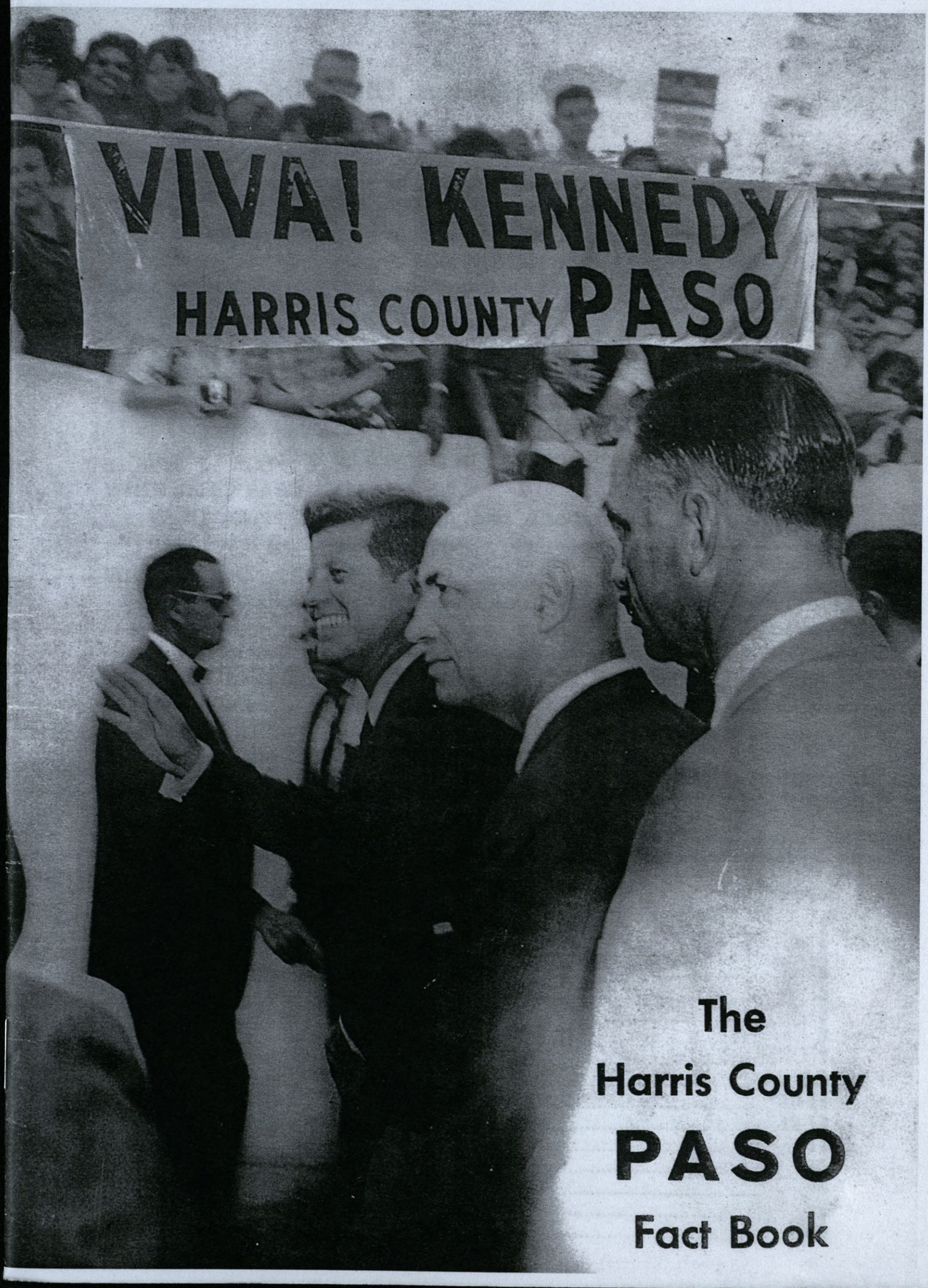


The Harris County PASO Fact Book

THE WHO and WHY OF PASO

WHO BELONGS TO PASO?

Any American citizen who wishes to help preserve our American way of life by fighting the apathy of eligible voters. PASO members use every practical approach to the problem: radio spots, newsletters, speakers, get-out-the-vote rallies, endorsements, and a team of 30 to 40 poll tax deputies.

WHAT DO PASO INITIALS STAND FOR?

Political Association of Spanish-speaking Organizations.
PASO is a non-partisan political action group.

WHERE DOES PASO MEET?

PASO does not have a specific meeting place. Its aims and purposes are served by meeting in different locations.

WHEN DOES PASO MEET?

PASO meets once a month and alternates between Tuesday nights and Sunday afternoons.

WHY IS PASO NECESSARY?

In Texas there are over two million Mexican-Americans who for the most part are below average in health, education, housing, and income. This segment of the population has been referred to as the "sleeping giant" because it has the potential to elect legislators who would sympathize with their problems. PASO can channel the thoughts and aspirations of these forgotten Americans to the legislators and the news media.

CONTENTS

HARRIS COUNTY PASO CHAIRMEN

CRESPO

MANUEL CRESPO

Chairman - 1964

Thirty-five years of civic work laid the ground work for Mr. Crespo's participation in politics. He possesses the qualities of high purpose (as was proven in his eloquent appraisal of the ambulance problem) and his mature leadership has given dignity to the PASO Organization.

During his campaign for city councilman, he polled 41,000 votes in the runoff. A great tribute to a man making his first race for public office.

FLORES

GENARO FLORES

Chairman 1962 - Treasurer 1963

The honor of being the first chairman of Harris County PASO fell to a hard working member of the Viva Kennedy-Johnson club.

During his term as chairman, the county PASO Constitution was adopted and served as a foundation for the organization to grow on.

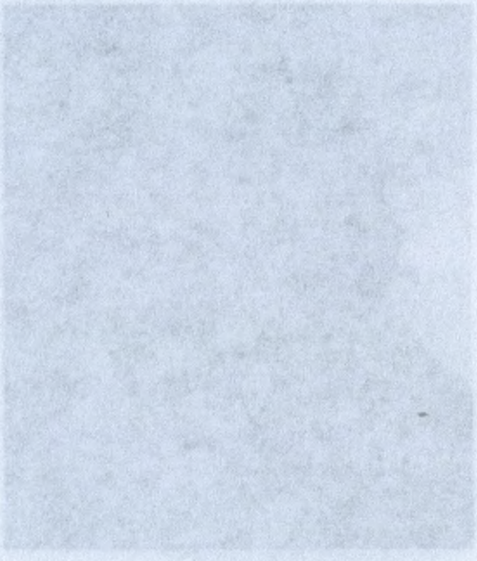
CALDERON

SAMUEL S. CALDERON

Chairman 1963 - Exec. Sec'y. 1964

A dignified leader who led PASO without pushing; served his community without fanfare and ruled firmly when the occasion warranted it.

