



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

Well, Well, Where Were #11 and #12?

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What You Should Know

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Well, Well, Where Were #11 and #12?

You should know that Mrs. Gail Badillo, the widow of the late Congressman Herman Badillo is upset and angry because of the lack of respect and reverence from New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio and some elected officials who did not attend the funeral services for her husband on Sunday, December 7, 2014.

As you know, the Honorable Herman Badillo served our community with great distinction. He was the first of many firsts. Herman Badillo was the first Hispanic to be appointed as a Commissioner of New York City, and the first Hispanic to be elected to serve as a Borough President in New York City. He was the first Puerto Rican to be elected to the United States Congress as a voting Member, and the first

Hispanic to be a Deputy Mayor for any New York City Mayor. He was the first Puerto Rican to serve as the Chairman of the City University of New York, and the first Puerto Rican to run eleven times in the New York City Marathon.

You should know that there are news reports saying that our beloved New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio chose to spend Sunday morning working out in the gym instead of attending the funeral services for one of New York City's most distinguished leaders. (Before the funeral, Mrs. Badillo had not even received a phone call of condolences from the Mayor.)

It is also important for you to know that the Mayor was not the only elected official from New York who did not commit his or her time to pay respects on Sunday morning. These other elected officials include the New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito (the same person who will not salute the United States flag during the National Anthem), and former Bronx Borough Presidents Fernando Ferrer and Adolfo Carrión, Jr.

I would like for you to also know that in the history of Bronx County, there have been 13 Borough Presidents, and Herman Badillo was #8. During the time of Herman Badillo's tenure as Bronx Borough President, the Bronx was controlled politically by the Irish and the Jewish power-brokers and it was difficult if not impossible for a Hispanic to be elected – but Herman Badillo broke down the barrier and became our 8th Borough President. Bronx Borough President Herman Badillo was succeeded by the 9th Borough President Robert Abrams, who was succeeded by Bronx Borough President Stanley Simon #10th.

You should know that it was not until many years later when the Bronx Hispanic community grew in size that the Irish and the Jewish politicians lost control. Since then, Hispanics elected the last three Borough Presidents: #11 Fernando Ferrer, #12 Adolfo Carrión, Jr., and #13 Rubén Díaz, Jr.

It is important to recognize that were it not for Herman Badillo and his ability to break down these barriers that #11, #12 and #13 would not have become Bronx Borough Presidents. The three of them should have attended the funeral service united and together. Of the three, only Borough President Rubén Díaz, Jr. was present at the funeral, and the absence of #11 Ferrer and #12 Carrión was duly noted and spoken about by those in attendance.

Perhaps they chose to go out and play golf, or go to the gym like Mayor Bill de Blasio, or maybe they just slept in ... who knows? Among the elected officials and dignitaries who did attend the funeral service to honor the life of Herman Badillo were: Bronx Borough President Rubén Díaz, Jr., Former New York City Mayors Rudy Giuliani and David Dinkins, Congressman Charlie Rangel, Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez, Congressman José Serrano, State Senator José Marcos Serrano, Assemblyman Marcos Crespo, and me.

I don't want to leave out the names of other dignitaries who were also in attendance and who are important to New York's Hispanic Community: New York City Police Commissioner William Bratton, Former New York City Police Commissioner Ray Kelly, and Former Assemblyman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Respected news reporters included Gabe Pressman, Geraldo Rivera, Juan Gonzalez, Gerson Borrero, Curtis Sliwa, Wayne Barrett and Errol Louis.

It is frustrating to know that not even Lorraine Cortez-Vazquez, President of the National Puerto Rican Day Parade nor Members of the Board of Directors were not only not present during the funeral service, but they refused to issue a statement about the passing of Herman Badillo.

My question to them - and to #11 and #12 is: Where the %*&!\$ were you??? What reason caused you to miss this important occasion?

Ladies and gentlemen, even Mr. Wayne Barrett who is suffering from a serious illness with an oxygen tank in a wheelchair pushed by Curtis Sliwa made the time to get there. If Mr. Barrett in his condition and Mr. Gabe Pressman who pushed a walker were able to get there, what possible excuse could those not in attendance possibly have for Mrs. Gail Badillo?

This is Senator Reverend Rubén Díaz, and this is what you should know.