

INTERVIEWS WITH DANIEL GALVAN

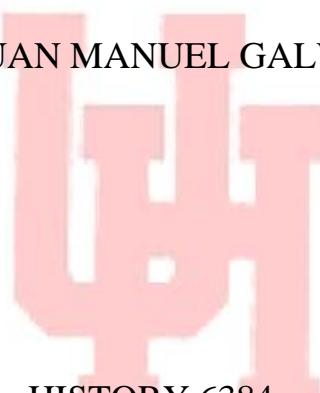
PROJECT: COMING TO HOUSTON

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PREFACE

The road traveled by many men and women who cross the southern border of the United States carries countless experiences of suffering and humiliation as well as tireless human efforts to reach the American dream. Throughout the decades, thousands, perhaps millions of Latin Americans have abandoned their impoverished homelands and left for the United States in a quest for survival or simply for better opportunities. The stories of these immigrants share many peculiarities, one of the most salient being the struggle and tenacity to earn a living even at the cost of one's life. What follows is one of those stories that we have only heard in part, the rest is only known to those who have experienced what it's

like to be an undocumented worker in this country.

This is account of the life of my father, Daniel Galván. His experiences are common, yet unique. What distinguish story of my father is its length and diversity. While thousands have lived and worked illegally in the United States, very few have experienced this process both before and after being part of the Bracero Program, and even fewer have eventually become United States citizens.

Daniel was born in 1937 in rural central Mexico, losing his mother at the age of five. He grew up in a distant.

Village of the Mountain Range of Quanajuato, where he did not complete even one year of elementary education. Being too young to enroll in the Bracero Program, he crossed over as an undocumented farm worker in 1952. He joined the Bracero Program later in the decade and spent the winters in Mexico, where two of his younger children died of preventable conditions due to poverty and isolation into which he and his family lived. He continued to work in the United States illegally, experiencing persecution and abuse but also taking pride in his efforts to support his family. Finally, Daniel was granted legal residence and later United States citizenship, which enabled him to bring his family to Houston, Texas in the mid 1990s.

The original idea for the preparation of this oral history came during a conversation with Professor Joseph Pratt in the summer of 2004. This project was prepared as part of the requirements of a methodology class, which placed constraints on the time and resources spent in its completion. It is, above all, a tribute to my father and a witness to the experiences of migrants living in the United States.

It is necessary to make a final note of methodology. Daniel Galvan speaks in the idiom of rural central Mexico, which I sought to preserve in the transcript. The translation of the transcripts that I offer is largely literal, and at times reflects not only Spanish syntax, but also the syntax of my father's idiom. I encourage reader, when possible to consult the Spanish transcripts. The fact that the data offered relies on memory also implies that most dates are approximate, and a margin error of one year must be granted to them.

Juan Manuel Galván.

Houston, TX, 2 January 2005.



TAPE 1 - SIDE A

JG Juan Galván

DG Daniel Galván

JG 21 October of 2004. It is approximately 12:00 noon. This is an interview with Mr. Daniel Galván. We are going to talk most of all about your experience coming to the United States; well, perhaps different questions about your life. First of all, I want to ask you, Where are you originally from?

DG From a small village called El Refugio de Trancas.

JG Is that where you were born? DG Well, I am not sure whether it was in El Refugio de Trancas or in Trancas. But that is where I was born and raised.

JG Can you tell me about your childhood?

DG Well, what could I tell you? Looking after herds of goats and working. Looking after goats as a small child and then working after a yoke of oxen when I was old enough. Planting corn and beans, planting chile.

JG Who owned the land that you worked? Was it your dad's?

DG The land belonged to the Hacienda. All the land belonged to the Hacienda.

JG How was your family? How many brothers and sisters did you have?

DG We were three brothers, well, four brothers and three... But I didn't have three sisters, only two. We were seven siblings: Lupe, Hipólito, Leon, Roberto, and I. Five [men] and two women. Seven. And two who died; those that I remember, a little boy named Marcial and another one named Dolores-, they were my mom's sons.

JG Did you mention Lupe?

DG Yes, Lupe was the firstborn.

JG What are your sisters' names?

DG Well, I don't remember all their names very well. My sisters, they are Estela, Prudenciana, Maria de Lourdes, Maria Guadalupe, Irene... I don't remember the others. I did mention Socorro, didn't I?

Of my other brothers; Manuel, Antonio, and Ricardo. Those who passed away, because one died before he was born. Another one also died, I don't remember if he was already been baptized, his name was Juan. Of those whom I remember that died, it was two of them.

JG Did you mention your two older sisters? Tomasa and...

DG Oh, Tomasa and Francisca from the first family.

JG Do you remember your momⁱ?

DG Yes, I remember her most about the time she died, that is when I remember her the most. Because before she died, I was very young. I don't remember anything earlier because I was five years old when she passed away. I am not sure if I had actually turned five, but I might as well have, since I was born in 1937. No, in 1942, she died in 1942; I don't remember the exact date. I believe it must have been in November of 1942. And my dad only remained single for less than a year, he then married another woman.

JG Was it with her that he had more children?

DG Another eleven or twelve more. I don't remember all of their names; I might have omitted somebody's.

JG When did you first come to the United States? How was that first time?

DG [Sighs]. The first time that I came, I believe it was in 1952, around the month of July, something like that. JG Where did you first go? What did you do?

DG We arrived in the edges of a place called Convis, near Harlingen. We could see the small town of Harlingen in the distance, although we didn't go to it. We were picking cotton; we were only two or three

weeks working there. Then people started saying that lots of immigration officers from California were going to come and clean everything up. Then people told us to go back. There was another boy younger than me, he was twelve years old, and the older men said that we had to get out, because they didn't want the Border Patrol to catch us.

And we went back; we crossed the Rio Grande back to Mexico. On the way back we passed through a place called Empalme right by the Rio Bravo, near Matamoros. There we picked cotton for about two months, on that side, in Mexico. Then we came back home to Guanajuato.

JG What did you do when you returned to Guanajuato?

DG Upon coming back to Guanajuato, well... I went to work on the fields, it was near the time of picking up the bean harvest, and then we had to cut down the corn, and so on.

JG And after all this, did you go back to the United States again?

DG Well, I didn't come back for a while. After 1952 I spent some time working around the village. I stayed home, I was single, and we were working communally. wasn't until 1957 that I started looking for a way to come over as a bracero. With my dad's help, of course, he gave me the money.² He sold some corn, well, to get the money to give me where I could go back.

I remember that during the last week in which I got my permit in Dolores my dad was already upset, he was tired and frustrated. I remember he told me: Well, if you don't get that permit this week, I am not giving you any more money, because I have already spent too much on that.³

Well, I was very lucky that weekend, I think it was a Friday. We went to City Hall and they called the roll, and my turn came. And then we set off to Empalme, Sonora. Because people were assigned to go to different places. Some they sent to Monterrey [Nuevo Leon], those who were coming this way; those who were coming to the North they sent to Empalme, Sonora.⁴ Well, it was my luck to go to Empalme.

I remember that I arrived over there in California I believe the 7 or 8 of September, to pick cotton. And it got so cold! And also so hot, but I mean terribly hot! Because it was so humid, because they irrigated the soil, and vapor came out of the ground and up. And they paid us 50 cents for every 100 pounds; I mean 50 pounds, which they called a quintal. I worked there during September and part of October, only about a month and a half.

Then they called me to work with a farmer, with a Japanese, and we set out of Brawley, on to West Moorland, a little town down the road. And I stayed with that Japanese [farmer] all that year. Yes, and we worked with him all year. We began to work with him I believe in June or July of 1958. The harvest with that *patron* came to an end and there was no more work.⁵ He turned us in to the offices that they called *la asociación*, where all the braceros gathered until they were given an assignment. Those who didn't come directly to a patron came also to the *asociación*, where they stayed for a while and did odd day jobs and waited until they found a job.

Well, I left [California] I believe in the month of July and came to Nayarit, where my dad was at the time. I stayed with him, well, working and doing whatever needed to be done. About three weeks later I set out for Empalme [Sonora] again, looking for a way to get a contract as a bracero again. After spending about two weeks in Empalme, at last... Well, waiting with the hope of getting a bracero contract again, and at times losing all hope and then gaining hope again.

It was then that at last I met some men from the state of Yucatan. And with them was a man whom they called, *el licenciado*, who represented all the people from Yucatan applying for bracero contracts.⁶ And I spoke to him and he told me, - Give me \$200 Mexican pesos and I will help you. Alright, I gave him \$200 pesos and waited about fifteen more days. And I got the contract, and crossed over, crossed over again; we all crossed over to El Centro, for it was there that they gave people work assignments. For it was there in Empalme [Sonora] that we received contracts and from there we crossed over to the United States. And El Centro was like a center of

re-concentration, where everybody arrived to and from where we were sent to different places.

And it was my luck to be assigned to a place called King City, California, where we came to pick up onions. They paid us 18 US cents per sack; those were like burlap sacks, they were pretty big. And we made a lot of money. Anyway, we did only the onion run, which we finished in about twenty days.

And when [the onion run] ended a man came and sent us to a place to pick tomatoes. And when we arrived, we found out that there was no money in it, for all the tomatoes were totally ripe, too ripe and burned by the sun. Then it was useless. We began picking and looking for the most firm. Then the overseers came over and began throwing most of them away and leaving only three or four tomatoes [in every basket]. We went back; from there we went back to El Campo, walking, for we were living in El Campo. And we said that we were not walking for that man anymore.

That day a representative came over, for there was always a representative from Mexico. And that man arrived and asked us what the problem was, and why we didn't want to work. And we told him that we couldn't work there because we didn't make enough to support ourselves. In the way they wanted us to work, we weren't going to work. And he said, - That's fine. And the same day he took us to Salinas [California] himself, and turned us in to a lettuce company. It was called Warren Company. We arrived at the time when they were pruning the lettuce.

We got to work pruning the lettuce and we stayed there. Then we continued weeding the fields until the time came to harvest the lettuce. And there we stayed throughout 1958 the entire year. We did the lettuce run in Salinas, and also in Watsonville. When the lettuce run ended in Salinas and Watsonville, it was ready to be picked up in Brentwood. Those might be different climates, for [the lettuce] seems to get ready like by regions, right? And we went to do the lettuce run in Brentwood. And later in October it came to an end and that is when we returned to the Valley. And then I came back home, I came to Mexico, to spend the winter.

