

8-12-1975

Interview no. 415

Frank J. Galvan, Jr.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.utep.edu/interviews>



Part of the [Oral History Commons](#), and the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Interview with Frank J. Galvan, Jr. by Richard Estrada, 1975, "Interview no. 415," Institute of Oral History, University of Texas at El Paso.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Institute of Oral History at ScholarWorks@UTEP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Combined Interviews by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UTEP. For more information, please contact lweber@utep.edu.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

INTERVIEWEE: Frank J. Galván, Jr.
INTERVIEWER: Richard Estrada
PROJECT: Bicentennial
DATE OF INTERVIEW: August 12, 1975
TERMS OF USE: Unrestricted

TAPE NO.: 415
TRANSCRIPT NO.: 415
TRANSCRIBER: _____
DATE TRANSCRIBED: _____

BIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEWEE:
(Attorney)

Born in the State of Chihuahua in 1908; educated in El Paso elementary and high schools; received his law degree in Dallas at Jefferson University.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW:

Biography; schooling; discrimination he has encountered; the founding of LULAC; experiences in Brazil; his association with Lyndon B. Johnson; thoughts on the Bicentennial.

1 hour 20 pages

Mr. Frank Galván
by Richard Estrada
August 12, 1975

E: Mr. Galván, where were you born, sir?

G: I was born in Santa Bárbara, Chihuahua, Mexico.

E: When?

G: February the 11th, 1908.

E: Could you tell me something about your parents?

G: In Mexico, when I first became knowledgeable of the existence of Frank J. Galván, Jr., my father was a tax collector under the federal regime of the Díaz regime. And at the downfall during the Revolution of Mexico, my father fled Santa Bárbara and went as far as Canada, and remained there until he was able to return to Mexico. And incognito he returned back to the little town of Santa Bárbara and moved us by horse and wagon from Santa Bárbara to Chihuahua. And from Chihuahua after a very interesting and adventurous experience on the road from Santa Bárbara to Chihuahua, we finally took the last train from Chihuahua to Juárez. It was a military train with three cars, three pullman cars at the end. And it took us 15 days to reach Juárez. On the way to Juárez, most of the federal troops deserted the military convoy and finally when we got to Juárez there was only the engine and the three passenger cars that finally arrived. Most of the freight cars and the military contingencies deserted and the freight cars were thrown from the railroad tracks. Of course the train became smaller and smaller as the federal troops deserted. And when we got to Juárez there was only the locomotive and the three cars full of civilians. And we dashed from the Juárez railroad station to the Immigration Department.

E: Do you recall approximately what year this was, sir?

G: This was in 1913, sometime in October.

E: Do you happen to recall the second battle of Cd. Juárez in November of 1913? Do you recall anything related to that?

G: No, sir. We were already here, because we got here I think in October of 1913.

R: Could you tell me something about your mother and her background?

G: My mother's maiden name was Mata, and they were plantation owners, my grandfather and my grandmother. And my grandfather died, and shortly thereafter my grandmother passed away and left the children in the care of a guardian. They call it in Mexico a tutor. And this tutor was a fellow by the name of Chávez who raised mother and her sisters and brothers until they became of age. And they had a terrific amount of land and hacienda properties. They used to be called the Hacienda Mata in the state of Chihuahua, the southwestern part. They had El Torreón de Mata, a big plantation; La Ciénega de Mata; and I believe two or three other small haciendas. And of the unusualness of the relationship between the orphans of the Mata family and the Chavez's, the Chávez branches, that family grew up whereby one became the governor of the state of Chihuahua. I've forgotten his first name.

E: Very interesting. Do you come from a large or small family?

G: Well, mother and daddy had nine children.

E: Could you tell me something about your siblings? What do they do?

G: Well, my brother Robert, the youngest brother, he's a judge of the County Court at Law #1 in El Paso. Julia May is a teacher with the El Paso Independent School District. And sister Helen is a widow in Los Angeles. And Josephine is living here in El Paso. She's married to a Frenchman by the name of De _____, and they live at 501 E. Nevada in El Paso.

E: Did you attend elementary school in El Paso?

