



**TRANSCRIPT**

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**Host: Roland Martin**

**Guests: Benjamin Jealous, President and CEO, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)**

**Raul Gonzalez, Director of Legislative Affairs, National Council of La Raza (NCLR)**

**Rep. Charles Gonzalez (D-TX), Chair, Congressional Hispanic Caucus**

**Rep. Emmanuel Cleaver (D-MO), Chairman, Congressional Black Caucus**

**Don Coleman, Founder and CEO, GlobalHue**

**George Herrera, Founder, President and CEO, Herrera-Cristina Group, Ltd.**

**Harry Alfred, President and CEO, National Black Chamber of Commerce**

**Dr. Victoria DeFrancesco Soto, Assistant Professor of Political Science and African-American Studies, Northwestern University**

**Roland Roebuck, Hispanic Community Activist**

**Sophia Nelson, Columnist, "Jet" Magazine**

**Cornell Belcher, Democratic Pollster and Political Strategist**



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K. Wills Transcripts

Contact/Producer: Jay Feldman

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**(HEAD-  
LINES)**

**MR. ROLAND MARTIN:** At the top of our agenda: the year 2042, the year America becomes a minority majority country. African-Americans and Latinos will be the two largest minority groups, and can they cooperate to their mutual benefit? Or, will they compete over scarce resources? Our “Washington Watch” newsmakers: Ben Jealous, President and CEO of the NAACP; and Raul Gonzalez of the National Council of La Raza. Plus, the heads of the Congressional Black Caucus and Hispanic House Congress, Cong. Emmanuel Cleaver of Missouri and Charles Gonzalez of Texas. And meet the former NFL linebacker who now quarterback a groundbreaking and highly successful multicultural advertising agency. All that and more today on “Washington Watch.”

**(SEG-  
MENT 1)**

**MR. MARTIN:** In 2042 or sooner, America will become a country where White Americans will be in the minority. African-Americans and Hispanics/Latinos and Asian-Americans will form the new majority. This is already true in our most populous state, California. Also, in seven states in America, under the age of 15, majority is minority. The big question facing America over the next 30 years is this: can these minority groups overcome the forces that divide them, or will they unite to form a powerful coalition to benefit their communities and their country? Over the next hour

here on “Washington Watch,” we are going to talk to black and brown organizational leaders, businessmen, politicians, pollsters, analysts and academics about this issue of a black-brown coalition. To kick us off, [to] start this dialogue [are] NAACP president and CEO Ben Jealous and director of legislative affairs for the National Council of La Raza, Raul Gonzalez.

Gentlemen, glad you’re on the show.

**MR. BENJAMIN JEALOUS:** Thank you –

**MR. RAUL GONZALEZ:** [Crosstalk.]

**MR. JEALOUS:** -- for having us.

**MR. MARTIN:** When Kweisi Mfume – here at the NAACP – he gave a significant speech to I believe it was La Raza, where he talked about how critical it is for African-Americans and Hispanics and Latinos to come together to recognize those common issues. That was more than ten years ago.

**MR. JEALOUS:** Sure.

**MR. MARTIN:** And so from a civil rights standpoint, what is the relationship, and what are those issues where you are working together, and you’re trying to get people on the grou- -- on the grassroots level to understand “we’re in this thing together, and we’re not enemies”?

**MR. JEALOUS:** Right now, we’re facing attacks across this country – attacks on everything from just basic s- -- civil rights – the voter I.D. bills – attacks on Affirmative Action, attacks on the rights of people who’ve come to this country from elsewhere,

attacks on the rights of unions that actually organize. And we spend a lot of time, actually – our two groups – working together[?], because we realize this is one fight. This is one fight for civil and human rights in this country. And so whether it was the big One Nation rally, or – or the, more recently, “We Are One” rallies across the country – [unintelligible] – a very strong me- -- message.

What makes a difference, though, is when that translates to the ground. And we see right now in Texas, for instance – which, in the past, Blacks and Latinos have not always had the best relationship when it’s come time for redistricting – very intentional efforts on *both* sides to – to ensure that things work this time. In N- -- New Jersey, a consensus redistricting plan was just put forward by Black, Latino *and* Asian l- -- l- -- leaders. So, folks are starting to get it. I think part of it, quite frankly, is that folks in our generation are rising up into leadership, and many of us in college learned how to play together and work together, realized there was sort of a people-of-color community that surrounded the Black or the Latino community.

**MR. GONZALEZ:** Yeah. I was at that speech when – when Mr. Mfume spoke at – at NCLR, and we were very moved, and we took it very seriously, because we saw that – that it would be really important.

Now, I – I agree with Ben that it’s a struggle when we get down to the ground, but I think we should also look at some success. In – if you look at Compton, now, ten years ago, it’s a – it was a very different community than it is today. And, you know, you have someone like Maxine – C- -- Cong. Maxine Waters –

**MR. MARTIN:** Right.

**MR. GONZALEZ:** -- over there, and there's been no bigger champion on the issue of foreclosures for Latinos and African-Americans than Maxine Waters. So, we see -- we see -- have seen some real good leadership on that, and she's worked a lot with Cong. Gutierrez of -- of Illinois -- of Chicago.

We've also seen groups come together around important issues like education, and so in Compton, there's an elementary school -- McKinley Elementary School in Compton -- where Black and Latino parents got together. And in California, you -- there's -- there's a parent trigger where you can remake a school if 51 percent of the parents of the school vote in favor of -- of changing it, transforming the school. Those parents got together, and they said, "We want a better education for our kids," and they won.

