

UNDERCOUNTING NATIVE AMERICANS:

The 1980 Census and the Manipulation of Racial Identity

in the United States*

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Introduction: Erasing Indians, a Game of Labels

Demography - for Native Americans - has always pointed towards a struggle against disappearance, or, more precisely, against being forced to vanish!

European colonialism has caused many "First Americans" to be annihilated physically, from the days of Columbus' depopulation of Haiti in the 1490s to the slaughter of tens of thousands of "*indios*" in Central America and elsewhere today, the latter carried out largely by other Indians or mixed-bloods operating usually at the command of the local "Hispanic" elites (white descendants of Columbus' conquistadores armed by the United States).

But Native People have also been annihilated psychologically and socially, by racial grading systems and by resultant caste systems which have caused people of American race to deny their own ancestry and to seek refuge in identification with Spaniards and with "whiteness."

It is difficult to deny the thesis that this psychological annihilation is, today at least, more widespread than the physical. Throughout much - perhaps all - of so-called "Latino" America, the Indian people (with their American racial features) are the most denigrated, despised, and oppressed of human beings. In a psychological sense as well as in the political sphere, Native Americans living in Latin America may well be one of the most psychologically oppressed peoples in the world since far more than half of the people of American race deny or only reluctantly acknowledge their ancestral identity.

Most striking of all, not a single country except, perhaps, Greenland possesses a government controlled by Native Americans even when, as in

the case of Bolivia, the vast majority of the inhabitants are *indígenas* (indigenous people).

Now, when any of these Indian peoples from Mexico southwards migrate to the United States, they are being falsely classified as "Hispanics" or as persons of "Spanish origin."

It is significant that in 1980 the U.S. Bureau of the Census counted *automatically* as "Blacks" all persons who had designated themselves only as Jamaicans, West Indians, Trinidadians, "colored," "non-white," or as being from any African state other than Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, and South Africa.¹

But not a single country-of-origin placed one in the Native American or Indian category. Thus Guatemala, Bolivia, Paraguay, Peru, Ecuador, Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, etc., countries well known as being *at least* as Native American as Trinidad is African or "Black" were denied a Native American category and given instead to Spain, that is, to "whiteness."²

Generally speaking, when a North American white person sees another person - whether in the USA, the Caribbean, or say, Brazil - who exhibits some visible element of Black African ancestry, that person usually becomes "Black" and entire populations, composed of such persons, also become "Black."

In short, "Blacks" are almost always labeled as "Blacks" even when mixed with white or Native American. "Indians," however, are made to exist as a sort of *cultural* category, or as a *caste*. They must remain unchanged, and often presumedly unmixed, in order to be considered "Indian." (Moreover, they must not move to the United States.)

With any mixture of bloods the "Indian" is supposed to disappear, that is, to be "blanched" out, becoming white, or darkened, becoming "Black," or placed permanently in a *mestizo-cholo-ladino*-half-breed category which is non-Indian as viewed by the U.S. Census people. (Self-identified "mestizo" people were placed in 1980 in the "Other" racial category while in contrast, "mulatto" people were placed in the "Black or Negro" category.)

The result is puzzling; one is told that the Sandinistas of Nicaragua are opposing the Miskito "Indians," and yet one looks in vain for any sharp racial differences between most "Nicaraguans" and Miskitos. Why aren't the *Nicaraguenses* also called "indios?"³ Of course, *Indian-hating has made "indio" a bad word* in "Latino" America.

In any case, one meets people who look "Indian" or part-"Indian," but they come from places where there are no "Indians," reportedly. But "Blacks" seldom have that problem! *White North Americans are always finding "Blacks"* (even if they look rather un-African) and *they are always losing "Indians,"* or so it would seem. Clearly we are dealing with a double standard, both of whose elements have been, and are being, determined by racism and cultural chauvinism.⁴

The "Spanish-origin" "Hispanic" Category: 1960s-early 1970s

Some people obviously believe that "Hispanic" is a suitable term to be used for *all* persons derived from any country in the world where the Spanish (Castilian) language is spoken. Some also assert that "Hispanic" is a multi-racial term (as does the Bureau of the Census with its 1980 "Spanish Origin" equivalent). In fact, however, Hispanic historically means Spanish and certainly does not, and cannot, logically embrace the Native

Peoples of the Americas - including the vast majority of Mexicans, Guatemalans, Bolivians, and other nationalities of predominantly Indian origin.

President Gerald Ford proclaimed National Hispanic Heritage Week on September 10, 1976 (during his re-election campaign). Ford stated:

In this Bicentennial year, it is good for us . . . to consider how much *the people who came to the New World* in a search for an opportunity to determine their own futures have meant to America . . . America's Hispanic heritage runs particularly deep. Men and women of Hispanic origin fought in our Revolutionary War. Hispanic Americans have enriched our culture, our arts, and our scholarship . . . Hispanic know-how, energy, pride and dedication *have strengthened America for over two centuries* . . . [italics added].⁵

It is perfectly obvious that Ford knew that he was proclaiming National "Spanish" Heritage Week and that he was honoring immigrants from another continent, not people native to the Americas. The above language certainly excludes people of Indian ancestry, mixed or otherwise, from the Hispanic group (and Ford's exclusion occurred precisely in the time-period in which the Federal government was adopting "Hispanic" as an official designation).

Very recently, Abel Quintela, president of the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce was quoted as saying, "Let us not forget that Hispanics discovered America almost 500 years ago . . ." ⁶ This anti-Native American statement, literally denying the humanity of the people already living in the Caribbean, leaves us in no doubt that the word

"Hispanic" does *not* include Mexicans or others whose ancestry stems from the Toltecs, Aztecs, Mayas, Tainos, Caribs, or other indigenous Americans and whose ancestors "discovered" America tens of thousands of years before Columbus.

"Hispanic," according to Mr. Quintela and President Ford, seems to be equivalent to "Spaniard" and does not include the people who became the Spaniards' victims. Clear enough, but the "Hispanic" category has been gaining momentum, especially by United States governmental agencies, as a term for classifying many Americans who are in no sense "Spaniards." How did this happen?

In January, 1969, the administration of Richard Nixon came to power. Very shortly thereafter, Nixon officials began to seek out Spanish-surnamed Republicans (and ex-Democrats) for appointment to high office as a part of a strategy to ensure a Nixon re-election in 1972. Nixonian strategists came to believe that Spanish-surnamed groups (and European "ethnics") were capable of being weaned from the Democratic Party, especially since most Cubans and some middle-class Mexican-Americans had already voted for Nixon in 1968

Congruent with this development the Bureau of the Census (as a result of intense pressure from Mexican-American groups) conducted a current population survey which had a specific sub-focus on Spanish-surnamed persons for the first time. In April, 1971, the Bureau published a report on "Characteristics of the Population by Ethnic Origin: November, 1969" which lumped Mexicans and all other Spanish-surnamed or Indo-Hispanic groups together as "Spanish" in the tables. American Indians,

"Negroes," and most other non-White groups were simply thrown together in the "Other" category. Census officials stated:

The data in this report and in the report on persons of Spanish origin are the first that have been presented on the basis of questions that ask for self-identification of the person's origin or descent. Previous ethnic origin had to be inferred from information on place of birth, country of origin, mother tongue, surname, etc.

Thus, in earlier census reports for 1950 and 1960 data on persons of Mexican ancestry or Spanish surname were gathered only by the above methods and no single category of "Spanish origin," Hispanic, or Latin American had been created.

With 1969, however, the current population survey asked persons (in a sampling procedure) the following questions. First, the places of birth of the subject and of his or her parents were ascertained. Then the interviewer was told to say:

Now I have a few questions about's origin or descent. First, I'll ask about Spanish descent.

37. Is's origin or descent:

- Mexican
 - Puerto Rican
 - Cuban
 - Central or South American
 - Other Spanish
- (skip to 39)

- o None of these (ask 38)
- 38. What is's origin or descent:
 - o German
 - o Irish
 - o Italian
 - o Polish
 - o Russian
 - o English
 - o Negro
 - o American Indian
 - o Other (Specify)
 - o Don't know

The introduction of the concept of "Spanish origin" ("Spanish descent") for persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Central and South American background is extremely significant and so is the inclusion of the "Other Spanish" category (which lumps European Spaniards, Spanish Basques and Spanish Gypsies into the same category with predominantly non-White American-origin nationalities or groups.

Of even greater significance is the fact that Census officials set the questionnaire up in such a way that if a person answered positively to any of the "Spanish descent" sub-categories, then that person was *not* asked to respond to question 38. *Thus a person of "Spanish descent" could not be further identified as being American Indian (or Negro).*⁷

Coincident with the Census Bureau's shift away from a Mexican to a Spanish emphasis was the abolition by the Congress of the Interagency Committee on Mexican American Affairs and its replacement by the Cabinet Committee on opportunities for Spanish-speaking People (88 Stat. 838, December 30, 1969). The Census Bureau displayed an even more radical approach than the White House in that the Bureau, under Maurice H. Stans and A. Ross Eckler, substituted Spanish and Spanish-American for Mexican, Spanish-speaking, Spanish Surname, as its major categories.⁸

There is, of course, absolutely no ambiguity about the word "Spanish." It refers explicitly to White European origin and in no ordinary manner of usage can it be extended to include persons of non-White Native American, African, or Asian ancestry. So we may well ask what was in the minds of the Census Bureau and Commerce Department officials? The publications for the 1970 census and various special current population samples in 1971, 1972, etc., help us to clarify the ideological, anti-Indian changes being made during the Nixon years.

The 1970 census asked all persons about their "color or race." They were told to:

Fill one circle

If "Indian (American)," *also* give tribe.

If "Other," *also* give race.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> White | <input type="radio"/> Chinese |
| <input type="radio"/> Negro or Black | <input type="radio"/> Filipino |
| <input type="radio"/> Japanese | <input type="radio"/> Hawaiian |
| <input type="radio"/> Indian (American) | <input type="radio"/> Korean |
| Print tribe | <input type="radio"/> Other - Print race |
-

Of course, the above categories have little or nothing to do with "color or race" but rather with social groups and nationalities. According to the Census Bureau, many respondents indicated their "racial identification" by marking "Other."

