



# NATIONAL COALITION ON THE HANIGAN CASE

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July 13, 1979

Hon. Griffin B. Bell  
Attorney General  
Department of Justice  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

This letter is written in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Arizona and throughout the country. While we are very pleased with the decision to convene grand juries in the Hanigan and Sinohui cases, we are most apprehensive that the Department of Justice will fail to secure indictments and ultimate convictions in these two highly important human rights cases.

Hispanic, church, labor, and other national civil rights leaders are distressed that in too many instances the Department has convened grand juries to "investigate" brutality cases but has declined to actually request indictments. This happened in the Lozano (Odessa, Texas) and Gallegos (Waco, Texas) cases, where although the United States Attorneys wanted to seek formal charges and proceed to trial, the panels were dismissed under orders from Washington before being allowed to finish their business.

We also note that in the Hernandez (Austin, Texas) and Ramirez (Albuquerque, New Mexico) cases, grand juries were prohibited outright, despite the fact that local federal prosecutors closest to these cases were desirous of instituting proceedings. It is indeed alarming that in Ramirez, the City of Albuquerque paid the murdered victim's family \$80,000 after admitting liability and wrongful police conduct. And yet an indictment could not be obtained!

Similarly, in the Benavidez case (Oakland, Calif.), the City paid the slain youth's parents \$50,000 after a consent decree acknowledging liability and wrongful conduct. Moreover, we will never forget the Department's callous refusal to seek an indictment for the senseless police killing of handcuffed, twelve-year-old Santos Rodriguez. This travesty thoroughly unmasked the hypocrisy of President Carter's human rights "policy."

What good are grand juries in cases of brutality against Hispanics if indictments are not permitted? Indictments have been brought in only two cases, Morales and Torres--only after relentless pressure from the communities. Grand juries are used with vindictive passion to fill the federal jails with our people. Why are they not used with equal fervor to enforce our civil rights? Unless the Administration protects these sacred rights, this government will surely suffer serious embarrassment from filings before international tribunals of charges of human rights violations in the United States."

Hon. Griffin B. Bell  
Attorney General  
July 9, 1979  
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We are still a long way from justice in the Hanigan and Sinohui cases. This time we expect vigorous investigations capable of justifying probable cause findings. We expect indictments and aggressive prosecutions.

Hoping to hear from you soon, we remain

Sincerely yours,

Benjamin Aranda  
Benjamin Aranda  
National President  
La Raza National Bar Assoc.

Cesar E. Chavez  
Cesar E. Chavez, President  
United Farm Workers of  
America, AFL-CIO

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Director  
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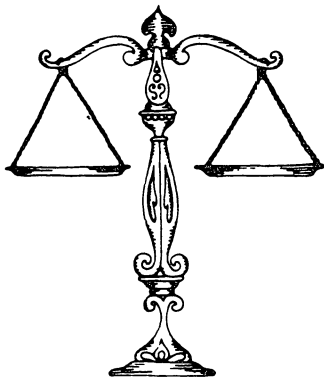
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## Tucson Coalition For Justice

P.O. Box 5279  
Tucson, Az. 85703

March 4, 1980

Honorable Benjamin R. Civiletti  
United States Attorney General  
Department of Justice  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

The Tucson Coalition for Justice and the community of Tucson are concerned about the Department of Justice's delay in its decision to indict former South Tucson Police Officer Christopher Dean for the killing of Joe Sinohui, Jr. in Tucson on July 2, 1977. In all too many similar cases, the Federal Grand Jury has been used to temporarily placate those who demanded justice and to defer a decision to not prosecute until a politically expedient circumstance arises. (See the enclosed letter dated July 13, 1979 from the National Coalition on the Hanigan Case.) This is a situation which is intolerable and which we wish to avoid in the Sinohui case.

The exceedingly long delay or a decision to not prosecute cannot be justified in this case upon the basis of "inconsistent" evidence, possible civil redress, the prior State criminal proceeding, or an overburdened Department of Justice staff. Any inconsistencies in the abundant evidence of this case either are unsubstantial or are self-serving and unbelievable declarations against the great weight of the credible evidence. Foremost among the purposes of a trial is the resolution of any such inconsistencies. Any civil remedy in this case will not satisfy the objectives of criminal law, namely, the deterrence of and societal non-acquiescence to such an egregious act. While it is conceded that the Department of Justice is burdened with activities such as ABSCAM, MIPORN, and the migration issues of Iranian students and U.S. Olympic athletes, the Department should establish as a priority the vindication of basic civil rights.

We cannot help but believe that a thorough investigation will establish the requisite probable cause for an indictment relating to the killing of Joe Sinohui, Jr. and the cover-up which ensued.

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Patty Moreno, Secretary  
Joe Robles, Co-treasurer  
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Barrios Unidos - El Rio  
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Clergy United for Justice  
Cochise County Committee for Justice  
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Hispanic Community Ministry -  
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Young Worker's Liberation League

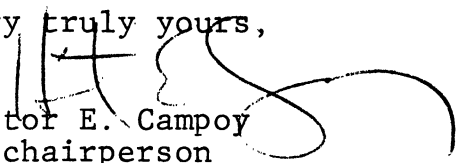
#### LEGAL COUNSEL

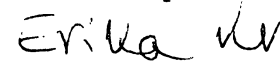
William Risner, Tucson  
Ruben Sandoval, San Antonio

Honorable Benjamin R. Civiletti  
United States Attorney General  
March 4, 1980  
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It is essential, therefore, that a speedy indictment be returned.

Very truly yours,

  
Hector E. Campoy  
Co-chairperson

  
Erika Kreider  
Co-chairperson

Enc.

cc: Mr. and Mrs. Joe Sinohui, Sr.

Ana Sinohui Sanchez

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U.S. Senator Birch Bayh

U.S. Senator Howard Metzenbaum

U.S. Senator Charles Mathias

U.S. Senator Robert Dole

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