**MR. MARTIN:** Isn't leadership the fundamental issue? And that is, if you talk about civil rights, business and politics, that you've got to have the leaders in -- in different organizations say, "Look. W- -- "We'll deal with what's happening back at home, but unless we see things eye to eye, it's not gonna happen"? You know, I -- I've, frankly, felt that when you look at the massive marches taking place across the country, that dealt with immigration, I said then I did not think that was going to translate into real policy changes, because I felt that Hispanics and Latinos did not have the strong, sophisticated political infrastructure to take the power on the streets and translate it into action on Capitol Hill and in statehouses. I think about Clarence Mitchell. He was

called “The 101<sup>st</sup> Senator” because, you know, when he was doing the Civil Rights Movement, he was the lead person for the NAACP, and there seemed to be a disconnect there in terms of saying, “Okay, how cou-“ – “how can we get together?”

On Black radio – I’m going to tell you something – immigration came up. Callers were *dead set* against allowing Hispanics and Latinos to have any kind of amnesty program, and so those flashpoints around economics [seem] to be driving it. And so – so, again –

**MR. JEALOUS:** But we’ve also seen a shift. I mean I think of the whole battle around the Dream Act got people to just sit for a second and think about these kids and think about – [crosstalk]- --

**MR. MARTIN:** Kids born in this country.

**MR. JEALOUS:** -- born in this country, whose parents were undocumented. They often came over here when they were two or three years old. All they can recall is being in this country. They’ve done well, ‘cause – because the- -- these are kids who’re college-bound. And now we’re saying, “It’s time to get out.” And that part of the debate, I think, got a lot of Black folks just to stop and think for a second.

I- -- it’s also been important that Black civil rights leadership, sensing some of those tensions, really stepped in and got folks to realize what’s at stake here.

**MR. GONZALEZ:** Yeah. I would agree with Ben that there’s been a lot of progress. And even during those marches, at that time there were leaders – African-American leaders – out there talking about the importance of immigration as a civil

rights issue and how it – it *does* affect the African-American community. And, you know, we were honest in saying, “Look. We understand that people have anxiety about jobs, and they always will.” And these flashpoints will become even more intense when there’s a bad economic cycle. But we have made some serious progress.

When we look at the Voting Rights Act, for example, when it came up just a year after those big marches, there was no bigger champion for bilingual ballots than the NAACP. We were not going to win that battle. It so happened that – the NAACP members were in town the day they were going – the day before they were going to vote on the Voting Rights Act. And you know what? We *won*, and it was because we identified key issues on which we agree, and that was an – [a] really great example, because that meant – that translates into voting power, and it translates int- -- translates in p- -- political power.

**MR. MARTIN:** All right. Ben and Raul, we certainly appreciate it. Thanks a lot.

**MR. JEALOUS:** Thank you.

**MR. GONZALEZ:** Thank *you*.

**MR. MARTIN:** When we come back, we’ll talk to two, powerful men who together lead a third of the Democrats in the House. Will they use that power with each other, or against each other?

[END OF SEGMENT.]

**(SEG-  
MENT 2)**

**MR. MARTIN:** There are 42 Black members of the Congressional Black Caucus,

41 Democrats and one Republican. Another Black Republican, Tim Scott, has refused to join the CBC. There're 21 members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, all Democrats, and eight Hispanic House Republicans who have a separate group, the Congressional Hispanic Conference. Between the CBC and the CHC, that comes to nearly a third of all Democrats in the House of Representatives. Those numbers are going to change over the next few years, because as of the 2010 Census, the Hispanic population is 25 percent larger than the Black population. In states like Texas, they expect to get four seats. Many think those four will all go to Hispanics.

So, how will our next two guests work together to have a major impact when it comes to public policy for African-Americans and Hispanics? Welcome to "Washington Watch" the chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Texas congressman Charles Gonzalez; and chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, Missouri congressman Emmanuel Cleaver.

Well, gentlemen, [I'm] certainly glad you could be here.

**REP. EMMANUEL CLEAVER:** Good to be here.

**MR. MARTIN:** And Cong. Gonzalez, you – I – lucky I let you stay on the air, talking about the Texas Longhorn stuff.

**REP. CHARLES GONZALEZ:** [Laughs.]

**REP. CLEAVER:** [Chuckles.]

**MR. MARTIN:** We don't allow that, being the Aggie myself, but it's okay. Cong. Cleaver told me you're a good guy.

**REP. GONZALEZ AND REP. CLEAVER:** [Chuckle.]

**REP. GONZALEZ:** Thank you.

**MR. MARTIN:** The reason we – I wanted to do this show is because we've heard for *so long* this whole issue of a black-brown coalition. And so from a political perspective, what are the opportunities for African-Americans and Hispanics to take advantage of being, as we're moving in that direction, the largest minority in this country?

**REP. GONZALEZ:** Well, it's – it's actually excellent, if we take advantage of it and we don't allow ourselves to be separated and divided; because we'll discuss what's going on even in Congress in committees, where there's a direct effort to basically try to divide the minorities. And so it – that's number one. We['ve] got to resist that. Then we have to be looking at this districts – and especially right now, as you know, with redistricting – and see when we can put these coalitions together, 'cause that's also going to be frustrated, especially where you have legislatures that are controlled by the other party that want to see the coalitions come together. So, those are the challenges right now.

**MR. MARTIN:** Cong. Cleaver, w- -- you know, what kind[s] of efforts have there been to divide minority groups? And so you – tha- -- that, certainly, Cong. Gonzalez spoke to?

**REP. CLEAVER:** Well, what – what we have generally is the majority trying to separate the Hispanic Caucus from the Black Caucus on the issue of immigration, and

we have resisted. In fact, we called a press conference together to make sure that there was no question, either in Washington, or out in the world, that we were working together. And – and if you – if you look at what we do in terms of the votes, I would daresay that the Hispanic Caucus and the Black Caucus are probably 98 percent together. And I think that frightens people – the – the – the fact that we *are* together. I – I think it – it creates a nervousness in the House, both in – in – in the Democratic Party *and* the Republican.

