Speaker 3

Unfortunately, across the history of mankind, we have seen great empires, great nations that reach some level of accomplishment and then either became exhausted or distracted or overextended. But for whatever reason, they lost their sense of the future. They became nations that were no longer willing to sacrifice. We're no longer willing to establish basic principles of decency and law and order.

00:29:17:11 - 00:29:42:26

Speaker 3

We're no longer willing to set out on a course that might be difficult. And so they lost their right to leadership in the world. They fell in war. They fell to outside conquerors. They fell to economic circumstances. Or they just whimpered away like Great Britain has since the end of World War Two. I just slid off the stage of world leadership.

00:29:42:29 - 00:30:05:22

Speaker 3

Such a thing can happen to the United States of America. I know it impossible that we should talk this way when we have six Medal of Honor winners who fought that our country could achieve the level of world leadership that we did after World War Two. It's hard to imagine that in a 50 year span we could possibly put ourselves in a position to slip off that far.

00:30:05:24 - 00:30:35:04

Speaker 3

It's it's so difficult to think about this as Latinos, because we believe our future is still ahead and we want to live in a country that still thinks of the future as being ahead. Two years ago, I spoke at a university and a young Latino stood up and he said, Mr. Cisneros, do you mean to tell me that we're going to go from being second class citizens in a first class country to being first class citizens in a second class country?

00:30:35:07 - 00:30:49:14

Speaker 3

I said, No, it doesn't have to be that way. It doesn't have to be that way. We are coming of age and we can make sure through our own work that we are first class citizens in a first class country that continues to be a leader.

00:30:49:20 - 00:30:57:08

Unknown

In this world. You see you see.

00:30:57:10 - 00:31:33:25

Speaker 3

As the growing population that we are, our destiny is in our own hands. Our destiny is in our hands. We can be the ones who decide that we are going to make sure that our young people embody the values of education and training. We can be the ones that are going to decide that the same values that these six men brought of loyalty and duty and courage and a sense of community is imparted to the next generation of young men so that our young Latinos show these values of loyalty, not to each other in a gang and compete for what?

00:31:34:01 - 00:31:52:04

Speaker 3

Who has turf and who's going to shoot each other, but compete for who is going to excel in education and who's going to come back to their communities and contribute to the neighborhood where they grew up. That's what it means to be loyal and courageous and have valor not to drive around in a car and shoot somebody from the backseat of a car.

00:31:52:07 - 00:32:16:29

Speaker 3

We have a job to do. Our destiny is in our own hands. No one is going to solve this problem for us. There's no other population that can possibly care about the Latino future as much as we must care about the Latino future. It is not possible that anyone would care more for as much about the Latino future as we ourselves.

00:32:17:01 - 00:32:45:21

Speaker 3

If we do not, then who? If we don't develop teachers who teach instead of regard their job as a paycheck, then who is going to teach if we don't develop the youth workers who take an interest in the young people and look at them in the eye and say, You're somebody worth my time, listen to me. Instead of leaving at 5:00 and not showing up again, then who's going to do it?

00:32:45:23 - 00:33:15:12

Speaker 3

If we as parents don't go to school and take our children to school and meet their teachers and turn off the TV set at home and review their report card with them and go back and see the teachers, then who is going to do it for our children? If we don't do it ourselves, nobody. Our destiny is in our own hands and our destiny is in our own hands.

00:33:15:13 - 00:33:47:06

Speaker 3

Even here in a difficult time in a state like California. And I say a difficult time because, my friends, I want to square with you as we set out on this tremendous course, this tremendous era of possibilities for Latinos. We have people who do not want us to succeed. There are people who are afraid of an American future that includes people who look different, who sound a little different, whose names are more complicated than Jones or Smith.

00:33:47:07 - 00:34:31:06

Speaker 3

There are Martinez and Hernandez who have strange faces and strange eyes, as Asian Americans may have, or a different tradition as African-Americans may have, or who are recent arrivals, like many Latinos are. And so we're seeing in California a movement that blames every problem that is amassed in this state in recent years on minority peoples, who blames the fact that the corporate industries have been downsizing and merging and losing jobs on people that look like us who blames the problems of unemployment or failed schools or inadequate funds to fund higher education on people like us.