G: I attended Alamo School, San Jacinto, Bailey, and El Paso High.

E: Could you give me a background of these formative years of yours, what it was like growing up in El Paso?

G: Well, I was the guest speaker at the White House under the Lyndon B. Johnson Administration, and I gave a speech or talk precisely of my experiences in El Paso during my adolescence. Well, in fact, they wanted to find out everything about me. So, my first experience, of course, was attending Alamo School and getting a job at the same time in a barbershop immediately adjacent to Alamo School, where I was a shine kid in the barbershop. My first experience in that position was somewhat a failure because I had to shine the shoes of a particular individual who wore white socks and black slippers. And in applying the shoe polish to the shoes, to black slippers, I over exerted the putting of the black polish on top of this man's white socks. And when he got through and saw what I had done, he was enraged and physically kicked me out of the barbershop. And thereafter I started selling newspapers. And going to school, I had a very interesting experience in Alamo school, which I related in the White House, about having a difficulty with a foreign language, which was English to me. I was in the first grade and the teacher, by the name of Mrs. Witt, had told us, instructed us, how to go to the restroom, by raising our two little fingers and saying, "Teacher, may I be excused?" We thought at that time those were magical words. So, everytime we needed to go to the restroom, we raised our hands and said the famous magical words, "Mabescus." Well, we had a substitute teacher once, and she was a very beautiful redhead. Blue eyes. Oh, and she was really a doll! And I needed to go to the restroom. So I raised my hand. I said, "Mabescus?"

whereupon the lady turned around and she said, "If it's absolutely necessary." But we didn't know and I didn't either, what those words meant. So, I raised my hand some few minutes later, asked her if I could be excused, and she gave me the same response. "If it's absolutely necessary." Well, I kept sitting down, and then the third time I raised my hands. She again very harshly said "If it's absolutely necessary." By that time it was apparent that it had become necessary. And thereafter my nick name from Kiko was changed by the members of the classroom to "El Miñón." (Laughter) One of the illustrations that I gave at the White House about the difficulty children of foreign extraction who didn't know the English language were faced with.

E: Mr. Galván, were there any prohibitions actively enforced against speaking Spanish in school when you were a young boy?

G: Yes, sir. Of course, not in the Alamo School, because 99 & 9/10% of the children there were of Mexican extraction. And when I moved to San Jacinto School, there was about 30% to 40% of Mexican American children. And of course, you could feel that there was a resentment between the Anglo American children and the Mexican Americans, and even in the classrooms, because it was frowned upon to make any allusions or even communicate with one and the other in the Spanish language. And that was more apparent in Bailey school. It seemed as if, as we went farther to the northern part of the city where the Anglo Americans lived at that time, that these feelings of dissention was more apparent. However, in high school, it became quite more apparent that the teachers wouldn't permit us to communicate in the classrooms in anything but the English language. And of course, that was because the greater number of students were of the Anglo American group. And that forced the Mexican Americans to chum

around or congregate with people of their own ethnic origin. And we had in the cafeterias a natural segregation of the children, of the students, because most of us who were attending high school at that time, of the Mexican Americans ethnic group, would hold ourselves together because we felt that we were not wanted to be associating with the Anglo American groups.

E: What high school did you attend?

G: El Paso High School.

E: What year, sir?

G: It's been so long ago. I think it was from 1922 to 1926, or around that area.

E: What did you do after you got out of high school?

G: I went to California and enrolled in the University of Southern California, and worked my way. I was in the University of Southern California for about two or three months. It was a very expensive educational institution, and I moved to the Southwestern University, also in Los Angeles, Southwestern School of Law in Los Angeles.

E: Did you obtain your law degree, there?

G: No. We had a Depression in 1932, and I thought that my educational attainments were over because of the economic situation. I returned back to El Paso thinking I was a complete failure. I finally made my way to Dallas with the help of my sister Josefina. And with the work that I got in Dallas, I was able to go to Jefferson University. And I graduated from Jefferson.

E: Did you go in law school, then?

G: Jefferson University was a law school in Dallas.

E: It was a law school in Dallas?

G: Yeah. I graduated and came to El Paso.