**MR. MARTIN:** I – I stay on the immigration issue, because when I had a daily radio show on WVON in Chicago – and I tell you when that a- -- when the m- -- when the immigration issue came up, 9½ , 9.8 out of every ten callers *absolutely* were disagreeing with amnesty programs. And so although you might be together politically here in Washington, D.C., it's a whole different story, what's happening on the ground. So, how do you deal with that? Ho- -- how do you say to your constituents, "Look, we see the benefits of a partnership. We need *you* to see it on the ground," and then make it happen back at home?

**REP. GONZALEZ:** Well, the first thing i- -- is you look at different leaders. And I will tell you when all that was developing, you know, really we're so appreciative for th- - with Rev. Sharpton to have stepped in and said, "Hey, look. We['ve] got to figure out where all these folks are and the fact that they're the – the disadvantaged. They're the ones that 're being taken advantage of. We know what it's like."

So, we['d] better figure out what we've got in common, what are the common

challenges and the common opportunities”; because we really do represent a segment in society that *has* disadvantages and sp- -- and particular obstacles that other groups do not have. So, I think we have to figure out that we’re in this together, and that if you’re *not* together, we both suffer.

And I – now, it’s not easy. You’re absolutely right! Why should someone who’s an African-American not also feel insecure here and threatened here in bad economic times? We have to recognize that.

**MR. MARTIN:** Well, when I was in Houston – born and raised there – I watched the battles when it came to the next fire chief, the next superintendent, the next police chief. Same thing happened in – when I was in Dallas as well. And you had some *serious* fights going on between African-Americans and Hispanics, because you had African-Americans who were saying, “Wait a minute. *We just* got some power. *We just* came into these positions,” when Hispanics were saying, “Well, *wait* a minute. Now *we* want ‘the first.’” And so h- -- have you been in situations where you had to navigate some of those disputes? I s- -- see you’re already laughing, saying, “Oh, yeah. I’ve been there, done that.”

**REP. GONZALEZ:** [Chuckles.] Oh, *absolutely*, and it’s not a comfortable thing! But you really – again, if you stay just focused on what’s going on and the fact that someone of color is being presented an opportunity that *did not exist at all* in – not that long ago, and to appreciate that and understand that you, too, are a person of color – and we can’t allow to be pitted against one another.

I will – and this is the other thing. Just years ago, we'd have the education budget, and they'd say, "Okay. We've got some money for minorities. So, okay, Black Caucus, and the Hispanic Caucus, what do y'all want to do?"

And we're going, "Well, you know what? We want a bigger *share*! Why are you limiting us to that slice?"

And that's what happens and gets played out all the time. We *have* to be together to make our share a bigger share that truly represents our needs, our desires and our population.

**MR. MARTIN:** Cong. Cleaver, is education really the most important battleground for minority groups?

**REP. CLEAVER:** Our dropout rates are horrendous for *both* groups, and – and we've got to work together, because if you go to most urban school districts – e- -- even here in Washington – you're going to find African-American and Hispanic students, and – and – and – and a – and we are *absolutely stupid* if we don't work together.

**MR. MARTIN:** Well, gentlemen, we certainly appreciate the conversation. Again, I mean our goal is to spur folks at home to say, "Look, we have to have this dialogue," because the numbers are changing; they're getting there. So, I say w- -- b- -- be prepared for it now versus later.

Cong. Gonzalez, Cleaver, we appreciate it. Thanks a lot.

**REP. CLEAVER:** Good to be –

**REP. GONZALEZ:** Thank you.

**REP. CLEAVER:** -- with you.

**MR. MARTIN:** All right, folks. Coming up, we'll go inside the largest multicultural advertising agency in the United States to meet its founder, who went from the gridiron to global entrepreneurship.

[END OF SEGMENT.]

**(SEG-  
MENT 3)**

**MR. MARTIN:** We've talked about leadership in politics, and now it's time to get down to business – literally – time to create our own opportunities as African-Americans, as Hispanics and Latinos – or do it together. One man who believes we are much stronger together is Don Coleman. The business he built is GlobalHue, the largest multicultural advertising agency in the United States. Based in Southfield, Michigan, just outside of Detroit, the agency places nearly half a billion dollars of advertising a year. The agency is that big because Don Coleman saw the future: not just an agency for the Black market, but an agency servicing the whole minority market. He saw the power of black and brown folks working together to service the rapidly growing multicultural market.

There are lessons to be learned from this visionary. We caught up with him on a business trip to Los Angeles.

[INTERVIEW W/MR. DON COLEMAN.]

**MR. MARTIN:** Hey, Don, welcome to "Washington Watch" from – you're in Los Angeles, though.

**MR. DON COLEMAN:** In Los Angeles, d- -- out doing a little business, Roland. Thank you very much. Glad to be on the show.

**MR. MARTIN:** Don, more than a decade ago, you had the vision to take GlobalHue – first of all, you had a black ad agency, Don Coleman Advertising, and then add[ed] the Hispanic and Asian component. And so what were you seeing ten years ago that a lot of other folks, frankly, were not seeing?

**MR. COLEMAN:** Well, ten years ago, I think everyone saw the 2000 Census, and we saw the explosion in the Hispanic community from a population perspective. So, the difference between seeing it and executing it is – is what we did when we were Don Coleman Advertising. We actually executed against what we saw.

**MR. MARTIN:** Now, what was the reaction from folks who knew you for all these years? Were they saying, “Don, what are you doing, man? I mean here you were, a very successful advertising firm targeting African-Americans. Did you have folks who said that you were nuts to all of a sudden expand your brand, if you will?”

