

ABSTRACT

Remember García:
An Analysis of the Life, Legacy, and Leadership of Dr. Héctor P. García

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The present research paper examines the historical figure of Dr. Héctor P. García. I begin by examining the history of the Alamo from an unpopular perspective, the Mexican side. By explaining the lesser-known history of the Alamo, I analyze García's similar situation. I, therefore, follow my introduction with a brief overview of the socio-historical climate of the twentieth century that allowed García to capitalize on the growing impatience of Mexican Americans and their unequal treatment in the U.S. I further explain through his biography how an immigrant from Llera, Tamaulipas was able to gain such prominence in the United States as an American hero. With data gathered from various primary and secondary sources, I establish that García is a true patriotic American who greatly impacted U.S. history as we know it today.

Remember García: An Analysis of the
Life, Legacy, and Leadership of Dr.
Héctor P. García

by

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DEDICATION

To my parents who have always supported and continue to support me throughout my education endeavors. I love you both, thank you.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The Mexican American Myth

The popular history [read: myth] of the Alamo is straightforward. The foundation of Texas liberty begins with a group of friends, Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, and William Barret Travis, as they venture to start new lives. However, they must defeat the evil Mexican dictator Santa Anna before they can claim their manifestly destined territory. On March 6, 1836, the Battle of the Alamo took place between Anglos and Mexicans. The myth of that battle became the foundational fiction of Texan identity.

The myth of the Alamo has been debunked by historians.¹ We now know that land speculation and slavery had more to do with Texas's separation from Mexico than some abstract notion of freedom, and that Mexicans fought on both sides in San Antonio in 1836. Still, it is just one example of the stories that American identity is made up of.

We therefore will learn, from my gathered data and research, that *history is more complicated than the Heroic Narrative we are taught.*

For some two centuries, the Alamo and other identitarian myths have cultivated the dichotomy Mexican vs. U.S. American. Dr. Héctor P. García (1914-1996), winner of

¹ Historians: Bryan Burrough, Chris Tomlinson, and Jason Stanford. See bibliography page 86 for further reference.

the Presidential Medal of Freedom (1984), worked his entire life to upset that exclusionary binary.

Dr. Héctor P. García

Hispanic American history is American history. It is appropriate and necessary, therefore, to learn and teach the history of the Mexican American civil rights movements.

According to Cecilia García Ackers, in “The Inspiring Life of Texan Héctor P. García” he was “a man who in the space of one week delivers twenty babies, twenty speeches and twenty thousand votes” (15). This thesis offers a review of the history of the Mexican American struggle for civil rights in the twentieth century. Additionally, this thesis helps demonstrate models of social change and equality that García employed. In his fifty-year crusade to improve conditions for his people, García should be remembered as an American hero. His story deserves to be widely known as an example of the power of the individual. He believed in the ideal of justice and dedicated his life to bringing it about.

Chapter One: The Socio-Historical Context

Before our introduction to García, this chapter reviews Mexican American history shortly before and during García’s lifetime. I also consider past activism as well as social and political thought. I argue that the ambitions of the Mexican American community dovetail with the framework of American ideology, which I further explain as I detail the progress of Mexican American civic culture today.

Chapter Two: A Biographical Note

This chapter introduces García and his lifetime of achievements. It illustrates García's personal life as well as his public one. It will be made clear how much the nation has been affected for the better on account of García's efforts and sacrifices. He fought and won many battles on behalf of Mexican American equality.

Chapter Three: Some Primary Sources

I will review the theory of Servant Leadership and argue that García's leadership style followed its principles. This assisted him in enlisting the support of the Mexican American community in his historical struggle. I will analyze a couple of primary sources by García as well as correspondence from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and César E. Chávez. These archival materials are located in the "Héctor P. García Collection" at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. I include an interview I conducted with García's daughter, Cecilia García Ackers (who is also my aunt). This chapter illustrates that García's mission was fueled by patriotism, belief in the American Dream, and ultimately love for the U.S.

Conclusion

In this brief section, I review García's final days. I detail how García is remembered today, and that his legacy is kept alive by his daughter, Cecilia García Ackers. I reiterate our duty as American citizens to work towards justice for all and in so doing to live out the legacy of García.

CHAPTER TWO

The Socio-Historical Context

2.1 Introduction

In tracing the career of Dr. Héctor P. García, one must begin with the sociohistorical context in which his experiences took place. A reflection on the Mexican American reality of the early and mid-twentieth century makes clear his prominent contribution to civil rights issues. This chapter begins with an analysis of Mexican American circumstances before and during García's time. I will also look at past activism how it impacted social and political thought.

While García has never been at the forefront of historical analysis, his legacy and its continued persistence are essential in completing the canonical teaching of Mexican American civil rights history. A reconsideration of the causes and effects of the struggles of Mexican Americans is merited as it relates to the civil rights movements and, more broadly, to questions of race in the U.S. It is in this vein that I recuperate García's history and less-known popularity. More straightforwardly, I attempt to demonstrate how great leaders such as Héctor P. García have created a better tomorrow for Mexican Americans today.

2.2 The Concept of Race

In the first half of the twentieth century, racial thought structured notions of family and descent and influenced our movements in the social world. It is now accepted that "races are invented categories—designations coined for the sake of grouping and

separating peoples along the lines of presumed differences—”; more simply, it is a “theory of who is who, of who belongs and who does not, of who deserves what and who is capable of what.” The myth of race has much to do with “competing theories of history which inform the society and define its internal struggles” (Jacobson 4-6). In understanding the Mexican American struggle and their inequality with Anglo Americans, one central premise that guides my research is, to apply Matthew Frye Jacobson’s thesis from *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race*, that race resides in politics and in economics and in the eye of the beholder—in several places—but not in biology. Racial categories are more a reflection of competing notions of socioeconomic power, and the anxieties that arise from these contests.

For this reason, history indicates there has been a failure of communication on the term *race*. While the term *ethnic group* is not a fair substitute for the term *race* because “the term ‘ethnic group’ implies a fundamental difference in viewpoint from that which is implied in the term ‘race’” (Montagu 927). Ethnic group or ethnicity are terms that attempt to clarify and remove themselves from the negative connotation the term *race* has. In reviewing Antoinette Burton’s research on David Theo Goldberg’s book, *Racist Culture: Philosophy and the Politics of Meaning* we can better understand how words such as “ethnic group” or “ethnicity” are ways to legitimize the term *race*. The premises of Goldberg’s book therefore offers “two paradigms that have historically announced themselves as the embodiments of progress and human liberty -that is, liberalism and modernity- [which] have in fact been carriers of contemporary society’s most characteristic evil: racism (Burton 595). His discussion argues that the invention of the

category of “race” by modern liberal culture is racist in its own right to acknowledge the involvement in structuring racial categories. For Goldberg, “while racial categories were the primary building blocks of modernity, racism itself was not so much decried as it was discounted as the foundational constituent of modern self-consciousness” (Burton 596). Thus, Goldeberg’s argument is unique as he focuses on the *who* of racism. The *who* being “*who* decides such distinctions, in addition to the problem of what criteria are to be used” (Burton 596). In short, Goldberg, believes race to essentially be a term that merely reflects social science and important to modern society in the development and preservation of the “other”. In this case the minority.

As the role of race exists in cohesion with social science, Goldberg’s central theme is that “racism is a flexible, vacuous concept able to adapt and re-shape to functional and (normalized) ideological requirements throughout modernity. In order to do this racism(s) must have a rational character and cannot be reduced to ‘personal prejudices of individuals, to irrational appeals to irrelevant categories, to distinctions that delimit universal liberal ideals” (Neal 619). Thus, a re-evaluation of the term race rather than its replacement with a more general term is more suitable because the term race simply cannot be redefined, nor can it be erased. It is through this research that I remove the misguided notion of the term race and introduce a new positive interpretation of the word.

2.3 A Very Brief Review of the Mexican American Experience

In this chapter I wish to outline the historical evolution of the Mexican community’s experience in the U.S. by way of the “generations” approach laid out by Rodolfo Alvarez in his article “The Psycho-historical and Socioeconomic Development

of the Chicano Community in the United States”. The first of Alvarez’s generations is the creation generation, which begins with The Mexican American War. The war ended in 1848 with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The treaty resulted in Mexico losing millions of acres of its territory to the U.S. Mexicans that found themselves now in the United States of America as the border moved over them forfeited “social status and the economic power and political influence” (Trevino 18). They were considered “Mexican by birth, language and culture [but] United States citizens by the might of arms” (Gomez 47). That these Mexicans never chose to become U.S. Americans is a unique aspect of their pseudo-migratory experience. What is more, the fact that it happened as a result of war led to animosity between the two peoples.

The migrant generation of 1900-1940 is understood in terms of Mexicans immigrating to the U.S. due in large part to modern capitalist forces. The initial impetus for many Mexicans to leave their country at the turn of the century can be traced back to World War I. Great labor shortages in the U.S. in the midst of an economic boom during and after the war saw many immigration laws go unheeded, particularly the Reed-Johnson Immigration Act of 1924.¹ Thus, “there was no serious attempt to enforce these laws [associated with the Reed-Johnson Immigration Act] as they applied to Mexicans, who were only too glad to bypass the bureaucratic red tape” (Gonzales 130). For employment opportunities, many Mexicans came to live in the United States where there was an abundance of jobs in manual labor. Migrants from Mexico became the majority among the Mexican American community — “original Mexican Americans were rapidly becoming the minority of the Mexican-origin population in the United States” (Gomez

47). However, according to the rest of society, whether Mexican- or American-born, they were all lumped together and racialized as Mexicans.

According to Alvarez, there are at least four reasons as to why Mexicans arriving to the U.S. post World War I were viewed as migrants instead of immigrants, which emphasizes their lower caste status. The first: Upon entering the U.S., Mexicans “did not arrive with the ‘freedom’ to define themselves in the new society in accordance with their own wishes and aspirations” (Alvarez 927). In other words, Mexicans were denied the liberty to create their own self-image as equal status citizens. The second: There was no significant contrast in the land to which the Mexican immigrant needed to adopt, which may have played a role in forcing upon him/her a new psychological relationship with their new country. As counterexample, “[the] Irish immigrant...experienced a great discontinuity between the land of origin and the land of destination” (Alvarez 927). For Mexicans, in some ways they never fully left a physical space, which would have fomented a psychological shift, the adoption of a new culture. Third: The physical crossing of the border to enter the U.S. distinguishes the migrant generation from other immigrants. The point that Alvarez makes with the border is that other immigrants were afforded the comfort of *time*, “to gradually, but profoundly to engage in serious contemplation ...to significantly ‘disassociate’ his identity from one nation-state and its culture and to engage in more or less effective anticipatory socialization for his new identity and new life in another nation-state and its culture,” while for the Mexican migrant this was not the case (Alvarez 929). Finally, the nature itself of coming to the U.S. to an already preestablished caste system forces the Mexican migrant into an assumed social identity of the lower social class.

Unlike the Mexican migrant for example, the Irish immigrants were afforded the *time* “to ask for official permission to leave his country or origin, be physically conveyed across an ocean to enter a country he had had to obtain official permission to enter” (Alvarez 930). Meanwhile, Mexican migrants were in complete control of their action to enter the U.S. as they did not have to ask anyone for permission they simply went on their own personal account. This decision resulted in large migration to the U.S. by Mexican migrants that “inflated the lower caste and took on its own psychic orientation (i.e., its collective state of consciousness), despite the fact that by the official transaction they were made conscious that they were now in the sovereign territory of another nation state” (Alvarez 930). Thus, Alvarez’s overall argument is that the easy accessibility to the U.S. was not necessarily an opportunity that presented *time* for the Mexican migrant to deeply enrich themselves with a new collective conscious associated with U.S. culture.

Not until the years 1940-1965 did the Mexican American community begin to win respect for their civil and political rights. This third generation is classified by a fundamental shift in recognition of their ethnic identity. On the one hand, the majority of Mexicans were now U.S. citizens by birth, and on the other, “the defining shared experience of this generation was World War II, in which Mexican Americans fought disproportionately and which forever transformed the lives of the Mexican women and men who took jobs in the war industries” (Gomez 48). Assistance from newly formed organizations, such as LULAC and the G.I. Forum encouraged Mexicans to partake in American core values and participate in politics to recognize their lawful rights as American citizens. From this realization among Mexican Americans, the Chicano movement slowly emerges in the 1960s and was in full force by the 1970s.

The fourth generation is defined by the development of the Chicano movement. The Chicano movement called attention to Mexican Americans' struggle to achieve social and political equality. Members of the Chicano generation are fueled with a sense of betrayal concerning the ideology of the U.S. This generation confronted the pain of social rejection and aimed to force a revaluation of their ancestor's migrant status and demand to be equally included within the larger society.

A key figure synonymous with the social movement is César Chávez. Although Chávez never claimed to be the movement's leader, his major strike in the fall of 1965 against the agricultural business in California "inspired, both directly and indirectly, a wave of activism in Los Angeles and across the Southwest" (Lopez 220). By the late sixties, among the Chicano youth, Chávez became a representative for La Raza.¹ For the youth, Chávez was directly "linked to a fight for human rights" and embodied the "philosophy that cooperation is the aim of life, common respect is the basis of cooperation and happiness, and spirituality and humanism are the criteria of respect" (García 232-3). Other activists, in addition to Chávez, were also on the rise.

Rodolfo Gonzales, leader of the Crusade for Justice, also gained attention for his desire to improve the situation of Mexicans by bringing to the forefront the question of identity.² Thus, "while Chávez stressed labor...Gonzales placed Mexican identity at the center of his organizing" (Lopez 222). His goal was to reform the term "Chicano," often associated with a negative connotation, and introduce a new conception of the word. His 1967 poem *I am Joaquin/Yo Soy Joaquin* reflects the different fractions of the Mexican

¹ La Raza: "the people, the race" (García 231).

² Crusade for Justice: "male-dominated organization known as the Crusade for Justice [was] a political and civil rights organization" (Marin 127).

identity along with sentiments of confusion and self-doubt that arise from the tensions of being in the middle between two cultures, Mexican and American.

In reflecting on the confusion of a simultaneous identity for many Mexican Americans living in a post war era, Gonzales and many others pushed boundaries beyond what constitutes a “true” American identity. There is a shift in ideological thinking as “multiethnic narratives celebrate American difference” (Olguín 106). The Mexican American identity begins to reflect not a difference as a minority group, but as an integral piece of a larger society that makes up the U.S.

A touchstone event in the evolution of Mexican Americans’ identity took place on August 29, 1970. In the largest protest demonstration by Mexican Americans, organized by a former student body president, Rosalio Munoz at the University of California, Los Angeles, between twenty and thirty thousand people protested the huge number of Mexican American casualties in the Vietnam War. Amidst the mass of protesters and the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, chaos erupted as the sheriff’s department resorted to violence. By the end of the day, “[the] police had arrested over one hundred people, forty people were injured and three lay dead or dying” (Escobar 1484). Ruben Salazar would be one of the three found dead. While sit drinking a beer at the Silver Dollar Café, deputy Sheriff Sgt. Thomas Wilson shot a 10-by-1 ½ -inch projectile that went straight through Salazar’s head. Due to his popularity and notoriety as a famed columnist and news director in Los Angeles, Salazar’s death received national attention and he became a well-known symbol of the discrimination that people of Mexican descent faced. While according to representatives of the Sheriff’s Department it was a tragic mistake, many Mexican Americans believe the incident was a targeted

assassination as Salazar was a spokesman for Mexican Americans' concerns and had previously allowed protestors to critique the police via his news outlets.

While the Chicano movement protested discrimination against Mexican Americans, their demonstrations also addressed other important issues. These included "farm worker's rights, land tenure, educational reform, political representation, the war in Vietnam, and police brutality" (Escobar 1485). However, a significant unifying theme of the Chicano movement was that it held out belief in the American Dream. It was in pursuit of the American Dream that the Mexican American community mustered the confidence to assert that all ethnicities deserve equality and as U.S. citizens have every right to disagree with their current treatment. Sal Castro, a high school teacher, is one example of this fight for the change:

Castro had come to the realization that the Democrats did not have the interest of Mexican Americans at heart...A product of the *barrio* schools in East Los Angeles, Castro returned to the neighborhood as a teacher only to find that racism toward Mexican Americans youth remained virulent...Castro came to the conclusion that his people needed their own civil rights movement... (Lopez 218)

Many young Mexican Americans like Sal Castro catalyzed a generational movement that helped organize protests in Los Angeles and across the Southwest. A new ethnic consciousness seemed to be taking shape among many of these Mexican American activists that were second and third generation U.S. born citizens.

While the Chicano label was highly popular among Mexican American youth throughout the 1960s and 1970s, by the 1980s the term had almost completely disappeared from mainstream society. It was mostly replaced by the term "Hispanic," which became popularized with the fifth generation: the Hispanic generation. "Hispanic" became the new label to refer to Mexican Americans and other ethnic groups of Latin

American origin in the United States. With the election of Republican presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush (1981-1993), the term “Hispanic” was preferred to recognize that not all Spanish speakers in the U.S. were Mexicans. Thus, Hispanic “covers the various Latin American-origin subgroups” (Gomez 49). The emergence of the term “Hispanic” and the Hispanic generation exemplifies the importance as to how one’s identity relates to one’s ethnicity. In short, the term Hispanic offers an advantage in disassociating groups of people from the connotations of previous labels.

2.4 A Theoretical Intervention: Lawrence Fuchs’s The American Kaleidoscope

The effect of the Mexican American civil rights movement for a more just society in America is ongoing. In *The American Kaleidoscope*, Lawrence Fuchs expands upon the direct link between race, ethnicity, and civic culture. Although there might be fear of a loss of a unified American culture due to division among a multitude of special interest groups, Fuchs argues that American unity has been made possible by the very dynamic of these diverse special interest groups. The multitude and various ethnic groups established within America provide unity “and protects their freedom including their right to be ethnic” (Schultz 639). Therefore, through Fuchs’s metaphorical use of a “kaleidoscope,” the intricate patterns of color and shapes symbolize the history of ethnicity that is continually more mixed, and the more the “kaleidoscopic”, the more multicultural (and beautiful, in my opinion) our society becomes.

