HERMANOS DE RAZA: ALONSO S. PERALES AND
THE CREATION OF THE LULAC SPIRIT

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There were two great ambitions in the life of Alonso S. Perales: the first was to help his people, the Mexican-Americans; the second was to help all of mankind. To pursue this first ambition, Perales became very active as a major political leader who supported civil rights and the abolishment of racial discrimination. Many viewed him as a defender of la raza (the Mexican-American race) and one of the most influential Mexican-Americans of his time. As such, Perales devoted most of his work to defending Mexican-Americans and battling charges that Mexicans were an inferior people and a social problem. He participated in various Civil Rights organizations and was one of the founders of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC). This author argues that without Perales’ involvement, LULAC would have never existed. This work solely focuses on Perales’ life from the late 1920s to the early 1930s. It begins by examining Perales’ roots and his first involvement with Mexican-American civil rights. It then covers his role in the origin of LULAC, specifically its predecessor organization, the League of Latin American Citizens. Furthermore, this work explores Perales’ involvement in the defeat of the 1930 Box Bill and his role in the American electoral missions in Nicaragua between 1928 and 1932. Lastly, this work examines why LULAC has forgotten Perales. The main goal is to shed light on this often neglected aspect of Mexican-American history and hopefully to bring forth the importance and impact that Perales’ work had on la raza not only in Texas but nationwide.
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INTRODUCTION

Figure 1 - Alonso S. Perales.

In 1928, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, newly elected governor of New York at the
time, summoned a young Mexican American attorney to Washington, D.C. Governor
Roosevelt explained that this young attorney could diplomatically represent the interests
of the United States in halting an uprising in Nicaragua. Later Roosevelt, who would
become president of the United States, after serving two terms as governor of New
York, again called on this Mexican American attorney to assist him in several special
projects regarding various Mexican American problems. President Roosevelt often
referred to this man as one of his most able advisers. ¹ This Mexican American attorney was Alonso S. Perales.

There were two great ambitions in the life of Alonso S. Perales: the first was to help his people, the Mexican Americans; the second was to help all of mankind. To pursue this first ambition, Perales became very active as a major political leader who supported civil rights and the abolishment of racial discrimination. Many viewed him as a defender of la raza (the Mexican American people) and one of the most influential Mexican Americans of his time even after his death. Perales devoted most of his work to defending Mexican Americans and battling charges that Mexicans were an inferior people and a social problem. Alongside José Tomás Canales, Ben F. Garza and Eduardo Idar, Perales was one of the founders of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC). I argue that without Perales’ involvement, LULAC would have never existed. Perales helped write LULAC’s Constitution and went on to serve as LULAC’s second president.² In the 1930s and 1940s, Perales testified before a United States Congressional hearing on Mexican immigration, helped establish the Independent Voters Association (IVA), introduced a Mexican American political club in San Antonio, and introduced a bill to the Texas legislature prohibiting discrimination based on race. Perales’ tireless work provided la raza with profound advancement in Texas.

In the annals of Mexican American and Latin American history, Alonso S. Perales has not received the proper scholarly or general recognition that he deserves. Hopefully, this thesis will be a step forward toward correctly modifying history,

² Ibid.
specifically that of LULAC. This work is the culmination of various years of study and determination. It solely focuses on Perales’ life from the late 1920s to the early 1930s. During this time Perales’ efforts were mostly concentrated on the creation of LULAC.

This work begins by examining Perales’ roots and his first involvement with Mexican American civil work. It then covers Perales’ role in the origin of LULAC, specifically its predecessor organization, the League of Latin American Citizens (LLAC), which came to fruition due to the Harlingen Convention. This thesis continues by analyzing how the Harlingen Convention of 1927 came about, the actions taken within the convention itself, how an exclusively Mexican American organization that excluded Mexican citizens was created, the fallout of the convention, and the periodic attacks that ensued on the newly created LLAC. Also, this thesis demonstrates how Perales protected LLAC by not merging it with other Mexican American organizations after its creation.