JG When you refer to the Valley, do you mean the San Fernando Valley?

DG They cal lit *valle imperial*.

JG Oh, Imperial Valley

DG Yes. Imperial Valley is a very large place, something like a county. That “Valle Imperial” runs from El Centro, and includes Brawley, West Moorland, Indio, Coachella; all those towns nearby, all of that is Imperial Valley. Well, it was in the last days of the year 1959 that I came back over here [to Mexico], and it was in January [1960] that I got married.

JG Yes.

DG I spent the year of 1960 at home [in Mexico], working for the Hacienda [de Trancas] . They paid us \$4 Mexican pesos a day. That's what I did throughout 1960 and 1961, the two full years.

JG Back then, in California, How much did you make a day, average?

DG I couldn't tell you how much we made [a day]. When I 7' went to California we made about \$250 US dollars a week, which was very good money at the time. \$250 dollars working Monday through Friday only, we got off early on Fridays. We were off Saturdays and Sundays.

JG That would be almost \$50 dollars a day.

DG Almost \$50 dollars a day was pretty good money.

JG Yes, and then...

DG Then we continue with 1963, right?

JG No, you were still telling me about 1960 and 1961, when you worked for the Hacienda de Trancas.

DG Yes.

JG But also, besides working for the day, didn't you also work as a sharecropper

DG I worked as a sharecroppers. Yes. The Hacienda only provided the land and the seed, we provided everything else, and we split everything in half, Oh, and we also brought the Hacienda's part to them. When the time came to harvest the corn and beans everything was brought to a *canton*.⁷ And from that place everything was parted in half and everybody took what belonged to him and took it home. The *rastrojo* we carried on our shoulders to take it to the piles of the *patron*, that we did without pay.⁷ Because that was the tradition and we had to do it. That was in 1960 and 1961.

In 1962 I set out to Ciudad Obregón, Sonora, which is near Empalme. We went to work near Ciudad Obregón and from there the [Mexican] patrones gave us letters [of recommendation], stating the number of pounds of cotton that we had collected or the amount of time that we had worked for them. They would give us a letter and we would take that letter with us to the city of Empalme, Sonora, and we presented that document. And we used that letter to get another bracero contract. And they would take that letter and would send us to the United States. But that time in 1962 I couldn't endure anymore. It was only fifteen or twenty days before my contract expired wFfZ You know, there are times when one doesn't take life all that seriously, and plans what can become true. There was that man, Juan Rodriguez, from El Terrero.⁹

And he was my brother Lupe's *compadre*, and while we were eating one day I told him: - Hey, Juan, I dare you to go back home to Mexico with me right now!¹⁰ And he said, - like hell that I go with you! He also said, - He who looks back is not a man! - Let's go! And we went home. Because back then we were poor but we didn't worry that much. I didn't have money but we had corn and beans. I got home and immediately began selling a sack of corn over here and a sack of beans over there, and I even sold a bull. Because as soon as I got back my *compadre* Ignacio asked me to become Gerardo's baptism godfather. Then my *compadre* Encarnación ask me to baptize Angel the same week. And like I said, God never abandons anybody and

although we were rich, we were back in the village and we had stuff to sell, for I even sold a bull.

And my compadre Encarnacián, after he asked me to be his son's baptism godfather, told me... He said, I feel bad about having asked you, for I know that you didn't make any money in your last venture [in the United States], and you probably are without any money. And I know you also have other commitments. All I am asking you is to bring my son to the baptismal font, but don't spend any money. Don't worry about buying my son any clothes, don't worry about anything, I will take care of everything. All I ask of you is to be his godfather where you don't have to spend any money.

Well, anyway, like I said, we were poor but weren't destitute. We sold a bull and took care of everything, right? And we continued that year. Later the time came

to harvest our crop of beans and corn, and those were good crops. That year Don Pedro Grimaldo had worked on my land, on the lots by the agave fields, which were ours. That was a good harvest; those were good harvests back in those years. That was in 1962, and in 1963 I also let him work on my lands and I took off. And I got a bracero contract again and took off, again, to the United States. That year I was assigned to a place called Gonzalez, California, pick up the tomato haverst.

And then, they assigned me to load and unload trucks. And I have always been one of those people who can't take a lot of pressure. And I could have made good money there as a carrier because those people get paid more money. Only that I had to work with two young men, one was from Morelia [Michoacán], the other one was from the vicinity of Pénjamo [Guanajuato] . And it was the guy from Pénjamo who was hard on me. Of course, they were professionals in that trade, and I was only a beginner. And that guy was always yelling at me and

cursing me out. And he used to tell me, - Hey, don't be scared, what are you scared of? Are you afraid of falling? If you die and go to hell, the insurance will pay off the widow, let the widow go!

And I couldn't take it, I couldn't take that job. I worked two weeks and got out. And that was it, I went and told the overseer, - I can't work here anymore. And he said, - But, why? How is it that you can't do it? He said, - I know you can do it, there you will be asking more money. I said, - No, I can't be there. Not with those co-workers, assign me to a different duty even if I make less money. And he said, - Well, it's okay. And I went and took my basket and began picking tomatoes. I did the tomato run and I came back, for there was nowhere else to work in the United States that year, and I returned to Mexico.

Oh, and by the way, a year before around that time, a train had ran over a bus full of braceros in a town called Chular, not very far Gonzalez (California). The train came by and ran over a truck full of people, and dragged them. And it left body parts as it went. What people tell is that even two weeks later there were people, sent by someone, picking up pieces of fingers and pieces of bones of those people. I am not sure if it was eighteen people that were killed. Yes, it seems like it was eighteen people who died there. Because the train left pieces of truck and pieces of people. And 1963 went by and in 1964 I went back over there. This time I was not assigned to Gonzalez, they sent me to Borland; I don't remember when we arrived there. It was in July perhaps. The thing is that all work came to an end around the 20th of October of 1964.

TAPE 1 - SIDE B

JG So all work in California came to an end on October 20 of 1964. What did you do then?

DG I went back to Mexico.

JG And then?

DG I went to work plowing my lands; I also worked for the patron for \$4 Mexican pesos a day."

JG Did you already have children when you went to California in 1963?

DG I had Chabela already.¹²

JG Anyone else besides Chabela?

DG Eugenio. I don't remember when he was born. Inés says he was born two years after Chabela.

JG What happened to Eugenio?

DG He died of pneumonia [prolonged silence].

JG And after you went back to Mexico in '64, Where did you go?

DG Once work came to an end in 1964, that was the end of the contracts, according to the twenty-year agreement between the governments [of Mexico and the United States]. There were no more contracts, and I came back and worked part of the time on my farm and the rest of the time for the patron.

JG What kind of agricultural work did you do?

DG Well, at first I plowed the lands with a steel plow and a yoke of oxen. After it began to rain, we got to plant corn and beans.

JG Who was the patron?

DG A man called Carlos Lance. Because it was back then when the old patron, Salvador Azanza, passed away. I am not sure when he died, Perhaps in 1961 or 1962. Because Don Salvador Azanza supported and defended my father very much, and when he died of a heart attack, the people went after my y4ther.¹⁵ They even yelled at him telling him that npr that the one who defended him was dead they were going to give him hell.

And one day he had a fight with a young man whose name I don't remember right now. Thought over there by the Tanque de los Patos irrigation dam. They fought with their fists even thought they carried guns. And they called my brother Hipolito, and he came over to see how my father was doing.¹⁵

And Hipolito wanted them to do something, he said he had friends in San Miguel de Alleffde. He had a friend who was a State Representative and he had other friends. He wanted my father to file charges against that young man, but my father refused. My father said it had been just a fight and he wanted to leave that behind, he didn't want to file charges against anybody.

We took my father to the doctor and my father said he had fallen off a horse. The doctor didn't believe that, he said my dad's injuries couldn't have been caused by a horse. My father insisted that he had been thrown and dragged off a horse and that was why he was beaten up like that. And that was when my dad moved to Mexico City in 1962. I don't remember the month, but it was in '62 he moved to Mexico City.

JG Now that you mention that in 1965 you stayed in El Refugio and that there were no more contracts, remembering those years that you worked as a bracero in the United States, can you describe how you remember those years, could you describe them?

DG Man, it was very nice. Those years that I spent as a bracero I didn't have to struggle much, because once the American laws received us we had medical services and everything else. We arrived over on this

side and they charged us \$12.50 US dollars a week for boarding. And they charged us \$8.00 US dollars a week for medical attention.

That much we paid every week, and that was all. And we came to work and they called us when the bell rang, and the whole group, hundreds of people, got over to the dining room to eat at once. At 5:00 a.m. they were calling us to eat. That was in *la asociación*, right? But if we were working for a patron, well, there we had to get up regardless of whether it was hot or cold and we had to wash our pots and pans and cook for ourselves.

The time I spent working in California for the lettuce company, those years I didn't worry about anything. There we also had what they called boarding service. The place where we stayed was like a very big house where all the people stayed and we came into a living room for all of us, there the only thing we did for ourselves was washing our clothes. But after that, in other places, working for patrones; well, there we had to wash our clothes and we had to do everything that needed to be done with our own hands. But it was beautiful. I especially liked the state of Idaho very much. The weather was especially good to me; there I would go years without even catching a cold.

JG After the end of the Bracero Program and before you went to Idaho, did you also spend some time in Mexico City?

DG Yes, towards the end of 1965 I went to work in Mexico City for an engineer with whom I had work in Guanajuato digging the tunnels. And when we finished in Guanajuato and I went to Mexico City with them, to work in the tunnels for potable water.

We began in a place called Navidad. From there we went on to El Cartero. Navidad was a small town; that is where we began to work. Then there was a hill, and on the other side of the hill there was a village called El Cartero, then we went over there. And ahead of that village was the last place where I worked, that was called Santa Lucia. We dug through the hills, and in Santa Lucia was where the tunnel came out. And there was a long downhill slope. At the end of that was an uphill slope. We carried the tunnel according to the landscape where it would go downhill and then would go uphill and would follow the water current.

There in that place called Santa Lucia they sent me with a master brick mason to work building offices for the company. And there, on the other side of the hill by Calzada Vallejo, near the Monumento a la Raza, there we spent some time building the offices for the company. It was called Compañía Estrella now that I remember.