Fuchs relies heavily on Alexis de Tocqueville’s interpretation of America to draw on the intellectual framework of what unites Americans. The core of Tocqueville’s interpretation of America was that “immigrants and their children claimed the U.S. for their own and became attached to it through the exercise of civil rights” (Daniels 1527).

As a political philosopher, Tocqueville knew that to comprehend the development and evolution of American federal democracy, he first had to understand the origins and characteristic features of our political culture and how and why it might change. Thus, he defined civil rights as based on “the new political institutions and practices” created by Americans motivated by a belief in “the founding myth of a new political culture.” That is, “that the U.S. was created by God as an asylum in which liberty, opportunity, and reward for achievement would prosper” (Fuchs 2-3). While we acknowledge that these beliefs allowed for the exploitation of immigrant labor and the theft of Native American lands, its premise also allows for a gradual and continual inclusion of the excluded other.

Until World War II, diversity was sanctioned only for white Europeans. But the stated ideals of civic equality provided “cracks” in the capitalist and political systems that allowed “Mexicans to participate in the process of ethnic-Americanization and to follow the pattern of white immigrant groups, a pattern in which ethnic groups establish voluntary associations to help group members gain a foothold in the capitalist system and become members of the middle class; participate in the civic culture by exercising civil rights; and finally, become patriotic citizens loyal to the ideals that unify Americans while retaining their ethnic heritage” (Schultz 641). WWII, therefore, stimulated among Mexican Americans an opportunity to challenge America’s founding ideals and institutions. Support for this argument is especially evident from the results of World War II. The war “induced a spirit of national cooperation and unity and made possible... the dismantl[ing] of the official system of caste pluralism altogether...and showed, as white immigrants had done before them, that the exercise of civil rights promotes an attachment

to those symbols, values, and institutions that most clearly embody the founding myth” (Fuchs 149-50).

One objective of my study is to answer long-standing questions regarding the civil incorporation of minorities. To that end, it is important to recognize, as I will in Chapter 3, that during WWII, Mexican Americans were the recipients of more Congressional Medals of Honor than any other minority group. In a California Poll in 1988, “85% of ‘Hispanics,’ (most of whom are Mexican American in California) and 82% of Anglos agreed that ‘defending America when it is criticized’ is very or somewhat important in making a person a true American” (de la Garza, Falcon and García 347). While the roots for patriotism cannot be exactly pinpointed to a specific date, it is clear that war ignited a chance for many Mexican Americans to prove their loyalty to the nation and transcend minority status.

By the end of the twentieth century, the metaphorical kaleidoscope of U.S. society had become apparent as diversity and inclusion had come to the forefront of the U.S.’s core values. Today, Fuchs concludes, America needs to address the true outsiders of this country who are “living in an ethno-underclass [for whom] ...civic culture and economic opportunity” are inconsequential (Fuchs 493). Fuchs’s metaphor continues to offer a counter perspective on diversity and unity in America to those that would prefer racist exclusions.

2.5 The Question of Patriotism

Moreover, on expanding upon the relationship between race, ethnicity, and unity, recent work builds upon earlier theories. In attempting to reassure an audience concerned with multiculturalism, ethnic groups have used Americanist rhetoric, to an extent, to

serve their ends. In the reconfiguration of what constitutes American identity, early immigrants to America “quickly claimed the principles of republican government as their own, sharing in the cult of the glorious Fourth of July . . . and the worship of ‘god-like Washington’” (Fuchs 20). Although early immigrants differed in their religious beliefs, culture, and history, they accepted and welcomed American civil culture and ideology into their lives. It is therefore the very celebration of American ideals that makes patriotism in America possible.

Although, unlike for other European immigrants (Germans, Irish, Jews) the political socialization of naturalized Mexican Americans may have been slow, significant political growth occurred within the Hispanic community between the 1950s—1980s. As Mexican Americans became more confident in themselves to speak out against injustices, their participation in American politics grew. Although LULAC (the League of United Latin American Citizens, 1929) and the American G.I. Forum (1948) are most famously recognized as the first organizations to recognize and honor Mexican Americans’ loyalty to the nation, and help overcome their status as a minority, it is essential to understand there were other under researched organizations that are essential to the deep history of Mexican American’s patriotism.

For example, the political history of the formation of MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund) reveals another social movement on behalf of Mexican American women wanting to be a part of the larger conversation between gender and politics in the U.S. Founded by Texas attorney Pete Tijerina in 1967, the organization at first “focused on class-action litigation and test cases to formulate new legal principles securing greater equality for Mexican Americans” (Flores 85). As

tensions grew between the organization's sponsor, the Ford Foundation, MALDEF brought new changes entering the 1970s with a new president of the organization, Vilma Martinez. While president she developed the Chicana Rights Project, "an in-house project of MALDEF, [which] possessed a separate funding base to ensure that Chicanas' specific needs and the issue of sexism received attention, while MALDEF's primary concern would remain the elimination of discrimination on the basis of national origin and race" (Flores 87). Once again, through the example of MALDEF and the Chicana Rights Project, an American consciousness encouraged Mexican Americans to reaffirm their American identity and make use of the American justice system to promote equality and patriotism as U.S. citizens.

In 1974, two Mexican Americans, Raul Castro of Arizona and Jerry Apodaca of New Mexico, were selected to be state governors.³ Additionally, Raul Gonzalez became the first Mexican American to hold a position in the Texas Supreme Court in 1986.⁴ By 1987, Mexican American participation in politics was at an all-time high as sixty-eight Hispanic (majority Mexican American) mayors were elected, one of them being Federico Pena of Denver.⁵ Based on Fuchs's findings, "the longer Mexican Americans lived in the U.S. and furthered their education and occupational progress, the more integrated they became into the larger society" (Fuchs 264). However, apart from more representation of

³ Raul H. Castro (b.1916): Governor of Arizona, Democrat, Served from January 6, 1975 – October 20, 1977; Jerry Apodaca (b.1934): Governor of New Mexico, Democrat, Served from January 1, 1975 – January 1, 1979 (National Governors Association)

⁴ Raul A. Gonzalez, Jr. (b. 1940): Associate Justice, Texas Supreme Court, 1984-1998 (The University of Texas at Austin, Tarlton Law Library)

⁵ Federico Pena (b.1947): First Hispanic mayor of Denver, 1983-1991 (History Colorado, City and County of Denver)

Mexican Americans in major political sectors and organizations of government becoming the norm, an increase of immigrant acculturation was just as important in the political progress occurring. For example,

when Ms. Laura Martinez Herring of El Paso, who had just been named Miss U.S.A. (1985), was asked to be a featured speaker at a naturalization ceremony for people from thirty nations, Ms. Martinez, who had become a naturalized citizen at 14, reminded the about to become citizens (her mother included) that “becoming a U.S. citizen does not mean you may not take pride in your culture or be proud of your roots or love your people. . . . It simply means that you are now loyal to this wonderful country that is full of opportunities and you will support the Constitution.” Her mother added that her citizenship meant she could “get involved now more with patriotic feelings. . . I can vote and I can participate actively.”⁶ (Gonzales, *Dallas Morning News*)

Therefore, the obstacles in obtaining U.S. citizenship further demonstrates a major shift in confidence within the Hispanic community encouraging them to participate in American politics. At all levels. The opportunity to become a U.S. citizen best exemplifies how this joyous occasion is not a rejection of one country over another, but an opportunity to express and expand upon shared values and principles in order to create a greater good for the rest of society. These citizenship ceremonies indicate that immigrants who become naturalized citizens have undergone a major transition with intense emotional overtones. It is, therefore, not surprising that foreign-born and Spanish dominant Mexican Americans are significantly patriotic for achieving success after numerous obstacles to obtaining their citizenship.

Overall, these reasons are possible arguments as to why Mexican Americans are just as patriotic as Anglos. However, what is factual from this data is that ethnicity does not impede civic incorporation; it is a tool used to enhance the American experience.

⁶ Laura Elena Herring (b.1964): First Hispanic to be crowned Miss U.S.A., 1985 (Turner Classic Movies)

Theoretically, these results follow the need to rethink the relationship between ethnic acculturation and civic incorporation. As indicated by the given data, regardless of ethnicity, born in Mexico or the United States, Mexican Americans support U.S. core values as much as their Anglo counterparts. Fundamentally, whatever the purpose or goal of individual Mexican Americans, they pursue each ambition they have not because they reject or disagree with the nation's core values, but because they are committed to the fundamental framework of the American ideology.

Today, the process by which civic culture includes Mexican Americans takes many forms. There are official holidays, buildings and streets named after Mexican Americans leaders, and appointment of government positions specifically for Mexican-Americans that emphasize the importance of equal representation in society. Incorporating Mexican Americans into civic culture affirms Mexican Americans' role in creating U.S. history and the nation's progress. It is, therefore, the very choice of Mexican Americans to participate in American political life that illustrates an active loyalty to American core values and principles to continue to achieve and maintain a just America for today's society and future generations.

CHAPTER THREE

A Biographical Note

Since the first half of the twentieth century, the largest U.S. minority group has been Hispanics. Hispanics have long played a significant role in increasing the diversification of the U.S. population. Mexican American activism, beginning in the early 1900s, has played a major role in shaping how the Hispanic community is viewed today in the U.S. Mexican Americans gained the nation's attention as they began to address the unfair and unequal opportunities regarding healthcare, work, school, and political participation. The dramatic revolution—though it took time—, could not have been possible without one of the most valuable public figures in the Hispanic community, Dr. Héctor Pérez García. His leadership assisted the Mexican American community to gain permanent and meaningful access to basic civil rights as U.S. citizens.

On January 17, 1914, in Llera, Tamaulipas, Mexico, Dr. Héctor P. García was born to parents José and Faustina García. Héctor García would be his parent's second child, after José Antonio. Héctor García also had two younger sisters, Emilia, and Clotilde. By 1917, García's parents and their four children had escaped the turmoil of the Mexican Revolution of 1910-1920, immigrating to the U.S. Upon their arrival to the United States, the family settled in the small Texas town of Mercedes in the lower Rio Grande Valley. Although the García family might have escaped the perils of the revolution, they were to face a new series of challenges that awaited them in the U.S.

While in Mexico, García's parents were both educated individuals. However, in the U.S., they were stripped of their teaching credentials, forcing the García family to live a life of financial difficulty. To provide for his family, José owned and operated a local dry goods *mercado*, Antonio G. García and Brothers Department Store¹. At the same time, García (Dr. Héctor) and his siblings worked in the cotton fields. Despite their lack of financial security, his parents emphasized education primarily. As his parents influenced him and his siblings to strive for higher education, García came to understand how “opportunity was influenced by environment and never accepted any Anglo notion of white supremacy or Mexican inferiority” (Allsup 192). It was this understanding and his parent's persistence toward providing their children with a proper education that would play a formative role in García's exceptional life.

García was driven by the constant pursuit of every possible intellectual opportunity, despite his many encounters with discrimination. One of the first of these was an incident in high school. An English teacher told him that “no matter how hard he tried, ‘no Mexican would make an A in her class’” (García Ackers 19). Instances such as this were commonplace in García's life.

After high school graduation in Mercedes, Texas in 1932, García attended Pan American Junior College in Edinburg, Texas. He hitch-hiked thirty miles daily to attend college. In 1934, he enrolled at the University of Texas in Austin. Two years later, in 1936, he earned a Bachelor of Arts in zoology while finishing in the top ten percent of his class. It was through his education that he acquired independence, as he “would never depend on anyone else for a job” (García Ackers 19). His acceptance to the University of

¹ Mercado (Noun, my translation): Public site destined permanently, or on designated days, to sell, buy or exchange goods or services (Real Academia Española).

Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) in 1936 was another pinnacle moment towards a lifetime of achievement.

UTMB allowed only one Mexican American per year into their medical program. While in medical school, García organized a disease prevention program for Galveston's Latino community (foreshadowing his life's later efforts). He graduated with a Doctorate in Medicine in 1940 and immediately faced his next challenge: acceptance into a medical residency. Once more on account of his ethnicity, García was unable to find a Texas hospital that would accept him.

St. Joseph's Hospital at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, accepted García in 1940 to intern for two years with them after the school visited the University of Texas Medical Branch-Galveston for medical and surgical training. As much as García "really liked the team from Omaha...the truth was that he could not obtain his medical and surgical residency in Texas or other states because of his ethnicity" (García Ackers 20). Training at St. Joseph's Hospital paved the way for his direct patient care involvement.

On completing his residency in 1942, García joined the United States Army. It was the height of World War II and, as he put it, "my residency at St. Joseph's Hospital is not what I hoped it would be and [I] want to be called to active duty immediately" (García Ackers 21). On June 29, 1942, García was sent to Europe. While in Europe, he had the fortune of meeting his wife, Wanda Fusillo, in Naples, Italy, who he married in 1945.

His military career was another successful milestone. Upon retirement from the United States Army, García had earned "the rank of Major, the Bronze Star Medal, the

European-African-Middle Eastern Medal with six Bronze Stars, and the World War Victory Medal” (Gomez Pachon 6). After the military, García returned to the United States and settled in the small oceanside town of Corpus Christi, Texas, in 1945. By 1946, García had founded a medical practice, improving access to healthcare for immigrants, veterans, and all others in need. It was during this time that he “witnessed the struggles of veteran and migrant workers [and] was able to understand the injustices his patients were facing” (Gomez Pachon 6). Conversations with his patients brought to the forefront of his attention the oppression of Mexican Americans by Anglo-Americans. This motivated him to become an engaged member of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC). García’s involvement in LULAC is a largely forgotten yet central part of Texas history. In LULAC he was joined by other noteworthy individuals, such as Gustavo “Gus” García of San Antonio, Felix Tijerina of Houston, and George J. Garza of Laredo.² These men shared a common goal: creating an America in which Mexican Americans were afforded the same basic rights as other citizens.

LULAC was founded in 1929 with the goal of bringing about progress in quality-of-life for Hispanic citizens. More specifically, LULAC focused on “improvement of Hispanic citizens’ social, political, and economic status in the United States. Its efforts in educational and legal reform have been noteworthy. They include the promotion of good citizenship, the desegregation of public-school systems, and the expansion of civil and

² Gustavo (Gus) C. García, a Mexican American civil-rights lawyer. Advisor to LULAC, 1939-40. Served as legal counsel to family of Felix Longoria, 1949. Advisor to American G.I. Forum, 1951-1952 (Texas State Historical Association); Felix Tijerina, “25th president – elected at the 1956 convention, at the 1957 convention, at the 1958 convention, and, at the 1959 convention held in San Antonio, Texas. Served as [president of the national organization of LULAC] four terms” (League of United Latin American Citizens); George J. Garza, “20th president – elected at the 1950 convention held in El Paso, Texas and at the 1951 convention held in Laredo, Texas. Served two terms” (League of United American Citizens).

political rights to Hispanics” (Gutierrez-Witt and Elvira Chavaria 6). Originally composed of businessmen, medical doctors, lawyers, judicial officials, political leaders, and other professionals, LULAC grew from representing Mexican Americans in Texas to giving a voice to those across the U.S.

However, as much as LULAC was a voice for the voiceless, García felt that more could be done. Although he was the local president of LULAC’s branch in Corpus Christi, he felt an overwhelming urge to serve veterans. Founded in 1948 by García, the American G.I. Forum was established and departed from the traditional benefits organized by LULAC. The Forum differentiated from LULAC with its primary concern for war veterans and “the making of active citizens who would practice their citizenship by participating in the dominant political, economic, and social institutions of the land” (San Miguel 345). Thus, while members of LULAC “felt that the members of the Mexican community had to ‘be aroused to a consciousness of [their] citizenship and then must be educated as to what are [their] civil and political rights’” (San Miguel 345), followers of the Forum were already educated individuals conscious of said civil rights. The Forum’s members consisted of an educated Mexican American middle class with an objective to raise the standards among the Mexican American population in order to increase successful career opportunities for veterans and others.

As the Forum’s leader, and a World War II veteran himself, one of his objectives was to ensure that the Forum brought awareness to Mexican American veterans of their entitled benefits under the GI Bill.³ With many veterans “limited by the many physical

³ Servicemen’s Readjustment Act: To provide Federal Government aid for the readjustment in civilian life of returning World War II veterans. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the “Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944” (The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration).

and emotional scars acquired while in uniform...the psychiatric and medical services provided by the VA to wounded GIs under Title IV of the bill's appropriations [had] been largely overlooked in favor of the direct benefit programs" (Rosales 600).⁴ García provided critical leadership to ensure veterans were receiving direct assistance under every aspect of the GI Bill. He made it his mission to "sway the VA into providing better health-care facilities and more timely payment of GI Bill entitlements" (Rosales 600). One of his strategies was to highlight the patriotism of Mexican American veterans. García's goal was to demonstrate Mexican American veteran's patriotism for the U.S. As patriotic war heroes, they were authorized to all benefits under all categories of the GI Bill.

Because of García's passion to serve war veterans' the organization prospered under his guidance. With García's successful progress as leader, the Forum's aim's evolved to

- aid needy and disabled veterans;
- foment the Spanish speaking population's participation in community, civic, and political affairs;
- advance understanding between citizens of various national origins and religious beliefs to develop a more enlightened citizenry and a greater America;
- preserve and advance the basic principle of democracy, the religious and political freedoms of the individual, and equal social and economic opportunities for all citizens;
- secure and protect for all veterans and their families, regardless of race, color, or creed, the privileges vested in them by the Constitution and laws of our country;

⁴ Title IV: Payments Veterans, Education and Training Allowance (Public Law 550, Chapter 875, 668).