When PASO was described as "dangerous", Chairman Calderon retorted; "PASO **IS** dangerous! . . . PASO is dangerous to the prejudiced and the bigots who attempt to deprive Americans of their constitutional rights," here is a leader who knows **when** and **how** to speak.



Statement of PASO Principles

By George I. Sanchez
(Condensed)

1. To unite into one national non-partisan political organization all persons of Spanish-speaking descent.

2. Through political action attain the rights of full citizenship for all Americans guaranteed under the Constitution of the United States.

3. To develop through united political activity a program for the economic, educational, cultural and civic betterment of the Spanish-speaking community.

4. To encourage increased participation of our members in both major political parties.

5. To provide a means of communication between members in all States and communities to better coordinate our efforts towards the attainment of our common national goals.

6. For the election and appointment to local, state and national office, persons sympathetic to the aims of our Organization, regardless of party, race, color or creed.

7. To institute a program of political education amongst our members of the community to better enable them to qualify for political office.

8. To publish and distribute a national newsletter.

9. To establish constructive relationships for local and national cooperation and assistance with other groups and organizations having similar aims.

10. To bring together the energy and imagination of our youth with the experience and knowledge of our national and community leaders for the attainment of these aims and purposes, thereby fulfilling the historic role of the Spanish-speaking people as defenders of freedom and democracy.

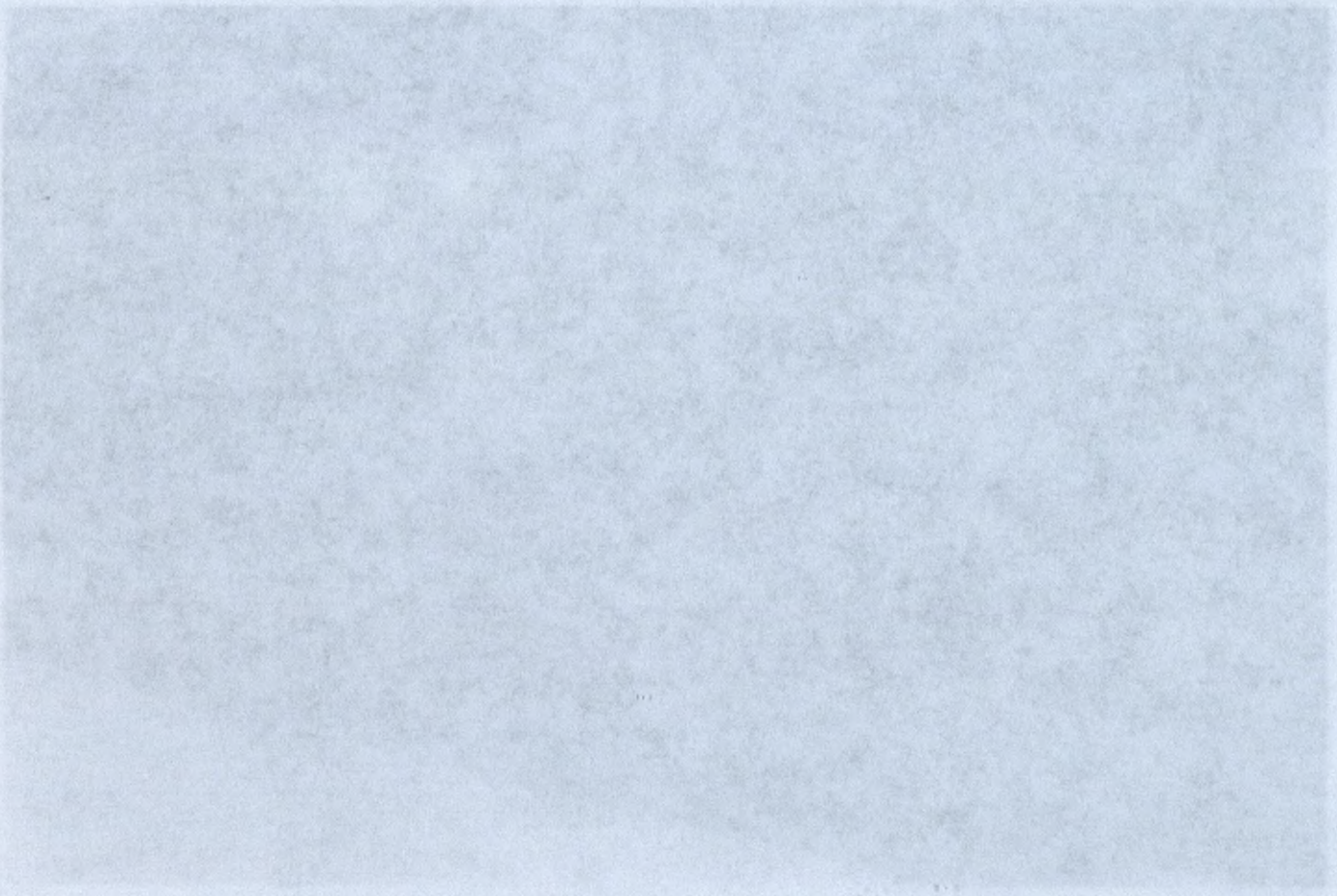
FATHER PEÑA

PASO, is fortunate in having had Father Peña's spiritual guidance in the first few months of the organizations difficult beginning.

Most of the time his presence was enough to keep every one on his best behavior. However, occasionally when hostilities would break out he was always there to put out the fire with a few well chosen words.

The 1960 presidential campaign introduced a new and broader focal point for Mexican-American political participation. The Gonzalez era had served its purpose and the "VIVA KENNEDY" Clubs took its place. The Civic Action Committee opened the first "VIVA KENNEDY" Headquarters in Texas with Al Rodriguez and Roy Elizondo as Co-Chairmen. It is now history that the VIVA KENNEDY Clubs in Texas, with Albert Pena at the head, saved the Lone Star State for President Kennedy in a very close election.

After the presidential election, a way had to be found to keep up the momentum of political awareness. Delegates from all over the State met in Victoria, Texas with Dr. Hector Garcia presiding and formed a nation-wide organization called M. A. P. A. (Mexican American Political Association). It was soon found that many "Latinos" (other than Mexican) wanted to participate in the political movement. PASO was the final result.