Next, it explores Perales’ endeavors in keeping LLAC functioning and establishing its initial councils and constitution. Furthermore, it demonstrates Perales’ role in the merger between other Mexican American organizations and LLAC, creating LULAC in 1929. Afterwards, I explore Perales’ involvement in the defeat of the 1930 Box Bill, the attack against Perales’ involvement, and the LULAC Convention of 1930. Moreover, I cover Perales’ role in the American electoral missions in Nicaragua between 1928 and 1932. By examining Perales’ time in Nicaragua, one can shed light on and truly understand an important aspect of Perales’ life, and how it shaped his future. Lastly, this thesis will examine why LULAC has forgotten Perales and LLAC’s role in LULAC’s creation. It must be noted that while this thesis only manages to concentrate on Perales’ very humble beginnings, the overall and main goal is still to shed light on this
often neglected aspect of Mexican American history and hopefully to bring forth the importance and impact that Perales’ work had on \textit{la raza} not only in Texas but nationwide.
HISTORIOGRAPHY

Perales was a columnist for *La Prensa*, a newspaper from San Antonio, Texas, and other Spanish language newspapers; he was a prolific writer who firmly believed in the law. He published two books throughout his life. The first was a two-volume work published in 1937 titled *En Defensa De Mi Raza* (In Defense of My People) which describes his tireless efforts as an attorney fighting for the rights and betterment of Mexican Americans. Perales' second book published in 1948, *Are We Good Neighbors?*, illustrates the cruel facts of racial discrimination against Mexican Americans and other Spanish-speaking people in the U.S. It provides a case-by-case look at the injustices, humiliations, exploitations, and the denial of rights in Texas under American democracy.³ Perales' publications provide an incredible insight into his work and passion. He worked meticulously and used his extensive network of contacts to provide the world with great firsthand accounts of various Mexican American civil right activities.

Despite his many achievements, Perales has not received the proper academic recognition that he deserves. Perales' legacy has only been celebrated and recognized through the designation of the Alonso S. Perales Elementary School, part of the Edgewood Independent School District on the West Side of San Antonio, in 1977 and a tribute paid to him during the national LULAC convention in Albuquerque held in 1990. If it were not for a few minor mentions here and there in the annals of LULAC history, Alonso S. Perales would have been improperly forgotten and his plight and efforts in LULAC would have gone unrecognized. Luckily Adela Sloss-Vento, a fellow activist and

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friend of the Perales family, provided the scholarly field with a small one-hundred page book published in 1977, titled *Alonso S. Perales: His Struggle for The Rights of Mexican-Americans*. Sloss-Vento hoped that the humbly written pages of her book informed upcoming generations of Perales’ struggle and that these generations became aware that many of the rights, advancement and welfare enjoyed today are due to the sacrifices of this leader. Sloss-Vento’s book provides a glimpse into the real social, economic and cultural conditions affecting the Mexican American people of Texas. The book primarily examines reactions to the Good Neighbor Commission, the Racial Equality Bill #909 and the Wetback Pamphlet, and demonstrates the economic inequality and prejudice which existed in Texas from 1927-1955. This volume is supported by abundant materials, such as newspaper clippings, articles, correspondence, and secondary sources that the author had been collecting since the early twenties. Sloss-Vento presents, in her work, objective documentation to show that it was Attorney Perales and not Bernardo Garza, who was responsible for the forming of what was to become LULAC.

On the other hand, Perales has not received any scholarly examination since Adela Sloss-Vento’s book in 1977. However, Cynthia E. Orozco has brought Perales back into the forefront of Mexican American history in her book *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed: The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement*, published in 2009. Orozco provides a brief background on who Perales was and his role in the forming of LULAC. However, it must be noted that Orozco’s overall interpretation presents Perales as having had a minor role. Why did Perales’ work and achievements