- combat juvenile delinquency through a Junior G.I. Forum program which teaches respect for law and order, discipline, good sportsmanship, and the value of teamwork;
- uphold and maintain loyalty to the Constitution and flag of the United States;
- award scholarships to deserving students;
- preserve and defend the United States of America from all enemies. (Arredondo 74)

It was through these objectives that the Forum brought awareness of Mexican American's struggle for social progress. As leader of the organization, García's travels took him from the smallest towns to the most prominent cities to ensure that the Forum's mission continued to improve the lives of Mexican Americans.

While the Forum continued to prosper, a distressing incident would shift the organization's focus. Felix Longoria, a Mexican American private first class in the U.S. army, was shot and found dead from an enemy sniper on the island of Luzon in the Philippines the summer of 1945. In 1949, four years after his death, the War Department finally sent Longoria's body to his family in his hometown of Three Rivers, Texas, for burial. Longoria's widowed wife, Beatrice, made plans for a wake in the sole funeral home in Three Rivers. Beatrice was denied a burial by the funeral home's management, Manon Rice and Tom Kennedy. Management refused to bury Longoria because "as [Tom] Kennedy stated, 'The whites would not like it'" (Arredondo 74). A bewildered Beatrice told her sister, Sara Posas, about the incident. Posas sought the assistance of García, who responded by contacting Tom Kennedy. Kennedy's response would not sit well with García. Once again, Longoria was denied use of the chapel because, in Kennedy's terms, "whites wouldn't like it and [...] Mexicans got drunk and got into fights" (García Ackers 41). García took action. He first contacted the media. As news of

the incident spread, “Anglos and Mexican Americans in South Texas, statewide Anglo political factions, the US State Department, and the Mexican government” became involved (Carroll 163). The media attention thrust the Forum to the forefront of the Mexican American civil rights movement. The event also threatened to upend the political career of newly elected senator Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas. In January 1949, in response to the situation, Johnson wrote via telegram:

I deeply regret that the prejudice of some individuals extends even beyond this life. I have no authority over civilian funeral homes, nor does the federal government. I have today made arrangements to have Felix Longoria buried with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery here in Washington, where the honored dead of our Nation’s wars rest. (Qtd. in García Ackers 41)

On February 16, 1949, Private First Class Felix Longoria was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery. The events surrounding Longoria’s burial afforded García the opportunity to reshape the Forum as an organization committed to end discrimination and raise awareness for Mexican American civil rights more generally. The Longoria dilemma “became a national issue, as well as the time and place where it happened, [that allowed] ...a narrative that ties the social history of South Texas to larger shifts in state, national, and international politics” (Ramos 635). The incident further compelled García to help Mexican Americans facing similar discrimination as Felix Longoria. At the same time, this affair contributed to advancing García’s participation in state and national politics.

Entering the 1950s, the Forum’s agenda concerning civil rights and veterans was at its peak. During the Adlai Stevenson presidential campaign of 1952, García was selected by Sam Rayburn to encourage Mexican Americans in Texas to vote. The Forum excitedly agreed to take an active participation in Stevenson’s presidential bid as it was

an opportunity for Mexican Americans to claim their place as equal citizens. In his first radio address, García called for his Mexican American listeners to exercise their right to vote:

Señor o señora si usted es nacido en este país usted debe comprar su poll tax o personal ahorita mismo. Toda persona nacida en este país o naturalizada es ciudadano americano y tiene el derecho de comprar su poll tax por \$1.75 y votar en todas las elecciones. Usted es tan buen ciudadano y tan americano como los que se llamen Jones, Smith, Ragland, Weinerts, Schumaker, etc. pues nuestro país democrático no conoce distinción de ciudadanía. (Qtd. in Kells 247-48)
[Ladies and gentlemen, if you are born in this country you should buy your poll tax immediately. Every person born in this country or naturalized is an American citizen and has the right to buy his poll tax for \$1.75 and vote in all elections. You are as good a citizen and as good an American as those named Jones, Smith, Ragland, Weinerts, Schumaker in a democratic country that knows no distinction of citizenship.]

Voting was only the first step on his agenda. With the Forum gaining momentum due to García's connections with presidential candidates, García and the Forum were being recognized for their projects across Texas. Despite their notoriety, though, García was still subject to exclusion.

García refused to be ignored and unheard. In response to not receiving an invitation to a Democratic function in Corpus Christi in 1953, García composed a letter to Senator Lyndon Johnson explaining the problems associated with the Democratic party, and its weak relationship with Mexican Americans:

This country and some of the counties of South Texas went for Stevenson primarily through votes of Americans of Mexican origin. I am sincere when I say that I did more traveling and spent more of my personal money in South Texas than any other individual. Our people work hard; our people sent out close to 100,000 envelopes for Mr. Stevenson. Yet as usual when the Honors are passed out we are left out in the cold...
Of course I do feel slighted also and even at this time, an invitation would be too late. The publicity and names were already given to the paper. Our people are upset and angry. I am embarrassed and the question is "Does the Democratic Party want us, or does it want to use us?" I am not asking for favors right now; I am merely submitting a report as a small cog in the gigantic Democratic Wheel.

Certainly, if a satisfactory explanation can be given to our Democratic people here, I would be glad to pass it on. (Qtd. in Kells 251)

Realizing the blunder committed, Johnson made every effort necessary to restore his relationship with García, as he knew that García would be an important ally in a future run at the presidency. Johnson's appearance at the American G.I. Forum National Convention in August of 1953 would solidify their political relationship.

The Forum continued to flourish under the leadership of García. As the organization grew in power and force, so did García. He soon became a household name in the nation for his drive and accomplishments in Texas.

By the end of the 1950s, García refocused his energy on new areas of national reform. In a written statement in Los Angeles in July 1960 at the national Democratic Party convention, García publicly aired his concern for a lack of Mexican American representation in the Democratic Party. Although he was not present himself to deliver the message, another delegated Mexican American from Texas delivered his message. He accused both political parties, Democrats and Republicans, of excluding Mexican Americans from being full participants in domestic affairs and as a result "this influenced their appointments in state and county party positions, and in state and county jobs" (García 218). According to García, Mexican Americans were more than qualified for such positions, especially foreign service positions in Latin America, due to more of an understanding of the Spanish language and culture. His statement continued by outlining the U.S. government's failure in promoting democracy in Latin American during this time because the government "failed to utilize the 'Latin America'" (García 218). Latin American countries were slow to embrace democracy as many Latin American leaders witnessed the ill-treatment of minorities in America, García explained. The Cold War

context in which he made his statement made it clear that the only way to promote democracy throughout the world was “by becoming inclusive and allowing everyone the same opportunities” (García 218). According to García, compared to the rest of the world, the United States was far behind in fair treatment of minorities.

Thus, through reference to the Cold War, García emphasized that now more than ever, the U.S. needed to prove that it was an inclusive nation. To ensure that government respected the proper and equal treatment of Mexican Americans, García “called on the Democratic Party to support a law making it mandatory that law enforcement agents take an oath in which they swore that they harbored no prejudices against Mexican Americans....and also called for questioning potential jurors about their feelings toward minority groups, something that would eventually become standard in police brutality cases” (García 220). Moreover, García’s advocacy for active participation in government would also result in demonstrating to the world that the U.S. fully embodied the spirit of democracy. García’s statement made it clear that he viewed Mexican Americans’ active participation in politics as an important step towards creating racial equality in the U.S. What was also evident in García’s message was a shift from traditional working-class issues towards focus on inclusion and participation among the middle-class.

That same year, García’s political strategy also included him gaining the trust and support from the Mexican American community for John F. Kennedy’s presidential campaign. During the election year of 1960, Kennedy’s presidential campaign strategized ways to attract support from the Mexican American community. Robert Kennedy appointed Carlos McCormick, a leader of the Forum in Washington, D.C., to aid the effort in “getting minority communities involved in Democratic Party activities” (García

221). McCormick was aware that his influence among the Mexican American community would be much less than that of García. McCormick, therefore, called a meeting among Forum leaders to create campaign units known as Viva Kennedy Clubs. McCormick appointed several national co-chairmen to assist the campaign, which included García. García's responsibility would be to motivate Mexican Americans to get to the voting polls. García promoted the idea that "Kennedy was actually a friend, someone who consulted frequently with leaders of the community and who felt their concerns personally" (García 223). Furthermore, the Viva Kennedy campaign promoted the idea that Kennedy's presidential win would be due in large part to the efforts of the Mexican American community. The Viva Kennedy clubs paid great dividends when Kennedy celebrated his victory over Nixon. The Mexican American contribution to Kennedy's campaign, today often overlooked, was essential to his electoral victory.

Kennedy's collaboration with García was not as effective as García had hoped for, but that was not the case under Johnson's administration. Under Johnson's administration, "for the first time in American history, national civil rights legislation and activities included the Mexican American community, with support from García" (Allsup 199). The summer of 1967 proved a pivotal era for García's advocacy of veterans and fighting for national reform. After his usual family dinner one night, relaxing by the television, he would receive a phone call from the White House. Former Senator Lyndon B. Johnson, now President Johnson, called to deliver the news of a lifetime to García: appointment as an ambassador to the United Nations. While the news was exciting, the reality was that all he achieved in Texas would have to be left behind to take on the new position. But with Johnson's support, he agreed to the position.

During the weeks leading up to his appointment as member of the U.N., the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) would wait outside the García family home and speak to their neighbors as part of his background check. All the FBI discovered was that “he does have a very nice family...[which] was probably the best endorsement that was needed. [García] had done a good job with his family, so he must in turn be a good, honorable person” (García Ackers 67). This is not to say that when his appointment became public knowledge it was well received by all. Still, a few months later, he was officially appointed ambassador as the following document attests:

WHEREAS, on the twelfth day of September, 1967, the president of the United States announced the appointment of Dr. Héctor P. García of Corpus Christi as an alternate member of the United States Delegation to the United Nations; and WHEREAS, Dr. Héctor P. García was in New York City on September 19, 1967, for the opening session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, thus becoming the first American with a Spanish Surname to represent this country in the august International Assembly; and WHEREAS, Dr. García served throughout the 1967 Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations with great distinction to himself, his state and his nation, becoming the first American to make a formal address to the General Assembly in the Spanish language, and winning many friends for his country by his understanding of mutual problems and by his devotion to service of all mankind. (H.S.R. No. 113)

From now on, García would be referred to as Ambassador Héctor P. García. Arriving in New York for his new employment was different from any other position he ever had.

As an ambassador, he was given the luxury of making his residence at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York and a few other amenities. Some privileges included “access to the United Nations restaurants, as well as all of its facilities and limousines. He wore expensive coats, gloves, and hats. His life had really transformed to that of a diplomat in New York City” (García Ackers 68). More than the luxuries he was fortunate enough to experience, the most important privilege of being an ambassador for García was gaining a global stage and respect for his movement.

One of his most important roles as ambassador occurred on October 26, 1967. He was the first U.S. representative to speak to the United Nations in a language other than English. Immediately, he captured the room's attention and led a formal discussion "to preclude the spread of nuclear weapons to countries and areas which do not possess them...a prohibition on deployment, possession or manufacture of nuclear weapons in areas where they had not been introduced, under appropriate circumstances, could constitute a fundamental step toward universal agreement on this non-proliferation of nuclear weapons" (García 2). While his speech was captivating, what was more enticing was the speaker himself. Many countries were surprised that an American could speak a language other than English. Russia was especially surprised, as they were convinced that García "had been coached. They thought that all Americans could speak only one language: English" (García Ackers 70). García had gained "exposure to a worldwide audience, he had achieved a historical accomplishment by speaking in Spanish to the United Nations General Assembly, and he would become a respected statesman for the United States" (García Ackers 70). And that was the purpose of García's participation in the UN. Moreover, he captivated the world as he represented the growing diversity of the U.S.

A few months later, on December 10, 1967, García decided to return home to Corpus Christi. Although his work with the United Nations was the opportunity of a lifetime, he was ready to return to his family and honorably resigned from the U.N. Upon stepping down from the U.N., he immediately resumed helping the Mexican American community in Texas. Next on his agenda: the desegregation of public schools.

Between 1950 and 1957, nine schools were brought before the Commissioner of Education in Texas due to issues of segregation. Based upon the evidence gathered, it was made known that “the state’s actions in two particular cases actually had the effect of contributing to rather than eliminating segregation based on national origin” (San Miguel 353). Ultimately, up to fifteen cases were brought before the court. One case highlighting the allegations that public schools were separating students according to race is the Driscoll case of 1957.

With approximately seventy percent of the student population of Mexican decent, the majority of Driscoll public school children did not speak or understand the English language. To remedy this, the Driscoll public schools established separate classes for students of Mexican origin. The problem was that “between 1949 and 1955.... the District maintained a system whereby all children of Mexican extraction were kept in the first two grades for four years and permitted to enter the regular third grade with English speaking students who had completed the same grade in two years” (San Miguel 354). Once the Forum was aware of the situation, a suit was filed claiming that “the practice by local school officials of placing school children of Mexican descent in separate classes for the first and second grades of school and of requiring their attendance in these two grades for a period of four years was discrimination based on ‘race or ancestry’ and a deprivation of their rights under the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution” (San Miguel 354). In rebuttal, the Driscoll school district argued that Mexican American students were solely placed in those classes to solve a pedagogical problem.

After listening to both arguments, on January 11, 1957, the Federal District Court found the Driscoll education system guilty. The judgment issued declared:

1. The district's separate groupings of students of Mexican extraction is arbitrary and unreasonable because it is directed at them as a class and is not based on individual capacities.
2. Any grouping, whether at the beginning or subsequent years, must not be based upon racial extraction but upon individual ability to speak, understand and be instructed in the English language.
3. Individual capacities and abilities in this respect must be determined in good faith by scientific tests recognized in the field of education. (San Miguel 354)

Although a notable win, the effort to stimulate opposition to segregation in South Texas failed. Despite the results, the Forum continued to challenge the issue of segregation for Mexican American students and its effects. For many leaders in the Forum, school segregation created significant obstacles in educational equality and denied further educational opportunities, but most pointedly it was a constant reminder of the persistence of institutional racism.

The campaign to desegregate Texas schools continued well into the 1960s. By this point, García's activism in the desegregation of Texas public schools had only strengthened upon stepping down as an Ambassador in the UN. Since its early days, the Forum constantly stressed that education is "the principal weapon to fight the many evils affecting" the Mexican people (San Miguel 348). Education became so vital to the organization, its motto became "Education is Our Freedom and Freedom Should be Everybody's Business." To further promote their concern for the advocacy for education, the Forum became more heavily invested in issues related to formal instruction for Mexican American children in public schools.

One incident regarding segregation in Corpus Christi in 1967 challenged García's advocacy and had lasting effects. According to certain records brought before Judge Cox of Corpus Christi "de facto segregation was found to exist [in the boundary lines drawn for the building of the new Moody High School] because of 'lack of foresight of previous planners in regard to a high school system and in light of neighborhood isolation by a subcommittee of the city council in Corpus Christi'" (García Ackers 73).⁵ By 1968, a historic lawsuit was filed on the basis that there were numerous violations per Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.⁶ The judgment concluded that the Corpus Christi Independent School District (CCISD) was indeed in violation of the Civil Rights Act. In a letter written by Lloyd R. Henderson, Education Branch Chief of the Office of Civil Rights, he details the harrowing predicament:

While the district has made progress toward the elimination of discriminatory practices in the hiring and assignments of its faculty and administration, this process has not been completed.

The effect of the sequence system is to assign the majority of Mexican American and Negro students to courses in sequence III and IV from which entry into college is difficult if not impossible.

Sites for new schools have been selected in certain locations with the effect of preparatory identifiable minority group schools.

Certain boundary lines have been drawn with the effect of perpetuating minority group schools. In particular, the southern boundary of Moody High School so as to remove a significant number of anglos from the Moody attendance zone.

The facilities in the Mexican American areas are older than the facilities in the predominantly anglo areas and the maintenance and upkeep of the Anglo schools are superior to that of the Mexican American.

The schools in the Mexican American areas are more crowded than the schools in the predominantly Anglo areas, with the utilization of more portable buildings. At the same time, there are empty classrooms in the predominantly Anglo schools.

⁵ De facto: In fact, in deed, actually. This phrase is used to characterize an officer, a government, a past action, or a state of affairs which exists actually and must be accepted for all (The Law Dictionary).

⁶ Title VI: Title VI declares that "No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program of activity receiving Federal financial assistance" (U.S. Department of Labor, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration & Management).

In general the school board has been much more responsive to the needs and desire of the anglo community than to those of the Mexican American and Negro residents. (Qtd. in García Ackers 74; italicized in the original)

But the superintendent, Dr. Dana Williams, and the school board were determined not to rectify the situation. García relentlessly pressed the lawsuit further. Judge Woodrow Seals eventually made a judgment on June 4, 1970, that the CCISD did not abide by the law and moving forward ordered the school district to not discriminate “*on the basis of race, color or ethnic origin in the assignment of students, teachers and staff of the various schools of the district*” (García Ackers 75; italicized in the original). As of the fall of 1970, the revised assignment would go into effect. The occasion created tension between García and Williams, especially when on August 29, 1970, García released a statement detailing his idea that Williams should resign and proposed to integrate black and Mexican minority groups in Anglo-populated schools:

If we are to understand, respect, and love each other, if we really want our country to COME TOGETHER, and if we are to work together for a greater America, then it is of the greatest importance that all three groups of children be brought together in the halls of learning under the guidance of wise teachers so that the children can study together, eat together and play together and get to know each other. This can only be done by abolishing the present dual school system and as required by law to have a real American “UNITARY” system. This must include Negro teachers and Mexican American teachers using their talent to teach the “ANGLO STUDENTS” also. Before it is too late, let us gather our children under one roof and give them all the best schooling and the best teachers. This Dr. Williams has not chosen to do or cannot do. So that someone else can achieve this objective, he should resign. (Qtd. García Ackers 76; italicized in the original)

García’s press release was followed by several court actions by the Corpus Christi Independent School District in favor of a total stay of desegregation that was approved by Judge Owen Cox on August 23, 1971. García did not give up though. In August 1972, García and James DeAnda protested school segregation through a “sit-in” that

encouraged surrounding students to join in garnering public attention to the maltreatment of Mexican American students in the public education system. Williams, still superintendent, called the police, and García and other protesters were arrested and hauled to jail. He used the platform provided by his stint in jail to advocate for the desegregation of public schools at a community meeting he held and that hundreds attended.