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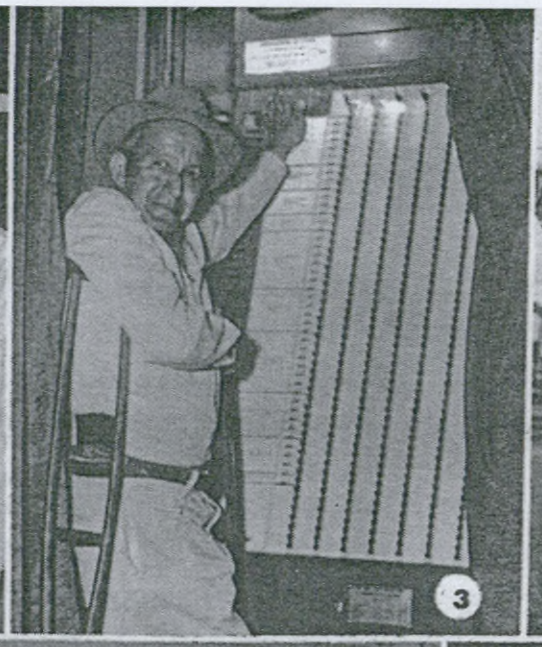
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O. Lopez accompanied by his boss Woodrow Seals. 8. Joe Watson - PASO Booster. 9. One of three official PASO election headquarters in 1964 primary. 10. PASO get-out-the-vote rally. 11. Chairman Calderon greeting members, Mr. and Mrs. R. C Hernandez, Felix Ramirez, and Mrs. Ruth Matta. 12. The group that made political history among Mexican-Americans in Houston by raising $1000.00 for Henry B. Gonzalez in his 1958 race for governor of Texas. 13. Happy trio - Yarborough, Calderon

O. Lopez accompanied by his [illegible] Secretary S[illegible] Joe Watson [illegible] PASO [illegible] 9. One of three official PASO election headquarters in 1956 primary. 10. PASO get-out-the-vote rally. 11. Chairman Calderon greeting members, Mr. and Mrs. F. C. Hernandez, Felix Ramirez, and Mrs. Ruth Santa. 12. The group that made political history among Mexican Americans in Houston by raising $1000.00 for Henry B. Gonzalez in his 1958 race for governor of Texas. 13 [illegible] Calderon

POLITICAL TERMS (Continued)

PRECINCT: The basic unit in the United States in the election process and for party organization. Cities and counties are divided into precinct polling districts, each containing from 200 to 1,000 voters and a polling place. Harris County is divided into 279 precincts.

PRIMARY: A closed primary is the selection of a party's candidates in an election limited to avowed party members. An open primary is a direct primary voting system which permits the voter to choose the party primary in which he wishes to vote without disclosing his party affiliation or allegiance, if any.

REFERENDUM: An electoral device available in twenty-two states by which voters can "Veto" a bill passed by the legislature.

RUN OFF ELECTION: Is held when no one candidate receives a majority of the votes in an election. The top two vote-receiving candidates are the Run Off Candidates.

SPLIT TICKET: The marking of a ballot by a voter for candidates of two or more parties for different offices.

STRAIGHT TICKET: The marking of a ballot for all candidates of a single party for all of the offices.

UNIT RULE: A rule applicable in conventions which provides that delegations may cast their total votes in a block for a single candidate when so instructed by the state party convention.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY: Is one of the two major parties in the United States today. Its basic strength lies in a loose coalition of the Agricultural South and the Urban Industrial North, although this is by no means a complete picture of the following. The Democratic Party is generally preferred by low income groups, organized labor, and religious and racial minority groups and is identified with the working people.

REPUBLICAN PARTY: The other major party of the United States. It finds its basic strength concentrated in New England, the Great Northern Plains, the West, the Rural Areas, small towns, and suburbs of the Middle West and Northern Atlantic. Studies have shown that Republican support increases as in income level. It generally advocates individual initiative, free enterprise, fiscal responsibility, sound monitary policies.

LOBBYIST. A paid agent whose function is to influence the decisions of legislators in favor of the special interests they represent; usually they are ex-legislators themselves who know the ropes.

JOIN THE HARRIS COUNTY PASO

POLITICAL TERMS (Continued)

STATISTICS

HEALTH: The United States Bureau of Census reveals that persons with Spanish sur-names are at the bottom of the scale in health, wealth, education and welfare. In Texas the deaths per 100,00 from tuberculosis was 40 for Anglos, 50 for Negroes, and 160 for Latin Americans. One-fourth of all the deaths in the U. S. from infantile diarrhea occur in Texas and most of these are among Latins.

HOUSING: In Harris County more Latins live around Jensen Drive, Buffalo Bayou, Milby, the Ship Channel, Hunting Bayou, Wallisville Rd., Hardy, White Oak Drive and the North Side.

There is now an average of 4.8 people in each dwelling as compared with 2.9 for the rest of the city. One-fourth have no bath or toilet facilities. Houston's owner-occupied value per unit average is somewhere around $8,000. For Latins $5,000 value per unit average

VOTING: According to commissioner Albert Pena state chairman of PASO, 38% of eligible voters with Spanish surnames vote throughout the state.

In Harris County (by actual count) there are 12,000 poll tax holders with Spanish surnames.

EDUCATION: A look at the State of Texas gives us a still greater cause for concern. For instance: The figures for the years 1955-56 show us that out of 1,745,347 students in Texas schools 286,292 were pupils with Spanish surnames. These comprised 16.5% of the total. Of this percentage there were 12 times as many students in the first grade as there were in the twelfth grade. In other words one out of twelve made it to the twelfth grade. However an interesting fact is that from grades nine to twelve there was no difference between the rate of drop outs with Spanish surnames and the rate for the rest of the students in the state.

CONCLUSION: If a concerted effort is made by parents, organizations, and educators to keep students in school through the ninth grade they will most likely finish high school.

JOIN THE HARRIS COUNTY PASO

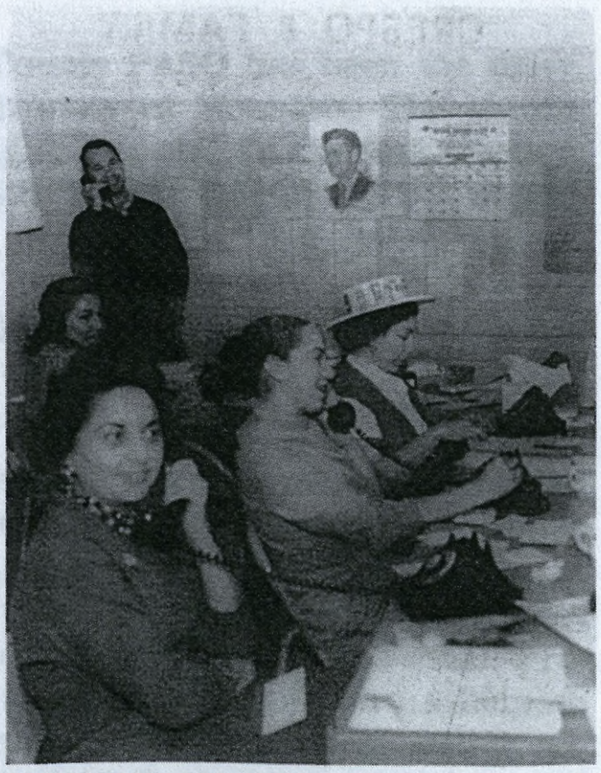
"Our future is to play the role of the conscience of the liberal movement, the Democratic Party and the Republican Party; and address ourselves to the task of eliminating the evils of discrimination, segregation in job opportunities, education and housing. . . It is in our hands to change the political complexion of the state of Texas not solely for the benefit of PASO, but for the benefit of all Texans."