A considerable proportion of the respondents who marked the "Other" circles supplied specific write-in entries such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Jamaican, etc. In the sample questionnaire, entries of this type were edited into the specific racial categories. The statistics presented in this report reflect the effect of this editing.⁹

What this means, specifically, was that Mexican, Puerto Rican, and other Latin American peoples were arbitrarily removed from their self-selected "Other" racial category and were reclassified to the "White" group (Jamaicans were arbitrarily reclassified as "Negro or Black").

In 1970, as in later years, the Bureau warned the reader that "the concept of race as used by the Bureau of the Census does not denote any scientific definition of biological stock." In keeping with the apparent desire *not* to be scientific, the Bureau counted only the father's "race" if a person reported being mixed.¹⁰ Likewise, persons of Native American race but of Mexican nationality had to choose between "Indian (Amer.)" and "Other." Doubtless the fact that persons checking the former were expected to have a "tribe" discouraged many Latin American Indians since the concept of "tribe" is not usually applied to large Native ethnic groups such as the Maya, Inca and Aztec. The Bureau tells us that in 1970:

the category "American Indian" includes persons who indicated their race as "Indian (Amer.)" as well as persons who did not

classify themselves in one of the specific race categories on the questionnaire but who reported the name of an Indian tribe or had such entries as "Mexican American-Indian," "Canadian-Indian," or "South American-Indian" About 20% of the Indian population did not report any tribal affiliation.¹¹

Thus the Bureau was willing to count as American Indians *only* those persons who specifically used the term "Indian" or who named a tribe.

It is worth noting, however, that the Census Bureau was apparently willing in 1970 to count as Indians persons actually designating "tribes" from south of the border. For example, under the category of "Canadian and Latin American" the Bureau listed the categories of Aztec, Inca, Mayan, Opata, Toltec, Yaqui, Mayo, Tarascan and Zapotecan. These were part of the "American Indian Tribal Classification List" and were terms already used by census respondents.¹²

Thus, the "American Indian" category could, apparently, include Indians from outside of the United States. But the ambiguity of the term "American" must be emphasized. For example, the Census Bureau for question 16 of the 1970 questionnaire asked, for persons born in a foreign country:

- a. Is this person naturalized?
 - o Yes, naturalized
 - o No, alien
 - o Born abroad of American parents¹³

Thus, Census Bureau officials chose to use "American" in place of "United States," thereby indicating a very narrow interpretation of "American." One would reasonably expect, therefore, that very few Indians from outside of the United States would have selected "Indian (Amer.)" in 1970.

The Census Bureau's Pro-Spanish and Pro-White Policy

In 1969 and 1970, under political pressure from the Nixon administration, the Bureau of the Census began attempting to create a new, fictitious group of people called "Spanish," "Spanish Origin," "Spanish Heritage," or other forms of the specific national designation "Spanish." It should be stressed here that "Spanish" refers directly to Spain as a country and to a European, white nationality. Contrary to popular usage, "Spanish" does not refer to a specific language, since Castillian, Gallego, Catala and Basque are all equally "Spanish" languages.

In choosing to create a "Spanish Origin" group the Census Bureau consciously conceived of this population as overwhelmingly "white" and "Indo-European." From the beginning, European Spaniards were included within the group as "Other Spanish."

Persons of Spanish origin in this report are those persons who indicated that their origin was Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish origin 93.3% of all persons of Spanish origin were reported as white.

Only 26,859 persons (0.3%) were classified as Indian and of these, 15,988 were of Mexican origin. Moreover, 23,172 were born in the United States, thus suggesting that an incredibly small number of foreign-born Indians were being counted. But only those persons specifically designating a "tribe" were counted as Indians.

The category 'white' includes persons who indicated their race as white, as well as persons who did not classify themselves in one of the specific race categories on the questionnaire but entered Mexican, Puerto Rican, or a response suggesting Indo-European stock.¹⁴

This incredible statement, that a Mexican or Puerto Rican response indicates "Indo-European stock," reveals both the ignorance and bias of Census Bureau officials. That Mexicans, a people of predominantly indigenous American ancestry, should be reclassified as being of "Indo-European stock" illustrates the extremes to which the bureau has been willing to go to favor a white-Spanish position. "Indo-European" apparently does not mean "American Indian-European" but rather "East Indian-European" in the sense of the Indo-Aryan or Indo-European language family. But the Census Bureau has added the term "stock" to a term for a language family, thus reminding us of Hitlerian Nazi efforts to transform the Aryan language group into a "race" or stock.

In any case, the Bureau attempted to persuade us that Mexicans in the United States were 98.1% "white" while "Spanish origin" persons as a whole were 93.3% "white." The Bureau also sought to boost the totals of the "Spanish Heritage" population by counting all persons as "Spanish Heritage" in a household where only the "head or wife reported Spanish as

his or her mother tongue" as well as all persons with a so-called Spanish surname in the five southwestern states. Thus, many inter-married persons were thrown into this category even if of non-Latin American background.¹⁵

In a survey carried out in March, 1971, the Census Bureau tells us that "white:"

includes almost all persons reporting Spanish origin. About 97% of persons of Spanish origin, about 99% of persons of Mexican origin, and 96% of persons of Puerto Rican origin were classified white in this survey.¹⁶

I have reviewed this usage of the Census Bureau in order to show that an anti-Indian bias was already present in their methodology as early as the 1969-1971 period, before the Federal government as a whole began to refine official definitions of ethnicity in an anti-Indian manner. The Bureau of the Census, no doubt, played a major role in this latter process, which I will now review.

The Development of Anti-Indian Racial Categories by the U.S. Federal Government

In the early 1970s several Federal ad hoc committees were convened to study the existing racial or ethnic classification systems in use by the major Federal agencies with a view to the creation of a single, mandatory set of categories. The findings of these early Nixon administration committees need not concern us here except to note that one recommendation asserted that whenever a person could be counted both as "Spanish" or as a member of some other group, the "Spanish" group

would be favored. This was in line with the Nixon attempt to court the Spanish-speaking vote in the 1972 re-election campaign.

The development of uniform Federal ethnic categories moved forward when the Subcommittee on Minority Education of the Federal Interagency Commission on Education (FICE) issued an unpublished report in April, 1973, on "Higher Education for Chicanos, Puerto Ricans and American Indians," with a recommendation for "common definitions for racial and ethnic groups." Casper Weinberger, then secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (DHEW), which supervised the FICE, was especially interested in that recommendation.

In June 1974, the FICE created an ad hoc Committee on Racial and Ethnic Definitions, headed by Charles E. Johnson, Jr., Assistant Chief of the Population Division of the Bureau of Census. Many other Federal agencies were represented on the ad hoc Committee, including Louis H. Conger, Jr., of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Ed Presson of the Office of Indian Education. The "working group" which made recommendations on "several problem areas" and which participated in the preparation of the final report did not include either of the above persons, however.

The ad hoc Committee, so far as is known, did not consult the National Advisory Council on Indian Education (an all-Indian body appointed by the President within DHEW and directly connected with the Office of Indian Education) or any other Native American organization, group, or individuals.

The report was completed in early 1975 and was issued in April 1975, after a few "minor changes" were made by the FICE itself. The report, in

spite of its importance, was never published by the FICE. Its implications for Native Americans were profound indeed.

The recommended categories included:

1. *American Indian or Alaska Native*. A person have origins in any of the original peoples of North America.

Some ad hoc Committee members felt that the definition should refer to 'original peoples of the Western Hemisphere' to provide for the inclusion in this category the South American Indians.

The committee eventually agreed, however, that the number of South American Indians in this country is small, and to include them might present data problems for agencies concerned with 'Federal Indians,' or those eligible for U.S. government benefits. Members agreed that the category may, at the option of the user, include a provision for responses indicating tribal affiliation of American Indians. In Alaska, the category may provide for identification of Aleuts and Eskimos as well as specific American Indian tribes.¹⁷

Before proceeding to other recommended categories, let us note that the reasoning given above is patently spurious since such "non-Federal Indians" as Canadian Indians, eastern seaboard Indians, "terminated" Indians and off-reservation Indians were included in the "North American" definition. Moreover, the discussion of "South American Indians" could lead one to believe that Mexican and Central American Indians were being included as being of North American origin.

In any event, the Census for 1970 records 1,508,866 persons of Central and South American origin.¹⁸ Since the majority of such Latin American persons are known from historical and anthropological research to be of non-white or mixed racial background, it is certainly a bit premature to conclude that the number of South American Indians in the United States "is small" in advance of counting them.

The ad hoc Committee also adopted the term "Hispanic," a word already being favored by high Nixon officials (such as Presidential Counselor Anne Armstrong) and accepted by Ford immediately upon his appointment to replace Nixon.¹⁹ According to the ad hoc Committee, the term *Hispanic* was to refer to:

A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

Now where did this leave Native American people stemming from Mexico and Central America?

The "Hispanic" definition was to include persons of Mexican origin "regardless of race." Presumably that meant that Mexicans of indigenous American race were to be reported as "Hispanic." But Mexico is a part of the geographical region of North America and under the American Indian definition cited above persons having "origins in any of the original peoples of North America" were to be classed as Indians. Moreover, the "Hispanic" definition made reference to "or other Spanish culture or origin," thereby implying that Mexicans who were not of Spanish culture or origin should *not* be classified as "Hispanic."

Most certainly, no knowledgeable person would equate "Mexican culture" with "Spanish culture." The two cultural traditions are not only

quite distinct but belong to two racially different peoples. (My experience is that Mexicans who visit Spain are never confused over whether they are Mexican or Spanish!)

The choice of the term "Hispanic" was, I believe, a political one engineered by Republican Party officials. The ad hoc Committee states:

Once members agreed that it would be inappropriate to refer to Spanish language or surname for purposes of identifying people to be counted in this category, they decided not to use the term 'Spanish' in the heading at all. The term 'Hispanic' was selected because it was thought to be descriptive of and generally acceptable to the group to which it is intended to apply.