E: Do you recall, Mr. Galván, how many Mexican Americans were in your graduating class at Jefferson? Just one? And you're the only one? Do you recall if the year before or the year after, do you have any idea if there were any Mexican Americans that had graduated from Jefferson?

G: No, I don't think so. I think that by that time Jefferson University closed... And, by the way, Sarah T. Hughes was one of our teachers.

E: The federal judge in Dallas today?

G: Yeah, she later became a Federal Judge, and some later on prominent politicians were members of the school. And then it was closed and the remaining students were taken over by SMU. It had a Law school by that time. This was the first law school in Dallas.

E: What did you do after you obtained your degree?

G: Came to El Paso.

E: What kind of practice do you have?

G: Well, I had nothing but Mexican American trade, both criminal and civil.

E: During the Depression, what kinds of legal problems did Mexican Americans generally have?

G: Well, inability to secure employment, there was no employment. Of course, the economic standards of the Mexican American in El Paso at that time were of the lowest that could be found, because most of them were employable or working people; and since work had been cut down to nothing, the only way of existence that they had was to join the CCC camp. It was a government program or project whereby the wages earned by these members attending the CCC camps would be paid over to their respective families, so that they could be able to meet with their necessities of life. Then they had here soup kitchens in the residential areas and in the business areas. And at that time the government invoked a moratorium law, which

prevented the creditors from proceeding against the debtors in the foreclosing of their mortgage properties because of the inability to make their payments. And I think as usual in every community, it is the poor people, the wage earner, who suffers economically most in times of depression.

E: Mr. Galván, was there any union organizing amongst Mexican Americans at that time?

G: No, sir. There was very little organization. As a unification of the classes of people, they were united because of their economic standards. But there was no unionization at that time, very little.

E: Mr. Galván, what do you know about the founding of the League of United Latin American Citizens?

G: The League of United Latin American Citizens, of which I was at one time the national president, was founded because of an existence in law that we had, which was known as a Poll Tax Law. The citizens, qualifying voters, of the Mexican American race could not qualify because they had to pay a tax of a dollar and seventy five cents to vote. And of course, that was an economic burden on those people at that time. Next, there was a condition throughout the State of Texas of discriminating against the Mexican American people, or anyone who had a Spanish surname. We were considered second or third or fourth class citizens. And we had a lot of humiliations because of our race.

E: Do you recall any particular instances of discrimination at that time?

G: Well, all the time you were being called a "Mexican greaser." And my associations with students at Jefferson University, and with the sophisticated students of SMU, I was in several instances humiliated and insulted by my bretheren, students, in social circles. They wanted to know how come a Mexican was amongst the social functions of SMU and Jefferson

University. And on numerous occasions, I was slighted in the attendance of these social groups. I was apparently a freak in these social functions, and particularly in a Bridge contest that we had. I will never forget that I made two grand slams, and I attracted the attention of about 40 people who were at this Bridge party of mostly students from SMU, and they wanted to know all about me. And two or three individuals who were envious of my ability to play Bridge, "Well, I wondered how a Mexican could have the ability to play Bridge!" However that group, through my efforts, recognized at last that I was equal to them in mental attributes, not economically, and they accepted the fact that a Mexican was amongst the social groups. However, even before going to Dallas, here in El Paso we had such discrimination in public places, such as the Washington Park, where they had restrooms for whites and for Mexicans and blacks. And that was humiliating.

E: Do you mean that there was one restroom for whites and one for Mexicans and blacks?

G: Right. When the Plaza restrooms were built here in El Paso, in the Plaza, we wondered where they were going to place the Mexicans. We were amazed that there was no signs there to show the discrimination between the allocation of the restrooms for whites and blacks. But the streetcars had sections for the blacks and the whites. And of course, if we sat in the front part of the streetcar where it was reserved for whites, some of the whites would make indications and motions for us to get back to the colored section. Oh, it was terrible!

E: Mr. Galván, do you recall what your reactions were? Was it one of anger or sorrow?

G: I was humiliated!

E: Do you feel that most of the Mexican Americans of your age felt this way?