Albert Pena,
State Chairman, PASO

Let Us Continue . . .

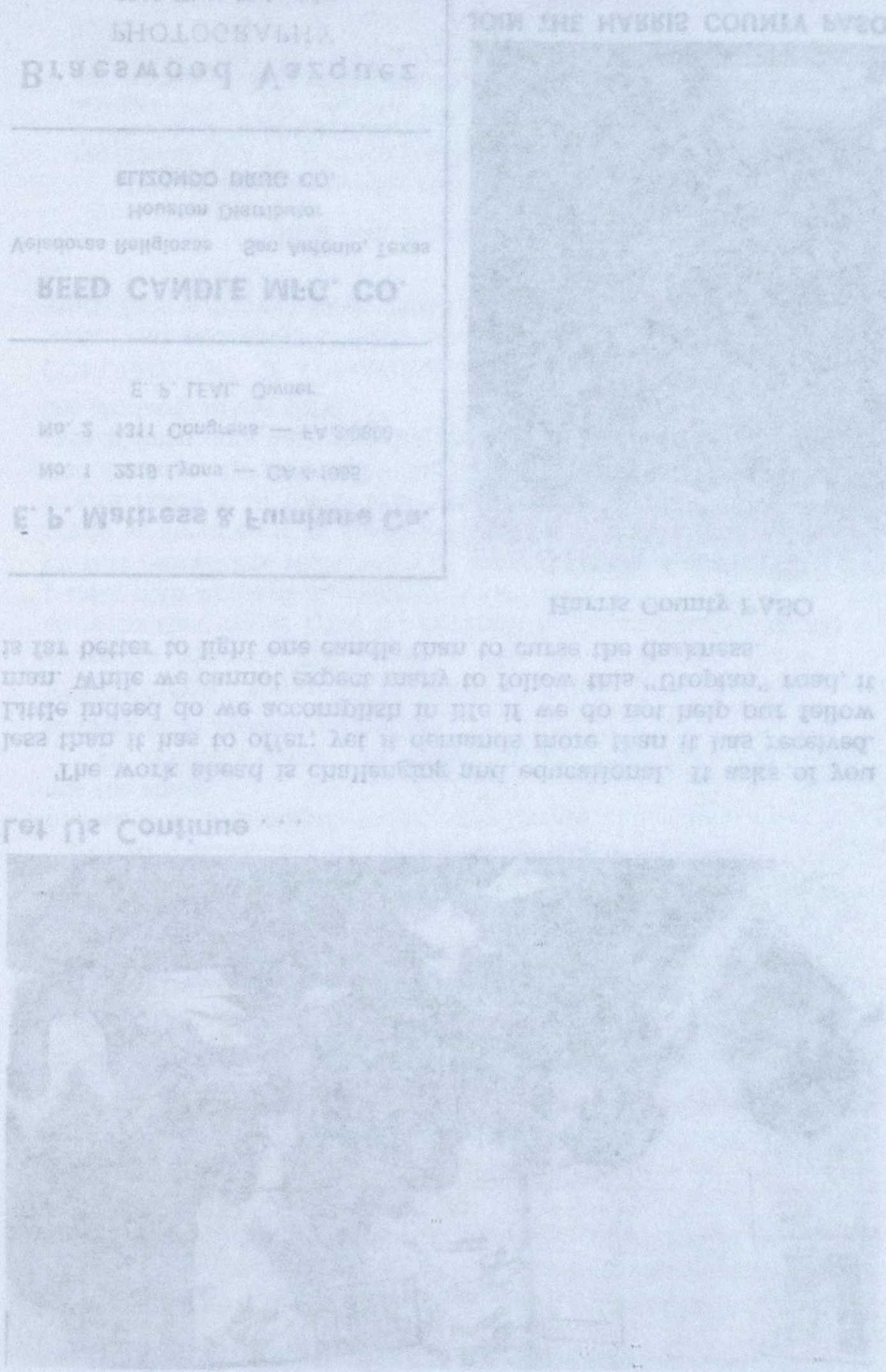
The work ahead is challenging and educational. It asks of you less than it has to offer; yet it demands more than it has received. Little indeed do we accomplish in life if we do not help our fellow man. While we cannot expect many to follow this "Utopian" road, it is far better to light one candle than to curse the darkness.

Harris County PASO



JOIN THE HARRIS COUNTY PASO

Write To: P.O. Box 4113



PASO Accomplishments

POLL TAX DRIVES

Poll tax deputies are placed in areas where potential voters congregate, such as churches, supermarkets, and union halls.

ENDORSEMENTS

In order that information be furnished to the membership so that intelligent recommendations may be made in political elections, a committee is formed to interview the candidates.

A two-thirds majority of the PASO membership is required to make a public endorsement of each candidate.

In the 1964 primary election, more than half of the candidates recommended were elected or placed in the run-off.

PRECINCT CONVENTIONS

Until 1963 PASO had been satisfied with selling poll taxes and urging the electorate to get out and vote on election day.

In 1964 PASO began an all-out attempt to get voters to attend the precinct conventions.

Teams of telephone callers, thirty thousand slate-cards, and ten thousand mail-outs in precincts where Mexican-Americans predominate carried the message to the voters that **their vote was important.**

As an added incentive PASO endorsed only **five** candidates for precinct judges. The result of this effort was that ALL FIVE PRECINT JUDGE CANDIDATES WERE ELECTED! They will serve for two years beginning in January, 1965.

U-H PASO

One of the activities of Harris County PASO has been the drive to establish a PASO unit at the University of Houston. The search for young minds is already beginning to pay-off. In the last election U-H PASO students participated with Harris County PASO in the different precincts.

THANKS!

This PASO FACT BOOK is a result of many hours of hard work by PASO members who did it without pay. It was slow meticulous research and writing by E. J. Hinojosa, Gilbert Campos, Nick Reyes and Ysidro Astorga. Typing by Dalila Ortiz, Cathy Anderson and Elodia Flores. Camilo Zapata furnished us excellent reference material. Professional lithographers David Ortiz and Isabel Romo gave a helping hand. Roy Elizondo and Tony Marron did a great job of selling advertisements. This book was published in the hope that people will keep it for future reference.