Representatives of one agency, however, still prefer 'Spanish' to 'Hispanic.'

I shall discuss the relationship of "Hispanic" to "Spanish" in a later section. Suffice to state that the two terms are essentially identical. The real alternative, the use of the term "Latin American," was not discussed by the ad hoc Committee report.

A fundamental issue is why have a category which is multi-racial (and even multi-ethnic) in a classification system which is supposed to serve a racial-ethnic purpose. The ad hoc Committee report states:

The minority view concerning the 'Hispanic' category concerns its relationship to all the other categories. Some ad hoc Committee members felt that the 'Caucasian' and 'Black' category headings should contain the modifier 'not of Hispanic origin' to ensure that all Hispanics are reported in the 'Hispanic' (ethnic) category rather than any other (racial) category. Since this is basically a procedural, rather than definitional, matter, it is discussed in the 'suggested applications' section below.

One wonders how it came about that the ad hoc Committee decided that "Hispanic" was an "ethnic" category when they were forcing the term to

encompass a multitude of different peoples *possessing in common only a shared experience as former subjects of the Spanish Empire*.

Also interesting is the idea that Black 'Hispanics' should not be counted with other Black people and that white 'Hispanics' should not be counted with other white people. Even more interesting is the failure to even acknowledge the existence of brown "Hispanics," i.e., people of American Indian race within the Spanish Empire category.

It certainly is not a mere "procedural" matter to take Mexican Indians or Maya people from Guatemala and classify them with white Argentinians and white Cubans. Nor is it a merely "procedural" matter to lump Afro-Puerto Ricans together with white Spaniards from Europe. The implications of this lumping together of different races and colors will be analyzed further below.

It should be noted here that the definition for "Caucasian/white" was:
A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe,
North Africa, the Middle East, or the Indian subcontinent.

Aside from the fact that few scholars know just who the "original peoples" of Europe were and that the "original peoples" of India were probably "Black" (or very dark brown), it is worth noting that Spaniards qualify as white under this category. By contrast, the vast majority of Mexicans and Central Americans would not qualify as white since they are descended from "original peoples" of North America rather than from Europe.

In any case, the ad hoc committee identified "two ways to collect the data" using its proposed categories.

The first alternative involves the use of five mutually exclusive categories. This format is particularly suitable for observer identification. Using the recommended terms and definitions (above), the array of categories would be as follows:

- _____ Hispanic
- _____ American Indian or Alaskan Native
- _____ Asian or Pacific Islander
- _____ Black/Negro, not of Hispanic origin
- _____ Caucasian/white, not of Hispanic origin

Several Federal agencies were ready to use the above format in spite of the fact that:

There is no way of identifying or separating individuals of different races included in the Hispanic category; however, an Hispanic representative on the ad hoc Committee points out that Hispanics see themselves as one group ethnically and culturally despite the racial variety within the group.

The above quote will be dealt with below, when we discuss racial prejudice *within* the former territories of the Spanish Empire. Here it is sufficient to state that one cannot take a single individual's word that "race does not matter." Such a procedure is cavalier and shoddy to say the least.

In any event, the second alternative is to ask:

1. What is your racial background?
 - American Indian or Alaskan Native
 - Asian or Pacific Islander
 - Black/Negro
 - Caucasian/White
2. Is your ethnic heritage Hispanic?
 - Yes
 - No

The Report notes further that:

This alternative also provides the kind of data needed by an agency like the Indian Health Service, for example, which requires information on Hispanic American Indians who are eligible for assistance under this program.

The above reference to "Hispanic American Indians" is rather interesting since it is a backhanded (unintentional?) acknowledgement that the "Hispanic" category was being used to embrace Native Americans as well as Blacks and whites.

The committee then provided a matrix which would allow the collection of data in a manner consistent with the objective of securing information on both race and Spanish-language heritage.

	Hispanic	Not Hispanic	Total
American Indian or Alaska Native			
Asian or Pacific Islander			
Black/Negro			
Caucasian/White			
TOTAL			

Finally, the ad hoc Committee considered the use of an "Other" category "principally for individuals of mixed racial backgrounds" But most members opposed the use of the "Other" category for essentially bureaucratic reasons.

The Committee suggests that the number of legitimate responses in this category is likely to be small²⁰

One might pause to wonder here at the omniscience of the Federal bureaucracy, knowing in advance of testing how many persons have a "legitimate" reason for stating "Other!" Considering that from about 30% to 70% of African-Americans are reported to be part-Indian in various studies and considering the large number of mixed persons in the Latin American population, and in states such as Hawaii, one can argue that a very large number of persons might choose a mixed category *if allowed to do so*.

I would argue that the real opposition to the use of free self-identification stems from fear of revealing the extent of race mixture in the United States and a political agenda to enhance the "Hispanic" numerical total at the expense of all other competing categories, including "Latin

American Indian" and "Other." In this connection, very little use has been made of the simple matrix reproduced above, a matrix which would have allowed "Hispanics" to also be counted as Indians, Blacks, Caucasians or Asians.

In the Spring of 1975 (after Gerald Ford had assumed the presidency) agreement was reached by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the General Accounting Office (GAO), the DHEW Office of Civil Rights and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

to use the draft FICE categories for a trial period of at least one year to test the new categories and definitions . . .

In August, 1976, OMB and GAO convened another ad hoc Committee on Racial/Ethnic Categories to review the draft categories. The committee included representatives of OMB, GAO, the Department of Justice, the Department of Labor, the DHEW, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Bureau of the Census and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Significantly, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Interior Department and the U.S. Office of Education's National Advisory Council on Indian Education (NACIE) and Indian Desk were apparently absent. It should be noted that the leadership of the BIA was quite weak during Nixon's second term. Still further, Commissioner Morris Thompson resigned effective November 3, 1976, to take a job with the Alcan Pipeline Co. The Carter administration was extremely poorly prepared in the Indian affairs area, only securing the appointment of Forrest Gerard as Assistant Secretary of the Interior Department in early October, 1977, after he had served informally for a few months. Thus it is highly unlikely that any Indians were consulted by

Federal bureaucrats during the 1976-1977 period. Moreover, Native American scholars concerned with Indian identity issues were apparently not consulted.

As a result of the discussion at that meeting, OMB prepared "minor revisions to the FICE definitions" and circulated the "proposed final draft" among Federal agencies.

These revised categories and definitions became effective in September, 1976, for all compliance record-keeping and reporting required by the Federal agencies represented on the ad hoc committee.²¹

Following the "receipt of comments and incorporation of suggested modifications" the above guidelines were accepted by the new presidential administration of Jimmy Carter, an administration extremely weak in the Native American area, as noted, but also very weak in relation to the Chicano-Mexicano community.

Thus it came about that within a few months after taking office as director of the Office of Management and Budget, Georgia banker Bert Lance issued, on May 12, 1977, a document entitled "Race and Ethnic Standards for Federal Statistics and Administrative Reporting" (Circular No. A-46). Shortly thereafter the Office of Federal Statistical Policy and Standards in the Department of Commerce issued (May, 1978) a *Statistical Policy Handbook* which contained the same racial classification system now re-issued as Statistical Policy Directive No. 15. (Essentially the same rules were published in the *Federal Register* in May, 1978.)²²

The rules issued in 1977 and 1978 are extremely significant as an example of the political and bureaucratic, as opposed to the scientific,

organization of U.S. statistical data. The purpose of the directive was to provide "standard classifications" for data on "race and ethnicity" in Federal reporting and statistical activities. The following disclaimer is worthy of note:

These classifications should not be interpreted as being scientific or anthropological in nature They have been developed in response to needs expressed by both the executive branch and the Congress to provide for the collection and use of compatible, non-duplicated, exchangeable racial and ethnic data by Federal agencies.

No reason is given as to *why* "scientific or anthropological" classifications could not be used, but it is significant that the Bureau of the Census (as noted elsewhere) gives a similar disclaimer for its collection of racial data. "The concept of race as used by the Census Bureau . . . does not denote any clear-cut scientific definition of biological stock."

As we have noted, *a scientific system could not be used for the simple reason that a political one was implemented instead.*

The 1977-1978 order defined five basic "racial and ethnic" categories. Since these are somewhat different from the 1975 proposal they will be reproduced here with my comments in brackets.

1. *American Indian or Alaskan Native.* A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition. [Note that this limits Native American status *only* to North Americans; also it is a cultural definition so that if any Indian ceases to be culturally identifiable that person ceases to be an

Indian; also it is not clear whether Greenland and Canadian Eskimo peoples would be included.]

2. *Asian or Pacific Islander*. [Note this includes people from Pakistan eastward through the Pacific Islands. No cultural conditions are imposed.]

3. *Black*. A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. [Note this excludes "Black" people from New Guinea, Fiji and Melanesian regions and does not clarify status of "brown" peoples of various parts of east, south and northern Africa. Note also that this is *not* a cultural definition like that used for American Indians.]
4. *Hispanic*. A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. [Note this fails to include Portuguese, French, English, Dutch and Native American-speaking peoples of the Americas south of the U.S.A. This *is* a partially cultural definition.]
5. *White*. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East. [Note this lumps Egyptians into the "white" category and is also *not* a cultural definition.]

The directive distinguished between "race" and "ethnicity" in the same manner as did the 1975 proposal. Race referred to the categories of American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, Black, and white (this in spite of having limited the use of American Indians to North America and to persons having an Indian culture). "Ethnicity" referred to "Hispanic origin" and "not of Hispanic origin." *Thus "ethnicity" was limited to the distinction between Spanish-speaking and non-Spanish-speaking, a rather mind-boggling paradigm surely developed by non-scholars without access to a dictionary of the English language.*

The directive goes on to add that:

When race and ethnicity are collected separately, the number of white and Black persons who are Hispanic must be identifiable and capable of being reported in that category. If a combined format is used to collect racial and ethnic data, the minimum acceptable categories are:

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian or Pacific Islander

Black, not of Hispanic origin

Hispanic

White, not of Hispanic origin

This is extremely significant *since the language mentions only "white and Black persons who are Hispanic" and ignores the existence of American Indians within the "Hispanic" group*. Yet, at the same time, American Indians are limited to North American-origin persons, thus creating a catch-22 situation; no American Indians exist *within* the Hispanic category and no American Indians exist *outside* the Hispanic category either (except in "North America").