00:34:31:08 - 00:35:10:08

Speaker 3

There is a movement in this day that will be voted on in November. It's called Proposition 187 and it's titled Save our State. Who are they trying to save our state from? What they're saying is they're trying to save California by drawing lines on the ground that have never been never been legally drawn before. This proposition would establish in law the denial of educational services to the children of persons who are here illegally.

00:35:10:11 - 00:35:41:04

Speaker 3

All right. Let's let's think about that for just a minute. These are children who are here because their parents made a decision, not because they themselves made the decision. These are children who, no matter how you draft laws, are probably not going to go back, at least not anytime soon. So do we actually believe that it would be better for California and for our country to have people uneducated, illiterate, underemployed and, unemployed than the productive citizens that they must be in the economy of the future?

00:35:41:05 - 00:36:05:27

Speaker 3

Do we really believe that? How can we? This legislation also would deny services, public health services to those same children. Do we really believe that it is good to have people without immunizations, without the inoculations that prevent the spread of communicable diseases like tuberculosis and others in our society that are denied, that are provided in public health clinics?

00:36:05:29 - 00:36:37:14

Speaker 3

I can't imagine that. I can't imagine that even the proponents of legislation like this believe that it's the right thing to do. But I'll tell you what really gets to me. What really gets to me is the denial of history, the denial of truth and the denial of rights of other human beings, the denial of history. Reporter asked me last night in Los Angeles, tell me something about the history of Latinos in Los Angeles.

00:36:37:16 - 00:36:58:09

Speaker 3

I said, Oh, do you mean L.A.? Senora de los Angeles? Concepcion? That city that was named by Spanish missionaries. Is that what we're told? Is that the history we're talking about? I mean, in the very beginning.

00:36:58:12 - 00:36:59:09

Unknown

Well, for that matter.

00:36:59:15 - 00:37:24:08

Speaker 3

Let's talk about San Francisco. Santa Barbara. Monterey. San Diego. Which one do you want to talk about? What history do we want to talk about from the very beginning, when people first arrived here 200 years ago, denial of truth, who built with their hand much of the physical reality of the state. Who picked the crops? Who built the irrigation ditches?

00:37:24:10 - 00:37:44:24

Speaker 3

Who built the roads? Who made it possible for the water to be circulated from the northern reservoirs to the Southern California desert so that it could bloom into the largest metropolitan area in America today? Who did that? Working people with their hand, with their calluses, with their bent backs, with their eyes that go to cataracts at a young age because they worked around the clock.

00:37:44:26 - 00:38:09:26

Speaker 3

Who did that? A denial of truth and a denial of the decency and rights of other people. Any time the leadership of a state can believe that the right way to govern is to drive a division between people so that you can pit one group that constitutes 51% against another group that constitute 49% and win an election in the process.

00:38:10:01 - 00:38:38:07

Speaker 3

It's not good government. It may be good politics. It may be good politics, but it's not good government and it's not leadership. And I'm here to tell you, my friends, our destiny is in our own hands. If we want to defeat a proposition like this, then it is going to take Latinos organized in California speaking up as never before.

00:38:38:08 - 00:39:08:22

Speaker 3

And let me just tell you, there is no one that can speak with greater clarity about the patriotism of the Latino population, about the essential values of courage and decency of the Latino population than the men and women of the G.I. Forum, and particularly those who are the Medal of Honor winners. What an example they are of what it means to be a Latino in the United States of America.

00:39:08:25 - 00:39:42:06

Speaker 3

So this is a very critical time. It's also a critical time in our country because some decisions are being made across the country right now. This same climate that I describe here, a meanness of hatred, of division, of blaming people that extends across America. I was just in Arlington, Texas, last week riding on the health care Express, moving across Texas and Oklahoma to try to go to Washington, a rather where the bus would end up in Washington this week promoting health care.

00:39:42:08 - 00:40:17:04

Speaker 3

And as I boarded the bus there in Arlington, I had not seen faces contorted in anger, in hatred. Young people, as I as I saw there in a long, long time, if something foul in the public mood today. And part of it is that people have just decided that they don't want to share. Health care is about sharing the benefits and resources of this country with each other.

00:40:17:06 - 00:40:44:28

Speaker 3

We're the wealthiest country on the globe, and yet there are only two industrial nations out of all the industrial powers in the world that don't provide health care to all their people. One of them is South Africa, and we know about South Africa. And Mandela has just asked for the authority to put in place health care reform in South Africa and the other one is the United States of America.

