

What is a Hispanic? Definition seems to evolve

By Harry C. Alford
Special to Sentinel-Voice

It is a nouveau term cultivated from the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Prior to that, Mexican-Americans demanded to be listed as Caucasian on government applications, etc. When affirmative action started to kick in and "protected classes" began to formulate, their leadership abandoned the claim as Caucasian and demanded distinction as a protected class also.

Thus, the broad term "minority" started to include Mexican-Americans and others who no longer saw the advantage in being separated from Blacks and Asians. Eventually, the term Hispanic began to be included among minority ethnicities.

Basically, Hispanic is in no way a race of people. It is a conglomerate of cultures who share a bond via speaking Spanish or Portuguese. It is a combination of Caucasian, Black and Native American plus a little Asian in places like Brazil (where there are 4 million Japanese Brazilians), Peru and other Latin-American places. Also included are direct descendants of Spain and Portugal — many of whose ancestors sponsored and profited from the slave trade business and slave-operated plantations. Imagine heirs to slave traders and slave owners being automatically allowed to participate in affirmative action programs like they suffered from slavery and Jim Crow effects. The fact is they prospered from it.

Another oddity is that Spanish is spoken

and written in only certain parts of Spain. There are other dominant languages. I went to Barcelona and tried my Spanish while ordering breakfast.

The waitress said, "We can do English or my language, Catalan (mixture of Spanish, French and a touch of Italian)." I was so embarrassed not recognizing the language of the land I was visiting.

During the Jim Crow days of the South and various northern venues like Indiana, Ohio, downstate Illinois, etc. separate facilities were for "Whites" and "Colored," a.k.a. Blacks or Negroes. People who were Mexican-Americans and other Latino ethnicities walked through the "Whites" door. They were not reduced to the inferior facilities we Blacks had to use.

General Colin Powell describes it brilliantly in his first autobiography, "Soldier," when he goes into a restaurant in Columbus, Ga., and orders a take out.

The waitress says, "Say you are a Puerto Rican and I can serve you. If you don't; I can't serve Blacks." He left.

South of the U.S. border there are well over 100 million Blacks who can claim they are Hispanic. The largest populated nation of Blacks is Brazil with 76.8 million (second only to Nigeria). It is followed by Columbia



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— 11 million; Panama — 4 million; Cuba — 3.9 million; Dominican Republic — 3.2 million; Venezuela — 3.1 million; Peru — 1.1 million; Mexico — 1 million (there are 9 million Mexicans who don't know they are Black) and Puerto Rico — 715,000.

This will be awesome once their civil rights movements start to kick in and they demand economic equity. They are on the lowest rung of the "ladder" when you evaluate every economic and educational factor of these nations. The time has come for them to be mad and start demanding their share of power.

Like in Mexico, many of the Caucasian Hispanics don't know they have Black blood in their veins. Someone did a DNA sampling of blood collected by a Buenos Aires, Argentina, hospital and found that 10 percent of the patients have Black lineage and didn't know it. The number that have "passed" can now be truly identified.

Many of the non-Blacks and non-Caucasians from Latin America are of Native American descent. For some reason they, especially Mexican-Americans, have not claimed this. Native American status would give them far more protection and opportunities than saying they are "Hispanic." I believe they need to rethink this.

Also, many Mexican-Americans can claim their heritage on this land prior to there being a United States in California, Texas, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada and Utah. A friend of my brother has a documented land grant given to his ancestors by the government of Mexico for 300 hectares (about 600 acres). The grant became null and void after our land grab of the Southwest in 1848. That land sits on what is now Wilshire Boulevard in Santa Monica, Ca. My goodness, now that is a reason to demand reparations.

Hispanics from the Caribbean are basically void of Native American blood as they were decimated from the early European settlers. Cubans, Puerto Ricans and Dominicans who have European blood are basically descendants of French settlers from Haiti who fled to their lands after the great slave revolt of Haiti ran the French army out. Cuba alone received 200,000 French settlers fleeing the revolting Blacks seeking big payback. Also, many French settlers left Louisiana and resettled on these islands after the Louisiana Purchase.

The next time you hear about Hispanic population, please remember that a good portion of that is us. Don't be alarmed; we are the largest so-called minority race in the United States by far.

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America taking notice of African migration to Europe

By Bill Fletcher Jr.
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Although there is nothing new about Africans migrating to Europe, the increase in such migration over the last 20-30 years has become noteworthy and is finally reaching the attention of the mainstream media in the USA.