Al Vazquez and Al Matta

JOIN THE HARRIS COUNTY PASO

For Further Information

Write To: P.O. Box 4113

Houston, Texas 77014

IMPORTANT STEPS FOR VOTER PARTICIPATION

Vote on Election Day after carefully checking:

(1) Make sure you have your poll tax receipt.

(2) If you have LOST your poll tax receipt you can still vote. Go to your voting precinct and the precinct Judge will qualify you to vote after he finds your name on the poll tax list.

(3) Always carry in your pocket a list of the candidates you are going to vote for. It will avoid confusion for you and help keep the voting line moving.

(4) Attend the precinct conventions (in the primaries) immediately after the polls close.

Harris County PASO thanks the individuals and business concerns who, by their contributions, made this booklet possible.

Photography by Barnes-and Vazquez

CA 2-0012

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STEVE REINA, Owner

I deeply appreciate the hearty support of our fine organization. I value my PASO membership highly.

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Mrs. A. C. Sunholtz
Angel Frogo
Mrs. Woodrow Seals
Rev. Samuel Calderon
C. H. Townsend

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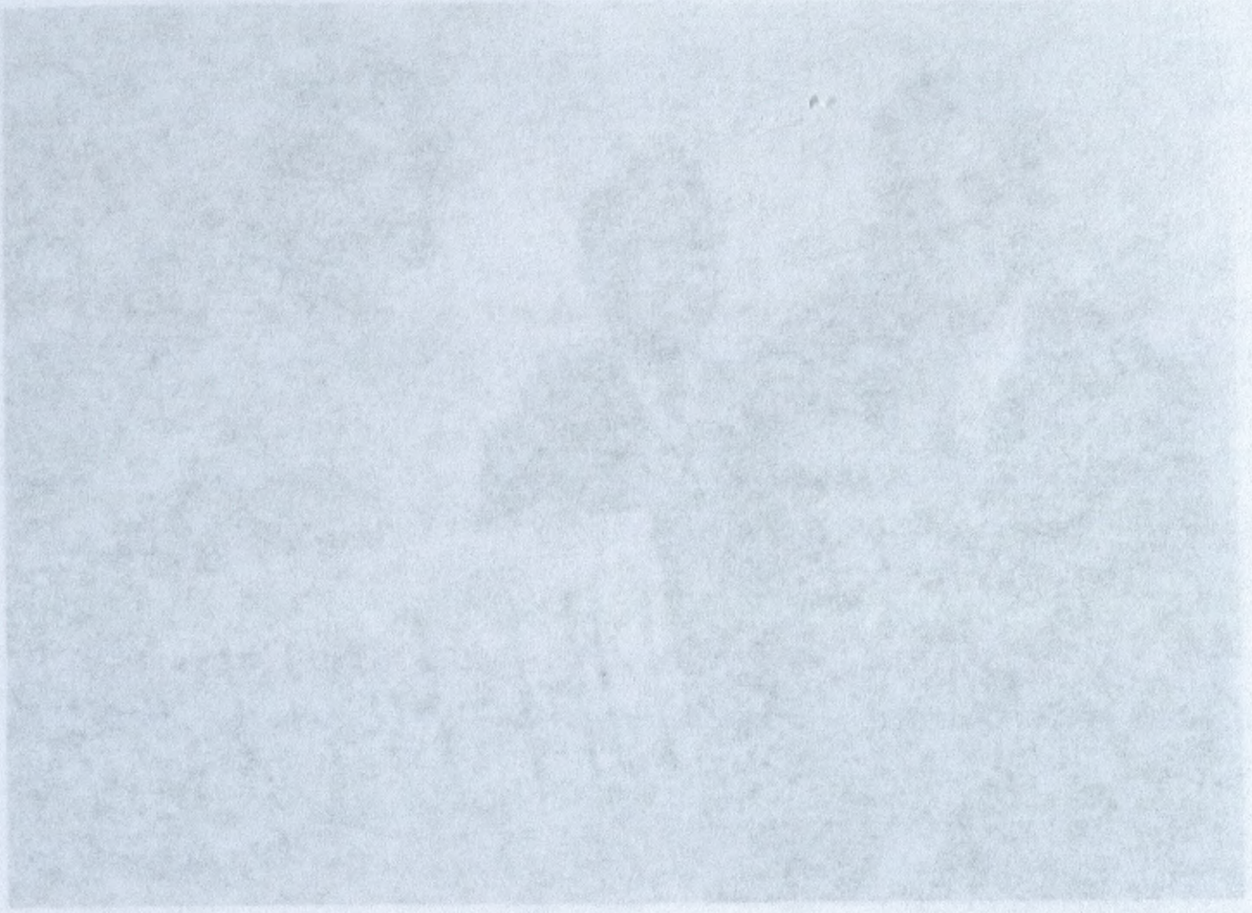

Harris County PASO Takes a Big Step

U of H PASO members available for a picture were Fred Garcia, Albert Contreras, E. J. Hinojosa and Elodia Flores.

Formerly, there were no provisions for student groups in PASO. However, thanks to the efforts of some University of Houston students, a group of which went to the 1963 Brownsville Convention and got state approval for the idea of university groups. Since then several counties have established PASO student groups.

The best way to get a group started is to have a frank discussion with officials of PASO at the county level. In this way, regulatory provisions which will specify the rules by which the student group can enter the organization can be made. Close cooperation and close coordination should be maintained with the county unit of PASO.

Qualified leadership for tomorrow depends on qualified preparation today. That is why Harris County PASO is hoping to maintain the group at the University of Houston. College students can be the working cord of political action and their presence in the organization can be a stimulating experience. Every generation must be politically educated to carry on the torch of freedom. Yes, PASO has taken a big step—it is training tomorrow's leaders today. Students may join Harris County PASO at a substantial reduction in regular dues.

JOIN THE HARRIS COUNTY PASO

POLITICAL TERMS

ABSENTEE VOTING: Provisions of state laws or constitutions which enable qualified voters to cast their ballots in an election without going to the polls on Election Day.

At Large: The election of members of the legislative body by the whole electorate of the state.

BOND ELECTION: An election in which the voters authorize the issuance of bonds for the purpose of acquiring money.

CAUCUS: A closed meeting of party leaders to select party candidates.

CONSERVATIVE: A person who usually prefers to retain things as they are, or to retrogress to the "good ole days"; an individual whose principles are aligned with the conservation of traditional views, procedures, institutions, etc., rather than with reform.

COYOTE: An unscrupulous individual who can be bought for political purposes by the highest bidder.