**MR. COLEMAN:** Absolutely. There were – I – I – there were naysayers across the board. In the African-American marketing media community, they – they thought I was breaking a paradigm that didn’t need to be broken. On the Hispanic side, they thought I was stepping over the line that shouldn’t be stepped across. So, we – we caught a – a little bit of flack when we made our move into becoming a totally multicultural agency, but it proved out to be the right thing to do.

**MR. MARTIN:** I’ve spoken to, frankly, minority chambers of commerce, Black

chambers of commerce all across the country. And one of the things that I rarely ever see are real conversations about M&A, mergers and acquisitions, and I keep telling people, “Look, you’re not going to have a John H. Johnson today spend 65 years building a business from the ground up to become the number-one business in that particular sector. It has to be done through M&A.”

And so what advice would you give to African-American entrepreneurs to take advantage of this changing landscape, where you have minorities [who], frankly, are going to have \$2 trillion in consumer spending by the year 2015, to say, “Look, you have to understand mergers and acquisitions if you want to be able to reach scale”?

**MR. COLEMAN:** Absolutely. Tha- -- that’s the way you’re going to have to do it. These days, the way the process works in America, it’s very hard to have a startup without some type of M&A activity. Capitalization is always a problem, as you know, Roland, when you talk about M&A; but entrepreneurs have to find a way to partner with people with capital to be able to make these mergers and acquisitions, because i- -- in order to reach scale, as you said, to reach corporations who want to have – want you to *have* scale in order to do the work for them, you’ve got to look at the merger and acquisition scenario.

**MR. MARTIN:** As we are changing in terms of our census numbers, how do you see, frankly, major companies – Fortune 500 companies – dealing with and grappling with how to market to a changing America that, frankly, is not going to be White-dominated; it’s really going to be taking in consideration what African-Americans and

Hispanics and Asians actually think, live and breathe?

**MR. COLEMAN:** Well, some corporations are moving faster in – in that direction than others. We at GlobalHue, in terms of where we see our evolution going forward, is taking our understanding – our two-decade understanding of these markets – and understanding how they have for many years influenced popular culture, and what that means in terms of the larger population explosion, the – the income explosion, and what that means to what we call – for what we call the “new total market,” which is going to be comprised of many more ethnic cultures. Take into consideration, Roland, that right now – today – 52 percent of all people 21 and under in America are multicultural. So, what is that going to mean as they continue to progress and become the dominant force in America?

So, we’re researching that, using our understandings from our past research and understanding how trends emanate, gestate in a community, and then integrate and cross over into popular culture – and even international culture. So, we’re bringing all that to bear in terms of our focus on – on the new total market.

**MR. MARTIN:** Don Coleman, always a pleasure. Thanks a bunch for being on “Washington Watch.”

**MR. COLEMAN:** Thank *you* very much, Roland.

[END OF INTERVIEW.]

**MR. MARTIN:** Folks, we’ve just looked at a big business in a changing America, but there are even more opportunities in small business. We’ll dive into that when we

come back.

[END OF SEGMENT.]

**(SEG-  
MENT 4)**

**MR. MARTIN:** The key to creating and maintaining wealth in black and brown communities is building minority-owned businesses. Minority communities clearly understand the importance of building and cultivating an entrepreneurial spirit. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, over the last ten years, the growth of Black-owned businesses has been triple the national rate, and Hispanic businesses have increased by 88 percent. Here to discuss how to maintain that economic power is George Herrera, the founder, president and CEO of Herrera-Cristina Group; and Harry Alfred, president and CEO of the National Black Chamber of Commerce.

Gentlemen, welcome to “Washington Watch.”

**MR. GEORGE HERRERA:** Thank you.

**MR. HARRY ALFRED:** Thank you.

**MR. MARTIN:** I- -- it is very interesting when we talk about where African-Americans and Hispanics stand as relates to economics. And so folks are always saying that these two groups should naturally be aligned with one another, but there seems to be this sort of disconnect, this sort of uneasiness between the two. When I talk to Hispanic business owners and African-Americans, you don't see significant joint venture partnerships. And so how do you break down those walls to say, “Look, we're in this thing together. We can get a” – frankly, “most of the pie versus the crumbs”?

**MR. HERRERA:** Well, I think you're absolutely correct, and I think what has to happen is that we need to start I- -- stop looking at minority business development in this country from an old paradigm. I think it's an old paradigm that's outdated and is not in lockstep with the 21<sup>st</sup> century. And one of the things that we need to do is call these major, national Hispanic and African-American business organizations together to develop what I would like -- what I'd like to call a "national economic development blue" -- "blueprint," one that really starts to deal primarily with corporate America in a reciprocal business relationship. There's a [total] disconnect from the minorities communities' es- -- purchasing power and buying power. It's over a trillion dollars, and what we see coming back from the -- from corporate America [sic].

So, I think one of the things we need to address is unlocking the doors of the board of directors suites in Fortune 1000 companies, getting minorities into senior executive-leg- -- -level positions that are not the traditional vice president of community affairs positions, but actually positions that control budgets; and then wrapping a national economic development agenda around doing business with corporate America at a high level.

**MR. MARTIN:** Harry?

**MR. ALFRED:** I'm all for it, George -- and -- and George knows that when he was CEO of the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, we worked together a *lot*, and we had a lot of issues; have done a lot of press conferences together. And we *still* do that with the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, with the Latino Coalition. So, it's

*there* in fir- -- in – in – [as] far as camaraderie goes and as far as the business agenda.

But African-Americans have lagged behind in entrepreneurship, but we're catching up.