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4 Ibid., vii.
5 Ibid., x.
go over thirty years without being examined or reviewed? While Orozco’s work is a significant contribution to Mexican American history Perales is not given the proper academic recognition. Perales has not received the proper historiographical recognition that he deserves as a Mexican American civil rights attorney, political leader, and a crucial founding father of LULAC. It must be noted that Perales’ achievements extended far beyond his work as a civil rights attorney and political leader. The Alonso S. Perales Papers collection is now, as of 2012, available for examination due to the University of Houston’s Arte Público Press, through the Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage Project, the Special Collections Department of the MD Anderson Library, and the University of Houston Law Center. This extensive collection is now available, containing documents that chronicle the life and work of Alonso S. Perales; furthermore, at a recent conference and edited volume after, these archives have begun to allow many historians to examine parts of his life and work that have gone unrecognized.6 Additionally, a database titled the Latino-Hispanic American Experience: Leaders, Writers, and Thinkers, has been made accessible through EBSCO Host, which houses various primary documents from the Alonso S. Perales Papers.

The Alonso S. Perales Papers contain extensive correspondence between Perales and other noteworthy civil rights leaders, important organizational papers for LULAC, papers from other committees and organizations that Perales was a member of

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and pioneer for, Perales’ work as a journalist, his essays, speeches and radio addresses, and Perales’ published materials such as books, pamphlets, newspaper columns, and letters to the editor. Many historians have recently taken up the challenge to bring forth the recognition and analysis that Perales deserves. In addition, some are using the collection to fill out the record on the structured role of Mexican American men and women in mutual aid societies and civic organizations. Additionally, these papers provide an alternate view of the role of lawyers not primarily as litigators but as civic leaders and elected officials. The University of Houston hosted a conference titled “In Defense of My People: Alonso S. Perales and the Development of Mexican-American Public Intellectuals,” where historians Mario T. García, Cynthia E. Orozco, F. Arturo Rosales, Emilio Zamora, and many others presented papers about Perales’ life. García examined Perales’ devout Catholicism and Perales’ belief that only a faith based community could achieve full rights and acceptance in the United States.

Orozco examined Perales’ involvement in LULAC and arrived at the conclusion that Perales was the most important Mexican American public intellectual in the United States and that Perales’ history should be recognized as a part of Chicano history. Rosales outlined the challenges he faced while trying to produce a biography of Alonso S. Perales. Finally, Zamora wished to underscore the importance of Perales as an

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7 Ibid.
insightful, prescient, and determined civil rights figure that played an important role in broadcasting the Texas form of discrimination into the bigger world of inter-American diplomacy. Thankfully, the Alonso S. Perales Papers has become a magnificent source in the further examination of Perales’ work and achievements.

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Figure 2 - Alonso S. Perales in academic regalia.

Alonso Sandoval Perales was born in Alice, Texas on October 17, 1898 to Nicolás and Susana Perales. When Alonso S. Perales turned six, his father Nicolás Perales died. He was followed by his wife Susana Perales six years later. Alonso S.
Perales, twelve years old at the time, became a Mexican American orphan who was forced to juggle school and work throughout the rest of his childhood. Perales could be found under the hot South Texas sun picking cotton and laying railroad ties in order to fund his education through Draughon’s Practical Business College in San Antonio. In 1915, Perales completed a stenographic course from Draughon’s Practical Business College and then acquired a job with the L. Frank Saddlery Company in San Antonio. For the next 18 months, Perales distinguished himself as an intelligent and accurate worker who was often praised for his clean habits and superior individuality and rose to the position of Assistant Export Manager of the Shoe Findings Department. On October 17, 1918, Perales was drafted to serve in the United States Army during World War I. He was stationed at the Headquarters Cavalry Officers’ Training School in Camp Stanley, Texas as an Army Field Clerk under the Adjutant General. Perales was eventually honorably discharged on January 6, 1920 at the Headquarters of the Southern Department, Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Immediately after the war, Perales went to work as a civil servant for the Department of Commerce in Washington, D.C. While riding the train to attend Washington State University, Perales saw an Anglo-American commit a cowardly crime to a defenseless Mexican. From that day on he knew he had found his aim in life, to defend the rights of the Spanish-speaking. It was at this time that Perales pledged himself towards his mission of defending his raza. By 1926, Perales had earned a Bachelor of Law from the George Washington University School of Law and a Bachelor

