

August 14, 1969

Dr. Hector P. Garcia  
U.S. Commission on Civil Rights  
Washington, D.C. 20425

Dear Mr. Garcia:

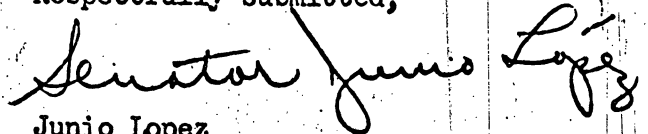
Enclosed find article "Jackrabbit in the corner," for publication in the Civil Rights Digest. It needs some proof-reading. Please notify me if you can use it. If you cannot please mail back.

I would also like some information on the following:

The New Mexico State Legislature in the 1969 Session adopted a new Voting Act. The procedures and qualifications were changed quite drastically. It amounted to the disenfranchizing of many of our voting citizens. The State of New Mexico did not seek approval from the U.S. Attorney. If they didn't seek approval can this act be questioned or nullified in our 1970 Session? I believe it is Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that the State of New Mexico did not conform with.

Please confirm.

Respectfully submitted,



Junio Lopez  
Senator

JL/ha

## JACK RABBIT IN THE CORNER

Once upon a time, many many years ago there was born a little brown Jackrabbit. He was only one of millions; But he was a special baby jack-rabbit for he came directly from Kings and Queens. His mama and daddy were having a hard time finding a name for him. It was difficult because they knew that from him millions more would follow. The daddy would say, There are so many of us. We have so much land and there is not a stranger amongst us. It is hard to find a name like a stranger of the old country that I knew, <sup>use</sup> use to hunt us down. He was strong, swift and brave, even though, he was our enemy. They use to call him, "El Tigre." Of course, here in this wonderful country we have found there is no "tigre." I know our baby will be swift, strong, and brave. There is no doubt of that. But he will never be a tiger! I couldn't call him Tiger. Of course here he doesn't need to be like the tiger. Not here. Not now. So it is hard to find a name for him. For he is gentle and friendly and this is what will probably destroy him, someday. The mama would then answer, If you cannot name him Tiger, why don't you give him a name that describes him and that will represent us all? That is very hard to do, the father would answer. I could not put all the Lujans, Montoyas and Chavezs and all the rest into one name! You gave him birth! So, you give him his name. The mother thought for a while and then said, Since there are so many of us, there will be many of him and because he is born of the brown earth and lives off the land, I will call him "Raza." Good, answered the father. That is a good name. From now on he and his own will be known as Raza. So, turn him loose and let him be free. Let him roam on his land and multiply and be happy. This is the way it came about. The happy years began to pass very rapidly, The faster the years went by the heirs of little Raza multiplied. They roamed in the valleys. Played in the mountains. Bathed in the clear streams. The day came about that all the jackrabbits living, on this land became as one and were known as one. They were known as Raza and their land was known as the Land of the Raza. Their freedom was their strength. But like all good things that must come to an end, there appeared on the horizon a stranger. A stranger had found the Land of the Raza. He was the first of many to come. The beginning of the end for little Raza. In his hand he carried an object that was foreign to Raza. Later, he would find out that it was called a gun. In the beginning, curiosity and innocence got the best of Raza and he swarmed around the stranger with the gun by hundreds. They tried to embrace the stranger with friendliness and humility. But the stranger felt the embrace as a smother-choking hug and he began to yell at them, Get away from me! But the Razitas did not understand the Stranger, his language or his ways. Finally, after the passage of a number of years, it dawned upon the stranger that the Raza could be controlled. He thought it was wise to whittle their numbers down a little and push them into a corner out of the way. So he began to use his gun. He began to push them from the valleys, the mountains and the streams. At the first sound of the gun, little Raza was shocked and bewildered. Then fear came to him for the first time. He was frightened. He ran in all directions. Perplexed he ran around the stranger within distance of his sharp boot. Little Raza remained bewildered for many years. He no longer roamed free on the Land of the Raza. So, with the acceptance of his destiny he began to move to the West towards a land called Nuevo Mejico.

He was now downtrodden and beaten, never knowing why. There was only fatal acceptance. The stranger then lowered his gun and tried to ease his conscience by blending and making amends as much as possible with Raza. The Raza then forgave him! There was tranquility and peace for another number of years. In those years of peace and transition, little Raza found a home in a valley where the grass was five feet tall. The mountains were at his back and the streams would flow into his new found valley. He began to build a curtain, around himself. A Tortilla Curtain! Once again he was happy. Less numbers and less land that is true, but behind a tortilla curtain. But the time came again that another stranger appeared on the horizon. Then another and another. An endless stream. They came by the thousands and settled all around the tortilla curtain. The strangers built a wall of their own. The Raza was finally cornered for all time. Cornered for all time in a little town known as West Las Vegas. The will to live and survive coupled with his inherited curiosity forced many Razitas to dig tunnels under the Tortilla Curtain and the strangers wall. He crossed into a strange world. He would never return except to visit and then leave again. Some would never even return to visit. The tortilla curtain and the strangers wall still stands. Peppared with tunnels but strong as ever. To Raza that chose to live and die behind this curtain in this corner there is but one wish. One hope. He wished to have been born a Tiger and not a Jackrabbit in the corner. There is no corner like this in all the world.

*Senator Junio Lopez*