G: Oh, yeah. In high school we gathered together and explained the circumstances to each other. Some of them were because of the economic standards of students, groups who had the ability to have a car, whereas we had to walk from home to high school. And a considerable number of the Mexican kids, we'd have to walk back to Second Ward, because at that time that was the only high school available. So, it was a factor of racial discrimination and economic discrimination, both combined, which was humiliating to the Mexican American people. We felt that we were the victims of two situations: our economic standards and the racial prejudice that existed.

E: Mr. Galván, could you elaborate a little more on the formation of LULAC from your knowledge? What year, for instance, it took place.

G: Well, I think it was in 1932, as a result of the economic situations and the constant discriminatory attitude that the Anglo American had for Mexican Americans that the organization was created. It was created on very beautiful concepts, the League of United Latin American Citizens. We requested the right to become an American citizen as provided for in the Constitution of the United States -- that we were created equal; and that discriminatory tactics were injurious to the development of our race as an American citizen. And if we didn't do away with such discriminatory tactics, we could never assimilate the true concept of an American citizen. So, we organized this association. It was organized first in the Rio Grande Valley, where they had had all kinds of trouble in San Antonio and Houston in discriminatory attitudes towards the Mexican American. So, one of the fundamental principles of LULAC was to integrate ourselves into a first class American citizen, and not a second rate American

citizen, and demand the same equal protection privileges that the Anglo American had.

E: Mr. Galván, did the people that founded LULAC consider themselves members of a different race?

G: Well, it wasn't that they considered themselves a member of a different race; it was because we were pushed in by the economic standards and the discriminatory attitudes into a group of "second class citizens," as they called us. Now, the Poll Tax Law was one of the instrumentalities used by the Anglo Americans to disenfranchise poor people. And since we were a vast class of the poor people, we suffered those consequences. Oh, we had a terrible uphill fight in those days, and it took a war to straighten the social difficulties, in making them more equal than they were before the war.

E: You're speaking of World War II?

G: World War II, yes, sir. Because we assumed the responsibilities of a patriotic American citizenship class. And we went to war to safeguard the country from a common enemy. And, gladly, it was an opportunity for us to display our patriotism for the country. And through the efforts against and the successes that we had in expressing through action, our loyalty to the country, we got, I think, a recompense after the war, in recognizing that we were not a different race, but that we assumed the responsibilities of the American citizenship. And since we had assumed them, and complied with them, and had sustained a certain amount of success, we were now entitled to these civil rights that we have. And the discriminatory attitude has been cured to a certain degree.

E: Mr. Galván, thus you have been intimately associated with the founding of LULAC and with its early years, and you've followed the Mexican American

movement since then. I would like to ask you, sir, in your opinion, what administration has done more for the furtherance of the Mexican American and minority groups in general in this country?

G: I think that it was LBJ.

E: Specifically, why do you say this?

G: Specifically, because he had a program in building a new society, and he was vitally interested in seeing that there was talent, demonstrating that there was talent in these minority groups, that could be utilized in making America a homogeneous nation as it was originally intended to be, by the basic concepts of the Constitution of the United States. It seems that during the progress of time, a lot of the institutions in government had forgotten the concepts of an American democracy.

E: Mr. Galván, what did your family think about your involvement of LULAC from the outset?

G: Well, I think they were very happy that I was as outspoken as I am, and (I don't want to appear braggadocious, but) that I had the determination and courage to so tell the people of the United States that we were not getting that which we deserved as good citizens. That's why LBJ invited me three different times to the White House to speak on the creation of the new society.

E: Mr. Galván, during what years were you national president of LULAC?

G: Oh, I think it was in 1936.

E: Have you been associated with the organization since then?

G: Always. And also with the American GI Forum, another organization of which I am a member.

E: You are a member of the American GI Forum?

G: Right.

E: Were you involved in its founding, sir?

G: No, sir. I joined the American GI Forum because they also had as one of their principles or tenets that they protect the rights of the Mexican American citizen.

E: Mr. Galván, I'd like to ask you for your opinion of the course of the Mexican American movement in the last few years. There seems to have been a lot more parades and demonstrations and this type of thing. What do you feel about these situations?