Finally, as of May 1975, Judge Cox ordered that Corpus Christi Independent School District implement a plan to integrate Mexican American students with Anglo-Americans. Although some parents were furious about it, the majority felt it was necessary and would only benefit the educational system and each child. Once the plan went into effect, García's public perception rose even further. García's insistence on doing what was right, despite the consequences, was always his first and only obligation.

As time passed, García continued to prioritize veteran's issues and civil rights. The sacrifices he made to improve lawful treatment of Mexican Americans did not go unrecognized. García was awarded the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. The award was established in 1945 by President Harry Truman in honor of those who served during World War II. Through Executive Order, President John F. Kennedy expanded its purpose to be given to "any person who has made an especially meritorious contribution to (1) the security or national interests of the United States, or (2) world peace, or (3) cultural or other significant public or private endeavors" (Executive Order 11085). In 1984, García was notified by President Ronald Reagan of his selection to be the recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. García was recognized for his "efforts in fighting for the tradition of freedom so cherished by the

country's founders," but most importantly for "[illustrating] the racial inequities that have been institutionalized in our Nation, the dramatic progress made in correcting these inequities, and the great challenge ahead in maintaining and building upon past achievements" (Ortiz). On March 26, 1984, García joined President Reagan and others for lunch at the White House, followed by reception of the award.

García's humility at being honored at the event was evident as President Reagan introduced each recipient. Holding on to every second of this special moment, García listened intently as Reagan introduced his award:

Dr. Héctor P. García: Over the years, he has faithfully represented our government on numerous occasions overseas and domestically. Dr. Héctor García was a credit to his family, country and to all Americans. Through his efforts based on a deep belief of traditional American ideals, he has made this a better country. (Qtd. in García Acker 82; italicized in original)

Receiving such an award was a meaningful landmark for García and the U.S. Hispanic community. He was the first Mexican American to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom, as well as the first Mexican immigrant to do so. The award signified progress for the Hispanic community. His accomplishments further demonstrated that "our system of government is not static but can adapt to the dynamics of a changing society" (Ortiz).

Today, we remember Dr. Héctor P. García for his vigorous effort to create lasting change for the Mexican American community. His actions made this country a better place for all Americans to live in. Understanding García's life allows us to recognize and be grateful for how far we have come collectively as a nation. His legacy lives on in our freedoms, regardless of color or ethnicity, to vote, to speak out against injustices, and to be the change we want to see around us.

CHAPTER FOUR

Some Primary Sources

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will first review the theory of servant leadership and situate García's style within it. I will do this by way of analysis of a few primary sources that are located in the collection of "Dr. Héctor P. García papers" housed at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi. I have also included a personal interview with García's daughter (my aunt), Cecilia García Ackers. Ultimately, this chapter will communicate through various documented occasions García's effective leadership in the Mexican American fight for liberty and justice.

García believed in the mythology of the American Dream. He embraced the American ideal of equality and the possibilities offered by the rhetoric of the American Constitution. While the ideas of American exceptionalism from the Constitution appealed to a majority of Mexican Americans, racism was another element of U.S. society that presented an obstacle for many in achieving the tenets of democratic liberalism. Although García may seem naïve to some for his vision of a patriotic utopia, his activism continues to inspire generations.

Throughout the 1950s and the 1960s, García was the most influential Mexican American in the United States, central to combating social injustice. His relationships with other prominent political figures were especially significant in creating a more cohesive movement for Mexican Americans. Towards the end of his career, in the 1980s,

García “had a booming medical practice, his efforts had been very successful on a national level and he was awarded many honors, including the highest civilian award, the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1984” (García Ackers 104). In so doing, he reconfigured Mexican American understandings of progress and continued to inspire generations to confront the corruption of racism and discrimination.

4.2 The Theory of Servant Leadership

In studying García’s lifelong advocacy and his impact on the country, this chapter begins with a brief review of servant leadership. According to Anastasia Filippidou, “leadership is a broad theme with numerous associated theories branching out from the main original theories, and there remains considerable debate vis-à-vis which ones remain relevant today” (17). This section will therefore give a short overview as to what constitutes a servant leader in some of Filippidou’s terms and how García falls under this category.

According to popular theories of the 19th century, leadership was an inherent trait. According to the Great Man Theory (GMT), leaders are born, never made, and was a quality most often associated with the upper-class elite. Such thinking is rejected today, as leadership “depends upon organization, task, leader-follower relationship, and other environmental factors,” and “is no longer just limited to men or class” (Filippidou 17-22). A leader’s effectiveness is contingent on his style of leadership and its organizational fit. In short, one leader’s style will not always be right for a group of followers, setting up the potential for failure. A successful leader “places primary importance on the tasks and challenges facing the organization itself rather than the personal traits of the leaders, and...proposes that leaders must be able to adapt their leadership style as the situation

changes” (Filippidou 22-23). A leader’s priorities, therefore, lie with their followers. And without committed followers, all other variables of the leader’s capacities are irrelevant.

Servant leadership best describes García’s style and is one in which, as the name implies, the leader leads by serving the needs of his followers. The idea of servant leadership was first introduced by Robert K. Greenleaf in 1977 and proposed that a “*great leader is seen as a servant first*, and that simple fact is the key to his greatness...because that [is what he is], *deep down inside*” (21; italics in original). Leadership is bestowed upon a person who is by nature a servant first; it is a role that cannot be given, nor can it be taken away. The conscious choice to serve first is what aspires servant leaders to lead. It is important to note that servant leaders are different than those who choose to lead first. Unlike the servant leader, the person who is “leader first, [upholds]...the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions” (Greenleaf 27). In comparison we note these two extremes: the servant-first and the leader-first.

For the purposes of our research, we must ask ourselves where a leader’s dreams begin? Or how do they begin? For a good leader, it all begins “by the conceptions of individuals that are born of inspiration” (Greenleaf 28). In other words, the individual is propelled by inspiration to assume the role of leader because they are able to see the goal more clearly than others. A leader therefore “ventures to say, ‘I will go; come with me!’ A leader initiates, provides the ideas and the structure, and takes the risk of failure along with the chance of success” (Greenleaf 29). While knowing the path towards success is not promised, those who follow the leader nevertheless continue to trust in his abilities.

Servant leadership is a strong model for guiding others. Though it may be difficult at times to clearly see success in the distance, leader's "[attributes]... puts them in a position to show the way for others...[because]...they are better than most at pointing the direction. As long as one is leading, one always has a goal" (Greenleaf 29). Whether this goal is what the followers want, or the leader is acting on his own accord, a leader's confidence enables them to boost followers' morale toward said goal even in times of doubt.

The word goal is therefore essential in understanding the premise of our research. As the leader's goal is drawn from inspiration from within, it is crucial to elicit trust between the leader and follower "because those who follow are asked to accept the risk along with the leader" (Greenleaf 30). Trust does not come without confidence. Thus, if a leader is not confident "in their values and competence (including judgment) and unless they have a sustaining spirit...that will support the tenacious pursuit of a goal" nothing will be achieved for either party (Greenleaf 30). The confidence of the success of the goal is therefore important because behind every success story is a great dreamer with only a dream at first.

The relationship leaders have with their followers is crucial to ensure the success of any goal. Without followers, there is no leader. Followers influence how their leaders act. Servant leadership is therefore celebrated as a positive approach to leadership, as leaders are more concerned about others than themselves. According to Bradley Owens and David Hekman, in examining humility in leadership, a leader's humility "at the most basic, fundamental level appears to involve leaders catalyzing and reinforcing mutual leader-follower development by eagerly and publicly (i.e., outwardly, explicitly,

transparently) engaging in the messy process of learning and growing. Even more simply put, humble leaders *model how to grow* to their followers” (801). Greenleaf’s ten characteristics central to the development of a servant leader as Rosana Gomez Pachon identifies them are:

Table 4.1 Ten Characteristics to the Development of a Servant Leader

Servant Leader Characteristic	Servant Leader Definition
Listening	Servant leaders communicate by listening first. Listening is the key that involves hearing and being receptive.
Empathy	Servant leaders must understand the follower's different point of views. Leaders must empathize with follower's thinking and feelings.
Healing	Servant leaders must care about personal well-being of followers. Servant leaders must support their followers to overcome personal problems.
Awareness	Awareness is a quality within servant leaders that makes them acutely attuned and receptive to their physical, social, and political environments.
Persuasion	It is important servant leaders persuade their followers to change. Persuasion creates change.
Conceptualization	Servant leaders must have vision. Servant leaders have clear vision of their goals and direction.
Foresight	Servant leaders should have the ability to think in the future. It can be based in what happens.
Stewardship	Servant leaders must take the responsibility to lead their followers. Servant leaders work for the good of the society.
Commitment to the Growth of People	Servant leaders should treat their followers as unique people. Servant leaders must help followers to grow personally and professionally.
Building Community	Servant leaders are committed to contribute to the community's development.

Note: Adapted from "Leadership: Chapter 10 Servant Leadership" (pp.56), by G. N. Peter, 2013, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Copyright 2013 by Sage Publications, Inc. (Gomez Pachon 33)

While each of these characteristics is important in our analysis of García's leadership, the last three are most pertinent. According to Gomez Pachon, based on

Greenleaf's analysis of these characteristics, "stewardship means that leaders assume responsibility for managing people and organizations. Servant leaders accept the responsibility to lead and work for the greater good of society" (Gomez Pachon 34). With a servant's goal to lead their followers towards a greater good, servant leaders are committed to the progress of each follower's individual needs in achieving said good; this is the leader's "Commitment to the Growth of People." Thus, servant leaders take on the responsibility to ensure the success of their followers' personal and professional growth. Leaders showing interest in a follower's passion to reach their goals constructs a unique relationship between leader and follower. Lastly, a servant leaders' ability to build a community refers to being able to provide a public space where people can freely express themselves. People want a safe place where they can "improve quality [of life] by making mistakes, as long as [the servant leader] also creates a safe environment in which [the follower] can learn from experience" (Spears 149). Context and culture, leader attributes, and follower receptivity are therefore defining factors of a servant leader's behavior and attitude in creating a safe place for his followers.

These three factors explain the existing conditions of a servant leader and the likely factors that influence their leadership development. According to Northouse, the first is context and culture. For servant leaders, the nature of the context and culture of the environment leaders are situated in affects their leadership style and progress. For example, "in cultures where power distance is low (e.g., Nordic Europe) and power is shared equally among people at all levels of society, servant leadership may be more common. In cultures with low humane orientation (e.g., Germanic Europe), servant leadership may present more of a challenge" (Northouse 226). Secondly, a leader's

attributes determine a servant leader's ability to successfully engage with his followers. Some servant leaders "bring their own traits and ideas about leading to leadership situations," which "shape how individuals demonstrate servant leadership" (Northouse 226). A leader's emotional energy thus gives him the cognitive ability to develop effective strategies for his followers. Lastly, from understanding follower receptivity, there must be a willingness by the followers to want their servant leader to "get to know them or try to help, develop, or guide them" (Northouse 226-7). Those followers who see the guidance and assistance from servant leaders believe their leadership will have a positive impact for them and others. Overall, the environment of the servant leader has effects on a servant leader's behavior and the general outcome of the goal for everyone.

Servant leaders can therefore be said to be very much a part of community morale as, once again, working for the community's goal is the main objective of the servant leader. Social movements are examples of how servant leaders help achieve a community's goal through guided and encouraged methods of change. However, a servant leader must first establish his authority before any type of demonstration or organized campaign can take place. Researchers have studied how leaders achieve authority in social movements. According to John Zinkin's *The Principles and Practice of Effective Leadership*, followers follow their leader and appreciate their guidance because "the emotional or economic rewards are implied *and/or* costs of not following are high" (Zinkin, Ch. 1). While followers ultimately crave authority, security, and need to belong, the preference of a leader to speak for them and offer them these needs helps followers and leader achieve their social goals together. The goals of the community are thus achieved through collective behavior—defined by Morris and Staggenborg as

creating “impetus for movements by providing examples of action, and directing action, and defining problems, and proposing solutions” (173). Therefore, it is through the guidance of the leader in identifying the problem and executing a solution within a structured framework that permits the goals of the organization to be achieved.

4.3 García – Servant Leader

Our guiding question then is how García exemplified the servant leader. It is through our understanding of servant leadership that we will explore his relationship with his followers. To analyze the context of his effective leadership capabilities, application of his use of civic space and language will reiterate his success in captivating followers.

García’s objective with his social justice movement was to fight for change within the Mexican American community, especially for those in South Texas impacted by a post-World War II era that, for some, were products of immigrant labor.¹ However, his own experiences with racism and discrimination led him to step up and be the leader everyone was hopeful for at the height of turmoil due to other social movements of the 1950s and 1960s. More so, it was through his confidence as a leader that he was “able to evoke hundreds of veterans and Mexican Americans and raise his voice to launch a social movement” (Gomez Pachon 49-50). Thus, his confidence is visible in his rhetoric. His tone and style of speech moved people to take action against the unfair and unequal treatment of Mexicans. For example, in the statement below, García urges the Mexican

¹ Immigrant labor as a result of the Bracero program (1942-1947). The Braceros Program “was a system of contract labor whereby farmers could hire young Mexican men, pay them low wages, and send them back to Mexico when they were not needed” (Zatz 851). García concluded the only way to therefore improve the livelihood for those stuck in the vicious cycle of contract labor is by “gaining an education, [which] would pull workers out of the fields and move them into other occupations” (Allsup 201).

American community to vote for President Johnson if they want an improved quality of life. His message states:

I appeal to all Mexican American people to vote in this all important election. Perhaps the main objective of my participation in politics has been to help the needy, the sick and the suffering among our people. This object of help for our people has been the inspiration for sacrifice, hardship, and prayer for many years. The war against poverty has been your program and mine. We began it. Now the democratic administration in Washington is backing our efforts. President Kennedy began it and now President Johnson will continue it. This is the reason I ask you to do everything I assure a great victory on November 3. Work and vote for Johnson-Humphrey...I know President Johnson and let me assure you he is a great humanitarian and a great friend of the Mexican-Americans...Tu hermano en la guerra contra la pobreza [Your brother in the war against poverty], Dr. Héctor P. García. (Statement, Viva Johnson Clubs; APPENDIX A)

A successful leader, like García, is capable of addressing their audience and invoking a sense of urgency in achieving the community's goal. Repeatedly, throughout García's statement, his use of "our" and "we" establishes that he is one of them; he too is part of those suffering in the Mexican American community that want change. García's closing signature, "Tu hermano" (your brother), further shifts the focus to letting the reader know his statement is not self-focused, but others-focused. Language is therefore at the forefront for leaders as the "civic challenge is not so much to generate ever larger number of experts... [but to] cultivate the public leadership skills" (Boyte 765). Thus, García's rhetoric illustrates a major form of public leaderships skills that García possessed and successfully executed to capture an audience's attention to take action.

Besides in official statements, García was also able to engage with his followers via the media. Although Corpus Christi, Texas is one of the minor cities in Texas, García's efforts extended to making sure issues regarding discrimination against Mexican was not just known at a local level, but nationally too. Through media outlets such as the Corpus Christi Caller Times and the Caller-Times Washington Bureau, García was able

to present Hispanic community issues to the public on a large scale. For example, the Corpus Christi Times newspaper published an article on August 8, 1969, “discussing [García] telling the Senate Migratory Labor Subcommittee the serious problem that Mexican Americans were facing related to harassment and abuse by law enforcement officers” (Gomez Pachon 51). The newspaper article discusses García’s testimony concerning the exclusion of Mexican Americans from equal legal participation. The article reads:

He said that when Mexican Americans get into legal difficulties, civil and criminal, it is difficult for them to obtain private counsel because Anglo attorneys, for one reason or another, don’t like to take [Mexican American] cases. “Nor can they afford bail and often must remain in jail until they are tried, thus jeopardizing their defense and seriously interfering with their family life and employment.” García also said that the language problem added to the difficulties with police and said states and communities do little to put down the language barrier. He added that many Anglos prefer that Mexican Americans speaks little English, adding, “It has been the intent of education in Texas since it became a Republic and a state to keep the Mexican Americans semi-illiterate.” García concluded, “To Mexican Americans, as to members of other minorities in this country, the failure of the administration of justice is simply the failure to guarantee them equal rights, not as member of a minority group but as citizens of the United States.” (Caller-Times Washington Bureau, 1969; Dr. García Scores Southwest Police; APPENDIX B)

By demonstrating a sincere, honest and sympathetic tone, García gained the trust and attention of the nation. He later directed this attention, won through the media, to the issue of mistreatment of Mexican Americans in the Rio Grande Valley along the Texas-Mexico border. It was notes of compassion delivered in every speech that strengthened his relationship with communities and allowed him to further promote his activism at more demonstrations.