When we finished there in La Raza we went over and built other offices somewhere in Avenida Guerrero. When we finished those we went over to the Alameda Central, although I don't remember the names of the streets in that area. In the Alameda Central, in front of the Caballito de Troya, there we built another office building.

And in La Lumbre there was a tunnel where they called me to work as a helper of El Escudo.¹⁶ That tunnel went across the Alameda Central and it came out in the next Lumbre. It was at the foot of the Torre Latinoamericana, there was another Lumbre over there, but we didn't get to go that far. We were about half way through when, in a weekend, we got out of work and when we got back on Monday, half a tunnel was filled with silt, half way full of mud. There had been a collapse; over the tunnel there was a very big swimming pool over in Alameda Central, from where there had been a slow leak and it had collapsed, filling the tunnel with all that water.

And they placed pumps out there and pumped a lots of water into the tunnel. And they placed more pumps out there with huge hoses and they pumped all that silt, all that mud mixed with water, until they cleaned everything up. And after they cleaned up we got back to work, but I didn't stay with them very long afterwards.

I don't remember how many more weeks I worked, but I went back home to Guanajuato, back to my farm to continue working on my crops. My dad and my brother Lupe encouraged me to stay in Mexico City. They used to tell me, "Sell everything you have over there, here you can support yourself and your family." But my brother Hipólito thought differently, he would say, "My recommendation to you is that if you are okay over in your farm, that you stay over there. If you decide to move over here to Mexico City, let that come out of your heart, and we will help you if you come over, but if you feel that you are fine over there, then stay over there." And Inés had never wanted

to move to Mexico City. And I didn't really want to move to Mexico City either. I was making pretty good money and my brothers and sisters-in-law would tell me, "Come over, man; look, the money you are making is really a lot, often those who are already over here make less than you do, and here we are, all of us."

But I was also aware that my job was not permanent. Once they finished that project they would lay everybody off and when they started another project, not everybody would be hired all over again. That's because among the employees there are many who want to get jobs for their folks. And then those people that are working perhaps might not be re-hired, and I was aware of that. So I chose to go back, to go back to my village, to my farm, and I stayed back there working on my lands and working for the patrón.

JG How much money were you making in Mexico City?

DG When I started I made \$248 Mexican pesos for twelve hours of work.

JG How many days a week did you work?

DG Five days a week.

JG And later, did you make the same?

DG When I began to work for El Escudo, which was the machine hat goes underground, I made \$650 Mexican pesos a week. Which was a lot more, it was very good money. They would even tell me, "Hey, you are making more than the engineer Lémus," who was a very young engineer. And I would say, "Maybe I am working a lot more too."

JG Did you work a lot harder?

DG Yes. And I made very good money, but I was always thinking that it was not a permanent job, and then I came over here.

JG Where did you go after the project was finished?

DG They hadn't finished the project yet when I left Mexico City. They were about to finish the potable water project but were still digging a

very, very big tunnel that was twelve meters wide. It was in that tunnel that all the smaller tunnels emptied, it was made to get all the sewage waters out of the city. It is a tunnel that comes out of Mexico City and empties in San Juan del Rio, near Tepeje del Rio. What they said was that they were going to use that water for irrigation in the planes of Querétaro, in that region. Then I didn't work on that project anymore.

JG Where did you go?

DG That was in 1967. Then in '68 I only worked in agriculture. Part of the time I worked on my own land and part of the time for the Hacienda, getting paid a little bit of money. Some days I prepared my own lands and every once in a while I worked for the patron. When I didn't have a lot to do I could make a little bit of money, right? \$4.00 Mexican pesos a day is not a lot of money, but we had to work for the patron anyway, and \$4.00 was better than nothing. That's what I did in '67.

JG What was your interest in working as a sharecropper for the Hacienda? Was it only for the crops, or did you have other interests?

DG Only the crops. I don't know how to explain that, those were the customs and the traditions of the *hacendados* of old, because back in the day all there were only big landowners, that was it.¹⁷

JG Did you also have access to Hacienda pastures for your livestock, perhaps to the water of the Hacienda, or something?

DG Yes, it was to have access to the water currents for my cattle and also for us; also because of the pastures, for all the pasture lands belonged to the Hacienda and it didn't cost us anything.

JG How many cows, calves, and horses did you have?

DG The last time, I remember counting twelve heads of cattle, including big and small ones, and a team of horses; perhaps eighteen animals in total.

JG Did you do any other work for the Hacienda besides cleaning up the water channels?

DG We cleaned up the water channels twice a year.

JG For how long?

DG That Project lasted about two months and a half.

JG Was there any other interest in cleaning up the water channels?

DG The interest we had in helping clean up the water channels wasn't so much for what we got paid, because we didn't get paid very much. But that is where we lived and those were the water currents out of which we lived. After cleaning up the water channels, for a few days the water ran turbid because who knows what people did in the tunnels. But later the water came out clear, it was all clear. When the rain season came parts of hills fell into the channels. There were mudslides, and then they would call people to clean up, and not everybody would show up. But when they called us we needed to go and help not only for the \$4.00 pesos but also because we needed the channels to work properly.

JG Then even if you worked cleaning up the channels, they would still pay you \$4.00 pesos a day.

DG Yes, they would pay us \$4.00 a day nevertheless.

JG You say that you stayed back working in your farm from 1960 until 1970.

DG Yes.

DG Until 1970. Those years I worked in agriculture and, like I told you, also for the Hacienda for \$4.00 pesos a day.

JG And as a sharecropper.

DG Also as a sharecropper.

JG How were your harvests back then?

DG They were good. Well, not very, very good, right? But still, working with one yoke of oxen we could still take home, for instance, two tons of corn and one ton of beans. And yet those were not excellent harvests because the lands are poor and don't yield very much.⁸ I was still very happy back there in the village because that lifestyle was very beautiful, because it was all free, we raised cows, chicken, pigs, turkeys, and all that we could. Back there you slaughtered a pig and filled one, two, even three five-gallon cans of lard, and you had enough lard while you were fattening another pig. When you finished up that lard you already had another pig ready to be slaughtered and you had more lard. The chicken laid many eggs; we picked up to thirty eggs a day. We would cook large pans of eggs and all that; man, that really helped a lot. The cows had milk most of the time, when one didn't have milk another one did, so we had milk all the time; and there were eggs, there was lard.¹⁹

What people worried about the most back then was about buying soap and salt and sugar, they had everything else. It all fell apart when the late Don Salvador Azanza died and Don Carlos Lance passed away. Carlos Lance I believe was the son-in-law of the late Don S2alva0dor. When Don Carlos Lance arrived, rumors started that Don Carlos Lance was going to fence the water channels because during the rain season our cattle provoked mudslides. The hills collapsed where cattle came to drink and with their hooves they caused the top soil to slide and block the water channels, and Don Carlos Lance was going to build barbed-wire fences on both sides of the channels so our livestock wouldn't ruin the water channels.

And when people heard about that, when they found out, they turned against him and began to mobilize themselves and to seek advice from other older *ejidatarios* who told them to wise up.²¹

JG When did this happen?

DG It was in '62 that they began to organize themselves. That's when people began to talk about it and to go to Los Quiotes, to El Terrero, to Los Juárez, seeking recruits and encouraging one another to

mobilize. The first leaders in the formation of the ejido were Pablo Rodriguez and Feliciano Arias, and, well, they were very lucky because the Hacienda didn't even mistreat them. They went after the Hacienda and, well, they mobilized everything...

END OF TAPE 1



TAPE 2 - SIDE A ONLY

DG It was back then that the Bracero Program came to an end, according to the twenty-year contract that the governments had. And the contract expired and there were no more contracts.

JG We are talking about 1963. Did you already have children back then?

DG Yes, Chabela was the firstborns, she was born in 1963. And I don't remember whethez Lucha had already been born, but I had Chabela already.²²

DG We were talking about 1964.

JG Did you have any children born back then who might have died, do you remember?

DG After Chabela was born a boy named Eugenio was born. And I am not sure if he was born two years or one year and a half after Chabela; Inés says he was born two years after. That child died of a pneumonia or something like that, two years after birth.

JG What did you do aftrJ964, after the end of the Bracero Program?

DG I came back to Mexico and I stayed, I stayed in Mexico.

JG When did you buy your land in Mexico, the rain-season land of La Represa?

DG My dad bought that land, with my money; he bought thatland for me.

JG When did he give you the titles?

DG When I got married in 1960, that's when he gave me the titles.

JG Then, at the end of the Bracero Program in 1964, you went back to Mexico.

DG Yes.

JG How did you do when you went back?

DG Well, I did very well, because that year when I got back to Mexico we had very good crops. And those were very good years, and I went back to work for the Hacienda. Well, you know, all the time waiting, waiting for the clouds to bring us some water. Those were good years, but nevertheless we never had access to irrigation for our crops.²³

JG What did you do after 1964, in 1965?

DG In 1964 I worked in agriculture, in my own land as well as the Hacienda's land. I also worked as a day laborer for Hacienda for \$4.00 pesos a day.

DG In 1966...

JG Before we speak of '66, can you tell me if you still worked in 1965 as a sharecropper?

DG Yes, and I also had my own land, but I worked only in part of my land and the rest of the time I worked the Hacienda's land.

JG Why didn't you plant crops in all your land?

DG So I could also sharecrop for the Hacienda.

JG And to have some benefits?

DG Yes, to have some benefits, because they let us use their pastures for our livestock. And the water channels and everything belonged to the Hacienda, because back then we didn't have to go and get water anywhere else. Back then we used the water from the Hacienda's channels that go by the village. We always had water, even during the dry season, the channels always had water. Because we always cleaned up from "El Paderón," I am referring to the river from "El Molino." We cleaned the channels from "El Paderón" and that water ran year-round.

And the water from "La Presa," they let that water run when they needed to fill the reservoirs, when they needed to irrigate, that is when they opened the floodgates of the dam. The springs from where water for the dam originated they called "El Romaninente," which were springs that had always been up there in the very mountains in a place called Los Tajos de Galvez. That is where those springs have always been, where you see the mountain "El Cerro de la Campana;" around from that hill is where the springs are.

JG Yes. We allowed our land to rest and used that land as pastures for our livestock. At the same time, the land rested where it wouldn't grow too many weeds the following year. The land that I worked for the Hacienda, in that land I grew crops year after year.

