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In this selection, De León provides an overview of Tejano life at midcentury. He examines such topics as politics, school desegregation, labor unions, intellectual productivity, and Texas-Mexican society. Moreover, Dr. De León considers the importance of trailblazers like Henry B. González, Raymond Telles, Hector P. García, Carlos E. Castañeda, and J. T. Canales. While Tejanos made important gains during this period, he asserts that "much remained to be accomplished in the struggle for equality."
World War II exerted profound influences on the state of Texas. In its wake, the war for democracy produced several years of prosperity as returning veterans and civilian defense workers hastened to spend incomes accumulated during the conflict. Industrialization rode a new wave as oil refining, chemical and petrochemical production, and defense industry plants surged in the 1950s. Cities burgeoned, moreover, as people from rural areas and small communities gravitated toward urban centers. As of 1960, 63.4 percent of the Texas’s 9.6 million people made the state’s metropolitan counties their place of residence.

On the other hand, some features of the Texas landscape did not change much, at least not until the late 1950s. Politics, for one, retained its conservative bent. On the one hand, many Texas Democrats preferred disassociation with the national party’s support for unionism and civil rights, while on the other, Texas Republicans refused to relax their opposition to constitutional liberties and welfare assistance. In race relations, the strength of Jim Crow sentiments led to the passage of several segregationist laws in 1956–1957, and while their purpose was to prop up long-standing discrimination against African Americans, by implication they extended to those of Mexican descent. Meantime, right-wing extremism prevailed as Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy’s campaign against Communists at the national level found supporters throughout Texas. Reactionaries demanded the removal of controversial books from libraries, the dismissal of teachers considered too liberal for local standards, and the suppression of left-wing ideas.

Nonetheless, Texas began to take new directions in the postwar era (especially towards the late 1950s) that opened up fresh possibilities for Texas Mexicans. In that period, the old agrarian order long committed to the subordination of Tejanos lost the political advantage to urban commercial interests, farm ownerships made a transformation from individually owned concerns into mechanized corporate entities, and many who had been field hands moved to the cities where industry offered better wages. By the mid-1950s, furthermore, McCarthyism was on the wane, and no longer a political issue handicapping “foreigners” from pursuing the American dream.

**TEXAS-MEXICAN SOCIETY AT MIDCENTURY**

The interruption in population growth that occurred during the 1930s ended during World War II and the 1950s; the number of Tejanos now increased from about 1,000,000 in 1950 to 1,400,000 in 1960. According to the census of 1960, 86 percent of white persons of Spanish surname in Texas were native born.

Like the rest of the state’s population, the Texas-Mexicans in the post–World War II years became more urbanized. During the war, a rural area-to city migration had occurred due to rising occupational prospects and demand for laborers in the new urban industrial sectors, and improved wages in the 1950s persuaded others to relocate. Farm hands were also pushed out of bucolic work by the transformation then underway: new mechanization and improved techniques permitted farmers to produce more without the previous reliance on manual labor. Whereas 57 percent of Texas Mexicans resided in urban areas in 1940, 78 percent of Texas Mexicans did so by the 1950s, and the pattern accelerated thereafter. By 1960, some 30,000 Mexican Americans lived in Dallas, 75,000 in Houston, and 243,000 in San Antonio.
(by then, only Los Angeles, California, had more Mexicans than the Alamo City). In the 1950s, Texas Mexicans made up 50 percent of El Paso’s population.

In their socioeconomic standing, close to 75 percent of Texas-Mexican males remained members of the proletariat. According to the 1950 U.S. census, Tejanos lived on a yearly median income of about $1,000. Anglo Americans at that time made twice that much.

Many Tejano city dwellers faced the same conditions that had vexed their parents and grandparents. These included neglect from city government concerning squalid living conditions, high infant death-rates, and rampant scourges such as tuberculosis, diarrhea, and typhus. The 1950 U.S. census identified 33 percent of urban homes owned or rented by Tejanos in the state as being substandard.

In the rural areas, living conditions for Tejanos were even more bleak. Seasonal work in the cotton fields for which farmers paid around $1.25 per hundredweight (that is, per hundred pounds picked) remained an option for survival, though families participating in the migrant cycle made less than $400 per year during the 1950s. In face of the lean wage rates and competition from Mexican illegals (called “wetbacks” during the era, or *mujados* in Spanish), whose numbers mounted during World War II because of alleged labor shortages in state agriculture, Tejanos took off for the Midwest in hordes. There, lodging in the sugar beet and tomato fields was as primitive as in Texas, though wage rates exceeded those in the home quarters.