In his first visit to collect evidence of Mexican American living conditions, García visited the Rio Grande Valley *colonias*, along the Texas-Mexico border.² In visiting the colonias, he and Mario Diaz witnessed how the area is affected by poverty.³ Together they outlined a humanitarian strategy plan to improve living conditions in this area:

1. The decision to put operation Las Colonias into action was made Tuesday, June 7, 1988, by founder Dr. Héctor García and National Chairman [of the G.I. Forum] Mario Diaz by telephone.
2. Mario Diaz will arrive June 27, 1988 to hold a press conference together with Dr. Héctor García where both will notify the press that the G.I. Forum will [go to] the colonias in Texas to investigate complaints of critical health conditions of the colonia 250,000 population and third world economic conditions. Findings to be reported to the National Press Corp. (We will carry several cameras to use pictures at National Convention to Politicians.)
3. Mario Diaz will rent a large van when he arrives on 6/27/88/ on the 6/28/88 we shall depart early to arrive at the First Colonia at 0800 the same today. Colonias: [...Edinburg, La Meza in Mercedes...El Ranchito...Cameron Park...Brownsville"]. (Operation Las Colonias Strategy Plan, American GI Forum; APPENDIX C)

His second visit was to the colonia Cameron Park and his third visit to the colonia El Ranchito were not any better. It appeared that every Colonia García visited he described similarly: “[it] does not have any gas, trash pick-up, not control for insects, people have to get water from other areas...the other colonia is La Meza, Mercedes, Texas in Hidalgo County...the Mercedes colonia was the worst...” (Gomez Pachon 54). These visits to the colonias illustrate García’s knowledge about economic infrastructure

² Colonia (Noun): A poor community in the U.S. near the border between the U.S. and Mexico, mostly consisting of immigrant families (Macmillan Dictionary).

³ Mario Diaz: Former National Chairman of American G.I. Forum (Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Special Collections and Archives).

and the need for improvement. His visits were essential in providing detailed data about the number of people living in these colonias who are affected by poverty.

Thus, it was through his visitation and meeting with his followers that Gomez Pachon mentions García exhibited the model of a servant leader additionally through his use of civic spaces. García gained a loyal following, but more so, exposed the social exclusion of Mexican Americans “through the use of civic spaces. A civic space entails giving speeches/communicating in spaces likely to generate change. Also, civic spaces help to define who the leader’s followers are and if they are aligned with the leader’s goals and ideologies” (Gomez Pachon 49). It was therefore through visits such as previously mentioned his followers began to construct their own cultural identity around the mission of García’s ideology. García became a leader for many as “he understood their situation because he experienced the same with his family...[and] was able to develop identification with followers by expressing his own experiences as an immigrant in the United States” (Gomez Pachon 55). Therefore, in exemplifying servant leadership via García’s choice of civic space of visitations and/or marches, protests, and rallies he was able to instill and generate change among his followers.⁴ As his success and followers increased, García finally began to notice the progress he and his followers were making.

One example of his success through demonstrations was in Harlingen, Texas, organized by the Forum. It was one of his most significant rallies to date as “[the] purpose of this rally was to encourage the Latino families from different areas of Texas, such as San Benito, Rio Hondo, Combes, Sebastian, La Feria, Mercedes, Santa Rosa, and

⁴ Refer to APPENDIX D for image of Dr. Héctor P. García at Protest March.

Harlingen, to enroll their children in schools” (Gomez Pachon 50). García strategically organized the rally in Harlingen, Texas because the majority of children who were not in school were from the Harlingen area, but also because the city was conveniently located so that people from neighboring cities were able to attend the rally.

At this point in our research, it is clear that García’s sense of civic space, of meeting people in their hometowns allowed him to connect with his followers on a deeper level. His beliefs though did not just align with his followers, but with other civil rights leaders of this time. For example, Martin Luther King Jr. contacted García to encourage him in continuing to focus on those less fortunate. Dr. King states:

The time to clearly present the case of poor people nationally draws near. I hope you will agree with me that this can only be done effectively if there is joint thinking of representatives of all racial, religious and ethnic groups. In keeping with our previous practice, I am assembling a special meetings so that the desired joint thinking can be brought to bear on the urgent needs of poor people. Your leadership is known and well recognized... (Telegram from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to Dr. Héctor P. García; APPENDIX E)

César Chávez also was in contact with García as he thanked him for his support on the protest of farm workers treatment. The letter reads as follows:

Dear Brother García: I want you to know how much we appreciate the support you have given us in our struggle. The support of our brothers and sisters throughout the world gives us real strength. I write now asking for your help in a very important campaign.

During the past months, many community groups have met with supermarket chains asking that they buy only UFW lettuce. Some have responded. Some have not. Safeway, because it is the financial leader of the industry, should really lead the way in accepting its responsibility to farm workers. Yet they have refused to help in any way. So we have found it necessary to begin an international boycott of Safeway stores.

Only ½ of Safeway’s markets are in cities where we have fulltime staff. In order to have an effective boycott, we will need boycott activities in many other Safeway locations as well. I have taken the liberty of enclosing some material to help you being the Safeway boycott in your area. I hope you will be able to help us.

Thank you again for your support. Let us know how we can help you in your work. Viva la Causa, César E. Chávez. (Letter from César E. Chávez to Dr. Héctor P. García; APPENDIX F)

Chávez's letters, in addition to Dr. King's, illustrates García's ability to effectively generate empathy from people of all walks of life. García's confidence allowed him to utilize his ability to communicate with people successfully, and as a result he was most successful in the civic space when he was delivering speeches and interacting with his followers in person. For example, through his "role as a doctor he demonstrated empathy toward Mexican Americans' situations" (Gomez Pachon 58). These interactions grounded him while he continued to be responsive to the needs of the nation.

His medical practice was possibly one of the best ways in which García established credibility as a leader for the Mexican community. For example, on December 21, 1953, García received a letter from a patient requesting medical assistance and due to their poor financial situation, they were not able to get the help needed.⁵ In Spanish, García replied:

Siento mucho no haber podido contestar su carta antes de hoy por debido de las exigencias del trabajo y el tiempo, pero quiero asegurarle y decirle que si usted pasa a mi oficina traendo esta carta que aquí le mando, con mucho gusto tratare de ayudarle y ver de que manera le podemos ayudar. Si es que no puedo yo hacer el trabajo naturalmente le mandaremos al hospital para ver si allí le hacen el trabajo gratuitamente. Como le dije anteriormente, es neCésario que se opera lo mas pronto posible. Sin mas, Su amigo y servidor, Héctor P. García, M.D. [I am sorry for not replying to your letter before due to my responsibilities as a doctor, but please stop by my office, and bring this letter with you. We will help you. If we can't do it, I will send you to the hospital, and we will try to get the surgery for free. As I told you before, it is necessary to operate as soon as possible. Yours truly, Your friend, Your server, Héctor P. García, M.D. (Letter from Rebecca Salinas to Dr. Héctor P. García; APPENDIX G)

⁵ See Letter from Rebecca Salinas to Dr. Héctor P. García; APPENDIX G for full letter of request to García.

This interaction with his patients highlights García's leadership ability not only to speak the language of his followers, but to do everything in his power to serve his followers and find solutions to their problems. Situations as previously mentioned were of various circumstances that plagued the Mexican community. Many Mexicans were left in poor situations due to a lack of support from the rest of the country in improving their life and García took notice of this. For García, the best way to improve the quality of life for everyone would be through education.

García was positive that his ability as a leader gave him the perfect platform to end discrimination against the Hispanic community, but also promote education. Through advocating equal education for people of all classes and races during his social movements, García's words set a precedent. In a letter composed by García to school officials, García communicated his frustrations with the public education system and the unequal treatment for Hispanic students. In his letter title, "South Texas War Dead Have Returned," he said:

"South Texas War Dead Have Returned" So read an announcement recently in the "Caller-Times", local daily. Our soldiers have returned to the Land of Democracy. They returned to their anguished mothers, to their widowed wives, and to their orphaned children. Yes, they have returned "Dead".

Observe, if you please, the list of the first returned and notice that there are 19 South Texans. Fourteen of these nineteen are Latin Americans or Mexicans and five of the 19 are Anglo Americans...

I wonder if some of those lives might not have been lost if those American soldiers had had a better education, if segregation and discrimination was not habitually and repeatedly practiced in our schools. If segregation and discrimination were not the rule instead of the exception perhaps those soldiers would have learned more and by so doing, they would have been better equipped and trained to defend themselves from the methods of the vicious enemy. School Officials take note, I say, lives could have been saved if it were not for your willful action, conduct and usage of segregation and discrimination.

These soldiers, both Latins and Anglos laid down their lives in the same Altar of Sacrifice for the same country—Our Country. Schooling of language difficulties or inability to speak English did not make any difference when the call came.

They fought and died in foreign and hostile shores believing in their country and what to them it represented. They firmly believed in the Ideals of Democracy: Liberty, Equality, and Freedom of Education. Today they are returned to the same and where they were discriminated against and where their brothers, sisters, and their own children are still segregated... (Qtd. in South Texas War Dead Have Returned; APPENDIX H)

García's letter reflects how education is a necessary tool for surviving in life, and the consequences one suffers without one, death. Due to a lack of education, García argues that had these men been educated they would have been better equipped to defend themselves against the enemy. However, many of these men, especially the Hispanic men, did not have access to a proper education due to segregation and other racist factors. His letter therefore reiterates a concern for future generations' educations and how education is necessary in protecting themselves and civil rights.

As a servant leader García gained followers due to his ability to be a servant to the Hispanic community's needs. He always put the priorities of the those around him over his own. He was a man readily available to solve his follower's problems on education, discrimination, racism, unemployment, housing, and medical services without a moment's hesitation. García's credibility as a servant leader goes beyond his capability to share in the unique experiences of his followers, he is a leader like no other for exposing the truth of injustices against Mexican Americans and others during this time. He is a leader all should remember regardless of belief, background, race, or class because without his guidance and activism, his vision of a patriotic utopia, would not have been nearly as possible without García's leadership.

4.4 Interview with Aunt Cecilia⁶

How do you believe García's leadership contributed to understanding effective leadership? For example, his leadership style, how did you personally experience/view his leadership as a family member and as an advocate follower of his social activism?

It was hard to understand what he was doing; he didn't talk much about what he was doing. He was put on this Earth for a reason, he knew he had to be a leader for his people. Mexican Americans were not expected to excel or achieve anything, he was their leader because they could look up to him. He experienced horrible things, and he just didn't want people to go through the same thing. He knew what the country was based on, and he knew the constitution very well to help defend the people in this way.

Additionally, how do you believe his work as a leader in the American G.I. Forum, an ambassador, and the Mexican American civil rights movement translated to his home life and while practicing medicine?

At home: He expected us to do well in school. His father said, "you have to study, no girls". He was the same way with us, very strict with us. He did not want people around us; he was very protective. He expected us to do very well in school. He did not want us to waste our time with outside distractions. He was just trying to protect us from all the evil that surrounded us. He was the very best father he could be but did not have the opportunity to spend much time with us. He could not be around us so much because he was doing other things. His schedule was that he would get home at midnight and then get up at 6am. He did that six times a week.

At the medical clinic: As a doctor he was really excellent in telling patients what their disease process was and explaining things to them.

How did he retain the confidence to continue as an effective leader when there were many obstacles in achieving his goals such as anonymous hate letters (ex: Hate Letter sent to Dr. Héctor P. García; APPENDIX I), non-believers in achieving equality for Mexican Americans, etc.

People who are successful, you become confident. He was able to get through medical school, how he got through his medical residency in Omaha, Nebraska, he graduated from UT top ten percent of his class. Things like that he was able to

⁶ García Ackers, Cecilia. Interview. Conducted by Veronica Rose García. 1 March 2023.

achieve for himself. His success varied from all kinds of things though, for example: desegregating Memorial Hospital, he really got success very early on in his career. Anybody who is successful is confident in anything. You find success and then confidence follows as you are confident in that you want to continue doing it; to continue striving for success. He had to work really hard, harder than most people. Even when you have successes, they're small, they are big, that will give you confidence. Although he was not successful every single time, he knew how to navigate around a system to get what he wanted. He would never give up.

Did he ever see himself as a leader for Mexican Americans? If so, when did that moment occur for him? The moment of realization he was making progress.

He was not satisfied with his accomplishments when he was really sick towards the end of his life. And when he was on his death bed, I was visiting him while he was in the hospital and he told me, "I'm a failure." And I said, "How can you say that?" I thought of all the tens of thousands of people that he helped medically. All the people that he took care of. And while navigating a successful medical practice. He felt he had not done enough; he was never satisfied. People like that are not happy with everything they did. A heartbreaking moment for me, to hear him say that after 50 years of action. He viewed himself as a failure. Even with all the awards he got. That was not important to him really. Someone like him, there was always more to do. The G.I forum treated him badly his last few years, they turned their back on him, they did not want him anymore. He was tired, he did not want to fight anymore. If he was here today, he'd go nuts, how people treat people. There was more to do and physically he couldn't do it anymore. He didn't want to exercise or think about retiring or put money away. He didn't want to be a professor at the university, a big mistake, he could not think about anything else. He wanted to practice medicine, it really hurt him a lot. He wanted to practice medicine more than anything.

How did he feel when he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom (ex:

Presidential Medal of Freedom; APPENDIX J)?

He was very happy being able to go to Washington D.C. The video of his receiving the award is on the Dr. Héctor P. García Foundation website. He was very humble; it did not change him. That big award did not change who he was. He felt he had more things to do. He was 70 when he received this award and died at eighty-two.

Being from the small city of Corpus Christi, how was he able to bring attention to a problem on a national level?

He knew how to use the media he was very good at that. He used the radio as a way to get people's attention. He went on the radio every single day at noon. He would go on the radio all the time and talk about issues and healthcare. He was interviewed a lot. He was also on Domingo Live with Domingo Peña almost every Sunday. He was very good at speaking on the radio about issues. He also used telegrams to get his message across to people all over the country. He would send telegrams to Western Union. But he especially sent telegrams to people who were making him mad.

How did he keep people motivated throughout the civil rights movement and to continue following his same beliefs?

He was good at speaking. He would go to schools and universities. Just listening to him, when people heard him, they knew he was sincere and that he knew what he was talking about. He went in front of people and people knew he was honest and always telling them the truth. He did a lot of personal appearances that helped build a relationship between him and his followers. He would especially treat everyone the same. If you were the person fixing his car or the president of the United States everyone was the same to him and everyone received the same respect. People like César Chávez and Martin Luther King Jr., for example, did not impress him. Titles did not impress him. What impressed him were people who were genuine and wanted to work towards the same goals that he thought were important.

Could you explain a bit more about his arrest in regards to the incident between him and superintendent Dr. Dana Williams (ex: Dr. Héctor P. García addresses Dana Williams and students during sit-in; APPENDIX K and 18 Stage School Board Sit-In; APPENDIX L). What did he think of his arrest? What did you think?

He thought "Dirty Dana" was just an awful person. Both of them had it out publicly, meaning they had public fights. It was not pretty between them. With the sit in at the school incident, he was not going to leave and stop his protest until he got his point across concerning obvious discrimination and segregation issues. He would not leave the school until he got what he wanted, so he went to jail. He was very proud of his arrest.

Cecilia: I thought he confidently made his point. He was not going to stay there and let those kids stay in that type of situation. He went to jail to make a statement. He did not care how long he stayed in jail for, he just knew he had to do it to make his point clear.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

5.1 García's Final Days

Dr. Héctor P. García had a vision early on in his activism. His advocacy was constructed on a promise to be the change for every person living in the United States. Although his vision for a more inclusive U.S. had opponents, he faced each challenge with courage and determination.

Unfortunately, due to his humble nature, he never really made his family aware of the full extent of his achievements. Not until after his death did his family know of the countless other personal stories of García's success. This, in part, was because he never felt satisfied with his accomplishments. For him, the progress he wanted to see in the U.S. was a constant and continuous effort that was never fully finished. No matter how many telegrams he sent, public appearances he attended, legislations enacted, or awards he received, there was always more to do. His vision for a more inclusive America would not be completed during his lifetime.

In the late 1980s, García's final years were impeded by a myocardial infarction that caused him to undergo a strenuous cardiac rehabilitation program. With his illnesses reoccurring sporadically and worsening the last few years of his life, he still made every effort "to maintain a medical practice, perform at the highest level as the founder of the American GI Forum, continue organizing chapters and be a husband and father...he was a true warrior—the Trojan prince of Greek mythology, and the greatest fighter for Troy"

(García Ackers 111). García thus fit the symbol of a true hero dedicating his entire life, even in poor health, to the greater good of others.

Following a slow and complicated battle with stomach cancer, diagnosed in 1994, he became depressed about his health condition. Although the cancerous tumor was removed with surgery, he never fully recovered and in February 1996, he would enter Memorial Hospital in Corpus Christi, Texas, for the last time. A month later, on March 29, 1996, reality began to set in for García that his fifty years of helping people were coming to an end when his medical practice officially closed. For him, he knew there was still so much left to do and so many people needed his help. One silver lining, though, was the construction of a nine-foot-tall bronze statue of him in the Dr. Héctor P. García Plaza in June 1996. It was a momentous occasion that represented his contributions to this country and captured the essence of his heroic efforts for this country.

A month later, on July 26, 1996, García passed away peacefully at Memorial Hospital in Corpus Christi, Texas. Although his health had declined for some time, his death still came as a shock for many. His wake was at the Selena Auditorium, while his funeral was at Corpus Christi Cathedral. Thousands of people from all walks of life attended both occasions to pay their proper respects to García. With an American flag draped over his coffin, García received full military honors, taps, and a twenty-one-gun salute for his burial; a fitting tribute for a person who committed his whole life to the service of others and this country.

5.2 How We Remember García

Through García, we learn what the ultimate sacrifice looks like for one's country. However, his legacy would not continue to be known today without the help of his family. In 2004, Wanda García (his wife) was deeply saddened by a lack of effort in recognizing García's accomplishments. García was not well remembered as much anymore, and the Forum during this period no longer aligned itself with García's initial vision and goals for the organization. Thus, my Aunt Cecilia made it her responsibility to ensure the legacy of García continues as she "[forged her] own efforts and started researching his contributions and impact to this country as a whole rather than just for Mexican Americans" (García Ackers 118). Because of Aunt Cecilia's tenacity, she successfully helped pass bill SB495 on May 18, 2009. Bill SB495 was passed by the Texas House of Representatives and signed by Governor Rick Perry as a day to honor García on Texas State Recognition Day. We, therefore, remember him today on the third Wednesday of September, which starts National Hispanic Heritage Month.