JG What did you do after 1966?

DG In the last days of 1966 I went to Mexico City to work. Before that, in '63 or '64 I had worked in construction in the city of Guanajuato, when they opened all those tunnels. Because those tunnels did not exist, all the tunnels you see in the city of Guanajuato were built by an engineer by the last name of Andrade, I don't remember the name of the supervisor of the project. And the thing was that when they finished there... Even though they hadn't finished everything, but when they were about to finish, they got a contract in Mexico City for the building of a potable water project, and the boys of the late Don Pedro Grimaldo were there.

Donaciano Grimaldo was there, and also the one they called "ayo;" also Esteban Gonzalez and Don Victorino and Miguel Hernández; those were master brick masons. Well, they invited me and I went with them, with the two Grimaldo boys. I went to Mexico City with them and we began to work in a place... Something like a village, a settlement called Navidad, down in the vicinity of Cuajimalpa, by the highway that comes from Toluca to Mexico City. That is Navidad, that is where we began, we were in the tunnels.

They had a rock crusher they called El Escudo, it was a machine that they had where they worked underground; the rock crusher had something like a round drill that was like a base and was opening the way. And from behind the machine they were

pulling all the crushed rock to the outside, they pulled all the debris out with wheelbarrows all the way to the end. I was there helping get all that debris out.

I started there in 1966. After '66 and already in '67 over there from El Cartero I went to a place called Santa Lucia, and from Santa Lucia we used to go and wash our own clothes over there in a settlement called Mixcoac. Over in the vicinity is where we were and from there we would go do our laundry somewhere in that area. And when we got to Tacubaya from there we would ride the bus.

JG What were the tunnels for?

DG Those tunnels were for potable water. Those tunnels were perhaps nine meters wide, they were for potable water.

And there in Santa Lucia, from there they sent me to help a master brick mason in the building of new offices for the construction company. Small buildings; well, not that small, about the size of this house, that's about how big those buildings were. When we finished they sent us to the Monumento a La Raza, there we built more office buildings. And when we finished there, they sent us to the Alameda Central.

I even remember that right in front of El Caballito de Troya is where the offices were. When they finished building those offices, they called me to work with that rock crusher they called El Escudo. I don't know why they called me, asking me if I wanted to go and worked with them. It was an operator and two helpers, but they were short of a helper and they called me. And I went to work with them. How much did I work with them? It must have been four or five months, something like that. It wasn't a long time, but outside they earned \$248.00 pesos a week.

Underground, as a helper of El Escudo I made \$650.00 pesos a week, and then I went home. It was near the time of picking up the crops, and I also wanted to go back to El Norte.²⁴ Back there I could make some

money, but I knew those were temporary jobs. Today as a laborer you couldn't make the kind of money I made back then.

END OF TAPE 2



TAPE 3 - SIDE A

JG Were you telling me that they began organizing the ejido?²⁵

DG Yes. Like I said, they were very lucky because they did not mistreat them. The ejidatarios would come with fifty or sixty yokes of oxen, they would invade a plot of land in just a few minutes.²⁶ Then the tractors of the Hacienda would arrive and erase everything the ejidatarios had done. Then the ejidatarios would get in the way of the tractors, and the tractors would stop because they didn't want to run over them, and they struggled like that for a while. But the Hacienda did not really mistreat them. Not like in the old times, when the late Salvador Azanza fought against the ejido of Las Aguilillas.²⁷ Back then it was really bad because the people of the Hacienda would arrive riding horses, the late Telésforo Rodríguez took part on that.²⁸ The people of the Hacienda rode on horses and carried guns. They would arrive on horseback and lasso and drag the ejidatarios; nevertheless, ejidatarios would not give up, they fought on and on.

JG Did my grandfather already work for the Hacienda back then?

DG Yes, but he did not take part on that. He worked for the Hacienda for a long time but he didn't have to fight against those ejidatarios. Like I said, the guys from the ejido of El Refugio were very lucky because although the tractors of the Hacienda would get on their way, they still went ahead and planted their crops. And they grew their crops the first year and the following year, and the Hacienda did not hurt them.

JG And after this, did you still work for the Hacienda?

DG Yes, because the Hacienda still kept some land. Because the ejido only reached up to the reservoir El Tanque de Ziñiga on the side of the village, and the rest of the land they didn't claim. Then we continued working for the Hacienda, because the hacienda had planted vineyards and peach groves, that's where the engineer Acosta worked, because he did much of the work in the orchards. That was the last time that we worked for them.

JG When was the last time that you worked in the orchards?

DG [Sighs] . What year was that? Let me think... It must have been in '61 or '62 when they planted the orchards. Then it was in '68 or '69 when we work in the peach groves and in the vineyards.

JG Did you still continue sharecropping for the Hacienda?

DG Yes, we still sharecropped for the Hacienda, because the land that they assigned to us was in the edge of the lands taken by the ejido, and next to it was the land in which we worked.

JG When was the next time that you worked as a sharecropper?

DG In 1971 was the last time that I ever worked for the Hacienda as a sharecropper.

JG Did you work for the Hacienda from 1968 to 1971?

DG Well, since the time since my ancestors, all the people used to work for the Hacienda, but when I got married, I started coming over to the United States. When I was over on this side I did not work my plot for the Hacienda, but someone else did. Whenever I did not come to the United States I stayed back there farming.

JG When was the last time you ever farmed for the Hacienda?

DG I believe 1969 and 1970 were the last years that I ever sharecropped for the Hacienda.

JG What did you do after that?

DG I made my living out of coming to work in the United States. In 1971 I entered through Arizona. I spend some time in a place called Mesa, Arizona, working in lettuce fields, weeding, and then picking up the crops. That's where I ran into an old friend with whom I had work long ago in California. I had met him back in 1958 in California, and I went to work with him again. We got started around the 10th of May over there in Salinas, in the lettuce. fields. We did the lettuce run in Salinas and then in a nearby town called Watsonville. Then we went

to Brentwood. I don't remember exactly the date, but it was in the last days of August, perhaps. And we worked up there during September and October, and in the last days of October all work came to an end over there. Up there when all the crops were picked some people went back to work in Imperial Valley and others went in different ways. I came back to Mexico.

JG What kind of work did they do in Imperial Valley?

DG Prunning lettuce and beets in Imperial Valley. I went back to Mexico, the supervisor himself took me to the other side of the border line, to Mexico... And I came back. I tried to go back to California in 1972, but I couldn't.

JG Why?

DG I made it to Arizona, to a little town called Chandlers. There I worked in orange groves. I tried to go back to California but I never found a way. Then one day I met a woman who owned an old car, she was going to take us to Idaho. And many were going to Idaho back then and they made a lot of money, so we joined them; me and three other guys who were also going to Idaho. But passing through the city of Las Vegas, Nevada, the truck broke down.

And there was a little town nearby, they stopped there, in front of a gas station, and we got off and ran up to the top of a hill nearby. There was a small junkyard, that's where we hid. And the police interrogated the lady and, well, they sent her back. They said that they hadn't jailed her but they had sent her home, and the truck stayed back, it was broke. Our mistake was that, well, they were going to find us anyway. But our mistake was that we made it easier for them to look for us because when we got off the car, the one who didn't leave his cap behind left his jacket, or something. We left stuff in the car and then, when the police found the car and they found our stuff there, they of course realized that the truck was carrying people.

And we stayed there. We didn't know what to do; we didn't know where to go. We would go down to a gas station and buy something to eat and get back to the junkyard. And we stayed inside those old cars, and about two days later we heard something rumble in the distance.

And sure enough, a little while later those soldiers, I mean police officers, were there pointing their big rifles to us and telling us, - Hey, come out of there with your hands up.

So we got out, and they took us to a place where there was an interpreter where they could interrogate us, because the police officers didn't speak Spanish. And when we were there with that interpreter, an *Americano* came over and told them that a truck full of people had just passed en route to Salt Lake City.²⁹ Man, they put us into a car right away and drove up, and they caught up with them. Their truck was breaking down; they weren't going to get very far.

From there they took us back to the little town where they had picked us up, they only got that far, and there they gathered all of us. And we waited for a while and later a bus arrived and they put all of us in it. And it was like fifteen of us, I believe. And they took us to Las Vegas. And up there they took us to jail, they took us to the third floor; they took our clothes and gave all of us something like blue robes. And they took us to a cell and gave us two blankets to put on the floor, and a pillow. And right in the middle of the cell there was a toilet without a cover or anything, and we all slept around it.

Well, we got there at night and the next day, early in the morning, they called us over for breakfast. Man, there was a big pot of oatmeal with milk and lots of sugar, and lots of bread, right? At noon they called us over for lunch, and those big pieces of beef were good, that food they gave us in jail was really magnificent, it was very good food. But we were there only three days; three days later they picked us up and sent us to Calexico, [California] , from where we would enter Mexico through Mexicali, [Sonora]

And I went home right away... No, let me think... Well, (this time they sent me through Mexicali and I didn't go back home, but instead tried to get back into the United States through a different port, it was called Altar where I got off to cross the desert, and that's where I got off. And I had on me a watch that I really loved, and I gave it to a guy, his name as Miguel Gonzalez and he was from Los Quiotes, where he would take it back and would give it to my family and where he would tell them that I had stayed at the border, that I was going to cross the border all over again. And he went and gave it to them, but they never believed him. I don't know how it was but for a long time

they did not believe that I was alive.., because how could it be that somebody was coming over to turn in my watch. It wasn't until I wrote them a letter telling them that I was okay. And I set off and crossed the dessert and I got to a place called Casas Grandes in Arizona, and I got a job there pruning beets. And I spent a week pruning and in those days the border patrol came over and picked up the irrigators and I managed to hide and therefore stayed. And from then on I stayed as an irrigator, for a while.

But I would manage to work only for a number of days, I would work for ten days, - by the way, our paychecks arrived bimonthly - I would work ten days and then I would get caught by the border patrol. Because they would come every other day; and I was there, and I would see them coming and, if there was enough time, I would run into the hills and hide.