Others joined the intrastate migration, either in family units or with troqueros. They responded to the beckonings of farmers for whom they had previously worked, then followed the well-traveled route from South Texas, through the Coastal Bend area, into Central Texas, and then to West Texas. Along the way, they encountered all too familiar problems: having to improvise to find shelter (usually in the fields but more likely beneath the protection of bridges or deserted sheds or chicken coops), entering towns that lacked parking areas for trucks as well as bathing facilities and toilets, and facing inadequate means to battle disease, especially dysentery, due to the poor sanitary measures afforded them. Those who returned to their hometowns (many did not; augmenting Tejano communities along the migrant trail) awaited the new planting and picking seasons by working in whatever jobs became available. The migrant workers’ children meantime, tried to obtain schooling for a few months in the spring.

On the other hand, the resilient Tejano middle class continued to be augmented, primarily in the urban sites. The 1940s and 1950s constituted watershed years for Mexicans in terms of opportunities for socioeconomic advancement. In 1950, middle-class categories (professionals, managers, proprietors, clerical, sales, and craftsmen) for men rose to 25 percent, up from the 15 percent reported for 1930.

**LABOR MOVEMENTS IN A CONSERVATIVE AGE**

Texas-Mexican labor organization declined somewhat in the postwar era. As noted, labor historians consider the era of the 1930s to have been one of acute union activity; that intensity lessened between 1945 and 1960 because of the probusiness sentiments that seemed endemic to the state, apprehension among activists of being branded Communist agitators or labor
racketeers and being incarcerated for un-American activities, the many options available to employers to suppress walkouts, and because unions discouraged Tejano workers from membership. In the case of the ILGWU, for instance, the national office showed reluctance to invest money in Texas to organize and train union leaders. The result was more workers in the state's garment factories during the 1950s but a decline in union numbers.

Overall, it appears that the postwar era became one of setbacks in the face of self-organization. In El Paso, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers struck for higher wages that same year, but the company imported Mexican nationals to break the walk-out. In 1948, workers at the Rio Grande Valley Gas Company in Harlingen, Texas, sought to organize a union, but management hired illegal aliens to replace the organizers and their supporters. Then, in 1951, Mexican-American women garment workers belonging to the ILGWU staged a walkout of a Houston plant, but the factory went out of business shortly after. In early 1959, Mexican Americans struck against the Tex-Son Company of San Antonio, which specialized in the making of young men's wear. Beating of strikers ensued, but workers and sympathizers picketed merchants carrying Tex-Son products and appealed to religious groups and fellow unions in San Antonio for assistance. Ultimately replacements and antilabor legislation weakened the job action, and by 1962 the strike had foundered.

POSTWAR POLITICS

Though World War II was very much a watershed in opening up new opportunities for Texas Mexicans, civil rights between 1945 and the late 1950s did not come to Tejanos automatically. With the war's end, white society once again regressed toward old attitudes. One West Texan veteran, for instance, groaned that he and fellow G.I.'s had not fought Hitler to have "ill-smelling Mexicans" now clamor for integration. Public establishments still refused to serve Tejanos, even recently discharged soldiers, among them Medal of Honor winners. White neighborhoods, eating places, picture shows, tonsorial shops, swimming pools, and even hospitals were considered off-limits to Mexican Americans. Throughout the state, police authorities and other law enforcement agencies such as the Border Patrol—an agency of the Immigration and Naturalization Service responsible for keeping immigrants from entering the U.S. illegally—regularly reminded Tejanos of their second-class citizenship through disparagement or intimidation. On the job, a similar retreat from the racial tolerance exhibited during the war years occurred. Employment opportunities for Tejanos diminished quickly. Those who had occupied skilled positions during the war now faced demotion, or even dismissal, while new employees found little available beside unskilled tasks. In South Texas, the press, influential businessmen, and farmers no longer preoccupied themselves with fair-play for Texas Mexicans, and although Governor Coke Stevenson in 1943 created the Good Neighbor Commission to better relations between Texas and both Mexico and Mexican Americans, the agency was staffed by personnel with little commitment to alleviating discrimination.

