

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

September 4, 1980

The attached is for your  
information.

Regards,

Raul R. Tapia

(GARCIA)

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- PRESIDENT CARTER'S NOMINATION OF MATT GARCIA, A CONTROVERSIAL MEXICAN-AMERICAN LEADER IN TEXAS, AS THE HEAD OF THE IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE DREW STRONG PRAISE TODAY FROM FELLOW HISPANICS.

BUT ROGER CONNER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE FEDERATION FOR AMERICAN IMMIGRATION REFORM, TOLD THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE THAT HIS ORGANIZATION FOUND SAN ANTONIO LAWYER TO BE "WITHOUT ANY QUALIFICATIONS" FOR THE LONG-VACANT POST.

"WE DO NOT THINK THAT HIS RESIDENCE IN TEXAS, STANDING ALONE, QUALIFIES HIM AS AN EXPERT ON IMMIGRATION," CONNER SAID IN PREPARED TESTIMONY.

GARCIA'S QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE JOB WERE EXPLORED AT CONFIRMATION HEARINGS CHAIRED BY SEN. DENNIS DECONCINI, D-ARIZ., WHO ASKED THE NOMINEE A SERIES OF QUESTIONS ARISING FROM A COMMITTEE STAFF INVESTIGATION.

"I WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT I HAVE NO BIAS ONE WAY OR THE OTHER," DECONCINI TOLD GARCIA BEFORE BEGINNING THE QUESTIONING.

AMONG MATTERS EXPLORED BY DECONCINI WAS GARCIA'S RECORD OF REPEATED FEDERAL INCOME TAX DELINQUENCIES DATING BACK AS FAR AS 1970.

EVEN THOUGH GARCIA HAD EVENTUALLY PAID ALL THE DELIQUENCIES, DECONCINI SAID, THEY REMAINED "A MATTER OF LEGITIMATE CONCERN" TO THE COMMITTEE.

GARCIA, A SAN ANTONIO LAWYER, ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE HAD FALLEN BEHIND IN TAX PAYMENTS AFTER A HEART ATTACK IN 1970.

"I'M NOT PROUD OF THIS ACKNOWLEDGMENT, AND I DON'T FEEL IT IS A TOTAL EXPLANATION," GARCIA SAID.

GARCIA WAS PRESENTED TO THE COMMITTEE BY SEN. LLOYD BENTSEN, D-TEXAS, WHO SAID THE NOMINEE WAS "PARTICULARLY WELL SUITED AND WELL QUALIFIED" TO HEAD THE INS.

BENTSEN SAID GARCIA HAD BECOME "A BONA FIDE LEADER" OF THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN TEXAS, HAVING SERVED AS THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS IN THE TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND AS THE DIRECTOR OF THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATIONAL FUND (MALDEF).

CONNER, IN URGING REJECTION OF THE NOMINEE, SAID GARCIA DID NOT HAVE THE NECESSARY QUALITIES TO HEAD THE INS.

THE INS COMMISSIONER MUST BE "A STRONG PERSONALITY, NOT MERELY A FOLLOWER," CONNER SAID, ADDING THAT THE AGENCY SHOULD BE HEADED BY SOMEONE WITH EXPERIENCE IN MANAGING LARGE INSTITUTIONS.

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