00:40:45:00 - 00:41:11:20

Speaker 3

The fact of the matter is we have 39 million of our fellow Americans without health care. 39 million of our fellow Americans who go to sleep at night without knowledge that their children are covered with insurance so that if their children become sick in the middle of the night and they wake up the next morning and suddenly there's a rash that wasn't there the night before or there's difficulty breathing, they are suddenly in economic jeopardy because they have no way to be able to take care of their children.

00:41:11:22 - 00:41:36:10

Speaker 3

What do they do? They go to emergency rooms. The general public picks up the tab. You go to an emergency room in the wintertime. What do you find there amidst the gunshot wounds and the car accidents are children with 103 degree fever who didn't have to get that sick if they'd had a family doctor. But they end up at the emergency room because that's the way we deal with children's colds and flus in our society when people don't have medical care.

00:41:36:13 - 00:41:54:28

Speaker 3

There are people in this country who work and then are fired from their job and they are without health insurance. They are let off because companies are consolidating and companies are merging. Let me just tell you, we believe that everybody who loses their job is a bad person. We believe everybody who loses their job is entitled to be destitute.

00:41:55:01 - 00:42:18:24

Speaker 3

Everyone who loses their job must have lost it for their own reasons of ineptitude and incapacity. No way. There are people who are losing their jobs because companies are downsizing. There's a company right here in San Jose yesterday that let people off by the hundreds Latinos who were hired because they have bilingual skills and they were needed for this particular function and they were released.

00:42:18:26 - 00:42:41:04

Speaker 3

Are they bad people? Are they incapable? Are they somehow scarred for life because they couldn't hold a job? No, not in this society. Not anymore. Not not in the 1990. People are losing their jobs because of bigger economic factors, because the Japanese move. Because the Latin Americans move. Because the Europeans move. We feel the job effect in our own country.

00:42:41:07 - 00:42:58:19

Speaker 3

And yet when those people lose their jobs, they're without health insurance. I met a man like that last week. He moved to another job. They promised him he was going to have health insurance. He got there. They didn't have the health insurance set up. It was going to be a month before the health insurance set up. And guess what happened in that month?

00:42:58:22 - 00:43:19:27

Speaker 3

His wife, who had been complaining of stomach problems for weeks and they've been giving her Maalox, thinking maybe she had a developing ulcer, went and got a checkup, and they told her she had cancer of the stomach. She had cancer of the stomach. And they gave her three months to live. She would undergo therapy. She would undergo treatment.

00:43:19:27 - 00:43:41:08

Speaker 3

It would cost a bunch of money. They spent it. He lost his house. He hocked everything he had. He's broke. Now, is that right? In the United States of America? The company, by the way, that he went to work for that didn't give him health insurance with a Christian radio station.

00:43:41:10 - 00:44:07:29

Speaker 3

It's not right. We can do better in our country than the way we're treating people today. And let me tell you something. 13% of Americans are without health insurance. 13% of the people of our country without health insurance. What percentage would you guess of Latinos are without health insurance? Try 33%. 13% of the general population, almost a third of our people are without health insurance.

00:44:08:01 - 00:44:36:22

Speaker 3

We are the most uncovered. There will be no one who will benefit more from health insurance passage than the Latino population of this country. Now, my friends, we are at the point of decision. A bill has passed the House of Representatives which includes health insurance. A bill has passed the Senate committee. Both of these committees, health committee, Senate committee, which includes they're about ready to go to have the decisive debate.

00:44:36:22 - 00:44:59:26

Speaker 3

You're going to hear all kinds of issues come up in the next weeks. And then finally, there will be those decisive moments when both of the houses, the House and the Senate need to vote. You need to be counted. You need to be counted because, number one, health care is a basic, decent right that people ought to have.

00:44:59:29 - 00:45:25:19

Speaker 3

We need to be counted because it is consistent with what you stand for and have fought for in social progress. You need to be counted because the Latino population is deserving and needs and you need to be counted because the time has come for people who believe in this future to stand up. Now, this is just one example of what we're trying to do in Washington today.

00:45:25:22 - 00:46:03:12

Speaker 3

We're trying to pass a crime bill next week that will allow people to have hundred thousand police officers to protect the streets, as well as youth programs and anti-gang programs and anti-drug programs, which we need \$9 billion worth of programs for the youth that we've just been talking about. Do something about it, not just talk about it. We're trying to do welfare reform that will allow people to transition off of welfare instead of staying on a life of dependency, when what we need is to give people a sense of self-reliance and create an incentive system where people can go to work and make something of themselves.