FILING: The legal act of declaring candidacy for a public elective office. A means by which running for office can be limited to "serious" candidates.

GRASS ROOTS: The local area and its people. A politician goes to the grass roots when he returns home to find out the thinking of the individual voter.

LIBERAL: Usually designates an individual whose wish it is to attain a more favorable economic and social balance concerning all of the people. His thinking encourages and endorses changes necessary for progress.

LOCAL OPTION: Authority vested in local units, towns, cities, counties, etc. to approve reject or select specific or alternate forms of action.
(Ex.) Determining by popular vote whether or not liquor will be served in the community.

PLATFORM: A statement of principles and objectives espoused by a party or a candidate which is used during a campaign to win support from voters.

POLL TAX: A special head tax which must be paid as a qualification for voting in five southern states - Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, Texas, and Virginia. This tax works a greater hardship on lower income citizens, who in most cases are also members of minority groups, and is significant in discouraging full voter participation.

1. Famed educator and author of PASO's statement of principals Doctor George Sanchez being welcomed to Houston by Barbara Calderon and Don Yarborough. 2. Gubernatorial candidate Gonzales and the Leal family. 3. This citizen votes in every election. Need we say more? 4. The Elizondo family, Alicia, Roy Jr. and Phillip learning the technique of using JFK bumper stickers from Harris County Women's Johnson election Team. [illegible]

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Political Activity that Led to the Formation of PASO . . .

AFTER WORLD WAR II and the Korean conflict, Houstonians of Mexican descent came home with a different outlook on social justice. Having traveled all over the world, they came home appreciating the great country they lived in, but recognizing its faults. If this country was worth fighting and dying for, it must be improved. Social justice had a remedy—it was education and political activity.

From different parts of Texas eloquent voices were pointing the way. Among the outstanding figures were:

DR. GEORGE SANCHEZ, head of the Philosophy Department of the University of Texas.

DR. HECTOR GARCIA, founder of the G-I Forum.

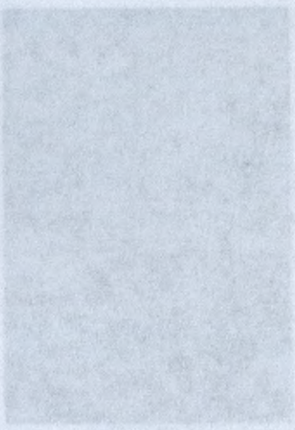
STATE SENATOR HENRY B. GONZALEZ, from Bexar County, who filibustered a record 26 hours, arguing for equality for ALL Americans.

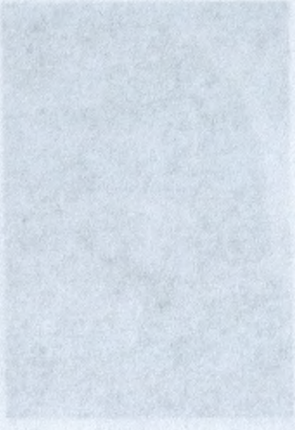
These three intellects had one thing in common: In essence, they said " . . . To claim your rights as citizens, you must first do your duty as citizens".

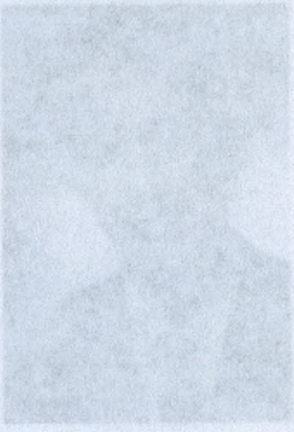
In 1958, State Senator Gonzalez ran a "Poor Boys" campaign for governor and surprised everyone by coming in second, ahead of an ex-governor! However, an important thing happened during that campaign. Mexican Americans for the first time organized to help a politician. These were not paid organizers, but a genuine "grass-roots" movement inspired by the lone figure in a white suit, they affectionately called "Henry".

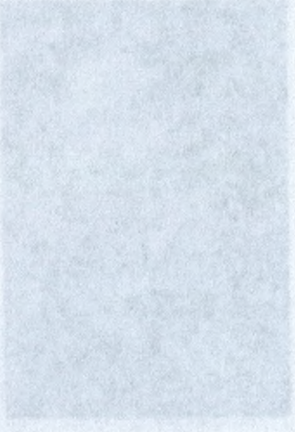
In Houston the political bug hit hard and the Civic Action Committee was formed with Roy Elizondo as Chairman. On a memorable summer night, a barbecue was held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Leal to raise funds for Henry Gonzalez. Tickets were sold at $10.00 each (skeptics said it couldn't be done). After the dinner, Civic Action Committee members were jubilantly piling a mountain of dollar bills in front of candidate Gonzalez and his Harris County Campaign Manager, Martin Elfant. Mr. Elfant (a man who smiles but rarely) broke into a tiny smile as he sat at that outdoor picnic table and counted out $1,000.00! Political history was made that night.

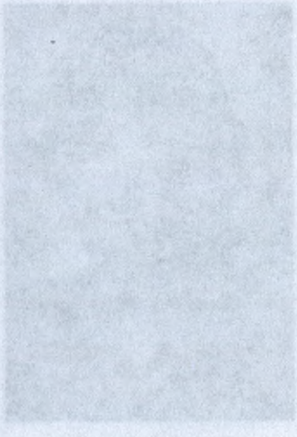
Thereafter the Gonzalez name became the rallying point for political activity among Mexican Americans in Houston. The Gonzalez races for State Senator, U. S. Senator and U. S. Congressman were the incentive behind poll tax drives.