But the border patrol was around all the time, and every ten days they would catch me as I was getting off from work, they always caught us in the afternoon. For sure they would catch us in the afternoon and we would spend the night in jail, they would give us dinner, and the next day they would give us breakfast and in the afternoon or early evening they would send us across the border. They sent me over through Nogales, [Sonora] . Well, just getting out and before getting to Hermosillo, [Sonora], we would get oft and turn right back around, and we would wait for another bus to get back over. And we would get to a small town called Altar and from there, if it was already dark, we would wait for daylight and we would buy something to eat and we would head over for the desert. We would walk for three full days or three days and four nights, depending on how fast we were walking, because it was a three-day journey. And back then I knew I had a job, I would only arrive and show up for work; and I would get caught every ten days and they would take me back to Mexico without a paycheck, and I would get back, right? Because I had to get back to get my paycheck, and I would get my paycheck and I would stay again, and I would get caught without a paycheck again.

And one day I got up early in the morning, and I fixed my lunch, and there was an edge of dirt near the huts where we stayed. And I took my lunch, and we didn't have a restroom, so I headed over to the trees. That's when I saw a truck and I thought, - Man, that's the

overseer and he didn't find me. But then I looked more carefully and thought, - Man, it's the border patrol. That day of about ten of us staying there on those huts, the border patrol took everybody else, I was the only one left only because I was already outside. And I stayed behind as the only irrigator.

Another time we were working when I say it coming very close, right? And I left the machine and ran; I went over the dirt edge and into the hill. I ran and kind of turn around, and about half an hour later I got out and looked. They had left, so I went back to work. In three months they caught me six times, and after the sixth time I went back home to my village. I said to myself, - I am going back to Dolores. That was in 1972.

And in 1973 I managed to get to Idaho. This time I ended up finding work in a place called Murphy, by the state line with Oregon. There was a river that crossed that area called Snake River, that river always had water. From that river people took water for the irrigation of potato crops and other crops; that is a big river. That year I worked in Murphy. And Melba was another town that was close, in the same region; I worked in Melba too. And we would go grocery shopping to Nampa. Yes, Nampa, Idaho, near Wakes. But it was to Nampa where we went grocery shopping; that was in '72. And in '73 I didn't manage to get there. In '73 I stayed in American Falls, right next to Aberdeen, it was there were I managed to settle for a while, with my patron in Aberdeen.³⁰

JG What did you do in Murphy?

DG Irrigation. I worked moving the irrigation pipes in Murphy.

JG What crops did they grow?

DG Mostly potatoes and some wheat, we also grew some wheat.

JG How long did you stayed there?

DG It was in 1972. In 1973 I worked in Aberdeen with Leonard Schroeder. They put me to work as a cowboy; there were times when I rode horses, at times irrigating, other times operating the tractors, I did

everything. That was in '74, all summer long, and then I went back home to spend the winter in Mexico.

In 1975 I did the same kind of work, mostly as a cowboy, operating the tractor, as a driver, irrigating, and doing everything that needed to be done, and then I would go back to Mexico to spend the winter. I went back in 1975, they called me in February. There was a lot of snow. I had to watch over the cows; it was the time when calves are born. I would get up around 1:00 a.m. to see how they were doing. And I would sleep a little bit, and I would check up on them again around 6:00 a.m., to see how many calves had been born. By dawn I had checked on them three times already, and I would do the work that needed to be done during the day. And it was tremendously cold.

JG Did you have heating in the place where you lived?

DG We had a small space heater, a portable one. We would put it in the middle of the bedroom.

JG How many people lived in that house?

DG Two people in every bedroom.

JG You have told us about a friend of the family who died crossing the border through Arizona in 1967. Who was he?

DG Oh, yes. I don't remember his name.

JG When did that happen?

DG Let me think... That must have been in 1978.

JG But you were already in Houston in '78.

DG Oh, yes, I got way ahead. Yes, it was around 1968.

JG What was his name?

DG I don't remember his name. It was a young man who lived near the marketplace. Your brother Pepe and your mother knew him, but I

didn't know him. He wasn't with me, I only heard about it. You know, we had to walk through the desert, right?

JG How many days did you have to walk when you crossed through Arizona?

DG We would walk about four days.

JG To get to Chandlers?

DG Yes.

JG About four days? Why did he die?

DG They say he died of dehydration. It was too hot.

JG And there was no water?

DG They didn't have water with them. There are places where there is water; in that place there was no water.

JG How long without water? Two, three days?

DG No, no. It could have been a half a day in which they didn't find water. The guy was very fat and couldn't stand the heat. It was incredibly hot, very hot.

JG Very hot, half a day without water...

DG With the heat over 100 Fahrenheit and having to walk without water, man!

JG You have also told me about different occasions like in 1974, when you were in Aberdeen, about something that happened in Twin Falls. Two guys who tried to escape from immigration officers. How did that happen?

DG Yes, that happened around 1974.

JG Where?

DG It was around 1974 in Twin Falls. Yes, that's a small town nearby. Of course it was not inside the city, but near the city. Immigration officers came over and when the workers realized they were surrounded, they tried to jump out the windows. The immigration officers shot at them, and I don't know how many were injured. One fell dead, I am not sure if two or three more got shot. After that the farmers kind of got together, right? All the farmers filed a lawsuit, complaining to the government about what immigration was doing. That was in 1974. And from then on, for about two years, they didn't raid in the Twin Falls area anymore. They raided later, but it was over there in Aberdeen where we were. That is when they caught my brother Roberto; that was in 1975.

JG In Aberdeen?

DG Yes, in Aberdeen. But over there in Twin Falls immigration did not raid anymore.

JG Did you continue working for Leonard Schroeder? During what years did you work for him?

DG Let me think, let me think...

JG In 1973 you were in Murphy, according to what you have told me before.

DG Yes. I was in California in 1971, in Arizona in 1972, in Murphy, [Idaho] in 1973. In 1974 is when I first came to work for Leonard Schroeder. When we got there, the coyote left us there with a farmer called Melvin Funk. With him is where all the people from El Huizachal and El Ojo de Agua de Cervantes work. He is a very big farmer. Yes, it seems like it belonged to American Falls. And then we were left without work, and for a long time we went without work; well, not really a long time, right? But we would meet there every once in a while, and one day a man that worked for Leonard Schroeder, from Aberdeen, came over. His name was Ramán Sanchez, he was very young. And he called me and another three, he called four of us, and he asked us if we wanted to go and work with them...

TAPE 3 - SIDE B

JG You were telling that Ramón Sanchez came over to invite you...

DG Yes. Ramón Sanchez came over and four of us went back with him. He called us because his patron needed workers, he asked if we wanted to work for him.³¹ He was going to pay us \$2.00 dollars an hour, I believe. And we went, myself and three more guys. And we worked for him the first year. And the second year one of them didn't come, but another one did. And we stayed. It was I and a guy from Palmitas and my brother Roberto, the three of us. And they brought someone else.

And we worked there in 1974, '75, and 76 with that patron. I was the cowboy and they worked outside. And the part of working as a cowboy was like I have told you; some times on horseback, also operating the tractor, driving the truck, and doing different things. And in 1977 was the last time that I worked with him over in Aberdeen. Well, they did like me; they liked me, let's say, not for myself but for the work that I did for them. I operated the harvester when it was time to harvest the potato. When there was no potato, I would plough for sowing with the big tractor. And when I wasn't doing that, I would be operating the harvester to cut the alfalfa or the packer to pack the grass or the alfalfa. I would do different jobs.

Only that in 1978 I tried to borrow money to go to Idaho again and it proved somewhat difficult. At last the *cornpadre* Ignacio Casas lent me \$300 Mexican pesos and with that money I came over through Texas.³² I spent some time in Alice, with a patron...

JG Before we talk about Texas, when you came back to Arizona in 1971 there were no more contracts, you were already coming undocumented, right?

DG Yes, I was undocumented already, because the Bracero Program came to an end in 1964. Then by 1970, all those years I was illegal.

JG Thinking about all the years that you worked in California, Arizona, and Idaho, and Texas, what was the biggest difference between working under contract with the Bracero Program and the years that you worked undocumented?

DG Well, it could be the same. Over here on this side, undocumented, we suffered crossing the deserts; sometimes without food, sometimes without water, sometimes tired. One of the times that I crossed through Arizona, that time I really struggled. They caught me and I was walking with a pair of tennis shoes, of those very thin ones. The first day I was blistered already, and I still had to walk another three days. When I got to the farm I had my feet all tore up. But with the good will of God I made it alright. And, yes, hiding all the time, always hiding from immigration officers.

JG Fear of dying, fear of being shot like what happened in Idaho?

DG We didn't think about that. We worried mostly about getting caught and being sent back to Mexico, because it was so hard to get back, always thinking that we might not have the same luck that I had the first time.

JG Weren't you afraid, for instance, when you heard about the man who died in the desert, dehydrated?

DG The one who died of a sun stroke?

JG Weren't you afraid that the same thing might happen to you?

DG One would think... Yes, one would feel bad... And then having to cross through the same spot and hear people say, - Over there in the side of that hill, over by that palm tree, that's where that guy ended his days... That's where he fell, where he fell dead.

Then those guys went near an Indian reservation, they went and talked to those men and asked them what they could do, they asked them to advise them on what they could do, on what to do with the body. And yes, they helped them somehow, they advised them to bury him some place, the way they did it.

And those men, the Indians, told them to go. They said, - Look, we advice you to go, we will take care of burying the body, you just go. Entrust yourselves to God and go, since you can't stay since you are illegals anyway. The law is going to come and they're going to deport

you, and the body isn't going back with you anyway. Go your way and we will take care the burial. That they really buried him, only God knows. JG Did you ever hear any stories about that guy's family coming over to see the burial site, did you ever hear about that?

DG That I never knew.

JG Then you did get afraid when you heard those stories.

DG Oh, yes!

JG That the same thing might happen to you. And when you heard about the guy that immigration officers killed in Twin Falls, weren't you scared that something like that would happen to you?

DG [Sighs). Well, yes... That time when we were in Murphy, we didn't sleep in the house. The houses were down the hill, there was also underground storage for the potato, that's where the machinery was stored also. Out of that place on both sides there was a hill, and we would stay outside.

JG You slept outside?

DG Yes. There were some old cars in the distance, where the trailerhomes were, and we would get out. There were boxes that they said used to store beehives, but they were not colotes.³³ They were rather more like tall boxes. They didn't have a door, and we would use them to sleep on them, two of us slept on each of them.