Persons of "mixed racial and/or ethnic origins" were to be placed in the category "which most closely reflects the individual's recognition in his community," a somewhat ambiguous directive which could very easily be used to deny personal self-classification with a multi-ethnic identity.

The categories decreed by OMB were not to be the only ones usable in data collection, but:

any reporting required which uses more detail shall be organized in such a way that the additional categories can be aggregated into these basic racial/ethnic categories.²³

Thus Native Americans and Afro-Americans from Spanish-speaking countries could not be counted except as sub-groups under "Hispanic."

But for Native Americans this possibility was precluded by the definition of American Indian, limiting that racial/cultural status to persons of North American origins. Since Mexico appears to have been excluded from North America, the above definition also means that Yaquis, Papagos, Cocopas and other Indians of Mexican origin but now recognized by the Bureau of Indian Affairs as Indians could probably no longer be counted as such.²⁴

Native Americans who have experienced the "termination" (assimilation) efforts of the 1950s and 1960s, and who are currently witnessing U.S. government efforts to recognize fewer Indians for service purposes, may also be alarmed at the utilization of a cultural definition by OMB. After all, a definition which requires that a person maintain "cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition" is so subjective as to allow for arbitrary interpretation by bureaucrats. Many hundreds of thousands of American Indians can be reclassified as non-Indians simply by narrowing the interpretation of "tribal affiliation" and "community recognition."

It may well be, therefore, that a "bottom line" reason for the FICE-OMB treatment of Native Americans is to ultimately reduce the numbers of persons qualifying for Federal services as Indians.

In July 1977, Katherine K. Wallman of OMB and John Hodgdon of the Office for Civil Rights, DHEW, wrote an explanatory article on the new regulations in the OMB *Statistical Reporter*. First, they noted that the new rules

extend, in general, to all forms of Federal record keeping and reporting which involve the collection and presentation of racial and ethnic data.

All old systems had to be made to conform to the new rules by January 1, 1980, at the very latest.

Wallman and Hodgdon note that Directive No. 15 "represents the best efforts of its Federal agencies" in an area "where many differing views and concerns are evident." Limitations seen by the authors include:

that the categories and definitions were developed primarily on the basis of geographical location of various countries the classifications which are presented should not be interpreted as being scientific or anthropological in nature.

This is a strange rationale, since the definitions conform to no known principle of geography whatsoever. Spain is lumped together with part of Latin America, the rest of Latin America is left in limbo, North Africa is separated from the rest of Africa, the Middle East to Iran is separated from Pakistan, the Pacific Islands are lumped together with East Asia and the Indian subcontinent, Europe is combined with parts of Africa and Asia, etc. In what sense, then, can "geographical location" be used as a justification? Such an argument would seem to be simply a shoddy "cover" for a mish-mash which can only be explained by certain white racial and cultural ideas such as claiming Egypt as white and establishing white-Hispanic dominance over Latin America.

In any case, Wallman and Hodgdon go on to note that OMB's Statistical Policy Division, by July, 1977, had already reacted to other agency requests by responding to questions such as:

2. Should persons from all Central and South American countries be reported in the category "Hispanic?"

No. *Only those persons from Central and South American countries who are of Spanish origin, descent, or culture should be included in the category Hispanic.* Persons from Brazil, Guiana, Surinam, Trinidad and Belize would be classified according to their race and would not necessarily be included in the Hispanic category.

One might think, from the above, that American Indians of Central and South America should be classified according to race and not as Hispanics (since they are not of Spanish origin, descent, or culture) but, as already noted, Indians could only be from North America according to the OMB rules.

Wallman and Hodgdon also deal with the problem of classifying racially mixed persons or individuals who object to being placed "in one of five mutually exclusive categories, none of which appears appropriate." They suggest that agencies should include in the questionnaire information:

that the report is not attempting to develop an anthropologically precise description of the persons surveyed, but rather to obtain information on the number of persons in the study population who may be *subject to discrimination because of the community's perception of their racial and ethnic heritage.* [Italics added]

Thus the ultimate aim of the gathering of racial ethnic data is supposed to shed light upon discrimination. If so, then why include Spaniards and white Latin Americans within an "Hispanic" group, people who have no history of

being victims of racial or ethnic discrimination but, in contrast, *often have been the discriminators* in places from where they have come?

In any event, OMB had also decided to allow agencies to include an "Other (specify)" category for self-identification.

This sixth category should be added, however, only when the data gathering agency is prepared to assign the persons choosing this response option to a standard category for purposes of presenting aggregated information . . . It should be emphasized that the use of an "Other (specify)" category is permissible only in cases where respondent self-identification is used; this option is not to be used in reporting forms which collect racial and ethnic data through observer identification of such characteristics.

Thus racially-mixed persons (such as *mestizos* or *mulattoes*) had to be ultimately assignable to one of the five categories. A Black/Native American mixed blood would have to be assigned to either the Black or American Indian categories (or to the Hispanic category if born in a country assigned entirely to that classification).

Moreover, Directive No. 15 determines the categories used by such agencies as the National Science Foundation. Recently I received a copy of NSD Form 1225 (9-85) in which the OMB-mandated racial/ethnic categories are presented exactly as issued in 1977-78. Thus, American Indians can originate only in North America and Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Central and South Americans are assigned to the "Hispanic" category.

The OMB mandated categories are, I would suggest, very useful for gutting affirmative action programs since they allow light-skinned and/or

affluent Cubans, Argentinians, Uruguayans, etc., to be counted in the same totals as dark-skinned persons of Native American or African ancestry, or of mixed-racial origins. Successful groups or persons with no history of being discriminated against thus become eligible for "minority" jobs and programs. In this connection it is worth noting that the OMB rules, as early as 1974, forbade the use of the term "non-white" in Federal statistical reporting. This prohibition was repeated in 1977 and 1978. *Thus it became impossible to contrast non-white racial groups with the white population* in terms of economic indicators, employment discrimination, and so on. The contrast was to be between "Hispanic" and "non-Hispanic" *thus effectively obscuring data on racial discrimination in U.S. society.*²⁵

Moreover, it is interesting that the guidelines refer to "*other* Spanish culture or origin," clearly implying that the people of Mexico, Puerto Rico, Central and South America are of "Spanish culture or origin." This is, of course, an absolute absurdity as applied to speakers of Maya, Otomi, Quechua, Aymara, Mapuche, etc. (speakers of Native American languages constitute from 10% to 60% or more of the population of countries such as Mexico, Guatemala, and Bolivia, for example).

Hispanic and Native American: Antagonistic Categories

How is it that well-known indigenous American peoples, known even to readers of the *National Geographic Magazine* as Indians, can be assigned a "Spanish culture or origin" by Federal bureaucrats? Clearly it is politics which are at work here and not science!

The politics relate back to the long struggle of some persons of Mexican extraction to escape from the prejudice directed at persons of Indian appearance by having themselves reclassified as "Spanish Americans" or "Latin Americans." This tendency was accentuated by white-only rules for participation in the Texas Democratic Party primary elections (the only real elections during the era of one-party rule). Some Mexicans fought to obtain reclassification as "Whites with Spanish surnames" in order to not be barred from participation in such white-only activities. Nonetheless, Mexicans were frequently segregated as a *racial* minority throughout the Southwest and California into the early 1950s, as I shall describe further below.

The concept of "Hispanic" (which means "Spanish" or "Spanish-derived") is an absurdity as applied to people who often do not even speak Spanish (except perhaps as a second, foreign language), whose surnames are often not of Spanish origin, and whose racial and cultural backgrounds are American Indian (or African, or mixed). For example, many Maya people from Guatemala do not possess Spanish surnames and speak a Maya language as their first or only language.

As recently as 1977, a noted British scholar on the subject of race, Michael Banton, utilized the term "Hispanic" in its more correct meaning, to

refer to white elites of European descent. He states that in Mexico, Guatemala and several other Latin American republics:

Indians live in distinct communities with their own language and culture. In between them and the small Hispanic population is the group called *ladino* in Guatemala and *mestizo* in most of the other countries. In much of this region an Indian can become a *ladino* or *mestizo* by behaving like one.²⁶

To clearly comprehend the absurdity of the new U.S. usage, *let us imagine that the Federal government decided to refer to all English-surnamed or English-speaking persons as "Britannics"* including, of course, Black Americans, white Anglo-Americans, American Indians with Anglo surnames, etc. In one fell swoop, a new fictitious "ethnic" group would be invented, every bit as justifiable as "Hispanic" or "Spanish origin."

Now what would be the function of the "Britannic" group? Aside from confusing many Blacks and Indians, it would make it possible for white Britannics to fill affirmative action quotas formerly set aside for racial minorities since such quotas could no longer exist for sub-groups within the "Britannic" category. In a similar manner, statistical evidence relating to discrimination, unemployment, poverty, education, etc., would become relatively useless, or difficult to analyze, since data for white-skinned persons would simply be averaged together with data for blacks and browns.

Anyone familiar with the Latin American world knows that brown and black persons, and especially people of Indian language and culture, are usually at the very bottom of society, in the same manner that brown and black persons are at the bottom in the Anglo-American world. Recently, Raoul Lowery Contreras devoted a column in a bilingual California newspaper to the issue of racism within the Mexican and Chicano worlds. He quoted an illegal Indian migrant from southern Mexico who was complaining of bad treatment by Chicano businessmen and Border Patrol employees. The columnist went on to ask why some Mexicans discriminate against other Mexicans.

To understand, one has to examine hundreds of years of history starting from the Spanish landing in 1519. From that day forward, the color of skin has dictated the measure of one's economic and social standing in Mexico The poor Indian illegal immigrant thus finds himself in a situation where he is ignored at home and hated in [the United States] . . .²⁷

This rather candid assessment of anti-Indian prejudice also is valuable for its providing us with an unambiguous reference to the Indian racial character of many current Mexican immigrants.