11 G.W. Parish, President, Draughon’s Practical Business College to [Missing], April 17, 1918, Alonso S. Perales Papers, 1898-1991, University of Houston Libraries, Houston, TX; A. Wallach, L. Frank Saddlery Co., to [Missing], April 18, 1918.
12 Adjutant General to [Missing], Military Record, January 6, 1920.
Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, he served on thirteen different diplomatic missions and corps for the United States Department of State, many times as a legal counsel and translator. These missions took place throughout Central America, South America, the Caribbean, and the West Indies. At the United Nations (U.N.) Conference in San Francisco in 1945, Perales provided legal counsel to the delegation from Nicaragua and assisted in writing the U.N. Charter. Perales also served as Consul General of Nicaragua in San Antonio for many years. Additionally, Perales was a member of several bar associations, such as the Texas State Bar Association, the San Antonio Bar Association, the American Bar Association, and the Inter-American Bar Association. He received one of Spain’s highest decorations, the Medal of Civil Merit, for his role in the betterment of mankind. He died on May 9, 1960. Perales did not only challenge men with his words—he challenged them with his life.

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13 Perales, Are We Good Neighbors?, 5-6.
Figure 3 - Alonso S. Perales in his U.S. Army uniform.
ROAD TO HARLINGEN CONVENTION

There were four key figures in the creation of LULAC that must be examined. The first key figure was José Tomás (J.T.) Canales, a Mexican American attorney born on a ranch in Nueces County, Texas. Canales eventually became the fourth National LULAC President, but he is mostly remembered for leading a campaign to reform the Texas Rangers in 1918, who in retaliation threatened and verbally harassed Canales for his stand. Canales is credited as one of the founding members of LULAC and the major author of the LULAC Constitution. Following Canales is José De La Luz Sáenz, a Mexican American educator and World War I veteran who was raised in Alice, Texas. Sáenz served as the official ladies LULAC organizer and is also credited as one of the founding members of LULAC. Sáenz claims in a 1950 publicity questionnaire that he solely originated LULAC. Next is Eduardo Idar Sr., a Mexican American journalist born in Laredo, Texas who was born to a very politically active family that also owned a printing business. Idar was a strong supporter of Mexican American rights, especially those of World War I veterans, and throughout his life, he founded several newspapers such as *La Crónica* and *Las Noticias*. Idar is credited as a founder and an eloquent intellectual supporter of LULAC. The last key figure was Bernardo (Ben) F. Garza, an entrepreneur and philanthropist who was born in Brownsville, Texas. Garza was a Mexican American man concerned with the welfare of workers, immigrants and businessmen of Mexican descent. He also served as LULAC’s first president. In addition to being one of the founding members of LULAC, Garza is also credited as the

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16 Ibid., 97-100.
17 Ibid., 103-104.
“father” of LULAC.\textsuperscript{18} It must be noted that in the LULAC official history Perales is only credited as someone who helped draft the LULAC constitution, and his name is oftentimes misspelled.\textsuperscript{19}

In June 1923, Perales arrived in San Antonio, Texas from Washington, D.C., bearing a stack of letters and accompanied by his friend Professor José De La Luz Sáenz, with a mission in mind. Perales’ self-imposed mission in San Antonio was to investigate the two newly formed Mexican American political groups. These were the \textit{Orden Hijos de América} (Order of Sons of America) formed in 1921 and the \textit{Orden Hijos de Texas} (Order of the Sons of Texas) formed in 1922. Perales became aware of these groups due to the Texan newspapers that he received while studying and working for the United States Department of Commerce in Washington, D.C. He had asked his friends, Pablo González and Filiberto Galván, to mail him a packet of information regarding these newly formed groups and their leaders, which they provided to him. Perales, Sáenz, González, and Galván examined the groups and came to the conclusion that they did not represent the ideas that these men were seeking both in theory and in practice.\textsuperscript{20} These four gentlemen were seeking an organization that truly worked for the progress and the welfare of the Mexican American people in Texas and not simply a political group. They craved an organization which truly labored for the good of the city and not one that simply impressed the political leaders or tried to

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 116-117.  
\textsuperscript{19} Yarsinske, \textit{All For One, One For All}, 27.  
acquire political favors. With this in mind, Perales returned to Washington, D.C. in order to ponder on what to do next.  

