

Statement on Membership in NMHCPL for First Thanksgiving Day Dinner 1998



The seeds of a new conflict have sprouted in the ashes of an old war! This statement could be repeated over and over in the course of time and especially when we consider how involved our Spanish forefathers were in the development and outcome of this country. Their contributions, support and sacrifices have all but been ignored. How many people know that had it not been for the financial support of the Spanish government, the battles fought by Spanish soldiers, the efforts and intervention of Spanish government officials in what are now the Southeastern states, the United States of America would probably not exist today? The newly formed United States betrayed Spain and its colonies, took advantage of the settlers' hospitality, dishonored their treaties and proceeded to invade foreign territories. There is something innately humane about the Spanish spirit, which makes us benevolent, kind, generous and trusting. On the other hand, vulnerable to misunderstanding, misinterpretation, and subject to attack. Out of the shadows of the dark recesses of a man's mind was born the idea of destroying the accomplishments of the Spanish Empire. We have been the victims of malicious attacks for centuries and now the ugly head of the serpent has risen again. There is a resurgence of anti-Hispanic sentiment, a perpetuation of the Spanish black Legend, La Leyenda Negra if you will, in which anti-Spanish propaganda promoted and ingrained long ago stereotyped Hispanics as uniquely cruel, bigoted, tyrannical, lazy, violent, treacherous, and depraved. (With those good qualities, we should rule the earth)! Of course, this was meant to demean, disgrace, disarm and destroy the proud Spanish population. We are in what one might consider to be a state of cultural crisis that's about to hijack your birthright, your birthright to know the people that came before you that make you who you are today. Your birthright to express what resides in your heart through the bonding connection of your blood relatives their essence, their energy, their courage, their character, their spirit, and their faith. Few Americans know about the

great pageants and processions that moved across our land during the sixteenth century. Few Americans know that the original New Mexico extended over parts of what is now Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Utah, Nevada and all of Arizona.

Few Americans know that New Mexico has the largest percentage (not number) of Hispanics in its population of any state. Few Americans know of the disproportionate number of Hispanic men in the US. Military who received awards for gallantry and intrepidity beyond the call of duty including the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest and most prestigious. Few Americans know that the first cowboys were the Spanish vaqueros. Few Americans know that the first Thanksgiving ever celebrated in what is now the United States of America took place on April 30, 1598. I could go on, and on, and on. But, what does all this have to do with membership in the New Mexican Hispanic Culture Preservation League? Well, united we preserve our identity as Nuevo Meicanos a distinct and unique culture in the Hispanic world or divided, we destroy our identity and go the way of the Californian and Tejanos. We will and are being caught up in the torrent of Hispanidad that is sweeping the country. Unfortunately, if we don't make ourselves heard and stand up and be counted, we will be floating under the shroud of another culture and that is already taking place. !Que Lastima! It is up to us, and others of like mind, to inspire the rest to honor our heritage, respect our past, and proceed with pride in who we are. Nuevo Mejico has been recognized as the cradle of La Hispanidad in the U.S. As an organization we need to promote this fact! I urge everyone to join or renew your membership in NMHCPL. n le W Together we can pull the tug rope that will keep us from falling face first in the cultural quagmire. Together we have made a difference this year. Together we can accomplish a lot more as evidenced by this wonderful First Thanksgiving Celebration! We need everybody's help! !Querer es poder Please join us

Written and delivered

By Max de Aragon 2nd Vice President 1998 HCPL