We must, I believe, be totally frank in acknowledging that far from being ethnically unified, the people of Latin America are divided along ethnic or racial lines. In many areas this division takes the specific form of a direct struggle between Native American nationalities or ethnic groups and Spanish-speaking white or mixed ethnic groups. As Gunnar Mendoza has written:

After 150 years of "independence," the Indians of vast Latin American areas, who make up the great majority of the population, are living in conditions practically the same or worse than those of the sixteenth century The type of society that Spain and Portugal built in the New World and which . . . persists today, is then, a society based, *sine qua non*, on the premise of the exploitation of the vast majority of people by a small minority.²⁸

In any case, the use of Hispanic or Spanish-origin categories achieves the end of continuing to empower white Spanish-speaking elites at the expense of people of Indian and African origin and of masking the

hierarchical, color-ranked class structure and racial/ethnic diversity within the Spanish-speaking and Latin American-origin populations.

As I shall also suggest, another function of "Hispanic" is to confuse people of color so that they will "think white" and allow themselves to be dominated by white assimilative forces (which are, apparently, already utilizing Spanish-language television to exalt whiteness at the expense of darker skin colors).²⁹

The United States government has, I believe, its own reasons for refusing to recognize that the Native American race embraces people from south of the border. The motivation is linked, I suspect, with the 200 to 400 year struggle to eliminate or assimilate Indians in the United States itself as well as with the desire to expel racially Indian Guatemalans, for example, who are refugees from racial exploitation in their apartheid-like homeland. By denying their "Indian" status the U.S. government can, perhaps, pretend that Maya refugees are not true refugees, but are only economically motivated illegal entrants.

It is significant to recall that from the late 1930s through the early 1970s the concept of *Hispanidad* (Hispanic-ness) was a favored propaganda tool in Latin America of the late Generalissimo Francisco Franco's Fascist dictatorship in Spain. Ironically, the term "Hispanic" was taken up by the United States (also as a propaganda tool?) at about the same time that Franco's death made Spain a somewhat more palatable pill for Latin Americans to swallow.

Franco's purpose was doubtless to overcome the animosity towards Spain engendered by the American wars for independence against Spanish intransigence, which endured throughout much of the nineteenth

century if we include the struggle of Cuba. He also, perhaps, wanted to overcome the distaste felt for a long string of clericalist-reactionary regimes in Spain (broken only briefly by the Spanish Republic of the 1930s, which Franco destroyed). In addition, Franco probably hoped to support Spanish cultural and political interests in the Americas, interests which were fundamentally anti-Indian, pro-European and reactionary.

Now the United States has become a major promoter of *Hispanidad* (Spanish-ness). Why?

The Bureau of the Census, in a section of the 1980 long form entitled, "Why the Census asks certain questions," stated:

Spanish/Hispanic origin or descent? The identification of Spanish/Hispanic origin groups is important for a better understanding of cultural differences and for the carrying out of laws and programs aimed at improving the economic conditions of the groups.

This statement certainly fail to convince a skeptical reader, since finding out about people of Native American origin from Latin America would be at least as useful as finding out about the persons associated with an artificially created group. To be more specific, it serves no useful purpose whatsoever to include European (white) Spaniards as a part of a target population which supposedly needs improvement of its economic conditions.

Let us consider several alternatives. First, the Census Bureau (and U.S. government) might have identified a "Latin American" target population for study. This population would have included Brazilians and might also have included French-speaking persons from South America

and the Caribbean. It would have been a useful group, since its membership would be exclusively from the Americas and usually of Native American, African and/or mixed ancestry.

A second alternative would have been to distinguish between predominantly "white" countries, such as Argentina and Uruguay, and predominantly Indian countries, such as Guatemala, or predominantly mixed countries (African-Native American-European), such as Venezuela or Brazil. This alternative could easily have been linked with a Latin American regional focus.

Instead, the Census Bureau and other Federal agencies have chosen to lump white European Spaniards together with persons of variable racial origin from the Americas to form a group which specifically excludes persons of Portuguese, Brazilian, French and French-American backgrounds but which includes persons speaking Native American languages. For example, for the ancestry questions (#14) *the Census Bureau specifically excluded European Spaniards from the European category* and placed them (along with Spanish Basques) in a "Spanish" category which encompassed all persons from Latin American countries where Castilian is spoken as well as Spain itself. *This grouping was unabashedly called Spanish* and not even Spanish-origin or Hispanic.

Thus, a conscious effort has been made to build an historically European Spanish-based and dominated group rather than a regional "Latin" group or a regional "American" group. This is precisely the tradition of Spanish imperialism and of Hispanidad which emphasized Spanish Culture and identity at the expense of Native American cultures. It is also in the direct tradition of the anti-Indian patterns of most Spanish-dominated

countries, where Indian languages are consistently unrecognized and where Native identity is regarded by the state as undesirable and an object of eradication measures. In short, we are dealing with a racist-colonist system, tradition and mentality.

The U.S. government must have reasons for creating a new "Spanish Empire" of linked nationalities, in addition to those to which I have alluded. I would suggest that one of the major ones is to empower white-skinned or assimilationist-oriented Spaniards, Cubans and socio-economic elites from elsewhere to become spokespersons and brokers for a fictitious "Hispanic" group. In turn, these brokers can replace or exclude the nationalistic or radical leadership developed within the Puerto Rican and Chicano-Mexicano communities. In short, as an Hispanic, a white Spaniard or Argentinian can now serve as "a leader" for nationalities or peoples with whom he or she has nothing in common save that same commonalty which a wealthy Spanish capitalist or landowner has with an Indian peasant or migrant worker.

In brief, I would argue that the "Hispanic" concept is a Nixon administration engineered political, not statistical-operational, device since other, more useful, statistical paradigms are available.

From the Native American perspective, one aspect of the "Hispanic" formulation is that it shifts analysis away from race (color) and towards much less relevant criteria such as nominal language. Hispanic, like my proposed Britannic concept, is "post-racial." *It does not end color discrimination, but it does bury it and thereby renders the victims more powerless to identify the sources of their victimization.*

After all, Mexicans cannot experience racial discrimination can they? Brown skin is only an illusion after all, since his or her "Spanish" status has made race irrelevant! Or has it?

The Racial Character of Mexicans and Other Latin Americans

In order to comprehend just how wrong the U.S. government's racial classification categories are, we need to cite several alternative sources (although in my book *Aztecas del Norte: The Chicanos of Aztlan*, 1973, and in an article on "Race and Color in Mexican-American Problems" I go extensively into the question). First, I will cite the anthropologist Harold E. Driver, who, in turn, is drawing upon Mexican scholarship. He states that in Latin America,

About 90% of the Spanish immigrants were men who came over single and married or cohabited with Indian women after arrival. Although most persons in Latin America today claim some dash of European ancestry, the percentage of European genes in entire populations is smaller than is generally known. *In Mexico today more than 80% of the genes in the entire population are probably Indian*, with the remainder about equally divided between Negroes and Europeans. Only about 200,000 Europeans and 250,000 Negroes immigrated to Mexico up to A.D. 1810, and there has been little immigration since that time [italics added].³⁰

How can a people, 80% of whose genes are probably Native American, be classified as "white," or "Hispanic?" The historian Henry Bamford Parkes, writing from the perspective of the Lazaro Cardenas

period of the 1930s, offers us this additional insight into Mexican historical evolution. The Revolution

had wrought a profound change in the national consciousness.

Mexico had become aware that she was primarily an Indian nation, and that only on the basis of her Indianism could she create a civilization of her own. Indian culture, submerged since the Spanish conquest, was beginning to reappear The task which post-revolutionary Mexico slowly began to undertake was that of fusing the Indian way of life with whatever was valuable in contemporary civilization, of integrating Indian qualities into modern society without, at the same time, destroying them Indian Mexico was finally beginning to emerge from the four century interlude of white domination . . . that the Indian races had sufficient vitality to slough off the habits created in them by oppression and exploitation and to create a future of their own.³¹

This passage helps us to understand why Chicano art and culture is so fundamentally different from that of Spain and also differs concretely from that of Puerto Rico and Cuba. The concept of Hispanic, in effect, denies the distinctive ethnic and national character of the Mexican people just as the English attempted to destroy the distinct character of the Irish.

Unfortunately, both right-wing anti-Indian conservatives and left-wing Marxist radicals often agree upon just this point; that the Native American character of the Latin American masses should be subordinated to a class analysis of society, the conservatives advocating the ideological perspective of the white or near-white ruling class and the Marxists offering

the perspective of a usually light-skinned or European-derived educational elite.

The desire to adopt "Hispanic" is perhaps reinforced by the often shaky status of Spanish-speaking elites in relation to the brown or brown-black masses of their specific native populations. Specifically as regards Mexican origin persons (in the San Francisco region in this case) a study noted that

Sub-cultural differences - but much more significantly, panicky status concerns - are focal in the efforts of "Spanish" Mexicans to differentiate themselves from "Indian" Mexicans and who could scarcely be regarded as partners in a common cause.³²

This, of course, reflects the fact noted above that in much of Mexico, as well as in the rest of Latin America, Native Americans are often still exploited ruthlessly by persons of a lighter color and superior economic status.

Another study suggested that in the United States, "Vertical mobility and loss of identification as Mexicans should theoretically be easier for those who approximate the "Castilian type." This is a significant insight since it is difficult to comprehend how any person of Mexican origin could repudiate a century and three-quarters of history from Hidalgo and Guerrero to Zapata and Cuautemoc Cardenas unless the "Hispanic" label allows them to shed Indianness and Mexicanness more easily.

Grassroots Mexicans have long been aware of their Indian background. For example, Paul S. Taylor found in the 1920s that, Generally the Mexicans of the [Imperial] valley quite unconsciously speak and think of themselves as Mexicans, and

as Indian or mestizo. Repeatedly, Mexicans have spoken to the writer of the "Mexicans" and the "whites" - in the most casual and matter of fact way. Only twice was objection raised to [those] designations by men who obviously were of part Indian ancestry.³⁴

As most readers will be aware, this attitude lay at the heart of the Chicano awakening of the 1960s and 1970s, with its emphasis upon the Indian homeland of Aztlan and a corresponding identification with the ancient Mexican and southwestern U.S. heritages. (I have never known a Chicano to identify with the *alcazar* of Toledo, Spain, or the *torre del oro* of Sevilla, Spain.)