In addition to the passing of Bill SB495, a middle school in San Antonio, Texas, was soon named after him in October 2009. Although "[three] hundred names were submitted for that school...García's name was selected due to his advocacy in education" (García Ackers 120). The Dr. Héctor P. García Middle School is one of five other schools named after him for his devotion and support to ensure all children were educated. His veteran status is especially worth mentioning as the United States Army recognizes his influence for being "one of the most influential Hispanics who served in this branch of the [military...and] achieved the rank of major in 1947 after being discharged in 1946..."

(García Ackers 120). As it is no easy feat to advance in the military, García's service deservingly earned him the title Major Héctor P. García.

Furthermore, one of Aunt Cecilia's most challenging yet rewarding accomplishments in continuing the legacy of García would be to ensure that García is included in the teaching of Texas history. In previous years there was no public-school curriculum, except in the third grade, that taught the life of García. Aunt Cecilia's husband, Jimmy Ackers, and The Texas State Board of Education would have an exhausting battle for six months in 2010 on whether García should be included in the Texas History curriculum. After much debate and "three testimonies in Austin, Texas, it was finally decided that [García] would be included in the 'Must Be Taught Section' in the third grade and seventh grade, as well as in high school U.S. history" (García Ackers 120). Because of Aunt Cecilia's and Jimmy's tireless efforts, future generations will learn of García as a prominent historical figure. In 2012 García's legacy continued to prosper as Aunt Cecilia and other familial and community members helped establish the Dr. Héctor P. García Memorial Foundation. The Foundation's premise is to preserve García as an important person in history, "as well as engage in the activities that he cherished and fought for in education and healthcare" (García Ackers 121). Thus, in promoting education, the Foundation finances students' education through scholarships at any scholastic level in Corpus Christi, Texas.

The Foundation is also recognized for the assistance in developing the first primary care facility in Corpus Christi. The hospital García passed away at, Memorial Hospital, would be demolished in order to provide an improved "delivery of services to an area of the city with long admission and ER wait times... [and additionally] would

provide primary care services such as a pharmacy, nursing, radiology, and physician services to all who would walk into those doors” (García Ackers 121). Such accomplishments by Aunt Cecilia and the Foundation that are previously mentioned are only a few of the numerous other honors García has received in his memory.

5.3 Conclusion

As the Foundation continues to expand its efforts supporting the livelihood of others, it is not only up to the Foundation, scholastic curriculum, or García family members to ensure his legacy continues. We must all hold ourselves and each other accountable for teaching García’s history to future generations. It is our duty as American citizens to ensure that his sacrifices are not forgotten. So how will you continue to remember and live out the legacy of Dr. Héctor P. García today?

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

VIVA JOHNSON CLUBS
ALL AMERICAN COUNCIL
NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE
1730 K. St., N. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PROMINENT PHYSICIAN AND FOUNDER OF THE AMERICAN G. I. FORUM URGES ELECTION
OF PRESIDENT JOHNSON AND SENATOR HUMPHREY.

MESSAGE FROM GARCIA:

I APPEAL TO ALL MEXICAN-AMERICAN PEOPLE TO VOTE IN THIS ALL IMPORTANT ELECTION.
PERHAPS THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS HAS BEEN TO HELP
THE NEEDY, THE SICK AND THE SUFFERING AMONG OUR PEOPLE. THIS OBJECTIVE OF HELP
FOR OUR PEOPLE HAS BEEN THE INSPIRATION FOR SACRAFICE, HARDSHIP, AND PRAYER
FOR MANY YEARS.

THE WAR AGAINST POVERTY HAS BEEN YOUR PROGRAM AND MINE. WE BEGAN IT. NOW
THE DEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATION IN WASHINGTON IS BACKING OUR EFFORTS. PRESIDENT
KENNEDY BEGAN IT AND NOW PRESIDENT JOHNSON WILL CONTINUE IT. THIS IS THE REASON
I ASK YOU TO DO EVERYTHING TO ASSURE A GREAT VICTORY ON NOVEMBER 3. WORK AND
VOTE FOR JOHNSON-HUMPHREY.

THE ELECTION IS ONLY A FEW DAYS AWAY. REMEMBER THAT PRESIDENT KENNEDY WON BY LESS
THAN 1% OF THE POPULAR VOTE. REMEMBER THAT THE DEMOCRATIC TICKET WON TEXAS BY
LESS THAN 40,000 VOTES. SO GET TO THE POLLS AND VOTE.

I KNOW PRESIDENT JOHNSON AND LET ME ASSURE YOU HE IS A GREAT HUMANITARIAN AND

A GREAT FRIEND OF THE MEXICAN-AMERICANS.

PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S FIRST JOB WAS AS A SCHOOL TEACHER OF MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN IN COTULLA, TEXAS. HE KNOWS US AND HE HAS ALWAYS RECEIVED OUR SUPPORT AND ADMIRATION.

IT WAS IN 1949 THAT I FIRST SPOKE TO PRESIDENT JOHNSON. I APPEALED TO HIM FOR HELP ON THE MATTER OF FELIX LONGORIA BURIAL IN THREE RIVERS. AS SENATOR OF TEXAS HE CAME THRU FOR US AND IT WAS THEN I KNEW THAT PRESIDENT JOHNSON WAS TRULY A GREAT HUMANITARIAN. HE TRULY BELIEVES IN EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL AMERICANS.

WORK FOR HIM. ORGANIZE TELEPHONE COMMITTEES, VISIT THE PRECINCT PEOPLE AND VOTE NOVEMBER 3.

TU HERMANO EN LA GUERRA CONTRA LA POBREZA.

DR. HECTOR P. GARCIA

Figure A.1. Statement, Viva Johnson Clubs

APPENDIX B

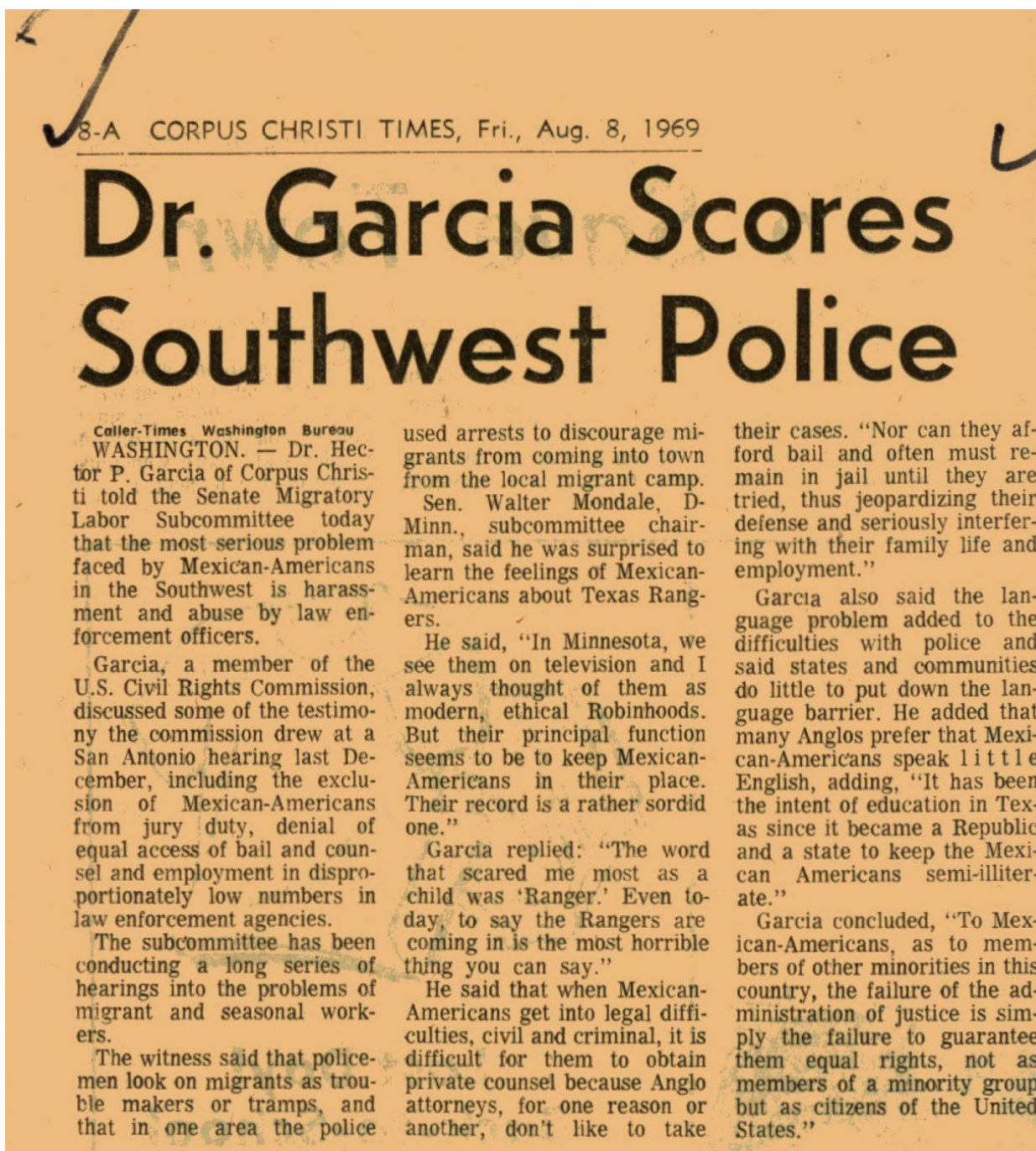


Figure B.2. Dr. García Scores Southwest Police

APPENDIX C

HUMANITARIAN OPERATION

OPERATION "LAS" COLONIAS

G.I. Forum "Operation Las Colonias" Strategy Plan

1. the decision to put operation Las Colonias into action was made Tues June 7, 1968 by founder Dr. Hector Garcia and Nat. chairman Mario Diaz by telephone.
2. Mario Diaz will arrive June 27, 1968 to hold a Press Conference together with Dr. Hector Garcia where both will notify the Press that the G.I. Forum will be in the Colonias in Texas to investigate complaints of critical health conditions of the Colono 250,000 population and third world economic conditions. Findings to be reported to the National Press Corp. (we will carry several cameras to use Pic's at Nat. Conv. to Politicians).
3. Mario Diaz will rent a large van when he arrives on 6/27/68. ON the 6/28/68 we shall depart early to arrive at the first colonia at 0800 the same day. Colonias: Lula in Edinburg, Mena in Mercedes, EL Ranchito & La Paloma on military highway, Cameron Park in Brownsville.

EL PASO COLONIAS

HISTORY: Colonias are rural unincorporated subdivisions most of which began in the 1950s. Most are outside the five-mile extrajurisdictional jurisdiction of the cities. They are not only physically and legally isolated from city and county governmental regulations, but they are characterized by substandard housing, inadequate plumbing, poor sewage disposal and inadequate access to clean water.

Most of these subdivisions, or colonias, began without basic services: water, light or gas. In many cases, developers promised the residents that utilities were on the way, but the law made it particularly easy for unprincipled developers beyond the city limits. Counties have no zoning authority in Texas and little regulatory power.

Estimated in states: CA, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas
Colonias Number 450 Population 250,000

TEXAS State Level Hearings in EL PASO

(Note: Not hearing on Federal Level)

HONORABLE RON COLEMAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BARRICADE CAUCUS ON FIELD HEARINGS (EL PASO REP.)
CONG. SALOMON ORTIZ, CONG. KIKI DE LA GARZA
HENRY NOWACK N.Y.

HON. RON COLEMAN, "Field hearings to study & bring attention to the DISGRACE OF COLONIAS"

HON. JIM WRIGHT, "There is not another more serious economic problem anywhere in the United States than that which afflicts those areas adjacent to the Mexican border," the facts be out the speaker: the colonias along the border are among the most desperately impoverished communities in the United States.

HON. LLOYD BENTSEN: Spoke out in Washington with other Texas lawmakers in favor of the creation of a U.S.-Mexico Regional Commission to address economic, health and environmental problems on the border. Bentsen also introduced legislation to establish a health education & training program on the U.S.-Mex border.

HON. Lloyd BENTSON: Senate Passed legislation which BENTSON AUTHORED TO TARGET ADDITIONAL RESOURCES UNDER A MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH PROGRAM TO COLONIA AREA. IT WILL ADDRESS THE CRITICAL INFANT MORTALITY PROBLEM IN THE AREA AND GREATLY IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF THE AREA'S INFANTS.

Pending Legislation

OCT. 21, 1987 Hon Solomon P. ORTIZ introduced to the House OF REPRESENTATIVES, COLONIA WATER AND SEWER SERVICE ACT OF 1987. THE ACT IS NOW BEFORE THE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE WHERE KIKI DE LA GARZA IS CHAIRMAN. CONG. ORTIZ IS TRYING TO GET NAT. HEARINGS IN WASHINGTON. THE NEXT STEP WOULD BE TO GET THE DESIRED NUMBER OF VOTES FROM THE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE TO BRING IT OUT OF COMMITTEE, LOBBY FOR VOTES AND BRING TO THE FLOOR OF THE HOUSE OF REP.

FUNDING CUTS: YET LAST YEAR CONGRESS FROZE THE APPROPRIATIONS THAT SUPPORT THE SEVEN FEDERALLY FUNDED HEALTH CLINICS IN THE REGION. AND THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS, THE FED. PROGRAM THAT SUPPLIES 85 PERCENT OF THE HEALTH CENTERS' DOCTORS WAS ABOLISHED BY THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION.

ASSISTANT SURGEON GENERAL DAVID SUNDWALL: VISITED THE BORDER LAST DEC., HE WAS SO SHOCKED BY THE CONDITIONS THERE THAT HE IMMEDIATELY AUTHORIZED A BORDER HEALTH INITIATIVE PROVIDE MONEY FOR HEALTH PROJECTS. BUT IS ONLY \$2 MILLION THE BHI POT, AND THAT MONEY MUST BE STRETCHED FROM TEXAS TO CALIFORNIA.

NEWSWEEK AUTHOR, FRANK GIBNEY JR., "EMBARRASSING NATIONAL PUBLICITY ABOUT THIRD WORLD HORRORS IN EL PASO COUNTY REACHED A HIGH PITCH."

Las Colonias Media Attention:

1974
U.S. News & World Report, About Third-World Conditions,
South Texas.

1979
Time Magazine did a Colonias story.

1988
Newsweek Covered the subject

1988
Corpus Christi Caller Times May 19, 1988: Editorial "There's a
real need for border Commission" Quoting House speaker,
Jim Wright and U.S. Sen. Lloyd Bentsen in favor of the
creation of a U.S.-Mexico border region Federal
Commission to address Las Colonias, "the most desperate,
impoverished communities in the United States."

Life Magazine: is supposed to have written on this subject

Colonias Health Conditions

Newsweek: June 8, 1987 In Texas, a Grim New Appalachia
Desperate lives in the nation's poorest region.

"In 1964 Pres. Lyndon Johnson declared America's first war on
poverty with a battery of laws to improve education and
attack hunger and disease, from urban ghettos to the hem-
gritty valleys of Appalachia. If Johnson could witness what
is happening in his native Texas today, however, he ~~would~~
would surely shudder - "Even in the dry, 100-degree heat of
spring kids have the wheezing cough of poverty." That
cough echoes up and down the U.S. border with Mexico, a
poverty belt more desperate than even Appalachia."

Doctors in the valley work overtime controlling basic illness
normally seen only in developing countries. Their patients
lack education and high cost of medicine make health care
Sisyphean task.

Corey

LAS COLONIAS HEALTH FINDINGS TO DATE: (U)

Hon. Solomon P. Ortiz: "Water obtained from these wells inevitably becomes seriously contaminated, resulting in rates of dysentery and Hepatitis estimated to be double the national average for those who can avoid infection by these diseases, SKIN RASHES, INFECTION, DIARRHEA, AND NAUSEA ARE COMMONPLA (also open sores)

Dr. Herbert Ortega, Regional Director of the U.N. AFFILIATE PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION. "What we are talking is a Third World within our Border. This is a very serious problem that can no longer be ignored locally or nationally

Ed Pfister, director of the Valley's irrigation district, "dysentery, Hepatitis and Lice here are twice the regional average. AAA. Children and their parents have dark yellow stains on their teeth. All of this is attributable in large part to the water WATER CONTAMINATED WITH "FECAL MATTER"

LAS COLONIAS HEALTH FINDINGS TO DATE: (CONTINUED)

Rafaela Harvey, a public health nurse in the area colonies, noted that 85 percent of the children from Sparks suffered from skin rashes, yeast infections, insect bites, diarrhea or vomiting.

Forrest S Prester, an environmental engineer for the El Paso City-Country Health Department, thinks he knows why (the children at Sparks were infected) S Prester conducted a study of Sparks addition that showed that 51 percent of the residents stored water in 55-gallon drums obtained from various sources in Mexico and the United States. "About 20 are were labeled indicating the contents were toxic, such as methylene chloride, Stoddard solvent and trichloroethane. Several children were treated for skin rashes caused by chemically contaminated clothes after the clothes were washed in these drums"

LAS COLONIAS HEALTH FINDINGS TO DATE (CONTINUED) ⑩

It is Hernandez, executive director of the Hidalgo County Health Care Corporation, "It's like we live in a forgotten land down here,"

Legal Aid to Colonias: The Texas Rural Legal Aid attorney EVONNE CHARBONNEAU, legal aid lawyer, "In some cases the water is so bad that even using it for bathing can make people sick. (The water was contaminated with fecal matter)"

Texas Water Development Board, according to a recent study by the Texas Water Development Board, it would take 30 years and at least \$200 million just to bring clean water and sewage lines to all 400 of the existing Colonias.