Figure 4 - Alonso S. Perales with life-long friend Professor José Luz Sáenz.

In the summer of 1924, Perales returned to Texas alongside Professor Sáenz with plans to tour various towns in the state of Texas and end the tour with a series of conferences. These conferences were very well received and dealt with the education, unification, and constitutional rights of Mexican Americans. Perales later stated that this tour prepared “el terreno para la organización que nos proponíamos fundar (the terrain

\footnote{Ibid., 102.}
for the organization that we proved to establish).”22 After this tour, Perales returned to Washington, D.C. with a very clear goal in mind. In 1925, Perales served at the Conference on Central American Affairs alongside Mr. Welles in the Dominican Republic. In 1927, Perales returned to the United States from Peru, where he was part of the Tacna-Arica Arbitration. There he served as part of General John J. Pershing’s staff for the Arbitration Commission from June 1925 to June 1927.23 Perales’ important diplomatic assignments were commended as splendid and satisfactory; due to this the United States Department of State would constantly seek his aid in future missions.24 Peru represented Perales’ fifth diplomatic mission under the United States government, but most importantly, by 1926, Perales had finally completed his Bachelor of Law degree. With this accomplishment, nothing obligated Perales to stay in Washington, D.C., but he was still hesitant to leave. However, J.T. Canales, a friend and seasoned attorney, insisted that it was about time for Perales to return to Texas. He wrote to Perales that his “work in the international and diplomatic services would not be of much use to [him] in the actual practice of law in the State and Federal Courts … [and if his] idea is to practice civil and criminal law [he] better come down soon, and get actual experience.”25 Perales agreed with Canales and replied that he intended “to return as soon as possible.”26

22 Ibid; All Spanish to English translations have been performed by the author.
23 Alonso S. Perales to Francis White, July 15, 1927.
24 Francis White to Alonso S. Perales, July 7, 1927.
25 J.T. Canales to Alonso S. Perales, October 9, 1926.
26 Alonso S. Perales to J.T. Canales, November 4, 1926.
HARLINGEN CONVENTION

Perales finally returned to the Lower Rio Grande Valley, specifically Harlingen, Texas in July 1927. He returned with enough savings to sustain himself for two years, an intention to set up a new law practice alongside Canales in McAllen, Texas, and plans to publish a public declaration. On July 2, 1927, Perales published the following declaration in various Texan newspapers such as La Prensa of San Antonio, the Diógenes of McAllen, and El Fronterizo of Rio Grande City:

I am going to dedicate all of my professional work on the Lower Rio Grande Valley and will have my buffet of legal profession established in McAllen and Rio Grande City by the 15 of July of this month or the next month at the latest. I also plan to sustain some pro-raza conferences soon, at the same time, establish preliminary steps in the Valley first and other following cities in Texas, of a strong entity of American citizens of Mexican descent whose exclusive goal would be to work towards the sincere betterment intellectually, economically, socially and politically of Mexican Americans in particular and the Mexican people in general. The success of this so-called organization will depend essentially on what type of leaders it will be led by. Consequently, these leaders must bring together the following qualities: they must be honorable so they do not cheat or exploit our ill-fated people in Texas; they must be active in order for our general progress to be rapid; they must be brave so they do not fear asking for justice when their rights as citizens of the United States of America are violated; and they must be intelligent so they can govern our destiny as citizens and as a race.