Carey McWilliams summed up the situation forty years ago by noting that:

Three cultures, not two, have fought for supremacy in the Southwest: Anglo, Hispano and Indian Mexicans are related to Indians by race and culture, with the Indian part of their cultural and racial inheritance being more important than the Spanish. Mexicans are consistently equated with Indians by race-conscious Anglo-Americans. Quite apart from the question of how much Indian blood flows in the veins of the Mexican minority, Mexicans are regarded as a racial minority in the Southwest.

The five hundred year struggle between *hispanos* and *naturales americanos* continues and is still being felt throughout our American continent. Eduardo Astesano proposes an "Indoamerican" and "Southamerican" nationality as appropriate for much of the Americas:

Vivimos sumergidos en una cultural blanca, importada, segregacionista, de apartheid, donde se usa despectivamente el término indio Es muy difícil escapar a esta medio milenio de avasallamiento europeo arqueólogos y antropólogos . . . han puesto al descubierto nuestros milenios de cultural indígena . . . aportando pruebas indiscutibles de una sorprendente Sudamérica antigua; [y] . . . los ecologistas . . . nos permitieron reconstruir la filosofía profundada de nuestra forma nacional indígena. Unos y otros, son el motor de un patriotismo indigenista . . . Todas estas manifestaciones históricas que podrían denominarse indistintamente, nacionalismo indoamericano o patriotismo indigenista fueron común a grandes sectores populares sudamericanos durante los tres siglos de hegemonía hispana.³⁶

This assertion of an *Indianist* national perspective for South America and its open opposition to Hispanic, white and European hegemony illustrates the simple point that we have been trying to make: *one cannot subordinate Americanoid (Indian) peoples under the Spanish label without doing violence to history and to accuracy.* To call peoples and nations of American race "Spanish" is a political and ideological act, not a scientific one.

Having gone into this background, then, what of the 1980 population figures for Native Americans?

What does "Indian (American)" Mean to the Bureau of Census in 1980?

There are a great many different definitions associated with the terms American Indian and Native American. The Bureau of the Census implies that it does not, of itself, impose any definition.

The categories "American Indian," "Eskimo" and "Aleut" include persons who classified themselves as such in one of the specific race categories. In addition, persons who did not report themselves in one of the specific race categories, but entered the name of an American Indian tribe or reported entries such as Canadian Indian, French-American Indian or Spanish-American Indian, were classified as American Indian.³⁷

Thus, the census claims that self-identification determined who was a Native American in 1980. Nonetheless, there *were* decisions made by the Census staff for persons who failed to clearly designate any racial or ethnic identity in relation to the Bureau's 14 basic groups. Question 4 on the 1980 form asked all persons to choose between white, Black or Negro, Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Vietnamese, "Indian (Amer.)," Asian Indian, Hawaiian, Guamanian, Samoan, Eskimo, Aleut and Other. Those who selected "Other" and who wrote in a specific group were subsequently classified by staff, or by interviewers, into one of the 14 categories or were left as "Other." Persons who wrote in Trinidadian, for example, were classified as "Black or Negro" unless they were among the sample interviewed orally and who, with the help of the interviewer, selected some other basic group.³⁸

A Maya Indian person from Guatemala who, for example, selected "Other" and wrote in Guatemalan would have been classified as both Spanish origin and "Other," but *not* as American Indian.

We must try to understand, then, what Census people had in mind by the term American Indian. Did they envision the same meaning as discussed for 1970? Did they plan to exclude Latin American and Caribbean area Indians? What did they mean by "American" within the term "Indian (Amer.)" as it was abbreviated and reversed on the form?

The term American is misleading since the U.S. government often uses it as if it were synonymous with United States, as noted earlier, while writers often apply it to all North and South Americans. Scholarly writers often use the term American Indian to refer to *all* native Indians of the Americas, while still others clearly mean to denote only United States Indians.³⁹

The use of the somewhat esoteric form "Indian (Amer.)" instead of a more straightforward form will be further explored. Here, let us only note that Indian-American is a form easily adopted by Asian Indians born in the United States (or assimilated in the Americas) and one, therefore, which should not be used in the future since the 300,000+ Asian Indians in the U.S. in 1980 will rapidly increase and come to include many more second generation persons.⁴⁰

It would appear that, as in 1970, Census staff did not plan to limit the use of American Indian only to United States Native Americans. This can be ascertained by consulting the tables which staff and interviewers were to use to classify persons who did not self-select one of the 14 basic groups.

The table commands that "Canadian Indian" would be classified as "Indian (Amer.)." The same was true for Abenaki, Athapaskan, Haida and Kootenai - all groups with possibly more Canadian than U.S. members.

Similarly the report on "American Indians by Tribe" (October 15, 1984) includes categories for Canadian and Latin American, Cree, Iroquois, Kootenai, Micmac and other tribes found in Canada, in whole or in part.⁴¹

Thus it is clear that Canadian Indians were included as "Indian (Amer.)." The status of Greenlanders (of Inuit origin) is unclear since the ancestry publication (PC80-S1-10) for 1980 does *not* classify Greenlanders with their Eskimo relatives, but places them under the category of "Other North American not elsewhere classified."⁴² As we have seen also, Eskimos and Aleuts are not considered to be American Indians by the Census Bureau, although they are, of course, Native Americans and every bit as "Indian" as are any other Native people of the Americas.

As the reader will note, the above cited report on "American Indians by Tribe" mentioned a category of "Canadian and Latin American" which clearly implies that Indians from Latin America were being counted as American Indians. On the other hand, not a single tribal or language group from Mexico, Central or South America is listed for 1980 except for Yaqui, Pima and others found also in the United States. Moreover, the tables used by Census staff and interviewers do not list a single tribe from that region, i.e., no Maya, Aztec, Tarascan, Quechua, Inca, Carib, etc., are named as groups to be reclassified as "Indian (Amer.)."⁴³

Thus, we can be rather certain that the Census Bureau did not anticipate that persons would be classified as American Indian if they were from south of the border unless they specifically chose to use the term American Indian (as in Spanish-American Indian). Moreover, the manner in which the Census Bureau chose to organize the data resulting from the ancestry question (#14) of the 1980 census is quite significant in that it tends to strongly support the thesis that it was intentional that no Americans Indians were to be reported from outside North America. Ancestry groups were classified in such a way that "American Indians" and

"Aleut and Eskimo" were placed *within a "North American" grouping only*. Persons from Meso-America, the Caribbean and South America were either placed within a "Spanish" grouping or within a "Non-Spanish Caribbean, Central and South American" grouping, *neither of which had any American Indian or Native American sub-category*.⁴⁴

But, In truth, I have gone through this analytical exercise as if the Bureau of Census independently developed its racial/ethnic categories. This was not the case. Census reports do not tell us what we have already shown, that is, that the white House's *OMB had already decided in 1977-78 that only North Americans could be classified as American Indians* and that census staff were bound by OMB policy, not by their own professional judgments.

On May 9, 1979, Daniel B. Levine, Acting Director of the Bureau of the Census, misleadingly stated in a letter to Representative Vic Fazio that

Every person in the United States, including American Indians, will have an opportunity to self-identify his or her race.

Levine then added:

Information on racial groups and for persons of Spanish origin is required to comply with standards on racial and ethnic categories as outlined in Statistical Policy Directive No. 15 issued for use by all Federal Agencies.

Unfortunately, Levine did not explain to Rep. Fazio that Directive No. 15 limited the American Indian category to persons derived from North America, thus rendering his previous assertion meaningless.⁴⁵

We must begin our analysis of Native American population reports with the idea in mind that Native Americans of certain origins, such as

Greenlanders and those from the Caribbean, Mexico, Central and South America, cannot be accurately identified by race but only by inference based upon country of origin.

Native American Population Figures: Who's Got the Right Numbers?

In this context, what do Indian population figures look like, focusing upon U.S. national totals? We must begin by noting that the 1980 census, and a 1979 sample count, yield several different totals, not just one.

Early figures for the 100% count of the 1980 census yielded one set of results. A second set resulted from corrections made to the 100% count, corrections which added about 5,000 persons (largely ones who had written in a tribal name under "Other," but had not marked "Indian (Amer.). A third set resulted from a 1980 sample count which increased totals by some 114,508 "Indians" (mostly urban or off-reservation) but which resulted in slight decreases for Eskimo and Aleut Native Americans. This change resulted largely from better counting of persons who had written in a tribal name under "Other" rather than under "Indian (Amer.)" and then from projecting the sample to a national estimate.

A fourth set of figures resulted from the 1980 ancestry questionnaire (a sample count) wherein almost two million persons designated American Indian as their *only* ancestry. A sixth set of totals resulted from the number of persons asserting some degree of American Indian ancestry in 1980 (almost seven million). A seventh set of totals stems from the 1979 sample count which yielded almost ten million persons of some degree of Native American ancestry.

Still further, additional estimates of Native American population are to be derived by including persons of Mexican, Bolivian, Guatemalan, Salvadorean, Honduran, Peruvian, Paraguayan, Ecuadorian, Greenlander and other known nationalities of Native American ancestry. These persons were counted partly as "Other" by the Bureau of the Census. Almost 7,700,000 persons stated in 1980 that they had Mexican ancestry and of these, 91% listed no other ancestry. Thus some seven million Mexican-derived persons were not overlapped with those other persons who had indicated American Indian ancestry.

Finally, note must be taken of the more than 20 million Black Americans in 1980, a population well-known as having considerable American Indian background but who, in the 1980 ancestry question designated themselves as being 97.9% of single ancestry or unmixed. This result was due to the manner in which the Census Bureau asked the question about ancestry. In any case, we can suggest that from 30% to 70% of the Afro-American population, or some seven million and more persons, possessed Native American ancestry in 1980.