Politically, Texas Mexicans in the immediate postwar years still had to pay the poll tax and cope with other voting and office-holding restrictions. They were handicapped by the lack of necessary funds to field candidates from their own neighborhoods and had to campaign

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against Anglos who felt politics to be their exclusive domain. Moreover, bossism still survived at midcentury. In South Texas, businessmen and farmers possessed enough economic power to control the votes. The political condition of Texas Mexicans thus remained at a level only slightly improved since the 1920s, when the Anglo-American domination of the border towns from South Texas to Far West Texas dealt a crushing blow to the Mexican-American presence in public offices.

But a resurgence of Tejanos in politics occurred by the 1950s, as “progressive” Anglo business leaders in the cities stood up to the power of the old guard that dominated the machines. The challengers tried to incorporate middle-class Mexican Americans into local government so as to establish a climate conducive to business expansion. In San Antonio, especially, power brokers by the early 1950s sought to enlist blacks and Mexican Americans for progressive slates, though Tejanos who did win by tacit agreement of those movers and shakers often found it difficult once in office to work effectively for Tejano causes because of their ties to Anglo sponsors. However, in 1956, an independent grass-roots campaign produced the election of Henry B. González to the Texas legislature, making him the first Tejano to serve in the state senate in the twentieth century. Voter registration and a get-out-the-vote campaign in El Paso led to the election in 1957 of Raymond Telles, the city’s first Mexican-American mayor. He won reelection two years later without opposition.

Compared to the other sections of the state, South Texas and Far West Texas had produced more prominent civic leaders, been the primary centers of activism in the Tejano community, and generally held an edge on the number of Tejanos in office. Indeed, of the six Tejanos in the state house in 1960, two were from San Antonio, one from El Paso, and the other three from the South Texas border area. At midcentury, therefore, it was still difficult to organize Mexican Americans in the rural counties of West and Northwest Texas due to their physical isolation.

RENEWED STRUGGLES FOR A BETTER LIFE

Out of World War II and the Korean War emerged politically minded Mexican-American veterans who set out on a concentrated course to erase the inequalities that their people faced. The military experience had defined for them the meaning of citizenship and exposed them to the inconsistencies of a country that espoused equality but did not practice it. In San Antonio, therefore, civic leaders took activist stances through organizations such as the Loyal American Democrats, the West Side Voters League, and the Alamo Democrats. Eleuterio Escobar revitalized La Liga Pro-Defensa Escolar in 1947 to again press for equal and adequate educational facilities and more educational opportunities for Mexican-American children.

Also organized in San Antonio that year by business and professional men was the Pan American Progressive Association (PAPA). As a nonpartisan entity, it sought ways in which to improve the lives of the Mexican-descent population of the city, including the integration of residential areas in San Antonio. But PAPA’s life appears not to have extended beyond the early 1950s.

In Corpus Christi, World War II veteran Dr. Hector P. García in 1948 founded what evolved into the most vigorous advocacy organization of the postwar, the American G.I. Forum. Originally
established in an effort to expedite federal benefits for Mexican-American ex-servicemen, the G.I. Forum attained a new standing in 1949 with the famous Felix Longoria affair at Three Rivers, Texas. When the local funeral home refused to hold services for Longoria, a slain World War II soldier, Dr. Garcia publicized the incident—which gained nationwide attention—as one more example of entrenched racial intolerance in the rural regions of South Texas. Through the intervention of Senator Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas, Longoria's remains were interred at Arlington National Cemetery.

The courageous stand that the G.I. Forum took on the incident vaulted the group into the role of spokesperson for disadvantaged Mexican Americans. G.I. Forum chapters from across the state now united with LULAC councils to press for sociopolitical advances. Involved in these struggles were leaders from the 1930s and World War II years, among them Alonso Perales, M. C. Gonzales, J. T. Canales, James Tafolla, George I. Sánchez, and Carlos E. Castañeda. But joining them in the era between 1945 and 1960 (and after that matter), were Gus García, Ed Idar, Cristobal Alderete, John J. Herrera, and of course, Dr. García.

Also part of this activist cadre were women from the two organizations. Representatives of Ladies G.I. Forum Auxiliaries and Ladies LULAC Councils engaged in programs established to: buy milk tickets for children whose parents suffered from tuberculosis; purchase glasses for needy students; distribute toys to the poor at Christmas time; raise funds to provide clothing for children in hospitals; and donate money to the March of Dimes and the Polio Drive. Alongside men, women helped back Little League baseball clubs to aid adolescents in acquiring a positive attitude for themselves; they worked in poll-tax-raising drives and rallies and were often the prime figures in the establishment of new councils throughout the country by spearheading efforts to integrate public accommodations and voice the concerns of Mexican-American women. Many gained recognition within their respective organizations as exemplary models of commitment to the cause of Mexican-American rights.