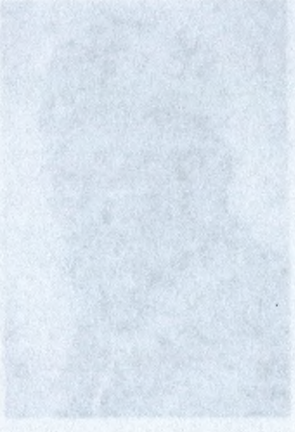


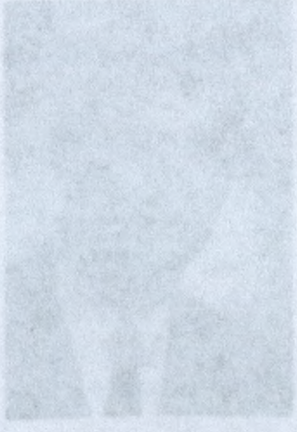


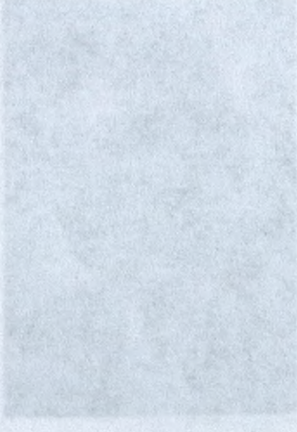


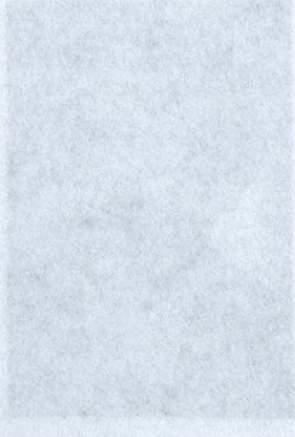






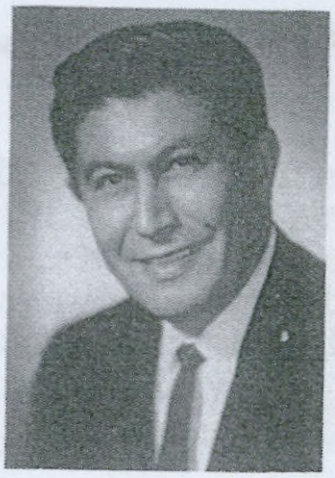






ORTIZ

HERNANDEZ



CASTILLO

SANDERS

SOLIZ

OFFICERS

Dalila Ortiz, Recording Secretary - 1964

Rafael Hernandez, Treasurer - 1964

John Castillo, Executive Secretary - 1963
Vice-Chairman - 1962

Virginia Sanders, Recording Secretary - 1963

Roy Soliz, Treasurer - 1962

Tony Marron, Sgt. of Arms - 1963

Albino Rodriquez, Sgt. of Arms - 1964

Alfonso Vazquez, Executive Secretary - 1964

Ted Garcia, Vice-Chairman - 1963

Camilio Zapata, Parliamentarian - 1962

A. D. Azios, Legal Advisor - 1962
Parliamentarian - 1963; Vice-Chairman - 1964

E J. Hinojosa, Parliamentarian - 1964

Henry Sanchez, Legal Advisor - 1964

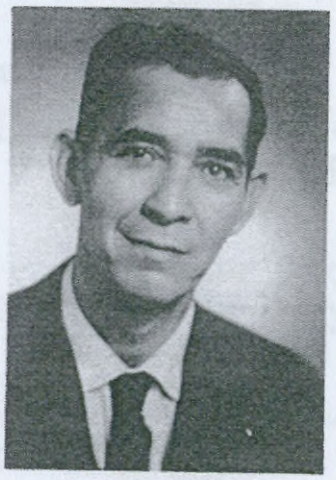
Father Roberto Pena, Chaplain - 1962

Angel Fraga, Legal Advisor - 1963

Heddy Majorca, Recording Secretary - 1963

Fred Soliz, Recording Secretary - 1962

Abel Garcia, Executive Secretary - 1962



MARRON

RODRIGUEZ

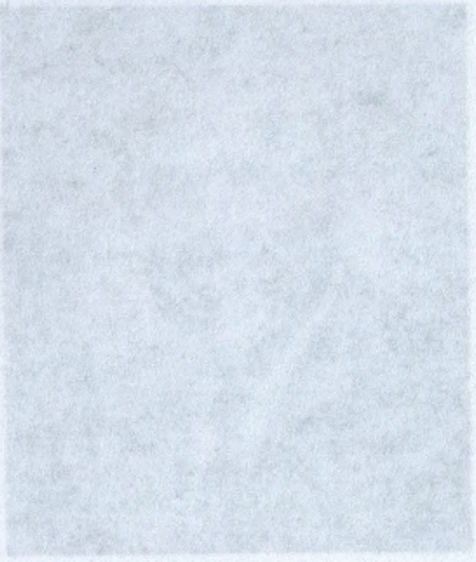
VAZQUEZ

GARCIA

ZAPATA

AZIOS

HINOJOSA



STATE PASO OFFICERS

PENA

ALBERT PENA
PASO State Chairman

A courageous down to earth bare-knuckle politician who has won many tough political battles. His effectiveness can best be measured by the type of abuse he receives from high public officials. If a man is judged by the company he keeps then it must follow that he should be admired for the enemies he makes.

ELIZONDO

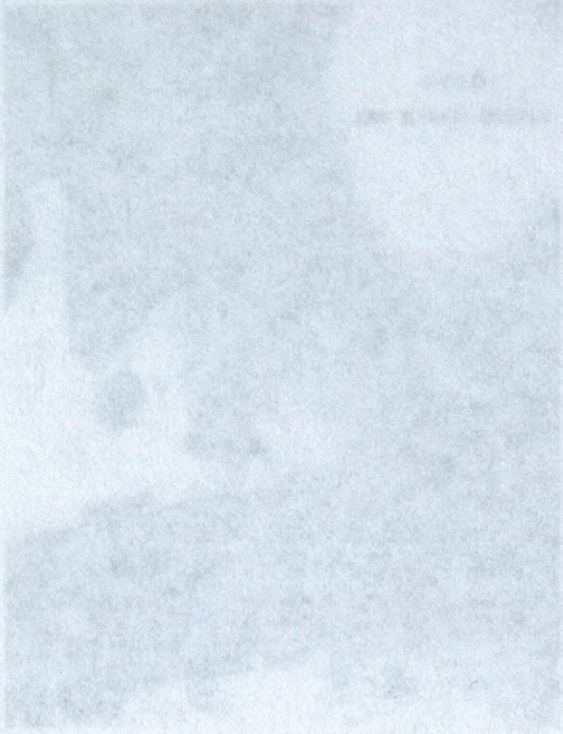
ROY ELIZONDO
PASO East Texas Regional Director

Since 1958 when he heard of state Senator Henry B. Gonzalez' fight for equal rights for all citizens, Mr. Elizondo has been in the thick of politics; spearheading poll tax drives, working door-to-door in the precincts, making a continuous pitch for monetary pledges that are so necessary for political activity; appointed to President Kennedy's National Committee on Equal Employment in Washington, D.C., and ALWAYS promoting the PASO organization.

NAVARRO

REV. JAMES L. NAVARRO
State Chaplain

A reputation for "getting things done" has been well earned by this quiet articulate minister who considers politics an honorable profession. Enough so that he himself has made a race for the school board and although he did not win, he made



VIVA KENNEDY-JOHNSON!

Was a phrase that became familiar to our late and great president. The Latino who always had been apathetic about politics came alive in the 1960 presidential campaign. The tall man with the red hair exuded warmth and sincerity and the Latinos took him into their heart.