The following chart will illustrate the above figures.

No. 4: The "Race" Question

Now let us examine first the counts which deal only with persons who marked question 4, the "Race" question, either by checking the "Indian (Amer.)" box or by checking the "Other" box but writing in a designation recognized by Census staff as being the name of a Native American group.

It is quite clear that the results from question 4 were flawed in that the terms "white," "Black or Negro," and "Indian (Amer.)" are all more

ambiguous than Census staff apparently believed. For example, many thousands of persons who wrote in the name of an Indian tribe and many hundreds of thousands (perhaps 400,000 by projection) who filled in the ancestry question (No. 14) as being of *only* American Indian ancestry checked the boxes for either "White" or "Other." Why? I would suggest that the term "Indian (Amer.)" as used in question 4 is obscure and misleading in that it might be variously interpreted as Indian (United States), Indian (Americas), Indian-American and American Indian. Quite clearly, hundreds of thousands (and millions, if one includes Latin American Indians) refused to mark it.⁴⁶

Secondly, the term "white" in racist regions where black and white are perceived as opposites within a bi-polar ethnic framework, does not mean "Caucasian" or "European" but apparently means "not black," "light," or not pertaining to the "black" side of society. Thus many American Indians and Mexicans of Indian blood might well see themselves as "white" in regions where black-white polarization has been a dominant theme, as in the northeastern, southern and south central regions (except for south Texas). It is significant that Mexicans chose either Black or White designations more commonly in those regions. In the Northeast, for instance, Mexican origin persons chose the "Other" category only 21.4% of the time. Mexicans in the South/South Central ranged from 9.2% "Other" in East South Central to 24.6% in South Atlantic and 37.5% in West South Central (including Texas) for a Texas-dominated average of 36%. The North Central region saw 45.7% selecting "Other," while in the West 51.2% chose "Other."

Clearly, Mexican origin persons were extremely influenced by the ethos of the white-black eastern half of the country. In the Plains and West regions, however, Mexicans were often the largest minority and the White-Black nexus was also weakened by the presence of higher percentages of American Indians and Asians.⁴⁷

In any case, the ambiguity of the term "white" is underscored by the fact that *the Census Bureau*, in publication D-561, *chose to place persons who classified themselves as "non-white" or as "Colored" in the "Black or Negro" category*. If non-whites and people of color are "Black," then clearly those who are *not* Black must be white or uncolored by similar reasoning.⁴⁸ On the other hand, "brown" and "mestizo" people were placed in the "Other" category by Census Bureau staff. I would suggest that many Mexicans and other Latin Americans who selected the "Other" category (rather than white, etc.) did so because of a knowledge of having indigenous American ancestry and because of being in parts of the country where "brown" and its equivalents (such as bronze) are acceptable self designations.

I would suggest also that about half of the Spanish-origin population in the West picked "Other" first because "Indian (Amer.)" was interpreted as meaning "Indian of the United States," and second because "Indian" in Spanish ordinarily is a negative term (*indio*), often resembling "nigger" in terms of negative connotation or at least meaning "lower class, backward and poor."

In any case, the above discussion should illustrate that question 4 was *not* designed with Native Americans in mind nor was it fine-tuned by

ethnically sensitive scholars who could have eliminated at least some of the ambiguity of the categories.

It should be stressed, however, that any question which attempts to identify "racial" groups (or social-racial) such as "Black or Negro" in the same list with nationalities such as Japanese is mixing apples and rocks and cannot yield really satisfactory results. Arbitrarily included in the "Black or Negro" group are many independent nationalities such as Haitian, Nigerian, Sudanese, Jamaican and so on. Similarly, "Indian (Amer.)" and white are terms of a totally different order from Japanese, Guamanian or Aleut. *The design of question 4*, I would argue, *would tend to encourage many persons who could lay claim to an unlisted nationality to write in that nationality under "Other"* and especially if the nationality is of Native American origin but the concept of tribe has no positive meaning or is unfamiliar. A person checking "Indian (Amer.)" was supposed to write in the name of their tribe rather than a nationality designation.

The Bureau of the Census, as noted earlier, is very careful to point out repeatedly that:

The *concept of race* as used by the Census Bureau reflects self-identification by respondents; it does not denote any clear-cut scientific definition of biological stock . . . the data represent self-classification by people *according to the race with which they identify themselves* [italics added].⁴⁹

Question 4, the race question, does not, in fact, ask the respondent about race, nor is race defined. Instead, each individual is asked only, "Is this person" one of the 14 enumerated groups and nationalities or "Other - *Specify*." Instructions further told the respondent (or census taker):

Fill the circle for the category with which the person most closely identifies. If you fill the Indian (American) or Other circle, be sure to print the name of the specific Indian tribe or specific group.⁵⁰

Interestingly, the ancestry question (No. 14) also asked the respondent to:

Print the ancestry group with which the person *identifies*.

Ancestry (or origin or descent) may be viewed as the nationality group, the lineage or the country in which the person or the person's parents or ancestors were born *before their arrival in the United States* . . .⁵¹ [Italics added.]

Similarly, persons filling out the Spanish origin question (No. 7) were told:

A person is of Spanish/Hispanic origin or descent if the person *identifies* his or her ancestry with one of the listed groups, that is, Mexican, Puerto Rican, etc. Origin or descent (ancestry) may be viewed as the nationality group, the lineage or country in which the person or the person's parents or ancestors were born.⁵²

Clearly then, questions 7 (Spanish origin) and 14 (Ancestry) were almost exactly the same and should have yielded identical results (except that No. 14 was only asked of less than 20% of the population). But also, both questions are similar to No. 4, since the latter is largely aimed at securing information about nationality (or country of origin) and ancestry (since Japanese Americans are lumped together with Japanese and so on). Only three of the 14 basic categories in question 4 have anything at all to do with race as the latter term is used by most English-speaking persons today.

The deliberate mixing by the Census Bureau of the concepts of race, nationality, lineage, country of origin, etc., no doubt led to even more confusion in the minds of respondents. A Mexican person of Native American *ancestry* was actually discouraged by Census directions from selecting "Indian (Amer.)" in question 4 (as well as mentioning any Native ancestry in question No. 14). The instructions told one to pick a tribe if one selected "Indian (Amer.)" in question 4, thus precluding its use by most persons stemming from countries where tribe is *never* used for the largest native ethnic groups (such as for Maya, Aztec, Quechua, Aymara, Otomí and Guaraní speakers), but is only used as a pejorative term for smaller "primitive" groups.

In Mexico the word Mexican has a double meaning. On the one hand it refers to a person living in the United Mexican States (*Estados Unidos Mexicanos*), but on the other it refers to the Nahuatl language (*Nahuatl*). Mexicano, as Nahuatl is known, is spoken by perhaps one million persons in central Mexico. In no sense could Mexican-speaking people be categorized as belonging to a tribe; but they are both Native American *and* Mexican.

In conclusion, we can argue that question 4 was useless as a tool for getting at race or racial ancestry, especially as regards brown people of neither white nor Black status. *We can almost conclude that the Bureau of Census did not want to know the race of Latin Americans of Americanoid (Native) racial origin.* Nor, of course, did the Bureau want to know how many persons had a dual identity, e.g., Black *and* Indian or Chilean *and* Mapuche or Chinese *and* European-American and so forth.

Question 4, as already noted, distinguished between "Indian (Amer.)," Aleuts and Eskimos. Why this was done is a mystery since all such persons are served by the same agencies, have the same indigenous legal rights and tend to associate with the same Native American urban organizations when away from home communities. But the breaking up of Native Americans into three groups (taking three out of the 14 basic groups in question 4) may have had another effect; it further *narrowed* the meaning of "Indian (Amer.)" and accentuated the possible interpretation that Mexican Indians, Guatemalans, etc., were not supposed to count themselves as "Indian (Amer.)."

In any case, as indicated in Table I, the numbers resulting from question 4 ranged from 1,418,195 (early count) to 1,536,997 (sample and projection) total Native Americans (American Indians, Aleuts and Eskimos). The figures cannot be taken seriously, however, since the ancestry question (No. 14) gave us 1,920,824 persons reporting only Indian ancestry in 1980, while the current population count of 1979 (also a sample) gave us 2,053,000 (1,957,000 to 2,149,000). It would appear that the *same* sampled groups in 1980 (those filling out the long form) yielded 1,536,997 (No. 4) and 1,959,292 (No. 14), a difference of over 400,000 as noted earlier.

In comparing the 1980 sample with the 100% count, we find that the sample resulted in an 8.4% increase in the number of American Indians (a 13.4% increase outside of identified reservation regions and 15.8% increase in off-reservation areas of California). Clearly, the sample yielded a larger count of urban and off reservation Native Americans but resulted in lower totals for reservation populations and Alaska Native Americans. The

Census Bureau ascribes the increases to a more thorough inclusion of persons marking "Other" by writing in a tribal designation, as noted earlier.

Clearly, also, the sampling technique did not work well for most reservation regions and to obtain a more accurate total one would probably have to add the reservation region totals from the 100% count with the off-reservation totals from the sample. Such a mixed count yields some 1,539,547 persons, a slight increase over the sample count taken by itself. In any event, question 4 appears to have resulted in a serious under-count of Native Americans.

It should be noted that the Census Bureau includes within its totals from question 4 a group of persons who are also categorized as of "Spanish origin." Some 94,745 persons were in this dual status and their numbers were added to the 1,325,655 "non-Spanish origin" Native Americans to form a total of 1,420,400 - a total which is intermediate between the early count total of 1,418,195 and the August, 1984, corrected count of 1,423,043.⁵³ This group will be analyzed below.

Question No. 7: the "Spanish Origin" Count

In 1980 all persons were required to indicate whether or not they were of "Spanish/Hispanic origin or descent." This was, therefore, a question about ancestry since the term descent does not refer to active membership but rather to some degree of ancestry, however remote. Many Native Americans of Arizona, New Mexico and California (Pueblo Indians, Pimas, Papagos, Native California Indians, etc.) must have puzzled over this question, since a high percentage have Spanish surnames and may even have some degree of Spanish (or Mexican) ancestry. Some, such as the Tigua of Ysleta del Sur, Texas, are Spanish-speaking also.