00:46:03:15 - 00:46:40:14

Speaker 3

We want to create a system in which these things are possible and it is doable. These things can be done. And I'm here to tell you today that I'm proud of the G.I. Forum. I'm proud of the Latino community and the way these things come together for our people. This can be a tremendous time of achievement and it can be a tremendous time in which the Latino community sets the platform for the future, where almost 25% of the population of California now, but we don't vote 25%.

00:46:40:17 - 00:47:04:14

Speaker 3

We're almost 25% of the population of Texas. So we don't vote 25%. But it won't be long before our people will see the connection between registering and voting and outcomes. And then many things are going to be possible. Right now, there's a young man named Art is a state senator who just got the Democratic nomination to be the insurance commissioner of the state of California.

00:47:04:14 - 00:47:37:09

Speaker 3

And if Art Torres wins, he'll be the first Latino in over 100 years to hold a statewide office in the state of California. And it's about time that it happened. And in Texas and in Texas, Dan Morales is the attorney general of the state at 36 years of age running for reelection. And Dan's future is a tremendous one in these places where we thought things were not possible in these places where the Texas Rangers and the highway patrol used to dominate our lives in these places where people, no matter how hard they worked and how decent they were, weren't given a fair chance.

00:47:37:12 - 00:47:42:11

Speaker 3

Things are changing. We can do it.

00:47:42:14 - 00:47:47:27

Unknown

We can do it. We can do it.

00:47:47:29 - 00:48:12:05

Speaker 3

And when we do it, we will do it. On the values, on the ethic, on the that are embodied in the American G.I. Forum, basic American ideals of people who have given to our country and now are asking for fairness. No one's asking for something for nothing. No one's saying we don't want to work. We want to work.

00:48:12:07 - 00:48:40:23

Speaker 3

No one's saying we want to serve. We want to serve. No one's saying we don't want to participate. We want to participate. We just want everybody to play fair and play by the rules. And let me tell you, when we achieve a society where we play fair and everybody plays by the rules, then we're going to see Latinos at every level of this society, presidents of universities, superintendents of schools, heads of foundations, presidents of corporations, governors and senators, even a president of the United States.

00:48:40:23 - 00:48:43:05

Speaker 3

Because our people are already capable, willing.

00:48:43:05 - 00:49:16:04

Unknown

To work, and we'll make it happen. Thank you very much. Well, I'm going to be with you. Good luck. Your great leader will.

00:49:16:06 - 00:49:22:16

Speaker 2

Get a grant from the Americans for many years. And I know that you will continue.

00:49:22:23 - 00:49:24:06

Speaker 5

To be a.

00:49:24:09 - 00:49:26:15

Speaker 2

Renowned friend of the G.I..

00:49:26:17 - 00:49:27:28

Speaker 5

Bill.

00:49:28:00 - 00:49:29:12

Speaker 2

Thank you. Gentlemen, I'd.

00:49:29:12 - 00:49:32:29

Speaker 5

Like to ask around here.

00:49:33:01 - 00:49:35:18

Speaker 2

For this afternoon.

00:49:35:21 - 00:49:46:11

Speaker 3

To the individual.

00:49:46:13 - 00:49:49:03

Speaker 5

And you and to.

00:49:49:06 - 00:49:53:02

Speaker 2

Your own administration to solve.

00:49:53:05 - 00:49:55:05

Speaker 5

That. And you have just the way.

00:49:55:05 - 00:49:56:24

Speaker 3

Am I. Okay.

00:49:56:27 - 00:49:59:04

Speaker 2

You're an inspiration to you.

00:49:59:04 - 00:50:01:13

Speaker 5

And thank you for this. Colorado.

00:50:01:13 - 00:50:21:10

Speaker 3

Frankly, I'd like to see you apologize. But you know.

00:50:21:12 - 00:50:27:24

Speaker 5

What? You're you and you're really right.

00:50:27:27 - 00:50:31:19

Speaker 3

Thank you. Okay. Thank you.

00:50:31:20 - 00:50:37:27

Speaker 5

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

00:50:38:00 - 00:50:41:02

Speaker 3

Thank you. Thank you. Hey, My pleasure, sir.