**MR. MARTIN:** Bu- -- bu- -- but also, isn't a part of that, though, that if you look at the Hispanic – [unintelligible] – I always say "Hispanic/Latino," because the p- -- different parts of the country. You look at that community. You look at [the] Asian-American community – that one of the advantages, if you will, to that kind of entrepreneurship is the fact of language. So, if you looked at African-Americans during the Civil Rights Movement, because we couldn't live certain places, it was only natural you saw thriving Black business, because we couldn't go anywhere else. And so is – so, how do you deal with that, where you have Hispanic[s]/Latinos who say, "Look. [We] speak the same language. We can do business with one another. We don't necessarily *need* to have to deal with a larger community." Is that also one of the issues that explains that?

**MR. HERRERA:** Well, no. I – I think that one of the – the things that we need to realize in the Hispanic community – piggybacking on – on the – on the last segment that I saw – is that we have to understand that the Hispanic community, even though we have commonality of language and culture, is a diverse community. And I s- -- that's why we were never able to have a national Hispanic leader, just like the African-American community, let's say, had in a Dr. Martin Luther King, to be able to be the spokesperson for taking a social agenda –

**MR. MARTIN:** Right.

**MR. HERRERA:** -- into -- into an economic development agenda. Why?

Because the Mexican-American community is never going to allow a Cuban-American from Miami to be a spokesperson. Communality of language and culture does not necessarily bring our community together.

Now, that's one of the things that we in the Hispanic community struggle with, and w- -- and one of my roles as cha- -- as CEO of the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce was to understand that our commonality is economic empowerment and being able to develop an economic development agenda. And, again, I go back to the point that I think that our national leaders, in the political arena and in the business community, need to come together and develop a national economic blueprint that we can utilize to drive forward a -- a -- a -- a program that will really empower us.

**MR. MARTIN:** Give me an example of some places on the local level where they are doing exactly what you're talking about. I mean d- -- do you have examples out there where -- in this particular city, where you really see African-Americans and Hispanic[s]/Latinos coming together and saying, "Hey, we can, frankly, take this thing over" --

**MR. ALFRED:** Your home- --

**MR. MARTIN:** -- "and more than" --

**MR. ALFRED:** -- your hometown --

**MR. MARTIN:** -- "we're getting now"?

**MR. ALFRED:** -- of Houston, Texas, I think, is one of the better markets for

Hispanics and *definitely* for Blacks. They're *doing* it down there in Houston, and there're more Black millionaires than you would think in Houston – probably more so than in Atlanta or Chicago.

**MR. MARTIN:** Um-hum. Very true.

**MR. ALFRED:** A- -- and I've got *three* board members in the city of Houston out of 21 nationally. So, Houston is a – is a – an ideal that L.A. and Chicago should look at.

**MR. MARTIN:** Is – is the struggle also getting past the notion of “it's our time”? Because tha- -- tha- -- that's also a – a part of the deal when you talk about boards of directors. I mean, historically, it was, “Okay, we have ten seats. Okay, fine. We'll” – “We'll get this one African-American to be o-“ – “to” – “to be on the board,” and then, all of a sudden, it becomes, “Well, if we replace somebody, let's repace [sic – phonetic] th-“ – “replace the African-American with a Hispanic.”

We're saying, “*Wait* a minute. We can have a[n] African-American *and* a Hispanic/Latino on the board,” as opposed to having sort of that one seat, if you will.

**MR. HERRARA:** But it's still tokenism. Let's take a look at the Fortune 1000 boardrooms. There're about 10,150 board seats. Of those, African-Americans hold about 414 – of 10,150. Hispanics hold around 140. There are 805 Fortune 1000 companies in the year 2011 – in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – in America that have *zero* Hispanic participation on their board of di- --

**MR. MARTIN:** Eight hundred –

**MR. HERRERA:** -- -rectors.

**MR. MARTIN:** -- and five?

**MR. HERRERA:** Eight hundred –

**MR. MARTIN:** Out of a thousand.

**MR. MARTIN:** -- 805 of a thousand Fortune [1000] companies have zero Hispanic population.

What we need to do is be able to go to the – to – to develop a blueprint that says, “If I’m good enough to buy your product and service, I’m good enough to sit in the board seat. And no longer are we going to let you drive how you deal with our community if I’m driving your bottom line.”

**MR. MARTIN:** So, if you look at the purchasing power of African-Americans, the purchasing power of Hispanics/Latinos, and then you combine that – you speak to that; but, again, how do you break the walls down for the *people* to see it is in their best interest to do what both of you describe?

**MR. ALFRED:** It’s – it’s more than – than the symbolism. I – I don’t care what color a board guy is, if he believes in – or she believes in inclusion. I can show you some CEOs of some Fortune 100 companies who are Black and are brain-dead when you start talking about inclusion. And then I can show you the – the CEO of – Randall Stephenson, of AT&T. Now, there’s a guy that’s *serious*. He is *serious* about inclusion, and he demands it from his people. AT&T has probably one of the best records going. He’s not White – not –

**MR. MARTIN:** But breaking –

**MR. ALFRED:** -- Black.

**MR. MARTIN:** -- but breaking those walls down to get the *people* to understand we're in this thing together and how we can maximize our power.

**MR. HERRERA:** It's a matter of educating them. It's a [matter] of [educating] them and – and – and having them understand, particularly in the minority business community, that one of the ways that they're going to grow the minority business community is by being able to lo- -- unlock the doors of opportunity with corporate America. We talk about in the Hispanic community all the time we're the fastest-growing community in the – in the minor- -- in the small business commu- -- community. We're growing three times faster. There's 2.5 million Hispanic-owned businesses in America. Of the 2.5 million Hispanic-owned businesses in America, only 30,000 have revenues of over a million dollars.