G: Well, I have never been an advocate of violence. I think that (and it's been my philosophy) if we can bring these situations known to other factions, these differences of opinions, this discriminatory attitude can be remedied through a peaceful solution--a solution of intelligent people getting down to brass tacks, to the tables of discussion, and discussing their attitudes, and discussing their present problems, to see if they can find a feasible solution. There is still a hidden undisclosed behavior of discrimination in certain areas, and it is up to us to find these areas and to cure the difficulty. That's why we have in all the United States governmental agencies an equal employment opportunity counsel. He is supposed to take care of erradicating any discriminatory attitudes that may be in the process of making.

E: Mr. Galván, what is your opinion of the Raza Unida Party?

G: The Raza Unida Party is, in my opinion, a little too radical. I personally have been an exponent of negotiations through understanding and through the administration of justice of rights we can get more than by creating a violent attitude. I don't believe in violence, radicalism, because I'm afraid that some Anglo American might misinterpret the attitude of violence or the attitude of radicalism into violence. And that

is not the purpose of our government. We have the judiciary now, since the civil rights have been established, have been created by law, we can resort to the administration of these rights through legal procedures.

E: Mr. Galván, we have two Mexican American state legislators from El Paso today, Mr. Moreno and Mr. Santiesteban. Could you tell me whose views you consider more in line with yours?

G: Well, both of them. Let me put it like this: I think both of them are doing a good job. I think Paul Moreno is a little bit more radical than Mr. Santiesteban. I think Mr. Santiesteban is approaching the situation by first exposing himself to the general public that he has the talents and that these talents that he has should be utilized to the fullest extent possible, irrespective of who or what ethnic group he belongs to. We've got to show these individuals who are discriminatory and racially minded that we, as a race, have a certain amount of talents. And if our talents that we may possess are greater than the talent of the individual white or Anglo American, we should be given the same recognition and the same right to demonstrate and be rewarded for our talents. We have some great lawyers, we have some great doctors. The only reason that we call ourselves Mexican Americans, and they say that we are segregating ourselves, we are not. They have segregated us and pushed us into a group. We have responsibility of showing that we are better American citizens than they are, that our talents are greater than theirs, that America will prosper by the proper use of our talents; because we believe, I believe, that our talents are worth two, to the talent of an Anglo American who speaks and has but one philosophy. We have two philosophies that are beautiful.

E: In other words, you see it as incumbent upon the Mexican American to excel?

G: Right! And we preach that all the time. You have to be a better ball-

player than the other fellow, you have to be a better golfer than the other fellow, to get the recognition that the world will eventually give you, and that the country will give you.

E: Mr. Galván, I'd like to go back to a little bit of your personal background. Are you married, sir?

G: Yes, sir.

E: Do you have children?

G: No, sir.

E: Could you tell me where your wife is from?

G: My wife is from Brazil.

E: Brazil?

G: Yeah. I had an interesting military career. I don't like to talk too much about Frank Galván...

E: Well, could you tell me, have you practiced law in El Paso continuously?

G: Continuously, except for the War years. I volunteered into the service. I was not drafted. I didn't want to wait to be drafted. I was anxious to get into the struggle, precisely because I have a love and affection for my country, my adopted country.

E: What branch of the service did you serve in, sir?

G: I went in the signal service, and...here we go, bragging. I volunteered into the service on March the 3rd, I think, 1941. Right after Pearl Harbor, I made arrangements to close the law office, and volunteered. So I went and registered for the draft, and I was impatient and the draft wasn't doing anything, so I closed my office.

E: So, you finally joined the service in 1941?

G: Oh, it was very interesting. I closed my office, and went on Montana Street to get a ride, early in the morning, to Fort Bliss. As I was

standing there on the corner, a car passed by and stopped, honked, "Come here, Frank! What are you doing here at this hour?" I says, "I'm going to join the Army." It was Col. Hunnicut. Col. Hunnicut had been the United States District Attorney here in El Paso, and he had been called to active duty. And I said, "They haven't called me, so I might as well join. I'm on my way to Fort Bliss." So, he took me to the recruiting office at Fort Bliss, and it was the first time in the history of military career that a Colonel has taken a buck private, or an individual to join the Army. He left me there; then I took my basic, and then I finished my basic, and they assigned me to Camp Crowler.