LAS COLONIAS HEALTH FINDINGS TO DATE (CONTINUED) ⑪

^{author}
Frank Gibney Jr. Only 3.5 percent of the colonia residents use Medicaid. As a result, many colonia dwellers depend on the Valley's private hospitals, where profits are important. These hospitals usually demand a deposit: cold cash, a lien on a patient's truck or, as was the case at one hospital, a patient's silver belt buckle.

The fertility rate in the Colonias is estimated at twice the national average, and infant mortality is high, ten percent. The nation's out-of-hospital births occur in Hidalgo and Cameron counties, which contain only two-tenths of 1 percent of the nation's population. If pregnant women receive prenatal care, it is usually not until they are well in pregnancy, and often ill mothers give birth to babies with a variety of sicknesses and disorders. For example, a disproportionate number of colonia babies are born partially deaf from middle-ear infections.

ACTIVE ORGANIZATION IN LAS COLONIAS

EPI SO, the EL PASO INTERRELIGIOUS SPONSORING ORGANIZATION, ONE OF TEXAS' COMMUNITY ACITION GR. Founded by ERNIE COTTES, a disciple of ORGANIZER SAUL ALINSKY. (EPI SO), A SISTER ORGANIZATION OF SAN ANTONIO'S CO PS, VALLEY INTERFAITH, AND HOUSTO TMO, EPI SO SINCE THE EARLY EIGHTIES HAS PLAYED THE ROLE OF PRINCIPLE GOAD IN EL PASO'S COLONIA WATER DRAMA.

DHS
PARTNERSHIP FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY, A PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF COLONIA RESIDENTS. MANICELA ORTIZ, PROJECT MANAGER. DHS IS SERVING AS A CATALYST TO ORGANIZE A TASK FORCE WITH PEOPLE FROM THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR. THE FIRST EFFORT WILL BE MADE IN LULI AND ROVIGUEROZ COLONIAS, LOCATED NEAR EDINBURG. DHS + MIDALGO COUNTY CONDUCTED A SURVEY OF NEEDS IN LULI. THE RESULTS OF THESE COLONIAS WILL SERVE AS MODEL FOR OTHER COLONIAS.

CS-22

Appendix 1

List of Contacts in Texas that work with "Colonias"

1. Texas Health Department (Region III)
El Paso (915) 779-8016
Steve McAndrew, Tom Grisham
2. Texas Health Department (Region VIII)
Hardington (512) 423-0130
Jake Mathwell
3. Texas Health Department (Region VI)
(512) 278-7173
Raymond Whitley
4. Laredo-Hubb County Health Department
(512) 723-2031
Victor Oliveros
5. El Paso County Health Department
(915) 541-6989
Dr. Laurence Mickey
6. Texas Water Commission
Austin (512) 463-7791
Jack Kramer
7. Texas Water Development Board
(512) 463-7868
Dr. Herb Grubb
8. Lower Rio Grande Development Council
(512) 682-3481
Jim Smith
9. Charles Frost

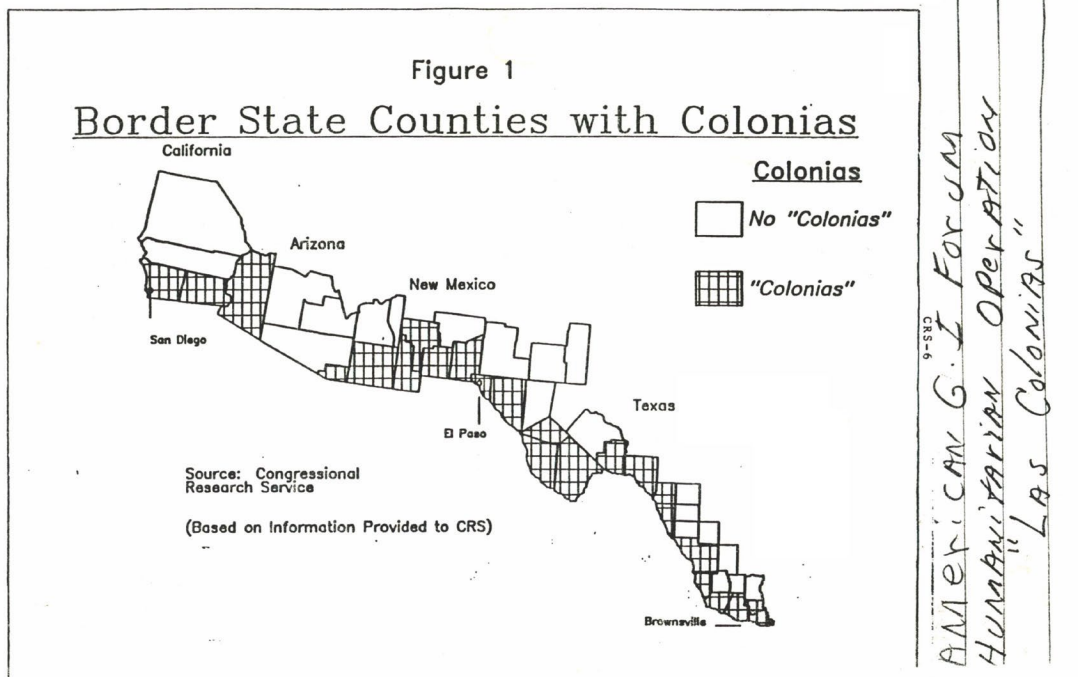


Figure C.3. Operation Las Colonias Strategy Plan, American G.I. Forum

APPENDIX D

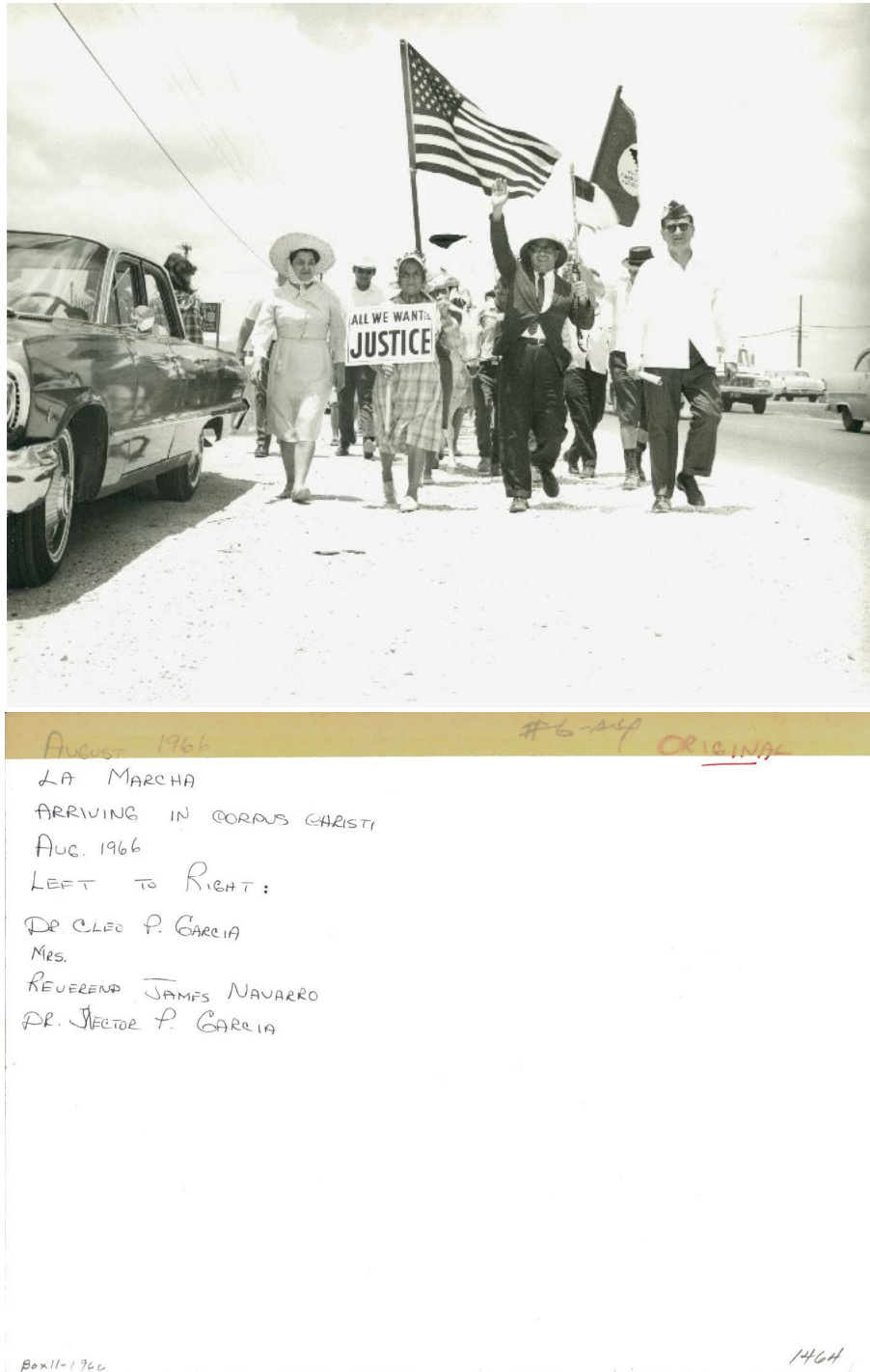


Figure D.4. Dr. Héctor P. García at Protest March

APPENDIX E

CLASS OF SERVICE	WESTERN UNION	SYMBOLS
This is a fast message unless its deferred character is indicated by the proper symbol.	W. P. MARSHALL CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD	DL = Day Letter
	TELEGRAM	NL = Night Letter
	R. W. McFALL PRESIDENT	LT = International Letter Telegram

The filing time shown in the date line on domestic telegrams is LOCAL TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is LOCAL TIME at point of destination.

V851P CST MAR 6 68 NSA339 AA900
A LLY392 LLZ24 LLZ24 NL PDB ATLANTA GA 6
DR HECTOR GARCIA
1315 BRIGHT ST CORPUS CHRISTI TEX

THE TIME TO CLEARLY PRESENT THE CASE OF POOR PEOPLE NATIONALLY
DRAWS NEAR. I HOPE YOU WILL AGREE WITH ME THAT THIS CAN ONLY
BE DONE EFFECTIVELY IF THERE IS JOINT THINKING OF REPRESENTATIVES
OF ALL RACIAL, RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS.

IN KEEPING WITH OUR PREVIOUS PRACTICE, I AM ASSEMBLING A SPECIAL
MEETING SO THAT THE DESIRED JOINT THINKING CAN BE BROUGHT TO
BEAR ON THE URGENT NEEDS OF POOR PEOPLE. YOUR LEADERSHIP IS
KNOWN AND WELL RECOGNIZED.

MAY I REQUEST THAT YOU MEET WITH ME IN A CLOSED SESSION AT
THE PASCHALS MOTOR INN, HUNTER STREET, ATLANTA, GEORGIA, THURSDAY
MARCH 14, 1968 FROM 12:00 NOON UNTIL 6:00 P.M.

WE WOULD HOPE THAT YOUR ORGANIZATION COULD PAY YOUR EXPENSES.

87101(R3-63)

Figure E.5. Telegram from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to Dr. Héctor P. García

APPENDIX F



UNITED FARM WORKERS, AFL-CIO
P.O. Box 62 • Keene, Ca. 93531

*File
Cesar Chavez*

December 23, 1972

Dr. Hector Garcia
1315 Bright St.
Corpus Christi, Texas 78405

Dear Brother Garcia:

I want you to know how much we appreciate the support you have given us in our struggle. The support of our brothers and sisters throughout the world gives us real strength. I write now asking for your help in a very important campaign.

During the past months, many community groups have met with supermarket chains asking that they buy only UFW lettuce. Some have responded. Some have not. Safeway, because it is the financial leader of the industry, should really lead the way in accepting its responsibility to farm workers. Yet they have refused to help in any way. So we have found it necessary to begin an international boycott of Safeway stores.

Only $\frac{1}{2}$ of Safeway's markets are in cities where we have fulltime staff. In order to have an effective boycott, we will need boycott activities in many other Safeway locations as well. I have taken the liberty of enclosing some material to help you begin the Safeway boycott in your area. I hope you will be able to help us.

Thank you again for your support. Let us know how we can help you in your work.

Viva la Causa,

Cesar Chavez

Cesar E. Chavez



Figure F.6. Letter from César E. Chávez to Dr. Héctor P. García

APPENDIX G:

18/06
12/01/53

Mr. Hector P. García, M.D.

Doctor, le escribo estas pocas
lineas, nada más para decirle algo
tocante a la operación, que me
iso sea que necesitaba. Yo fui a
consultarlo, en el mes de mayo.
mi enfermedad, es la rotura del
homblijo y una bala, en una ingle
ahorita estoy mala de eso mismo.
ay ocasiones que no puedo estar
mucho sentada por que me duele la
bala, y del homblijo, ciento dolores
y obesos punsadas, que me ebitan
de mi trabajo, en la casa. Doctor
yo quisiera, que ud me ayudara
aber si me podian dar chandomey
el hospital, por que yo tengo 8 de
familia, y el sueldo de mi esposo
es poca, son \$20 por semana. Tenemos
que comprar todo con eso, el año
4.60. el Doctor Horbaly me ayudo
a traerme el ultimo bebe, y despues
me opero, para que ya no tubiera
ahora fui a buscarlo pero me
dijieron, en el hospital memorial, que
ya no esta. Doctor, tengo un hijo

en el armaz me dicen que puedo ser
a la Cruz roja, que ellas me pueden
ayudar con la operacion. Yo la
ciudad. no ayo como aser, por que
si voy con ellas, tengo miedo que
me abarquensen. por eso le escribo
a ud. a ver sus consejo me da. y
perdoname. por la molestia Doctor
solo ud. puede darme una orientacion
como aga. solo quedo en espera
de su contestacion sin mas
su amiga.

Rebecca M Solinas
RT 3. Box 404
city

December 22, 1953

Sra. Rebecca Salinas
Rt. 3 Box 44
Corpus Christi, Texas

Estimada Senora Salinas:

Siento mucho no haber podido contestar su carta antes de hoy por debido de las exigencias del trabajo y el tiempo, pero quiero asegurarle y decirle que si Usted pasa a mi oficina trayendo esta carta que aqui le mando, con mucho gusto tratare de ayudarle y ver de que manera le podemos ayudar. Si es que no puedo yo hacer el trabajo naturalmente la mandaremos al hospital para ver si alli le hacen el trabajo gratuitamente. Como le dije anteriormente, es necesario que se opere lo mas pronto posible.

Sin mas,

Su amigo y servidor,

Hector P. Garcia, M.D.

HPG/mt

Figure G.7. Letter from Rebecca Salinas to Dr. Héctor P. García

APPENDIX H

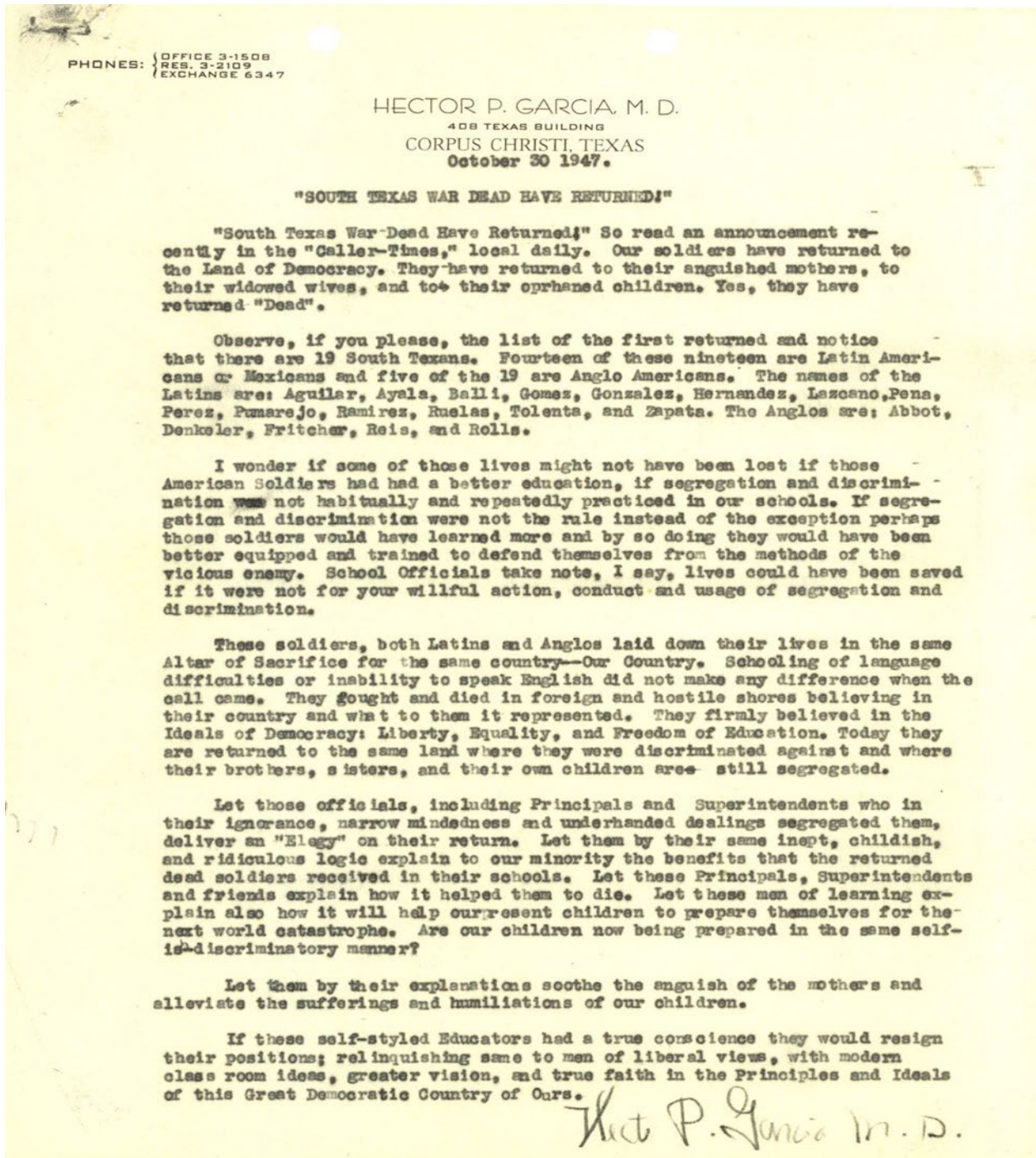


Figure H.8. South Texas War Dead Have Returned

APPENDIX I

April 6, 1949

Dr. Garcia:

Your indiscriminate and unfair treatment of Mr. Kennedy of Three Rivers—for the sole reason of trying to make yourself conspicuous, and under the guise of "bettering" the conditions of your race, has rankled many of us who have been tolerant of you Mesicans.