**MR. MARTIN:** Which – which goes to the issue that I've always said for African-Americans. It comes down to scale.

**MR. HERRERA:** Absolutely.

**MR. MARTIN:** If you're small, that's fine –

**MR. HERRERA:** Right.

**MR. MARTIN:** -- but if you- -- you're not a million, five, ten, a hundred million, a billion dollars, really, what does it mean?

**MR. HERRERA:** But that's why doing business *together* –

**MR. MARTIN:** Right.

**MR. HERRERA:** -- and being able to joint venture and look at opportunities where we can develop strategic business alliances to go after bigger opportunities is one of the ways that I think that we'll be able to gain some true parity.

**MR. MARTIN:** Harry, final comment.

**MR. ALFRED:** A- -- a- -- and it's getting better. When we started -- my wife and I started the National Black Chamber of Commerce, there were 300,000 Black-owned businesses. Now, 18 years later, there's 1.9 *million* Black-owned businesses. We've gone from 37 billion to 137 billion a year; but, yet, our people spend a trillion dollars of their own money, and our total capacity is a -- w- -- 137 billion. We[ve] got a long ways to go. If we start doing business with ourselves and then with our other partners, we'll grow automatically.

**MR. MARTIN:** But I have -- one of the reasons why I, again, wanted to have this show [is] because there has to be a beginning process of breaking down those walls to say, "Look. We can, frankly, take this thing over to maximize our power; but if we don't, we're fighting with one another." Frankly, it's a waste of both of our times.

So, George and Harry, we certainly appreciate it. Thanks a lot.

**MR. ALFRED:** Thank *you*.

**MR. HERRERA:** Thank you, Roland.

**MR. MARTIN:** Now, we talked about business -- leadership and politics. Next, we tie it all together and look toward the promising, but uncertain, future with our roundtable featuring an Afro-Latino activist, an African-American pollster, a Black

columnist and an Hispanic professor who teaches African-American studies. That's up next.

[END OF SEGMENT.]

**(SEG-  
MENT 5)**

**MR. MARTIN:** So, with changing demographics, how are we are we able to have African-Americans and Hispanics and Latinos come together to be able to take advantage of their changing numbers? So, we go to our panel right now to have that conversation, so we're certainly looking forward to it. First up, Dr. Victoria DeFrancesco Soto, Assistant Professor of Political Science and African-American Studies at Northwestern University; Hispanic community activist Roland Roebuck; "Jet" magazine columnist Sophia Nelson; and Democratic pollster and strategist Cornell Belcher.

All right, folks. Let's get right into it. It's very interesting when you talk about this whole issue of African-Americans, Latinos and Hispanics. I – I want to go back to the immigration marches that we had that took place all across the country. When it was taking place, millions of folks coming out, but what's interesting is when I was on WVON Radio in Chicago, when that issue came up, you had *many* African-Americans who were flat-out against immigration reform, and they were saying, "They're taking our jobs. We don't like it. I'm sorry. Go back to where you came from." And so it was some fierce dialogue. And so how do we deal with that, where you have these two groups [who], by 2042, will be the majority minority, being able to come together and say, "We have like interests, and we should be able to unite and come together"?

**DR. VICTORIA DEFRANCESCO SOTO:** I think with both of these groups, what we're seeing is that many times, with the Rainbow Coalition mentality, we'll say, "You guys are minorities, so all of your interests are the same"; but they're *not* all the same. And so people always focus when they diverge, maybe on some – [unintelligible] – of immigration; but there're economic issues that bring black folks and brown folks together much more strongly. And I think sometimes we lose sight of that because we're focusing in on the flashpoints of difference.

**MR. ROLAND ROEBUCK:** In – in the process of establishing all these coalitions, it's very critical that within the Hispanic community itself the issue of race needs to be thoroughly discussed. You cannot start coalition discussions if within the Hispanic community there is denial with respect to racism – especially towards Afro-Latinos that are part of that experience and are very frequently excluded. So, the notion of starting coalitions with the Afro-American community – I find it sort of difficult until you have a serious, internal discussion and admit that, "Yes, we have a problem of racism."

**MR. MARTIN:** We think in terms of just one group – Hispanics, Latinos [are] all the same – when it's just not the case.

**MR. ROEBUCK:** But even in terms of definition, we call oursel[ves] "Afro-Latinos," or "Afro-descendant." This term of "Hispanic" – we usually attach it to "White" Hispanics. We do not accept that terminology. So, there is – there is no word itself that we can use to truly define this particular community.

**MR. MARTIN:** So, it does not fit in our usual boxes. I remember reading the book on Roberto Clemente, and he was saying, “Okay. *Wait* a minute. I’m Latino, but I’m also dark-skinned. I don’t fit in the box you established.”

**MR. ROEBUCK:** I- -- in my particular case, when I use the term that I am “Afro-Puerto Rican,” many of my Puerto Rican brothers and sisters tend to reject that.

**MR. MARTIN:** But, Cornell, isn’t the problem because it is so fractured, where in politics you’re just simply used to dealing with large groups of people, versus these sort of narrow –

**MR. CORNELL BELCHER:** Right.

**MR. MARTIN:** -- ways of dealing with folks.

**MR. BELCHER:** No, it’s – it’s really fascinating, ‘cause – ‘cause I come from the South, and there you’re either Black or you’re White; but – but – [chuckles] – you’re either “colored” or – or –

**MR. MARTIN:** Right.

**MR. BELCHER:** -- not, but –

**MR. MARTIN:** You came from Alabama, Mississippi –

**MR. BELCHER:** -- [chuckles] – right.

**MR. MARTIN:** -- or Chicago.

**MR. BELCHER:** -- you – you – yeah. But the – the issue thing sort of pol- -- the political thing [that] is going on is that it – it is tremendous power in this black-brown coalition that we have to get together in your state of Texas, where you’re moving to

majority minorities. But – and if you look at sort of the – the – the old electorate, it was 70 percent – or plus – White. The new electorate that – if you take that percentage of the electorate that was new that – that – that was the key to Barack Obama’s winning, the – only 55 percent or so of that electorate was – was White. So, it’s a lot blacker, and it’s a lot browner.