**SCHOOL DESEGREGATION EFFORTS**

For years, activists had noted the lack of education for Tejanos as the major stumbling block towards the people's progress. The presence of inferior "Mexican schools," especially, stigmatized children as being less than full-fledged citizens, hindered their ability to learn the English language, and impeded their participation in matters relevant to the community. Because middle-class leaders understood schooling to be a gateway to social betterment, they sponsored efforts to educate Tejano children by means that included back-to-school drives, public service announcements over radio, community rallies, teenage hops, and king and queen balls.

The middle-class leaders also undertook legal measures, according to historian Guadalupe San Miguel's study of the Texas-Mexican campaign for educational equality. Following World War II (before the founding of the G.I. Forum), LULAC took the lead in seeking legal reversals to educational wrongs. In California, the League contested the pattern of segregation in Méndez v. Westminster School District (1945), and the subsequent ruling by the Ninth Federal District Court in Los Angeles—that segregation of Mexican-American children indeed infringed on guarantees made by the Fourteenth Amendment—had inspired the drive to
desegregate schools in the Lone Star State. Therefore, in January 1948, Minerva Delgado and several parents in Central Texas, counseled by LULAC, alleged that school segregation in the region was in breach of the Constitution. Soon after, the G.I. Forum closed ranks behind LULAC with moral support and financial contributions garnered from across the state. In *Delgado v. Bastrop ISD* (1948), a district court agreed with the aggrieved plaintiffs, declaring that separating students in different buildings violated the law.

Despite this legal pronouncement and supportive regulations issued by the state superintendent of public instruction to integrate, most school districts generally overlooked the *Delgado* decision. Undaunted, Mexican-American leaders took other segregation cases to court, including the significant *Hernández v. Driscoll Consolidated Independent School District* (1957). In their complaint, LULAC and the G.I. Forum argued that the segregation of Mexican-American children in the first two grades and their subsequent detention at that level for a total of four years was an unreasonable practice predicated on notions about race or ancestry. In January 1957, a federal district court agreed with the charge. Despite such significant victories, school districts devised ways of evading court orders. These included gerrymandering districts (dividing districts unfairly to insure segregation), building schools for specific neighborhoods, and offering freedom-of-choice plans that allowed Anglos to select the school they preferred to have their children attend.

The commitment to educational matters produced, in 1957, what came to be known as the “Little Schools of the 400.” The brainchild of National LULAC President Félix Tijerina, the program, first implemented in Ganado, Texas, by seventeen-year-old Isabel Verver, sought to have preschool Tejanos learn four hundred English key words and phrases that would allow them to succeed in their first year in school. Implemented initially in Jackson County, the project proved so popular by 1958 that the Houston entrepreneur enacted similar programs in other parts of the state and gained the endorsement of Price Daniel, the governor of Texas. The next year, the state legislature funded Tijerina-type schools to the tune of $1,500,000. The concept of the “Little Schools of the 400” survived into the 1960s, though budget cutting undermined it by the middle of that decade. The federal government, however, later modeled its Head Start program on Tijerina’s creation.

**Hernández v. Texas**

LULAC and the G.I. Forum also joined forces to have Mexican Americans recognized as a *class* whose rights Texans transgressed. To this end, Gus García took the case (with the assistance of attorneys John J. Hererra and James de Anda) of Pete Hernández, who had been accused of murdering Joe Espinosa in Edna, Texas, in 1950. In his motion against the state, García contended that the omission of Mexican Americans from jury service in Jackson County violated their right as a *class* to equal protection under the law. Hernández was tried nonetheless, and the jury rendered a guilty verdict and condemned him to life imprisonment.

The United States Supreme Court agreed to hear *Hernández v. State of Texas* and LULAC and the G.I. Forum members supplied the needed funds for the attorneys’ Washington stay. In May 1954, the high court agreed unanimously that Texas laws that discriminated ostensibly
on the basis of class (or against "other whites," such as Mexicans) did in fact defy the rights and assurance granted by the Constitution. Hernández was retried and again found guilty (though given a lesser sentence), but the Supreme Court's decision was far-reaching as it acknowledged that Tejanos (to whom Jim Crow laws did not ostensibly apply) had long been the victim of discriminatory treatment. The verdict did not change race relations in Texas immediately, but future generations of Tejanos would profit from its implications.