Your sneaking actions have proved to us--what we already knew--that you and all the rest of your race are nothing but greasy pepper bellies.

And furthermore, everytime any of us get a chance, we solemnly swear to kick every Mesican we can right in the swarthy ass.

Several untolerant students, who still think we should run every Mesican out of Texas.

Figure I.9. Hate Letter Sent to Dr. Héctor P. García

APPENDIX J

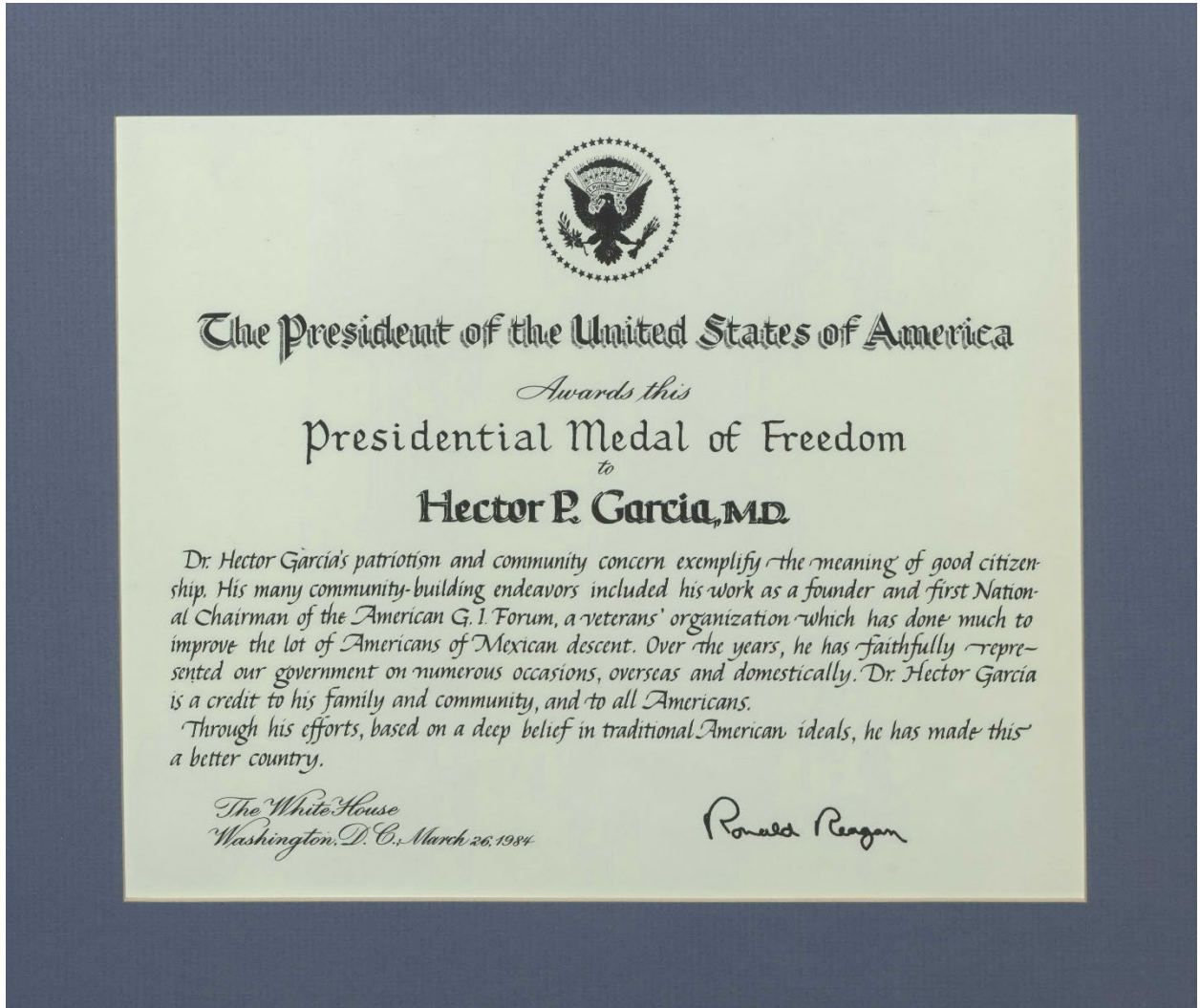


Figure J.10. Presidential Medal of Freedom

APPENDIX K



Figure K.11. Dr. Héctor P. García Addresses Dana Williams and Students During Sit-In

APPENDIX L

News Summary

Corpus Christi

● Dr. Hector Garcia and 17 other Mexican-Americans were arrested by city police officers after the group of protesters had staged a 3½-hour sit-in at the school administration building. 1A

● Defense attorneys for Thomas Odle Hammond, charged in the murder of William Asher Richardson, have been ordered not to allude to alleged misconduct by Richardson. 1B

Texas

● Police in Houston said the fall which left Barnett Garrison, husband of the former Candace Mosler, in critical condition was apparently an accident. 2A

● Improved jail conditions in Dallas were blamed in Sunday's escape of four prisoners as officials threatened the four might have received a hush-hush bid to their unsecured mail. The men have not been recaptured. 8A

● Tornado sightings accompanied by deluges and hard winds were reported across Southeast Texas. No immediate reports of injury came with the stormy weather. 10A

● Larry Temple, Austin lawyer and former aide to President Lyndon B. Johnson, was named by former Gov. John Connally as state chairman of Democrats for Nixon. Connally is national chairman of Democrats for Nixon. 1B

National

● Republicans at a hearing on party reform in Miami Beach denounced convention membership quotas. 19A

● New York City police believe that two businessmen shot to death in a restaurant in the Upper East Side were mistaken for a hired killer for members of the Mafia family of Joseph Colombo. 1A

● Speaking to newsmen after his two-week visit to North Vietnam, former Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark said he thought that a few American prisoners of war would be released soon by Hanoi. 2A

● The Miami Beach City Council voted 4-3, to allow demonstrators to camp at Flamingo Park during the Republican National Convention. 2A

● The federal Pay Board will make no change in its 5.5 per cent raise in wages increases, the board said. It said a survey shows that the board's action is a general standard is needed at this time. 10A

International

● All 156 persons aboard an East German charter flight were killed when their Soviet-made jetliner crashed shortly after takeoff from East Berlin. 2A

● British dock unions announced that their leaders will vote tomorrow on whether to end the strike which has closed British ports for the last 18 days. 2A

● The latest secret meeting of presidential adviser Henry Kissinger with senior North Vietnamese officials was announced Monday. It was his latest meeting to try to break the deadlock in the peace negotiations. 2A

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Horoscope	2C	Women's News	2B

Weather

Increasing cloudiness with warm temperatures is forecast for Corpus Christi and vicinity through tomorrow. A 20 per cent chance of showers is forecast for today. Winds will be westerly at 10 to 15 miles an hour today with winds gusty in the vicinity of showers. The high temperature today and tomorrow will be in the low 90s with the low tonight in the upper 70s.

2 businessmen slain in NYC believed mistaken by hired killer for Mafia kin

New York Times News Service
NEW YORK—Two businessmen shot to death Friday night in an Upper East Side restaurant were apparently mistaken for members of the Mafia family of Joseph Colombo. Two male companions were wounded.

This version of the shooting in the Neapolitan Noodle Restaurant on East 79th Street was given out Monday by Police Commissioner Patrick V. Murphy at the W est 82nd Street precinct.

Murphy said that the four victims were standing at a place at the bar that had been vacated a few minutes earlier by the four Mafia members. He said the four mobsters had retired to a table in the rear of the restaurant and were sitting there when the businessmen were shot.

He said the shootings were undoubtedly a continuation of the gang warfare between the Mafia families of Joseph Colombo Sr. and the late Joseph (Crazy Joe) Gallo, who was slain earlier this year in a Little Italy restaurant in Manhattan. The Gallo slaying is believed to have been a retaliation for the critical wounding of Colombo last year in Columbus Circle.

The four victims of the mistaken

shooting were all meat wholesalers said by the police to have no connection with organized crime.

The two men killed were Sheldon Epstein, 40, of New Rochelle, N.Y., and Max Telesco, 48, of Woodbury, N.Y. Wounded and now recovering were Leon S. Murphy, 46, of East Meadow, N.Y., and Jack Forman, 55, of Brooklyn.

The man called Little Alie is the elder brother of the Colombo crime family, now serving a 14-year sentence in Illinois for interstate theft. Little Alie's nephew is Carmine Persico's son, Langella is Little Alie's bodyguard, according to the police.

Little Alie Persico was arrested Saturday by Federal Bureau of Investigation agents at his horse farm in Saugerties, N.Y., on charges of unlawfully receiving firearms in interstate commerce. He was released on his own recognizance because of "prior bad" residences.

Langella, who was named with Persico

in the same sealed indictment, surrendered here Monday to FBI agents. Federal Judge Arthur Bauman held him in \$100,000 bail. The two defendants, both former convicts, could receive a maximum fine of \$15,000 and/or imprisonment for a term up to seven years for the firearms charge.

In giving his interpretation of the killings in the Neapolitan Noodle Restaurant, Murphy said that the gunman had an accomplice who was waiting for him in a dark Chevrolet automobile with an out-of-town license plate.

Murphy said that the gunman, who was a bulky man of middle age wearing a wig of long black hair, had come into the bar unobtrusively and was sipping a scotch and water unobtrusively at an end of the bar.

He said the four businessmen were having a drink while waiting for a table and that their wives were talking farther down at the bar.

When the men arose to go to their table, the killer allegedly pulled out two .38-caliber pistols and fired at least nine shots at his victims. They were walked away

Corpus Christi Caller

89th year — No. 147

CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS, TUESDAY, AUGUST 15, 1972

Price 10¢ (No. 941)
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36 pages — Price 10¢ cents

18 stage school board sit-in

Hector Garcia among arrested Mexican-Americans

By MARY ALICE DAVIS

Related pictures are on page 8D

NICK JIMENEZ
City police officers last night arrested Dr. Hector P. Garcia and 17 young Mexican-Americans who had staged a 3½-hour sit-in at the Corpus Christi school district administration building.

The group was taken to the police station about 9 p.m. by about 20 police officers. No charges were pressed, however, and the group was released about 11 p.m.

The group was released after the school board declined to press charges of trespassing.

A crowd believed to be "at least" 100 persons waited in the small entrance to the police station and inside

on the steps during the two hours. Shortly after Garcia and the other 17 persons were taken to the second floor of the station to the jail. School Supt. Don Williams, school counsel J. W. Gary and school public information director, Rita Whitlock arrived to talk to police officials.

A member of the city's legal staff conferred with the school officials and the group discussed the filing of charges under the state trespassing law.

The 18 persons were arrested at the school administration building when they refused to follow a police order to vacate the building.

Those arrested, Police Chief James Avant said, were not formally booked during their stay at the jail. A thumb print was made but said but this is an administrative procedure of the jail. A formal booking would have included a full set of fingerprints and a photo, he said.

See 18 stage, page 10A

Police had plans to release the group after personal recognizance bonds at one point but the protesters, according to reports, declined to leave the jail.

Much of the two hours was taken up apparently with the protesters discussing whether they wanted to leave the jail. The 18 persons never entered a jail cell but spent much of the time in a corridor of the jail.

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See 18 stage, page 10A

Restraining order

halts construction of island seawall

By JIM DAVIS

County Atty. Franklin Smith yesterday obtained a restraining order to halt construction of a controversial seawall at Padre Island.

Judge Noah Kennedy signed the restraining order in 148th District Court and set a hearing for 10 a.m. Aug. 24 to determine whether a temporary injunction against the construction should be issued. The restraining order will remain in effect until the court has ruled on the question of construction could be settled in a full trial.

The suit was filed against Padre Island Investment Corp., which has been constructing a seawall of a seawall built several years ago.

State Atty. Gen. Crawford Martin's office joined the county in filing the suit.

Smith told a reporter yesterday the suit seeks only to halt construction of the seawall and has nothing to do with the controversial seawall, used to direct traffic each weekend on the beach in front of a part of the existing seawall.

Smith said the suit regarding the public use of Padre Island is a small city 20 miles southeast of Berlin. The agency did not say how close the crash was to the town.

ADN said the plane was an Ilyushin 62, a long-range Soviet-made jetliner with four engines.

The worst commercial air disaster on record was the collision of a Japanese domestic airliner and a Japanese cargo plane on July 30, 1971, in which 162 persons died. A crash at Maracaibo, Venezuela, on March 16, 1968, killed 100 passengers and crew members were killed.

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The worst commercial air

Storms lash southeastern part of state

Members of the audience (arrested and put in jail if the protesters were not) Saldaña frequently arrested, but for the most part, an hour the protesters city jail, Tony Canales, and Rudy Garcia, all local and as attorneys for the

School board sit-in -

ryer, the police in the school of Dr. Garcia and lects on the police

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Rogers -

Continued from page 1A
reformers for 1972. Although critics and supporters of such action agreed that the GOP should not impose quotas to ensure broad-based representation at its conventions.

By The Associated Press
Proy - straining rains pushed down on Southeast Texas Monday evening, whipped along by tornado funnels and hard surface winds from Beaumont to Palacios. The monsoon - like rains stretched out over the Gulf of Mexico for 10 miles.

Although there were numerous tornado sightings there were no immediate reports of damage or injury.

Police in Lufkin and Texas City, just north of Galveston, reported a tornado

released but failed to come down. When the police station and their attorneys walked into the waiting area, they were greeted by loud cheers and rain on the back.

Form came as a

from the meeting, Dr. Hector Garcia, Dr. Clellie Garcia and David Serna spoke in behalf of providing transportation for Mexican American students who transfer into schools with Mexican American minorities.

Both Garcia noted that the 5th U.S. Circuit Court is appealing a federal court decision that would allow the state to "publicly command the police for the way they treated us."

Two persons were arrested out of the crowd waiting for the arrest of one for making a disturbance and the other when he apparently got into an argument with police officers in the crowd.

The sit-in began when the school board decided to act on plans that the district provide transportation for Mexican American students who transfer into schools with Mexican American minorities.

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He said the food was ample and that there was a vegetable garden outside. He said that the men thought the prison had been there since 1860, although the man who had been there the longest had arrived in the spring of 1971. Clark said that the men told him the prison was much the same as others they had been in.

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Gov. Frank W. W. Rogers

Massachusetts, a leading proponent of reform, denied his intent was to derail Agnew's 1974 chances for the presidential nomination.

However, he said Agnew's chances in four years "might well be reduced if the delegate selection process is overhauled."

William C. Cramer, chairman of the Rules Committee, flatly ruled out any sort of quota system. "Republicans do not want to be a quota party," he said.

Rogers was the first major witness at the hearing. He said he had been hospitalized around 3 p.m. Another witness, Dr. Gilbert Roberts, leading a group of about six black women, asked for a bus for South Park Junior High students who are now cut off from their school by the Crowstons Expressway.

Williams told her a crosswalk was to be built but that it would take about a year. Mrs. Roberts said if no buses were provided, parents would try to transfer their children to Brown Junior High.

Requests for transportation have been made by the school board and the parents of the children who would be affected.

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Sympathizers keep vigil until protesters' release

BY GUILLE GONZALEZ
Occasion: Reyna, chairman of the Mexican Action Agency and local labor

show of support for Garcia. Chants of "viva la raza" and "we want freedom" were heard as the group gathered in front of the police building.

Reyna said he would post whatever bail was necessary to get the protesters out. He said he was not doing it as an official of any organization.

Several other demonstrators, including Jose Cisneros, the major plaintiff in the school segregation suit here, was in contact with the regional office of the U.S. Justice Department in Dallas.

He said the Community Relations Service of the Justice Department had offered whatever help was needed.

As the night wore on, the protesters were joined by a large number of people who were waiting outside the police building.

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PROJECT STRETCHES SOUTH TO GULFSTREAM CONDOMINIUM

At the platform hearings, with pictures of Nixon and China's Mao Tse-tung on one side of the stage and Nixon with Russia's Leonid Brezhnev on the other, conservative Rep. John M. Ashbrook of Ohio defended the first decision.

In Southwest Texas, the highway authority closed Texas 163 in Val Verde County, Texas 35 in Val Verde County and U.S. 27 north of Rockspire in Edwards County, all in the last hours.

Extensive flooding was reported on the Middle Neuses at Crystal City and below. The downflow was expected to cause considerable flooding at Asherton later in the day and reach Cotulla later in the week.

3 feared drowned in Houston bayou

HOUSTON (AP) - A compact car carrying two or three persons plunged into a rain-swollen bayou Monday. One body was recovered, but the others were missing.

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Famous for both melodies and melodies, he delighted in being dubbed "the man with the violin."

"I'll admit I'm sick," Levant once told Beverly Hills, Calif. (AP) - Oscar Levant, a gifted pianist and humorist who aimed his wit at his own eccentric hypochondria, died Monday at the age of 67.

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