And if you look at what’s happening in the Rust Belt, where they’re losing these old-line – sort of these blue-collar White state, they’re losing population, and your Nevadas and your Colorados are picking up population; and that’s really sort of the – going to be the heart of the – of the new political battleground. It’s not going – not going to be the Rust Belt so much. It’s going to be the West, and the West is blacker and browner.

**MR. MARTIN:** We are so used to easily putting people in a particular box, and so with this discussion – and we always want it to simply be, “Oh, black, brown” – but it really forces people to have to go deeper and say, “Wait a minute. Unless you deal with all of the layers you talked about, then you can’t have a real conversation,” because you have to know what you confront. You have to know what you confront.

**MR. ROEBUCK:** But the issue also is the lack of education. The school system and institutions of higher learning have failed in truly depicting and – and describing all these nuances. So, as a result, we have many folk that are not aware that we have Afro-Latinos, we have Afro-descendants; and people here in D.C. still shock when, you know, I – I speak Spanish to them. And they s- -- they – they – [chuckles] – usually

say, “Oh, you speak it well” –

**MR. MARTIN:** [Laughs.]

**MR. ROEBUCK:** -- like – like Afro-Puerto Ricans are not even part of –

**MR. MARTIN:** Right.

**MR. ROEBUCK:** -- of the mix.

**MR. MARTIN:** Right. Look, I speak to business conferences all around this country, and it’s amazing when you don’t hear real, substantive discussions about joint ventures between African-Americans and Hispanics and Latinos; and my whole point is, “Look. The two of you are fighting over the same *small* dollar versus saying, ‘*Wait a minute!* Why don’t we get most of the pie, and *y’all* get the little, small slice?’”

**MS. SOPHIA NELSON:** But there’s a –

**MR. ROEBUCK:** But the- --

**MS. NELSON:** -- mentality – I think we would all agree that – that, again, as people of color, as minorities, as we’ve been defined as, we – we feel less than. I mean that’s – that’s a whole ‘nother conversation, so we always think that we should fight for that little piece versus why can’t everyone around –

**MR. MARTIN:** Right.

**MS. NELSON:** -- this table, that’s highly educated, build their own j- -- joint venture, get the contract themselves and employ 500 people?

**MR. MARTIN:** -- Roland –

**MR. ROEBUCK:** -- the –

**MS. NELSON:** We don't *think* that way. We –

**MR. MARTIN:** Roland, and then Soto.

**MR. ROEBUCK:** -- the –

**MR. MARTIN:** Go ahead, go ahead.

**MS. NELSON:** -- yeah.

**MR. ROEBUCK:** -- but the – the issue is, why is it that the Afro-American community always has to initiate conversations with the Hispanic leadership? I think that the Hispanic leadership has – has failed at the national level to truly engage in conversations to at least set the platform for coalitions.

**DR. SOTO:** I'm – I – I'm going to respectfully disagree with –

**MR. MARTIN:** Doc sort of frowned –

**DR. SOTO:** -- that.

**MR. MARTIN:** -- on that one. Go ahead. Go ahead.

**MR. BELCHER:** [Chuckles.]

**DR. SOTO:** I- -- it's – we can't make generalizations. Maybe here in D.C., we're not seeing the Black Caucus and the Hispanic Caucus work as we might like, but all politics, to me, is local. And when you see folks in Chicago – you know, the – the community centers coming together even at the neighborhood level, I don't think we can discount that. And we do see folks at the state level and at the county level and at the school board level come together. So, I don't want to take some high-profile examples and say, "Oh, they don't want to work together."

**MR. MARTIN:** But – but I – but I will use this example, and I would love to get your perspectives on this. When they had those immigration marches, I said then – and people thought I was crazy when I said – said it – I said, “You know what? This is great. This is wonderful; but, ultimately, this will fail.”

And folks said, “Oh, my God. Why are you saying that?”

I said, “Because African-Americans established a strong political infrastructure to be able to take the street power and then translate it into actual policy.” Those marches were generated by deejays and community activists, but I felt that Hispanics/Latinos did not have a strong national infrastructure to be able to take all of that energy and then translate it into policy. And, to me, the mistake was in not going to African-Americans and saying, “Now, look. We saw what y’all did with this. Let’s partner in this and work together so we can actually get what we want.” And so I think all of that energy, all those millions of people – they just sort of just left there. And what’d you really get out of it, other than a big march on a day, or in a week?

**MR. ROEBUCK:** Yeah, but I participated in the – in the Latino marches, but then I stopped. And I stopped primarily because I did not see the level of reciprocity. When Blacks were pursuing a particular issue, there was a serious absence of Hispanics.

**MS. NELSON:** But this – [crosstalk] –

**MR. ROEBUCK:** So –

**MS. NELSON:** -- to my point of how we see each other. And I think you and I

are saying the same thing – right? I think – and I – I – I’m not – I don’t want to make a statement -- a blanket, like she said – but in this country, Black is less than. Black is less than. Okay? So, I still think, as you said, Hispanics – “non-White” – have you ever seen that on the form? “Hispanic” and “White” are seen as the same. In fact, my little niece said the other day, “I thought” – “I thought Mexicans were White people.” I mean she’s a – she’s –

**MR. MARTIN:** Right.

**MS. NELSON:** -- ‘cause she’s eight. She’s trying to grapple with color. And she really thought that they were *White*; because, you know, the lighter skin and kind of the way that shakes out.