E: Where is that, sir? Which state?

G: That was in Missouri. And they chose me to go into the Signal Corps because some tests, aptitude test, they thought I had a good ability to determine a dot from a dash. So, I went into the basic training there. I took telegraphy, the code, and then I was sending and receiving so many words per minute. Then they sent me and placed me in the cadre. The cadre was the ones who would teach the new recruits that were coming in. And I was given the assignment of giving lectures on why we fight.

E: Mr. Galván, did you ever experience any ethnic discrimination while you were in the service?

G: No, sir.

E: You did not?

G: No, sir. On the contrary. Well, after I was assigned, I had a theatre in which I had about 1500 to 2000 students there, and I was giving them hell, filling them full of patriotic speeches. And a general heard me speak, and comes up after the class and he said, "What's your rank, soldier?" And I said, "Active Corporal." He said, "We have no Active

Corporals in the Army. I said, "Well, that's what my commanding officer said I was, sir." He says, "Well, I want to see you." So, he took me to the PX. He drilled me found out everything about me, and he said, "Okay, Sergeant." I said, "Sergeant?" "Yeah, I'm making you a sergeant, if you don't understand." So, when I got to my orderly room, I had a new shirt, with my stripes. So, the next day here is the general again in the auditorium. He says, "Sergeant, I'm very happy that you were able to choose three up and not three up and three down." So, I said, "Yes, sir." Well, anyway, a few months later, I was transferred from the Camp Crowler to OCS. And when I graduated from OCS, my first assignment was with General Omstead, the fellow who had seen me in Camp Crowler. And he said, "Hell, it sure took you a hell of a long time to get through with OCS. I thought that you weren't coming." So, he put me in Signal Intelligence. And then, I had a very interesting experience. They put me in General Intelligence.

E: So you must've attended school at Fort Hallerberd Maryland, is that right?

G: I was Assistant Commandant of Fort Hallerberd after the war.

E: That's very interesting, sir.

G: Did you go to school there?

E: I have lived in Baltimore several times.

G: So, I had very interesting confidential, secret assignments. From Signal Intelligence, they sent me to the General Intelligence and then they sent me to the Intelligence School at Chicago. And from there I went back to the Pentagon. And then I went on several secret missions. And while I was in France, I was wounded; and of course, they gave me a recuperating leave and they sent me to South America, and I was in Brazil, head of the 432nd CNC detachment. We had a very interesting experience there. And

there I met my wife, and after the capitulation of the enemy, we married in Brazil. And I brought her back to the States. I was in Brazil under the command of Col. Novel. And when I got here to be released, there was a special order that my orders had been canceled and I was to report to Washington, D.C. So, I reported to Washington, D.C. and from there I was sent to Camp Hallerberd. And who was there as the Commanding officer, and the school commandant? Colonel Novel. And he said, "Frank, I don't know beans about this thing. You're going to be my assistant." He says, "Can you stay in the Army for six more months while we get this thing straightened out?" I stayed with him for six months.

G: That's an extraordinary story, Mr. Galván. I'm interested in knowing, sir, when was the first time you met Lyndon Johnson?

E: Oh, this is an interesting story! I was going to Brazil nearly every year. And not having anything to do over there, just visting the folks, I was invited to a Lions Club meeting. I was to be the guest speaker, and I didn't know what to talk about. So, I talked about the American way of life, in Portuguese. I'm somewhat of an actor. The first time I started my speech in English, and of course, I knew purposely, that the audience, being all Brazilians, some of them couldn't speak English. So, suddenly I would change into Portuguese. And I would then immediately attract the attention of those individuals for emphasis. And the speech went over like a house on fire. Then I was invited to another town by the Lions Club. So, I didn't mind it, I accepted the invitation. And I would stay, oh, about a month, a month and a half, in complying with all these invitations that I would get from all the different civic service organizations in Brazil, speaking of the American way of life. And it went over like a...wham! Well, the next year, I was invited again, all

