

1972

Interview no. 91.1

Abelardo Delgado

Ricardo Sánchez

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ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

INTERVIEW BETWEEN:

INTERVIEWEE: Abelardo Delgado, Ricardo Sánchez

INTERVIEWER: Arranged by Manny A. Escontrías

SUBJECT: Bookmobile Painting

DATE OF INTERVIEW: _____

TRANSCRIBER: Lourdes Tinajero

DATE: August 20, 1973

D: My name is Abelardo Delgado and I'm one of the many Chicanos that have been angered by the recent action of the board members of the El Paso Public Library. They have the audacity to order the bookmobile from the barrio to be re-painted merely because they thought the symbols displayed were of a political nature which shows again the ignorance of the board members. They never bothered to consult with anyone who would know any better. I'm just very angry, and all the people that I have talked to both at the University and at the barrio are very angry. I think that if the bookmobile is to be disposed of those symbols, a lot of the Chicano community will be very angered to make such a bookmobile even less effective than it has been in the past.

S: For the past few months since it came into operation that bookmobile has been an inspiration to many of our kids in the barrio. They have a symbol they can identify with. Symbols that represent what they're

going through, what they're living through: reality. The arbitrary decision to do away with those symbols because people do not understand what the symbols represent not only to our children but to us who are older makes us very angry. What has to happen is those people to become more sensitive and more aware. We the Chicanos in El Paso are over 56% of the population here, and as such we have no voice. This arbitrary decision by the minority has to cease. It is time that the majority of people in El Paso had a meaningful voice. Not only am I angry about it, but many people are angry here in the east side of El Paso, where I live, are very angry. It has to stop. It's a cause of discontent. And if they don't stop it, they're going to have a reaction they can't deal with. We are trying to avert that type of reaction. We're trying to be thoughtful in what we're doing. We're trying to build up a meaningful community for all those who participate and share. We're trying to sensitize the minority community as to what the realities of the majority are. But if they are not sensitive enough, if they do not become aware of what is reality and what is happening, they're going to have problems they can't deal with. As my compadre Abelardo was saying, there is anger, a lot of anger.

E: What do you plan to do now? Do you plan to try to get the symbols put back?

S: Definitely. We shall apply whatever pressure we can bear on that. Those symbols represent houses of people. The people that are there represent the different Chicanos throughout the Southwest, the five

southwestern states. We are one people. Are problems are the same throughout the Southwest. We're trying to overcome these problems. The mestizo represents the reality of our people. We are mestizos. We are índio-español merging into one. The mestizo.

D: It brings to mind another issue. You know, this issue about the bookmobile brings other issues to light. The fact that none of the board . . . (remainder of the tape is erased)