And so what I’m saying is I think that there might be a little bit – I want to use the word “elitism,” because I don’t have a better word at the –

**MR. MARTIN:** Go ahead.

**MS. NELSON:** -- moment –

**MR. MARTIN:** That’s fine.

**MS. NELSON:** -- by the – by – by some in the leadership, that feels like, “Well, the Black folks – they don’t really have any power, so why would we kind of” –

**MR. ROEBUCK:** *Exactly.*

**MS. NELSON:** -- “tether ourselves to them?” I’m not – I -- I’m just saying –

**MR. MARTIN:** No, no. I –

**MS. NELSON:** -- that’s just the –

**MR. MARTIN:** -- gotcha.

**MR. ROEBUCK:** [Crosstalk] – it's –

**MS. NELSON:** -- *politics*.

**MR. ROEBUCK:** -- *real*[?]. That's – that's – that –

**DR. SOTO:** Well[?] –

**MR. ROEBUCK:** -- go ahead.

**DR. SOTO:** -- you know, I – I think what – the point that Roland made was they didn't have an infrastructure –

**MR. MARTIN:** This Roland, or –

**DR. SOTO:** -- in place –

**MR. MARTIN:** -- that Roland?

**DR. SOTO:** *This* Roland. This –

**MR. MARTIN:** Okay. Got it.

**MR. ROEBUCK:** This one –

**MR. MARTIN:** All right.

**MR. ROEBUCK:** -- is better-looking! This –

**MR. MARTIN:** [Laughs.]

**MR. ROEBUCK:** -- [chuckles] –

[CHUCKLING.]

**DR. SOTO:** -- [crosstalk] – moment.

[CHUCKLING.]

**DR. SOTO:** So, the infrastructure wasn't in place; and, mistake one, they didn't talk to the Black leadership; and, mistake two, didn't talk to the White leadership that had business interests that could've helped –

**MR. MARTIN:** Gotcha.

**DR. SOTO:** -- with that coalition. So, sometimes it's not just about a black-brown coalition. Sometimes you need some strategic partnerships, and you – you know, the – the grassroots was there, but there was no substance –

**MR. BELCHER:** [Crosstalk] --

**MR. MARTIN:** Cornell.

**DR. SOTO:** -- to it.

**MR. BELCHER:** -- and let me jump in. I mean two – two, quick thoughts on that, because I think back. Sort of, we just celebrated MLK. The thing is, where would MLK have been? He would've been down there at those marches –

**MS. NELSON:** True[?].

**MR. BELCHER:** -- with – with – with – with – the Latino and Hispanic brothers and sisters. And – but there was a disconnect, 'cause there were – 'cause the- -- in our community, we were *not* a part of that. And this is the game that we['ve] got to stop playing; 'because, quite frankly, the divide-and-conquer game politically is not working for us. Politically, there were th- -- a lot of those people on – on the far fringe of – of – of – they call it "conservatism." You know, they – they can say the most outrageous things, and they can try to make law after law after law discriminating against Latinos

and Hispanics, particularly in the West as long as we play divide-and-conquer politics.

And the truth of the matter is they are not held accountable as long as we're divided, 'cause the moment – the moment that – [chuckles] – that we're not divided, the – the – the – the – the conservative – the – the Republican Party's going to have to have a – a fight within itself, because – 'cause when you look at the trend lines [of] sort of how this country's changing colors, they cannot continue to be so harsh and so dramatically – I'mma go ahead and say it – bigoted to – in – in – in this way and be a majority – a major- -- a majority party. The new – there's going to have to be a new right –

**MR. MARTIN:** Right.

**MR. BELCHER:** -- that takes on the Tea Party, if they're going to continue to be a dominant party in this country.

**MR. MARTIN:** And we have to leave it right there. Great conversation. Dr. Soto, Roland, Sophia, Cornell, we appreciate it. Thanks a bunch.

All right, folks. Back to "Washington Watch" in a moment.

[END OF SEGMENT.]

**(SEG-  
MENT 6)**

**MR. MARTIN:** Now it's time for "My Perspective."

I think one of the issues that we have when it comes to this whole notion of African-Americans, Hispanics and Asians coming together to take advantage of this

large minority representation is the issue of fear – and that is folks are fearful of one another. We have cultural issues. We have historical issues.

The only way we're able to take advantage of being the dominant, or the majority minority, in this country is if people are able to set aside their fears and say, "What do we have in common?" For far too long, African-Americans and Hispanics and Asians have had to sit back and look at Whites dominate every aspect of this culture. Now, we call ourselves a "melting pot" in America, but now we're reaching the point where we truly *are* a melting pot – where you have different cultures having [an] opportunity to be able to come together, to grow, to amass power, to create wealth. But it is going to require folks to understand that "power concedes nothing without a demand." You're not going to see changes in politics, in business, in education simply because the numbers are changing. It is going to require minority groups to understand that they are far more powerful as one, as opposed [to] as individuals.

But also understand we are going to have some differences, and it might mean many of us walking our separate ways. But that should not preclude anyone from understanding that as America changes, so must minority groups, and so must the dominant culture – and that is Whites in this country. America today will not look the same in the next ten, 20 and 30 years. So, I suggest we start now preparing for the future before it's too late.

Well, that's my perspective. What's yours?

That's it for this edition of TV One's "Washington Watch."

I'm Roland Martin. Goodbye, and have a happy Easter Sunday – or, as some call today, “Resurrection Sunday.” Take care.

**[END.]**