After his victory, president-elect Kennedy acknowledged their valuable assistance in a close race by wiring to all the Viva Kennedy-Johnson Clubs:

CLASS OF SERVICE
This is a fast message unless its deferred character is indicated by the proper symbol.

WESTERN UNION
TELEGRAM
W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

SYMBOLS
DL = Day Letter
NL = Night Letter
LT = International Letter Telegram

1201

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

1960 NOV 14 PM 2 25

DC292 BA262

B HYA129 PD=HYANNISPORT MASS 10 243P EST=

HON ALBERT PENA=

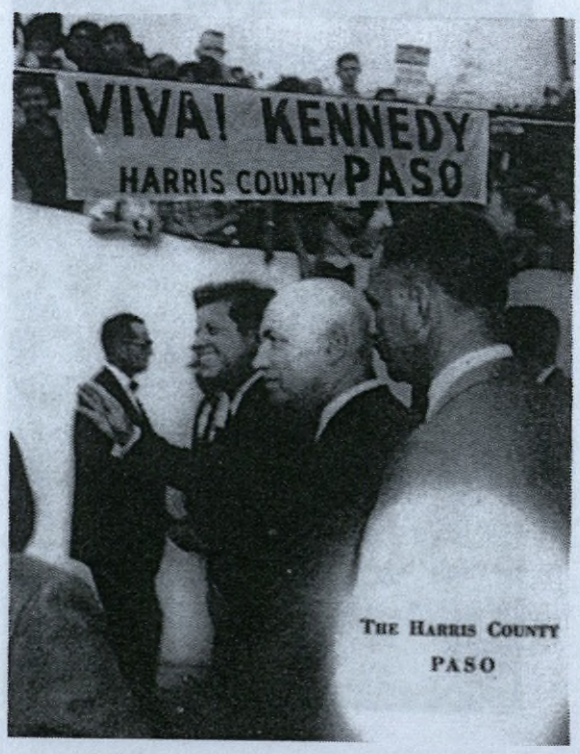
CA 48351 BEXAR COUNTY COURT HOUSE SAN ANTONIO TEX=

CONGRATULATIONS ON THE MAGNIFICENT JOB TURNED IN BY THE VIVA KENNEDY CLUBS IN TEXAS. THE MARGIN OF VICTORY IN BEXAR, NUECES, EL PASO COUNTIES AND THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY WAS A PROMINENT SIGNIFICANCE IN CARRYING TEXAS BEST PERSONAL REGARDS=

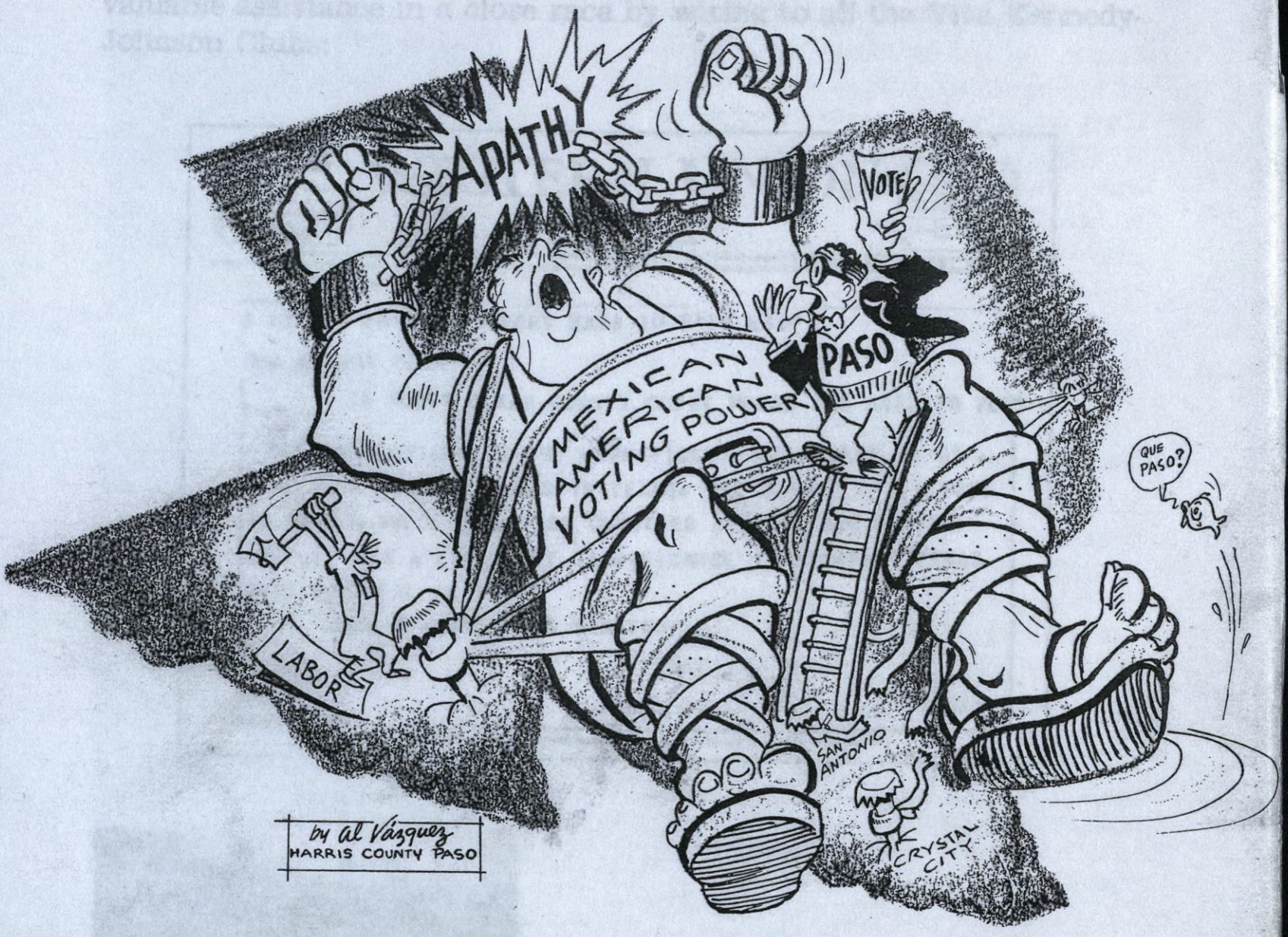
JOHN F KENNEDY US SENATOR=.

458 SPCL

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE



COVER PHOTO — As President Kennedy alighted from his plane on his 1963 visit to Houston, a thirty foot PASO banner welcomed him with a hearty VIVA! — In the photograph the president is shown accompanied by NASA director Robert R. Gilruth and other dignitaries. On this occasion the president made an historic address on Houston's important role in the nation's space



A GIANT AWAKENING

(NO LONGER THE SLEEPING GIANT)