my expenses paid. I get to Río, all my expenses were paid. So, then the American Embassy started putting a tail on me, you know what I mean; and this guy followed me everyplace. And one day he says, "Mr. Galván, who's paying you for all this?" I says, "I guess the Lions Club, because, they furnish me transportation, furnish me lodging, and I'm a guest of the association. They have made this itinerary for me." But anyway, I'd done that for three years. The third year, I was coming from Brazil, from México City, and I met a very good friend of mine on the plane. And he said, "Frank, I understand you're going to the White House." I said, "White House Department Store?" "No, Washington!" This fellow who I met in the plane was Antonio Bermúdez. And he had with him an engineer by the name of Rivas Serrano, who was an old man, and we helped him out in Torreón. He fell down. The newspaper reporters came and started taking pictures of Engineer Serrano, of the water commission. So, he said, "Take our picture. Take that guy's picture. He's going to the White House." So, the reporters came up to me and said, "Are you going to the White House?" "No!" "He's kidding you. He doesn't want you to be attracted to his importance. He wants to challenge or shift the responsibility to me." Well, anyway, we got here to Juárez and I came to the office right away, and there was a telegram here from LBJ. He wanted me to be the guest speaker that day! So, my brother said, "Get the hell out of here, I've already accepted the invitation for you!" So, I went to Washington. It was getting close to the hour. So I got Mr. White, our representative, and said, "Look, I don't know what goes on." He says, "I don't either, Frank." So, getting down to the hotel was interesting. I stopped a cop and I said, "Look, I have to go to the White House and I have no transportation because the cabs won't stop." So, he saw the telegram and he stopped

a cab! And on the way I went to the hotel and changed, by the way, and walked over to the White House. Well, I talked on my personal experience, and on the building of the great society. And they liked it so well that they invited me again. I was invited three different times, and I was LBJ's personal advisor. He would call me long distance and say, "Look, this is the situation we have. What would you do? How would you fix the situation?" I became intimately acquainted with LBJ.

E: What did you think about the man? Did you consider him a sincere man?

G: I think so; yeah. He was very sincere.

E: There are many stories about the fact that LBJ in his earlier years was an anti-Mexican and in East Texas as any East Texan was back in the '30s and '40s. Now, do you think that this was true at one time and that he somehow matured?

G: I think if it was, I think he did a hell of a good job in repenting.

E: Very interesting. Mr. Galván, I'd like to move into the final phase of this interview. As you know, no doubt, we're entering the 200th anniversary of this country's birth. How do you relate to the founding fathers of this nation? How do you relate to the ideals on which the nation was founded?

G: Oh, the ideals were superb, wonderful! Never had there been a creation of a country based upon those principles, from a historic background. But the trouble was that the administration of our governmental functions, people lost track of these beautiful elements of foundations, the principles and foundations in which the country was born, they overlooked that and they forgot about the inalienable rights that the individual has, and all those beautiful concepts of looking to our happiness. I thought those principles laid down in the constitution are beautiful! Only through the

passage of time, they were overlooked or forgotten, and the individuals didn't have the knowledge, actually, of these basic fundamental principles. But there's nothing more beautiful than that is--"the pursuit of our happiness," and that was forgotten. "All men are created equal," those were forgotten during the Civil War. It was only through the great efforts of Lincoln that these moral principles were coming to the surface, but finally went back. They forgot because probably of economic roles, economic principles, and the economic development, they forgot the basic moral rights that the man has. And no question that they're coming back, civil rights. Equal employment opportunity programs, all these things are coming back to the equal rights. Undiscriminatory attitudes, the right to an education, all these blessings that we had are coming back to the public, slowly but surely.

E: Mr. Galván, do you consider yourself a patriotic American?

G: Oh, yes sir!

E: Mr. Galván this has been a very enlightening interview and I want to thank you very much.

G: I had in mind, "I regret that I have but one life to give to my country." And I believe that most of the Mexican Americans who have been given the inside view of the rights and privilege that they had been endowed with felt the same way to the country, all the heroes that went and took arms for our country, and they were showing that they had that conviction that the only regrets that they had was that they had but one life to give to the country.

E: Thank you very much, Mr. Galván.