JG But you didn't sleep in the house anymore.

DG We wouldn't sleep in the house; we would only go down to eat. And when someone was cooking someone else would be by the road watching for cars coming from a distance. And when he saw a car he would whistle and yell, - Hey, there's a car coming! And we would turn the stove off and run. And once that car was gone, if it wasn't immigration officers, we would go back, turn the stove back on, and sit down to eat.

JG Was it because of the people they had killed in Twin Falls?

DG Well, yes. Partly for that and partly because we didn't want to get caught and taken out of the country.

JG You were so far away...

DG So far away. Yes, we were so far away, and that's how we lived. We almost never slept in the house. We only went into the house to eat and to shower. Same thing, while someone was taking a shower someone else was watching. And then the patron brought us a pair of those two-way radios. And that helped, because the person cooking held one and the one on the road kept another one. And if he saw a car far in the distance, because the road was long and straight, - like it is from Los Pirules to Los Hernández, he would speak on the radio and say, Hey, a car is coming, who knows what it might be! And we would all get out and run in different directions. And when I was there immigration never showed up, but we were always fearful, right? All the time, and inside the house we wouldn't sleep, nobody slept inside the house.

JG After 1977 you went back to Mexico. After this, did you ever work for Leonard Schroeder in Aberdeen again?

DG Yes, in 1977 was the last year that I worked in Idaho with Leonard Schroeder. And I went home and in 1978 I didn't go back there anymore, I came here through Texas.

JG I believe we will stop here and some other day we'll talk about 1978, because we have been here almost two hours.

DG That's a long time.

JG Yes...

END OF TAPE 3

TAPE 4 - SIDE A

JG Today is the 5 of r of 2004. We are here in Houston, Texas, with Mr. Daniel Galván, and we are going to make another recording for this series of interviews. The last time we spoke about when you went back to Mexico from Aberdeen, Idaho, for the last time, in 1977. What did you do that winter of 1977 in Mexico?

DG Well, the winter of '77, when I came back from Idaho, I stayed to spend the Christmas holidays. I also had someone sharecropping a small portion of my land, so I had a small harvest, and I stayed spending the holidays and working, picking up the little harvest that there was, and that was it. Then I headed back to this side.

JG How were the Christmas holidays?

DG Well, there were somewhat fun, there wasn't much difference with the way they are celebrated today. The nine days previous to Christmas the people go out chanting and praying and carrying the patriarchs and baby Jesus. At night they visit from house to house, or else they stay in a single house. They celebrated I believe the nine days previous to Christmas, I am not really sure how many days. The celebrations began on the 16th December and the last day was celebrated on the 24th.

Yes, that was all we did in Mexico. Then I tried to go back to Idaho, but it proved difficult, I wasn't able to borrow the money. Since I didn't keep the money, I would arrive and spend all the money in whatever was necessary, and when it was time go head back I had to borrow money again, but I couldn't that time. because to get to Idaho a lot of money was needed, a lot of money. To get back there we would borrow around \$3,500.00 or \$4,000.00 dollars or something like that; up to \$5,000.00 dollars for those trips.

JG U.S. dollars or Mexican pesos?³⁴

DG

Mexican pesos, of course. And I tried to borrow enough money to go there, but I was only able to borrow \$300.00 Mexican pesos with my your uncle Ignacio Casas, and that's what I used to come over here. Three hundred pesos. But this time the journey proved to be somewhat longer and a little difficult. However, God helped me and I was fortunate, although I struggled a lot and I spent much time wandering. However, I managed to get ahead. That time we crossed the river, we did that at night. One night it rained a lot and we spent the night underneath some small trees covered with pieces of nylon, and, well... However we managed to sleep for a little while and set off again at dawn.

And I always thought and still feel that we were going back, because I remember that we were walking parallel to interstate 59. And I always thought that we were heading back, but we were walking a pretty good way from the highway. That's when we saw two men walking from a the distance, they were coming from the side of the hill, alongside the barbed-wire fence, they were walking downhill. And I told the others, - There are those men coming, what do you think they could be looking for? And one of them said, - It's the border patrol, we have to hide. Well, I said, let's go and see what kind of luck we have. And I ran ahead of them and the other two guys didn't follow me but ran together in a different direction, God knows which way they went.

And where I was walking, I found a plant loaded with flowers, very big like this, and I turned around and crawled underneath that little tree, so leafy it was. And there I stayed holding my backpack, underneath that bush. A little while later those men arrived, they were border patrol agents and they were following our tracks. They would get to that tree and stop because they didn't see me. And they would turn back and then would come back around to that tree. And I would shrink; I would shrink my feet where they would not stumble with me, because they were walking 'round and 'round that tree.

And after a while, they would just stand there and whistle, saying, - Hey, get out of there, we have already seen you; we are bringing the aircraft anyway and we are going to get you out of there anyway, because we already know where you're hiding! And I would shrink my feet, because they were standing right next to me. You know, back

then, if you made them mad, - Man, they would give you such a beating! And that's how I remained all day. That happened around 9:00 a.m. By 4:00 p.m. I didn't hear anything, and I got out, looking in all directions. Then I didn't see anything and then looked for the other guys who were coming with me, but I thought that if immigration had spent all day looking for them and hadn't found them, How could I be able to find them by myself? So I set off on the road again.

And after walking a while I found an animal, it seemed like a cat but it was big as a bulldog, like that, with the wide head and the short tail, and he moved and roared like a cat. And I just motioned like I was going to hit him, I threatened him like this, and he got away and I kept on walking without any direction, just to see where I would get to. I walked all night and the next day I found a trail, and I followed that trail until I got to a village. Oh, by the way, I ended up getting to a small town called San Diego; San Diego, Texas!

And I was on the edge of that small town and then I found another trail, which I followed. And after walking for about three hours I came to a village and I saw this man. And he said, - Come in. And I came in. And he asked, - Do you want something to eat? Come on, I have armadillo soup. And that's what that man ate; he killed armadillos and ate them. He worked there. And then he asked me, - Where are you coming from, how long have you been wandering? And then I told him that I had been walking for four days and that I had recently passed through a small town called San Benito. And he said, - Man, you lost big time! You have to rest here for a few days and then I will tell you where to go, because you are getting close to the Rio Grande, that's where that trail is leading you to. And I spent; I don't know, four, five, or eight days there in that man's house. And we ate armadillo every day; he killed armadillos, made armadillo soup, and that's what we ate.

And one day he showed me the way. He said, - Now is the time; I think you have recovered enough, now you can advance. Look, follow this line of short posts and keep on straight. Follow this trail, it will take you to Alice. You are going to go through El Naranjo and then you will get to Corpus Christ. - Alright, I said. And then I set off. And I walked all afternoon and part of the night, and by dawn I found a

brush of dead branches. And I thought, here's where will start a fire and take a break. And that wind was freezing, it was very cold, freezing.

JG What month was this?

DG It was January or February, it was wintertime. And I started a fire and I lied on the side of the fire. And I would lie on one side, and my other side would get cold, and I would turn around, over and over again. And, when I realized, when I woke up, the piece of nylon that I was using as a blanket was burning. And I had a jacket on, one of those denim jackets that have wool on the inside. Man, it already had a whole in the back! And I was close to burning myself; because you know, burning nylon, if it melts on you, it takes your skin and everything, right? And when I realized that I was burning I took my jacket off, it had a big hole right on the middle of the backside, and I stumped on it until I turned the fire off.

And I set off, having to wear that jacket, because it was very cold anyway. And I walked that all morning and basically most of the day. And by sunset I got to Alice. And I came close to a house, thinking that I would ask for some water to drink. And there was a pack of dogs there! Four or five dogs, of those very big ones. And a man came out and called them off, and they got quiet. And he asked me, What are you looking for? - Well, you know, what we always look for, mostly some water to drink. - Alright, he said. And he gave me a bottle of water.

And he said, - You can't stay here, and don't even try going forward because you are lost. In this trail the only thing you are going to find are towns and ranches. What you must do is to follow a trail that way, and don't get off. In the first ranch, you are going to find a man... I don't remembez' what his name was. His last name was Garcia, Ramón Garcia or something like that. There is a man who helps people; you get to that ranch there, and there is no way you can miss it, his house is right beside this trail. And I said, - Alright, that's good.

And it wasn't very far, because I got to that ranch before sunset. Before getting to that little ranch I ran into a young man driving a little brand new red truck. And he stopped and asked, - What are you

doing? - Well, you know, I'm wandering. And he said, - Come with me, my dad is used to helping people who wander this way. And I got in the truck. And he asked, - Where are you coming from? What's your name? And so on and so forth... And when we got to where that man was, there were him and four other people, they were barbequing deer meat and drinking beer, visiting, right? And when we arrived the young man got off and truck and went ahead of me, walking towards his dad, and said to him, - Dad, here's Daniel who's come to see you, he tried to contact you before but he couldn't, it has taken him a little while but here he is. - Hey, Daniel, how are you? And he spoke to me pretending that we were old friends. – Come over and eat with us. Come on, have a beer, and right away he gave me a beer and some roasted deer meat.

And that day went by. Next day, by dawn, they had a deer ready for me to skin. And they set off again. A little while later they came back with more, that day they killed five deer or so, and I would skin them and chop them off. And they had a fire going and were roasting the meat. And we ate roasted meat, lots of deer meat. And several days went by. He also had some cows. During the day we went out to roast *nopal* to the cows, also to fix the barbed-wire fences³⁵. Then we would go out and help them do whatever needed to be done. They had corn fields; it was mostly corn that they grew. Then we would go behind the tractors unearthing the plants that got buried during the hoeing. And after twenty days or a month or so he got me a job where he worked. I believe it was an oil company.

And I went to work with them to that oil company. It was a team of plumbers, and I helped them in whatever they needed, right? I worked there with them for two or three weeks, I am not sure. And between the 5th and the 10th of May, in those days, a coyote came by, because they call coyotes to those who transport people from one place to another, for a fee.³⁶

And as that man came, they called me, - Hey, they are asking if you would like to go to Florida. And the other guys said, - We are going to go. - I am going too, what the hell! And he took us, we were going to pay him once we started working, we didn't have to have any money in advance as we set off.

Yes, and we got in the truck and set off. We had very good luck because we arrived over there in Florida safely; we left one day at night and we rode all night. And the next day around 9:00 a.m. we arrived in Florida, and we got work to in the orange harvest right away.