When we look at the 94,000 Indians who were also counted as "Spanish origin" we find that their percentage in the total "Spanish origin" population of 14,608,673 was 0.6%, exactly the same percentage as Native Americans were in the non-Spanish origin population of 211,927,132. This surely must be more than mere coincidence, since the actual proportion of Indian persons among the "Spanish origin" must be in the range of 50 to 75%, (including all those of one-quarter or more Native American ancestry, the usual criterion of the U.S. Government).

The fact that a population which *should* have reported a very high proportion of persons having descent from *naciones indígenas de las americas* (native nations of the Americas) reported instead the exact same proportion as the "Britannic" population of the United States confirms that *the nature of the questions asked by the Census Bureau served to stifle or discourage a truthful "racial" response by Latin American origin persons.*

Marta Tienda and Vilma Ortiz, scholars who have utilized 1980 census data, assert:

racially, the Hispanic population is predominantly white, especially if one assumes that those who wrote in Spanish as their racial category are mostly white or mestizo.⁵⁴

Thus, Professor Tienda very clearly interprets the 1980 results in a very literal sense as indicating that *racially* the Spanish-speaking population is predominantly *white*. This is, at first glance, born out by the results of the answers given to question 4. Of the 14,608,673 persons identified as

"Spanish origin," the following "racial" designations were selected.

White	8,115,256	55.6%
Other	5,841,810	40.0%
Black	390,852	2.7%
Asian and Pacific Islander	166,010	1.1%
American Indian Eskimo and Aleut	94,745	0.6%

The 8,740,439 persons of Mexican origin made the following selections:

White	53.2%
Other	45.0%
Black	1.8%

Significantly, American indigenous ancestry is not even published separately by the Census Bureau for Mexican origin persons. The "Other" in this case "includes American Indian, Eskimo and Aleut, Asian and Pacific Islander and Other races" combined. This is very revealing since it illustrates the utter disinterest of the Census Bureau in the Indian background of most Mexicans. The figures are available, of course, but the fact that they weren't published, coupled with the smallness of the group self-identifying as "Indian (Amer.)," is what is especially revealing about Census Bureau procedures and attitudes.

About 92% of the Spanish-surnamed persons of Texas in 1980 were of Mexican origin. Nonetheless, only 0.2% of the Spanish-surnamed selected American Indian as their race. In California, where 80% of the Spanish-surnamed were of Mexican background, 0.8% selected American Indian in some manner. These figures are, of course, incredibly low and would indicate that, as discussed earlier, something is wrong with census methodology.

Clearly, the Bureau has made it difficult for us to be able to say just how many of the more than 14 million persons in the USA of Meso-American, Caribbean and South American background are of Native American ancestry and/or ethnic-cultural identity. Of course, as regards ancestry, we can apply what scholars know about the peoples of the Americas by making some simple calculations. For example, we can add up, from the ancestry question, the total numbers of Bolivians, Ecuadorians, Guatemalans, Hondurans, Mexicans, Peruvians, Salvadorians and Nicaraguans and multiply that resulting sub-total by 80%; an estimate of Indian ancestry for those populations. Then we can arbitrarily add up the totals for other countries where Indian ancestry ranges from 20% to perhaps 50% (such as Colombia, Chile, Costa Rica, Panama, Puerto Rico and Venezuela) and, to be conservative, multiply the total by 25%. Then we must add to that at least 20% of the "Other Spanish . . ." since Paraguayans and others of Indian race would be in that total. Finally, it would be good to add in a proportion of persons from Brazil, Belice, Guyana, Trinidad, Dominica, Aruba, etc., of Indian background but the numbers are too difficult to segregate in the published Census reports.

Such an effort as the above yields approximately 6,500,000 persons from the 80% countries, 437,500 persons from the 25% countries and 13,000 from the "Other Spanish" countries. To the resulting total of 7,000,000 we should, of course, add in a portion of persons simply classified as "Spanish/Hispanic" by the Census Bureau (2,686,680 persons) but let us forego that exercise since the Bureau tells us that "this category represents a general type of response, which may encompass several ancestry groups." In short, we don't know what it means.

In any case, by using the above method we have "discovered" another 7,000,000 or more persons of autochthonous American ancestry, using the numbers from questions 14 (ancestry) as projected by the Bureau. If we utilize the numbers from the "Spanish origin" question (No. 7), we have to resort to a different calculation since Guatemalans, Bolivians, etc., are not identified separately. We can, however, take 80% of the 8,740,439 Mexicans (yielding 7,000,000), 25% of the 2,013,945 Puerto Ricans (yielding 500,000) and a conservative 20% of the 3,051,063 "Other Spanish" (yielding 600,000) for a total of 8,100,000 persons of Native American ancestry.⁵⁵

Thus we can estimate that from seven to eight million persons classified as "Spanish" are of Native American ancestry in some significant degree (and not counting marginal persons with merely a slight amount of Indian blood). Interestingly, this total is at extreme variance with the Census Bureau's racial or ancestry totals wherein we find that, as noted, only 0.6% of "Spanish origin" selected American Indian. But 40% selected "Other" for a numerical total 5,841,810. We do not know what "Other" means "racially" speaking and also the almost 6,000,000 "Others" do not have the same distribution pattern as the seven to eight million persons of indigenous American origin we have identified.

More significantly, we cannot tell how many persons classified as "Spanish" actually speak an American language or identify in any way with a Native American community. Thus, we cannot help Native American service agencies to anticipate the needs which might be generated by Maya refugees or by other Indian newcomers.

Significantly also we cannot test the question of how people of color fare in U.S. society since the question of color has been carefully disguised beneath "Spanish origin."

Candace Nelson and Marta Tienda note that:

In a socioeconomic profile, Cubans emerge as the most advantaged [Hispanics], Puerto Ricans most disadvantaged, with Mexicans falling in between . . . Cuban immigrants . . . are the least linguistically proficient, yet they are more successful in the labor market than either of the two "older" immigrant groups.

Nelson and Tienda seek to explain the differences thus described largely by means of a socioeconomic or class analysis, however, I would argue that *color* and being part of a color-ranked caste system is the key difference. Cubans, especially the more successful newcomers of the 1960s, are light-skinned, Mexicans are ordinarily brown but usually lack visible African features, while Puerto Ricans are often either brown or visibly part-African.⁵⁶

The use of the "Hispanic" and "Spanish origin" categories thus are not only insulting to people of Native American race, representing a perpetuation of the Spanish Empire's exaltation of whiteness into modern U.S. society, but they also help disguise the crucial *racial* differences existing between such groups as Cubans, Argentinians, Mexicans and Puerto Ricans. Ingenious arguments must be invented to explain white Cuban success in a white racist society, as if whiteness did not matter. Conversely, the Native American, African and Afro-Native American ancestry of millions of Mexicans and Puerto Ricans is made to disappear

as if by magic. Again, ingenious arguments must be invented to explain the slow progress of such non-white Latin Americans in a white racist society, since their physical appearance has been made undiscussable.

Conclusion

Since at least 1969, the Bureau of Census, conspiring with the Office of Management and Budget and political special interests, has made a mess of understanding the "racial" character of the U.S. population and, as a part of that process, has "lost" some six to eight million persons of Native American ancestry and appearance within a scientifically useless "Hispanic/Spanish" category.⁵⁷ In addition, many persons of mixed African and Native American ancestry remain uncounted as such because of the way census questions were asked and answers tallied.

After the 1980 census was completed, a group of experts (mostly statisticians) were called together to make recommendations for improvement. This group (which apparently included no Native Americans and no authorities in the fields of Native American, Chicano-Mexicano, Black or Asian American studies) stated:

The 1980 phraseology "Indian (Amer.)" is ambiguous. Does it apply only to tribes native to the United States or does it encompass all Indians of North and South America?

Presumably, the former was intended, but should those of Mexican, South and Central American origin not also have the opportunity to conveniently identify their origin - and would this not be useful information?

The "experts" then proposed that the Census Bureau test a variety of question designs for race and ethnicity, including some that "combine the collection of information on Hispanic origin with the other race and ethnicity information." They proposed a design very similar to ones proposed in 1974-75 by the ad hoc committee of the FICE (cited earlier):

Is this person of Spanish/Hispanic origin:
 (Yes includes Puerto Rican, Cuban, Mexican, Chicano and other
 Hispanic)⁵⁸

	Not	Yes,
	Spanish/	Hispanic
Spanish/		
Hispanic		
White	_____	_____
Black	_____	_____
Indian (U.S. Tribes: Print Tribe: _____)	_____	_____

Indian (Mexican, South or Central America)	_____	_____
Other (Specify: _____)		
_____	_____	_____

[et cetera]⁵⁸

It appears that although the Bureau of the Census paid for the above study they have chosen to ignore its recommendations, just as they have ignored the designs offered by the FICE in 1975. Thus, the plans for the 1990 census indicate that there will be no improvements over 1980 as regards the race and ethnicity questions.⁵⁹

Quite clearly, Native Americans have not been able to develop the political power necessary to influence a massive bureaucracy. The Spanish-speaking political leadership has seen the wisdom of maximizing their strength by counting every conceivable person as "Hispanic" and they have been able to work with the Republican Party (especially) in terms of playing the game of numbers.

Native Americans are still victims of the "assimilation" policies of U.S. society as well as of the slowness to realize that "numbers" are important in terms of securing services from the Federal and local governments.

The First Americans are still being made to disappear. The consequences of the bureaucratic process of the denial of one's existence are far reaching and they will extend until 1992 when the Bureau of the Census will again release erroneous figures.

Five hundred years after the Spaniards committed their assault upon the indigenous people of the Americas the Native Americans are still being manipulated by outside forces. The struggle between the Spaniards and the Indians still continues, with the "Hispanic" descendants of the Europeans being used as proxies in a veritable war of the castes orchestrated by powerful agencies of the United States government.

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