The rebellions that took place in French suburbs in 2005 carried out by the children of African immigrants brought global attention to an aspect of this situation. The increased coverage of the plight of those currently trying to get to Europe has shed new light on a growing crisis and one from which we actually can better understand the situation of migrations to the USA.

During the Colonial Era, African and Caribbean immigration to Europe was limited by the controls imposed by the colonial powers. In the aftermath of World War II, a combination of factors, including the need for cheap labor, as well as the expectations that had been raised by the war in the colonized territories, led to an increase in migration from the colonial and former colonial world to the "mother countries," i.e., the colonial powers themselves.

The most recent wave of immigration must be seen in the context of the destruction of economies in Africa as a result of both

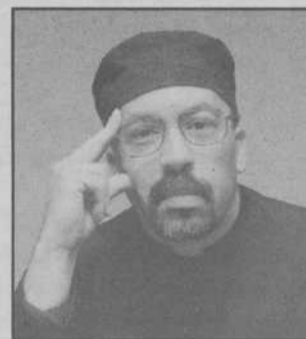
economic and political factors, most out of the control of the Africans themselves.

First, for most of the post-colonial era, Africa was a battleground in the Cold War, with the rival superpowers arming their respective allies, often at the expense of any legitimate democracy in those countries.

For example, the Congo/Zaire having been a U.S. ally and a thoroughly corrupt country under Mobutu Sese Seko, and Ethiopia having been an ally of the Soviet Union until 1991 under the despotic rule of the military clique known as the Dergue.

The Cold War undermined legitimate sovereignty and resulted in the over-arming of various governments rather than supporting those governments in placing badly needed resources into social and economic development.

In the aftermath of the 1973 recession and oil crisis, African economies were further plunged into a tailspin after a decade of significant growth. The combination of this crisis and the demands by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, for what became known as structural adjustment, re-



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sulted in a major debt crisis for African countries, a crisis with which most of those countries live to this day.

Again, as with the Cold War, African countries in this case have to place badly needed monetary resources into servicing a debt that was largely imposed on them.

The growing misery on the African continent has resulted in streams of people leaving and heading to Europe and, secondarily, to Canada and the USA. In fact, the desperation of such migrants mirrors the desperation of Latino immigrants who cross into the U.S. in search of survival.

Migrants in open trucks cross the Sahara Desert with little in the way of food, water and medical supplies. Migrants wait in various North African countries, such as Morocco and Libya, for the opportunity to cross the Mediterranean Sea into Europe. Migrants are found dead and dying on coastlines when their boats capsize.

Much of the response in Europe mirrors responses in the USA to immigration: place the blame on the immigrants.

In the case of Africa, the focus of White European concern is that the immigrants are

supposedly bringing disease, poverty, and, in many cases, alleged fanatical Islam to their shores.

Rather than stepping back and understanding the root causes of this immigration, largely to be found in the legacy of the European rape and colonization of Africa, there is an historic blind spot.

This blind spot rises to the level of arrogance when one hears almost no discussion of the fact of the root causes are European colonization of Africa and the riches that were taken as a result of that pillage.

It is as if colonialism never existed and this pathetic mass of humanity is simply looking for a better life than they can achieve in their homelands.

Much like the situation in the U.S. with Latino immigration, African immigration to Europe will not dry up until and unless there is a turnaround in their homelands.

Specifically, until and unless African countries receive the necessary support from Europe and the U.S., repairing the damage from colonialism, in order for them to rebuild their countries in a self-determined direction, one should not expect any change, except, perhaps, an increase in the number of bodies floating in the Mediterranean.

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something they have done to advantage the Black masses?

On a local level, as well as a national level, we should have some collective gain from the Black millionaires we have already created. Think about some of them and ask yourself, "Have Black people really received a return on our investment from their causes or their

businesses?" Or, have they and their friends and families been the only ones to gain? Stop supporting shysters, hustlers and hucksters.

Yes, it's time we create Black millionaires who have a Black consciousness. I wrote in a previous column: "Over one million strong — Where are they now?" A million brothers and sisters collectively supporting a Black business owner, a Black freedom fighter, and

an authentic Black "servant-leader" by purchasing a product or sending a couple of dollars to that person's organization or initiative, will create a cadre of conscious Black folks who will have the funds to execute the kinds of efforts necessary for Black people to move forward.

Let's start a campaign to create more conscious millionaires. On November 2, the

National Boycott Day, it's not just about what we don't do with our money; it's more about what we do with it. Let's use some of the money we don't spend on that day to create a conscious Black millionaire. Imagine the possibilities.

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