We started with the orange that they cut for stores, that one is different than what they cut for juice. What's its name? The Valencia, I believe that's how they call it, the Valencia was to sell in stores. What they cut for stores we have to pull, it is hard to cut and they make sure that it doesn't get bruised too much. When we got to the other type, the one they cut for juice, that they cut with some leaves, sometimes they just shake the branches and it all falls and we grab it by bundles, sometimes with leaves and then we get up there on ladders to grab whatever is left. Whichever it was, they didn't want us to leave any flowers up there, right? They wanted the trees to be clear, totally. And we spent some time working there... And we spent some time there. And I liked that type of work very much because even when we didn't make a lot of money, nevertheless we made more than working by the hour; we made pretty good money anyway. And then around the 15 of July the orange run came to an end. Then we set off with the same contractor we were with, because we worked for him. He came to an agreement with the bosses, he collected the money and he paid us, we were his people and we worked for him, right?³⁷

And when work came to an end there, we set off to North Carolina with the same man. And we got to a place called Elm City, North Carolina. We arrived and stayed there a day or two. About the third day we got out and started working picking up a cucumber crop. But there were only a few, very small cucumbers, and we could only make very little money because there was so little to harvest. And some time later things started to get better. Man, later there was really a lot of work!

But in the cucumber run I only worked with that contractor perhaps about three weeks, and then I went to work for a farmer. With that farmer things were different; well, at least I felt happier working for that farmer, since I could keep a little bit more money and I worked more at ease.

JG What did you do in that farm?

DG Same thing, picking up the cucumber harvest, we did the same thing. Then we went to the tobacco harvest, which we also finished in two weeks or so. And there we would cut the leaves that start to turn yellow like they are getting ripe. They get that appearance, like the bean plants do when they get ready to be harvested.

JG When they begin to turn yellow.

DG Yes, to turn yellow. Tobacco leaves are also cut that way. The leaves from the bottom are the first to turn yellow, to get ready. One goes and cuts from one tree and from another and another, like that. A week later we start another cut, and then another one, and so on. We do about five cuts, until we cut the leaves from the very top, the ones that are very small.

JG During which month do you do this?

DG That was the entire month of August. And in September the tobacco run came to an end, around the 4th of September. It seems like by the 4th of September we finished all the work with that farmer, tobacco and cucumber and everything, we finished everything. And then some of my companions had a small truck, a Station Wagon, and we set off to Virginia. And that guy knew that area. And we arrived to a place called Mount Jackson.

There in Mountain Jackson we picked up the apple harvest, nothing but apples. We picked apples for a week and a half or two weeks. And I don't remember the name of that kind of apple; it is a very fine apple, very expensive. That one had to be pulled very carefully, we had to be careful not to squeeze it because our fingers would be printed on it, and we couldn't drop it either because it would get bruised. Then it has to be pulled carefully and also has to be put in the baskets carefully. And we also had to empty the baskets very carefully, because otherwise they would get bruised. And they pay it better, but one makes about the same because we get a lot less production done. And the apple run came to an end

around the 12th of November. And from there we some people left for Chicago, others went to Pennsylvania; they said they were going to the mushroom harvests, and some went to Florida.

And I joined some fellows who were coming over here to Houston, and that's how I got to Houston. We got here and, well, it wasn't very good business, and I don't really know why I stayed here. At first I stayed waiting for things to get better... And time went by, and by the 20 or 25 of November of 1978... Because we spent '79 and '80 here. Was that when Chabela got here, in 181?38

JG No, she came later, in '83. In 1983?

JG Yes. Or perhaps it was in 1982, I'm not sure.

DG Well, she came once and spent some time here and then went back. She came back to stay, I don't remember the dates. Well, the thing is that I stayed here in Houston. At first I went to work for a hotel where I worked for the next eleven years.

JG The Westin Galleria?

DG At the Galleria, in the Westin Oaks. At first my job was to wash pots and pans, that's where I worked perhaps the first two years. And then they assigned me as kitchen helper [long silence]. When I first came to work for that hotel, I worked mornings, from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Then I found a second job as a janitor, cleaning office buildings; well, you know, cleaning those little cubicles, and that's how I spent a long time. And then I found another job in a restaurant right there inside the Galleria, but in the first floor, besides the ice skating-ring. And, well, I liked that a bit more; I made a little more money and I was happier at work.

JG: What was the name of that place?

DG That restaurant was called the Cockery. And the time came when they closed it and then I only kept one job. Later I found another job at another restaurant also inside the Galleria. That place was called Thursday, I

believe. I worked there only for a little while I don't remember how many months I worked there.

And after there was no more work there I worked only for the hotel for some time. And then there was a change of supervisors and a new boss arrived who cut back everybody's hours. We could no longer work forty hours, but only thirty-six that was the maximum. From then on we would work thirty-four, thirty-five, but we rarely worked thirty-six hours because we were not supposed to work more than thirty-six hours a week. And that's how I struggle for a while, struggling and looking for...



TAPE 4 - SIDE B

DG

And then one occasion they transferred me from the kitchen to the bakery. And when I was first transferred, the bakery's lady supervisor liked me and I thought that it was always going to be that way. One day my old boss asked me if I liked my new job, saying that if I didn't I could go back to work with him. And, well, I liked where I was and I had hopes of perhaps getting a raise in salary.

Man, a few days later that lady started getting very grumpy, she wanted everything to get done very fast. What I'm saying is that she assigned us jobs by the minute and if they weren't done on time, man, she would scold us badly. And one day I took courage and said to myself, - I'm leaving, I'm not working here anymore. By the way, I had been going over there to Kingwood, where our relatives and friends worked at the time, and I had worked weekends with Bob cleaning up construction sites.

And one day I really got sick of it, I had already been asking the chef to transfer me to another section and he only would say that he was going to see what he could do. And that day I was working, and about 10 a.m. I got off like I was going to the restroom and on the way back I stopped by the chef's office and told him, - Hey, I'm resigning from this job. But, how... - Have you thought about it? - Yes, I thought about it. - You no longer want to work here with us? - No. — Are you sure? - Yes, from this moment on I am not working for you even for another minute. - Alright, that's okay; I wish you the best, good luck. And I came home.

And the next day I went to work with relatives over there in Kingwood and right away I got to work. Man, I made more money. They paid us \$35 dollars a day, I believe. Yes, and worked there with that man...

JG

What year did this happen?

DG

That was in '89. And one day that guy from *Los Apóstoles* found me³⁹. What was his name?

JG Aubrey LaBuff.

DG Yes, Aubrey found me and asked me if I wanted to work for him. He said, - How much do you get paid over there? - Well, I get \$ 5 dollars [a day] . He said, - I will pay you \$40 dollars for the same number of hours. - Alright. Then I went to work with him, and there I stayed for a long time. Forty dollars perhaps was not a lot of money, but to us it was alright.

And then; let me think, let me think. What happened next? That I went to Mexico, but, - Why did I go to Mexico that time? It might have been only to visit, I don't remember. I don't remember if it was only to visit, but it was a fast trip, I came back within a week. And I came back to work in the same job with the same man, but I came back to work on a Monday and something like Wednesday I received a phone call telling me that my wife was ill, in Mexico, that I had to go because she was going to have surgery, that it was an emergency, that she was very ill. And I collected some money and I took off immediately. And it all came out fine, it was not as bad as I had been told. Then a young man from El Terrero, his name is Mayolo Palacios, he had come from Idaho and was home for a visit. And I ran into him and spoke to him. And he told me, - Let's go to Idaho. And I asked him, - When are we leaving? And he said, - Such a day. And I said, - Well, let's go. And I made up my mind and I set off for Idaho with him. And I only had to wait three or four days out there before they got me a job in the irrigation lines, moving irrigation lines in the potato crops. And I stayed there until the end of the season. The day we finished harvesting the potato, the patron took us all to the restaurant to eat whatever we wanted.⁴⁰ He who wanted to drink, he drank whatever he wanted, the patron was paying for the feast, and it was over before long. We got to the restaurant by 6:00 p.m. and by 10:00 p.m. we were on the way back home already. And all work came to an end. And the patron stayed hoping that I would go back the next year, but I didn't go back And we left that place, and the next day I set off to come over here, to Houston, I caught a bus this way. And I got here, and Carmelo Casas was here in Houston; also, who else? Nayo?

JG Reynaldo Carrillo?

DG Yes, Reynaldo Carrillo⁴¹. They were here thinking about going to Florida and when I got here they told me, - Let's go to Florida. No, not to Florida, but to North Carolina.

JG When did this happen?

DG That was in '91. We left for North Carolina to work in the harvests of Christmas trees. And we only did the Christmas tree run, and there was no more work. Only a person or two stayed behind, but only cleaning up and working a little bit here and there. And we came back over here and I went back to work... Let me think... Then when I came back I didn't go to work for the same boss that I had before, but instead... How was it? Was Pepe already here? I don't remember if Pepe was already here already.⁴²

JG Yes, he was already here.

DG He was already here? Yes, that's when I went to work in landscaping. Pepe was working for a Honduran man and he got me a job, and I worked for that Honduran for a while; the lady, the patrona's name was Martha. And we worked there for a while. And then Pepe quit, he got another job with another patron.⁴¹ He was invited to work in construction by that young man they called "el primo."⁴⁴ And I left that job soon after, that's when somebody got me a job at Texas Trees.-

JG Was it Antonio Pinon?

DG Yes, Antonio PiñOn. And I went to work for Texas Trees and I stayed there for a long time; seven years I spent working there, until I had the fortune of finding a job in the oil pipeyards, making less money by the hour, but with the hope that it was much longer hours of work.⁴⁵ Then at the end I would make more money because although I was making \$2 dollars less an hour of what I used to make there. Because back there I made \$7 dollars and some change and here I started out at \$5.50. And, well, I stayed until today, until I resigned because I could no longer work, there was too much pressure and they were making work harder every day. Because back then everything was alright, but at last, the way they set out the work, at least for me, I felt it was too hard and that forced me to resign. And here you have me, resting.

JG Thenint..1end, Why do you think that you stayed in Houston? Because you could have stayed here for a while, until you collecteough money to go, for instance, to Idaho again.