The ACSSP

In the background of such efforts to protect the legal rights of Mexican Americans in the United States existed an organization recently rediscovered by the historian Ricardo Romo called the American Council of Spanish-Speaking People (ACSSP). Founded in 1951 by the educator George I. Sánchez, ACSSP pursued litigation in the area of civil rights and assisted sister civic action groups in other parts of the United States. With monies received from the American Civil Liberties Union, it financed several civil rights cases during its brief period of existence, among them Hernández v. State of Texas (1954) and Hernández v. Driscoll Consolidated Independent School District (1957). By the late 1950s, however, the ACSSP faced decline as Sánchez and other members of the Council found less time to dedicate to the organization and funds became more difficult to acquire. In 1959, the ACSSP passed into history, having set an example as a courageous attempt to utilize the legal system as a recourse for redress on behalf of Spanish-speaking Americans.

Los Del Otro Lado

In seeking to improve the lives of Mexican Americans after World War II, both LULAC and the G.I. Forum resisted what Tejanos of the era referred to as the "Wetback Problem." In the eyes of these organizations, the presence of braceros (day laborers from Mexico brought to the U.S. on contract) and "wetbacks" cheapened wages for Texas-Mexican residents, supplanted them from agricultural jobs, intensified health problems in the colonias, and generally gave "Latin Americans" (the preferred self-referent used by Mexican-American leaders circa the 1930s to the 1950s to combat the image held by Anglos that Tejanos were not "Americans") a bad name. The braceros were part of an official labor agreement negotiated between the United States and Mexico during the war years to provide field hands for United States farm estates facing labor shortages. Although Mexico had banned the movement of braceros into Texas because of the state's well-known racism, it relented in 1947 and removed Texas from the "blacklist." Illegal entrants ("wetbacks"), on the other hand, had arrived in Texas after 1942 in response to the state's great demand for farm workers and continued to be preferred by growers as they could be hired without bureaucratic interference and could be easily exploited by avaricious farm managers.

To combat the "Wetback Problem," the G.I. Forum and LULAC lobbied to extradite illegals, to terminate the bracero program, and to have the border better patrolled in order to halt unauthorized crossings into Texas. In 1953, the G.I. Forum published an investigative report titled What Price Wetbacks? as part of its ongoing efforts to combat the presence of undocumented
workers. The pamphlet illuminated the exploitation of wetback labor and explained the effects these laborers had upon health standards in border communities. The survey further faulted law authorities for a lax enforcement of the immigration statutes.

Politicians seemed indifferent to the Forum’s concerns (preferring to ignore the issue because it helped the nation’s growers maintain a supply of cheap labor), but the public ultimately became alarmed over the “wetback menace.” With popular support, therefore, the Immigration and Naturalization Service in July 1954, ventured upon a widesweeping campaign called “Operation Wetback.” In corroboration with local and federal authorities, the Border Patrol mounted raids into the rural areas of Texas to arrest illegals and evict them to Mexico. The drives affected many American citizens of Mexican descent who witnessed close relatives forcibly repatriated. The American G.I. Forum and LULAC both countenanced the project, though they did make attempts to insure that the rights of the Texas-Mexican citizens were respected. But their stand caused friction within the ranks of the Tejano community, leading many to question the sensitivity of the Forumers, LULACers, and other supporters of the xenophobic campaigns.

ACADEMICIANS AND WRITERS

Previous generations of Texas Mexicans had contributed to a literary past, some in English, some in Spanish. Juan Seguín and José Antonio Navarro had both left memoirs, and a small number of Tejanos had also penned autobiographies. Lay historians had put together informal histories to note the role Tejanos played in the Texas saga. Other writers had dealt with ongoing concerns of importance to the Tejano community. Spanish-language newspapers regularly printed creative literature, and Tejano authors of fiction had published through other outlets.

