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Mr. Fernando E. C. De Baca
Special Assistant to the President
on Hispanic Affairs
The White House
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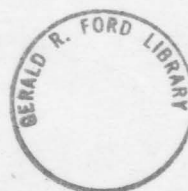
Dear Mr. De Baca:

This is to respond to your letter of June 23, 1975, in which you outlined the allegations surrounding the arrest of Modesto Rodriguez on June 20, 1975 at Pearsall, Texas.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is investigating this incident and furnishing reports to the Civil Rights Division of the Department. When the investigation is complete we shall decide on an appropriate course of action.

Sincerely,

Edward H. Levi
Attorney General



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 23, 1975

ADMINISTRATIVELY
CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR

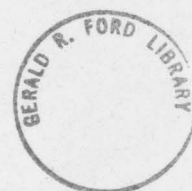
THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

I have just been informed of a potentially explosive situation in Pearsall, Texas, that would appear to warrant further inquiry on the part of the Department of Justice.

On Friday, June 20, 1975, during the early evening hours, Mr. Modesto Rodriguez was reportedly beaten by agents of the Texas State Alcohol Beverage Control Division and the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Representatives of the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice had reportedly been interviewing Mr. Rodriguez earlier in the day regarding his recent testimony before House and Senate sub-committees on the Voting Rights Bill. Mr. Rodriguez had reportedly been lining up additional witnesses for the Department of Justice and had retired to a local bar with two of the potential witnesses at the close of day.

Two state highway patrolmen and one or more ABC agents allegedly approached Mr. Rodriguez and a scuffle ensued. Mr. Rodriguez was reportedly beaten to the point of near unconsciousness and charged with disorderly conduct. He claims he was "framed" by Texas state law enforcement authorities in an attempt to discredit his testimony before the Congress and to dissuade him from assisting Justice Department officials.

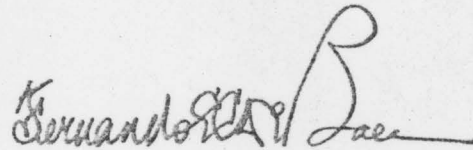


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Hispanic organization leaders are extremely troubled by this incident and have indicated that they plan to request a Congressional investigation of the incident and on-site Congressional hearings if the matter is not resolved through an investigation of the facts surrounding this unfortunate occurrence. They feel that the beating may be directly related to Mr. Rodriguez' active support of the Voting Rights Bill and his open cooperation with Justice Department officials.

I would welcome your review of this matter and any follow-up action you deem appropriate.

If you would like to have more information, please call me at 456-6219.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Fernando E. C. De Baca". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "F" and "B".

Fernando E. C. De Baca
Special Assistant to the President
on Hispanic Affairs