DG I was afraid. I was afraid that in a trip to Idaho I would be caught on the way. And, well, sometimes your plans don't turn out as you would think. When I started working for the hotel one of the thing I liked was their insurance, because there were very good insurances.

JG Medical insurance?

DG Yes, very good medical insurances, that's it. Well, that was really their only true benefit. And we worked indoors and with air conditioned, right? Because there was no real money and there were always pushing us with the quantity and the quality of the work they wanted. They kept saying that they were building another hotel in Massachusetts, and that they were building another hotel in Ohio, and that we needed to work harder so the company would progress.

JG There was no progress.

DG No. For us there was no progress. And as for me, I did better after I got out of that place and went to work in construction outside.

JG Do you think that having stayed in Houston might have helped you in some way; for instance, in buying a house?

DG Yes, it might have helped, because if I had stayed in Idaho, as long as I didn't have a green card, I couldn't have done anything.⁴⁶ If I had gotten my green card over there [in Idaho] perhaps I would have bought a house over there. I say, because over there we work only in the summertime. In the wintertime, well, some stay back, some work, others don't; the majority don't work. The only ones who stayed back are the ones closest to the patron, which are the overseer, the one who is a very good mechanic; like one person or two or three are the ones that can stay back. Because the patron will say, I need you here, I am going to pay you; there is nothing to do but I am going to pay you to be here, that's what they say. But I believe they can buy a house, they will sell them a house because they know that they keep coming back,

they know they are going back and forth. Now, that's why people need to save a lot of money during the work season, because during the entire winter season, it might be two or three months during which they're not working, but they have to be making the payments, right? And they don't have a source to get the money from.

JG When did you first get your papers?

DG I got my papers on the 10th of July of 1987.⁴⁷

JG Did that help you bring your family over?

DG Well, citizenship helped me a lot to bring my family over, although...

When did you receive your citizenship?

DG On the 22nd of September of 1994.

JG Did this help you bring your family over in any way?

DG Yes, because while I had applied for my family since I received my permanent residence, which was perhaps in July or August of '89, that's when I applied for my family. And everything was going very slow, the process basically came to a stall. It seemed that nothing was moving, and that's when I received my citizenship; then soon after my son-in--law Enrique helped me buy this house. He worked in a company that...

JG A Real Estate company.

DG Yes, a real estate company. And he found this house for when I received my citizenship, immediately I sent a letter notifying the government that I was now a citizen and that I needed my family here. And they replied to me telling me that I would have my family here as soon as possible. And that's also when I managed to buy the house. We got the house something like November of '94 and I believe that in February of '95 my family was already coming over here. That was very fast. In that time those processes ran very fast.

JG How were all those years away from your family, since you came here the first time, when you were a newlywed, until '95, when large part of your family arrived?

DG It's a thing... I don't know how to explain it, but even if one is fine, one is always thinking, Is my wife okay? What about my children? Could they be ill? Are they okay? Do they have anything to eat? And so on, right? And something thinking, What do I do? I really want to send them some money, but I can't, I don't have anything. And years go by... and it's hard. And that's what I keep asking to myself; so many people that I have known since those years, that came undocumented for so long, and their family was back there and they were over here. And they got their papers and they're living the same way, they're over here and the family is back there; then I say to myself, and I don't know how to explain it, right? If they're only interested in the money they make, or is it that they are not interested in being with the family. And I was always thinking and hoping that perhaps one day we could be together. Because my wife, she never wanted to come to the United States. She used to say that she didn't want to have anything to do with the United States. And when I finally was able to file the applications, I called her, I wrote to her. And I told her, - I need for you to find me any letters I might have sent, any envelopes, something you might have saved at home, to file them. And she would say, - But, what are going to do to the United States, if we are okay here? And I would say, - I don't know.

I say, my hope was that one day we could all be together. I already got used to living in the United States, I don't know why. Because rich I never will be. Only that I think that here we can live better.

JG In Mexico?

DG [No,] in the United States.) think that in the United States we can live better than we would in Mexico. Taking into consideration that in Mexico we could make a decent living, somewhat comfortable, because one can also support oneself in Mexico. But it is very rare for someone to be able to stay at home with the family and be okay, without lacking anything; there are very few people like that. Always, they have their house in Dolores Hidalgo and they are working in

Guadalajara, or they're working in San Luis PotosI, or they're working in Mexico City. And they come to see the wife, the children, every weekend, or every other weekend. And when they arrive, they go and buy groceries and this and that, whatever they need, and the next day they go back and the family is always alone, alone at home. And I say, - Well, if we can all be here [in Houston] together, then it is better this way.

Now, if for instance I am here. I am already legal but I don't want to bring my family over and I am here working and I am sending a few cents back over there... Well, yes, the family is over there. I am here, and once or twice a year I go back over there. Then those little savings that I have, I get over there and in two or three days, two or three weeks, they are gone and I come back over, I get back once again looking for a job, I get back and the family is always alone, right? And that's one of the things that I always aspired for, that someday we all would be together.

And I would tell my wife, - I would like for one day, if God should bless us in the last days of my life, of being together. Because, my entire life, our entire life separated... To me, that was not, that was not happiness. Because I was never happy about being alone. And since I stayed here [in Houston], that is one reason why I stayed. Because it was closer to Mexico, near the border. Not really close to home, but it wasn't that far. When I went to North Carolina, it was so sad for me. Like this, thinking that in case of an emergency we would have to drive three or for days to get to Mexico. And to catch a plane, we would have to drive six or eight hours to get to an airport where we could catch a flight to Mexico, that's one of the things I didn't like about that place. The rest, yes, it was pretty. But, because of the distance, I always hoped to be over here close and, well, perhaps that's why I stayed over here.

JG

There were events that happened back then, when you were away. It was in 1963 when Eugenio was born and then in 1967 when Ricarda was born.⁴⁸ And both died about two days after birth, with you being in the United States. How did you feel back then, especially for being so far away, when you found out?

DG

I was in Mexico when they died...

JG Both of them?

DG Yes, the two of them. I was there when they were born and I was there when they died.

JG Were they born in the village, or in the city of Dolores Hidalgo?

DG In the village. They were born in the village.

JG How did you feel?

DG Well, I don't know. I didn't want, I didn't want to talk about it, I didn't want people asking me about it. At times, sometimes I felt guilty in part, for both of them, not only for one. In part... In part it was because of lack of attention. Because Eugenio began to cry at night, around 10:00 p.m he began with to cry... and with that pain that he had, right? He began to cry without end... and he cried all night. But we never thought about getting out at night, to look for... On the other hand, there was nothing to drive. Back then, back in that time there was only a truck in El Ciprés and another truck in El Paderón.⁴⁹ And at night, we couldn't find a way... to move, the city was very far. At sunrise, we ran with the child to Dolores [Hidalgo], we got there, and we ran to look for the priest where he would baptize the child...

END OF TAPE 4

TAPE 5 - SIDE A ONLY

JG You went looking for the priest in the morning. Why?

DG Where he would baptize him, where he would pour on him the holy water. We came to Father Moisés Castillo, and he sent us out. He said, - You have to look for the doctor, to look for something to cure him, this child is very ill. Yes, and we went... And I don't know how it was that we wouldn't find a doctor at that time.

And we got back to the priest again and we found him in the parish already, and when he saw the child, that he was so ill, he just ran and very fast baptized him right then and there, he poured the water on him. And then we got out and left. And we found a doctor; I don't remember what his name was. And he gave us something to give to the child, but he told us, - If he lives two more hours, he will have life, but he's not going to make it, he is too ill. And, yes, he left... Before two hours the child died right there in Dolores. And we went back to make preparations for his wake. And later the girl Ricarda, the same thing happened with her. It was also a pneumonia, and also... we also left for Dolores, well, yes, until dawn, right? And it was all too late; everything was in vain because of being so far away from the city. That was, that was... because back there in the village there was nothing we could do, because... there was nothing we could do. We would give them some... like chamomile tea and thyme tea and things like that, but that didn't help them at all.

JG Were both of them born in the village?

DG They were both born in the village, yes.

JG Was there a lady who helped my mother when they were born?

DG A lady by the name of Toribia Gonzalez. Yes, her name was Toribia. And that lady was the one who helped women back there in that time. And, well, they died back there in that time, the two of our children

who passed away... And yes, it hurt me, it Hurt me very much. And every time I remember I think that, if we there had only been better medical aid, that... that we could've taken them to, to the doctor, they would have lived... But that was one of the causes, that we never had a chance.

JG And now that you have all your children and grandchildren in Houston, How do you feel?⁵⁰

DG Very well.

JG Very well, in spite of...?

DG Well, right now I feel very well, very happy, and more so since I don't work anymore. And, yes, I kind of want to go back to work. Sometimes I think about looking for a job out there, but I'm not sure. We'll see what we can do next year, here in Houston it is all very difficult. 5' Over in the employment agency, the office of the *rentados*, there is work all the tIme.⁵² Well, from now on there is little work, I'll tell you. But from what I have seen, it is very hard because... You go to those offices and the people to whom they send you; you always go to do the dirtiest work, the hardest work, until you are fortunate to stay with a company.

Once you stay for a long time, then it is different, then you learn the job, and you are working like everybody else. But until then, they send you to Tuboscope one day, another day they send you somewhere else, and so on, right? And they are always sending you to different places and you are always in the dirtiest and the hardest jobs.

Because always. At least where I used to work, every time they got *rentados* was to do the jobs that the people there didn't want to do, either because the job was too hard or because it was too dirty, and since the workers are too busy, what they do is to bring rented ones.

And they will say, it's okay, we'll bring rentados. And the rentados have to do the dirtiest and the hardest work. If I went to work with the rentados, I don't know, I... I would ask not to be sent to the place where I used to work, I would ask to be assigned to different places, but not to where I used to work.

JG Alright. Well thank you very much.

DG You're welcome.⁵³

END OF INTERVIEW

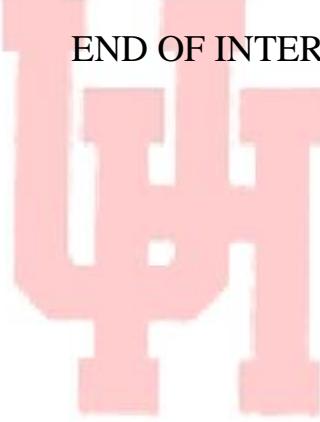


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