In the postwar era, academicians, intellectuals, and others with a talent for composition added to that literary record. Noteworthy writers include historians, the most renowned being Dr. Carlos E. Castañeda. A professor of history at the University of Texas until his death in 1957, Castañeda wrote numerous works during the period between the Great Depression and the 1950s that sought to explain the Spanish/Mexican contribution to Texas history, among them the now classic, seven volume study, Our Catholic Heritage (7 vols; Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones, Co., 1936–1958). His lifetime bibliography of twelve books and seventy-eight articles contributed to Texas and borderlands scholarship by identifying the debt American history owed to Spain and Mexico.

Dr. Américo Paredes, a University of Texas folklore teacher, writer, and poet educated in the Brownsville schools, in 1958 published “With His Pistol in His Hand”: A Border Ballad and Its Hero (Austin: University of Texas, 1958), a book studying the kinship between the corrido and the real historical events surrounding the episode of Gregorio Cortez. The lay historian Mercurio Martínez coauthored The Kingdom of Zapata (San Antonio: The Naylor Co., 1953), and Cleofas Calleros in numerous pieces preserved the history of Spaniards and Mexicans in the El Paso Valley.
New Mexico-born-and-educated George I. Sánchez, who taught in the Department of History and Philosophy of Education at the University of Texas from 1940 to 1972 (when he passed away), authored or edited some fifty books, monographs, and special reports as well as some eighty articles, many of which dealt with his deep concern with the quality of education for Mexican-American students. As a graduate school professor at the University of Texas, Sánchez directed in excess of sixty-five Master’s theses and twenty-eight doctoral dissertations, and he taught as a visiting professor in universities both in the United States and overseas.

In the early 1930s, Jovita González became one of the first Mexican Americans to publish English-language translations of traditional Tejano storytelling, submitting articles to various scholarly outlets, including the yearly publications of the prestigious Texas Folklore Society. She continued to write sketches, short stories, and poems during the 1950s.

Activists also contributed to the literature issued during the period. J. T. Canales, the former legislator from Brownsville, authored several essays between 1930 and 1945 on behalf of civil rights causes, then in 1945 reminisced in “Personal Recollections of J. T. Canales.” He produced other historical pieces after 1945, among them Bits of Texas History in the Melting Pot of America (2 vols; Brownsville: privately printed, 1950, 1957) as well as titles on his kin Juan Cortina, among them Juan N. Cortina Presents His Motion for a New Trial (San Antonio: Artes Gráficas, 1951). Alonso Perales, the LULAC activist, published El méxico americano y la política de sur de Tejas (San Antonio: Artes Gráficas, 1931) and En defensa de mi raza (San Antonio: Artes Gráficas, 1936 and 1937) to highlight the political disadvantages of Tejanos in South Texas. In 1948, he compiled a volume of statements on discrimination and published them in Are We Good Neighbors? (San Antonio: Artes Gráficas, 1948).

THE END OF AN ERA

From 1945 to 1960, Texas Mexicans continued to experience oppression and exploitation, most severely in the rural regions in which racial attitudes relegated Tejanos to a second-class status. But circumstances in the late 1950s for Texas Mexicans no longer resembled those of the 1940s. Within the community, for one, improved familiarity with American mainstream life offered more promise. While Tejano society had command of the Spanish language, observed Mexico’s national holidays, and enjoyed Mexican music and other traditions of the motherland, a number of factors strengthened their attachment to United States institutions. World War II had acquainted Tejano veterans with an Anglo-American world they had previously known only vicariously; the G.I. Bill of Rights had proved instrumental in the education of many ex-servicemen, compulsory-school attendance laws came to be more strictly enforced, and the consumer culture of the era seduced the multitudes, many of whom had been United States born and knew no other than American life. Continued cultural syncretization improved Tejanos’ chances to capitalize on the age’s new opportunities.

Meanwhile, de facto Jim Crow traditions for Texas Mexicans in the urban areas faced new threats due to the increasing influence of Mexican-American leaders and their sympathizers in the NAACP and labor unions as well as to initiatives undertaken by government and the
courts to integrate public education and juries. By the late 1950s, political circumstances themselves conspired to weaken racism against Tejanos. The liberal wing of the Democratic party experienced a resurgence, and members of the Congress such as Lyndon Baines Johnson and Ralph Yarborough did not look upon Jim Crow as an appropriate system for the modern age. In Austin, legislators such as Henry B. González and Abraham Kazen initiated campaigns to overturn segregation. As the decade closed, however, much remained to be accomplished in the struggle for equality. The 1960s and 1970s would see newer approaches in the campaign to achieve those ends.