I have the firm conviction that our race can hold Texas accountable as a place that gathers numerous leaders with these qualities, and the day is near when a Mexican American organization will be formed; and, since this organization will be founded with a strong foundation its pro-raza activities in Texas will be crowned as a complete success.27

27 Translated from Spanish: Pienso dedicarme al ejercicio de mi profesión en el Valle Bajo del Río Grande y tener mis bufetes de abogacía establecidos en McAllen y Río Grande City para el día 15 de julio del presente mes a más tardar. También pienso sustentar algunas conferencias pro-raza en tiempo no lejano, a la vez que dar los pasos preliminares para la formación, en el Valle primero y después en otras poblaciones de Texas, de una fuerte entidad de ciudadanos americanos de origen mexicano cuyo exclusivo objeto será laborar sinceramente en pro del mejoramiento intelectual, económico, social y político de los México- americanos en lo particular y de la raza mexicana en general. El éxito de dicha organización dependerá esencialmente de la clase de líderes que la encabecen. Por consiguiente, esos líderes deben reunir
After this publication, Perales organized and attended various conferences and reunions with several like-minded individuals, civic organizations, and Mexican fraternities. This led him to create *El Comité Provisional Organizador Pro-Raza* (The Provisional Pro-Raza Organization Committee), or *El Comité*, in which he served as the interim president.\(^{28}\) Felipe Herrera of Harlingen acted as the secretary for *El Comité* and on July 10 he initiated a unity campaign referred to as *La Asociación Pro-Patria* (the Pro-Fatherland Association). *El Comité*’s membership consisted of Mexican Americans and Mexicans from Mercedes, Weslaco, Brownsville, Edinburg, Mission, San Benito, Donna, and Raymondville. At least one member, M. Flores Villar, of Harlingen, was a Mexican citizen.\(^{29}\) The next few months were very trying for Perales since he had come to the realization that a schism had risen within the committee. One faction favored a single organization embodying both Mexicans and Mexican Americans, while the other wanted two separate associations to address the distinct needs and goals of each citizen group. Perales favored two organizations and suggested a conference to

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\(^{29}\) Ibid.
resolve the matter. In the end, a convention was established that met in Harlingen, Texas on August 14, 1927.

On August 14, 1927, representatives of all the key Mexican American organizations based in Texas met in Harlingen, Texas, specifically the Harlingen Auditorium. All the delegates were greeted by El Comercio, Harlingen’s very own Spanish newspaper. El Comité had announced throughout the Spanish-language press, mostly due to Perales’ close relationship with Eduardo Idar, that the "Pro-Raza" conference would resolve several issues. The Spanish-language press played a key role in attracting interest for the convention all throughout Texas. Special credit must be given to La Prensa (San Antonio), El Cronista del Valle (Brownsville), La Avispa (Del Rio), and México en el Valle (Mission). La Prensa would become a central part of Perales’ life since it had already and would later feature numerous publications and works of Perales. It must also be noted that the owner of México en el Valle would become one of Perales’ main columnists. The English-language press also announced the meeting, and the McAllen Daily Press reported that a society of Mexican Americans was being formed. Conference planners extended an open invitation to all persons of Mexican descent, members of sociedades mutualistas (mutual aid societies), civic or political organizations. Several organizations throughout Texas, some located in Houston and Fort Worth, elected delegates to attend the convention. Key organizations in attendance included the Order of the Sons of Texas (OST), the Corpus Christi council.

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30 Orozco, No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed, 122.
31 Perales, En Defensa de mi Raza vol. II, 103.
32 "Bienvenidos Los Delegados," El Comercio (Harlingen, TX), Aug. 12, 1927.
33 Orozco, No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed, 122.
34 Ibid.
of the *Order of the Sons of America* (OSA), headed by the council president Ben F. Garza, the San Antonio OSA, headed by council and general president James Tafolla Sr., and the *Orden Caballeros de América* (Order Knights of America) (OKA), headed by Manuel Carbajal (M.C.) González. About two hundred or more delegates attended the Harlingen Convention.\(^\text{35}\)

*El Comercio*’s headlines welcomed the delegates to the “Grand Pro-Raza Convention” as well as provided them with the convention’s program and suggestions. The program addressed eight items but only two were particularly significant. First was the question of would the organization be composed of Mexican Americans and Mexican citizens or just Mexican Americans? Second, into which existing organization would the Mexican Americans merge?\(^\text{36}\) Controversy over these two issues began before the conference even started, since it became very clear that Mexican citizens were the majority in attendance. The first order of business was the selection of a presiding officer and a secretary; Perales and Sáenz were elected, respectively. Then the conventioneers decided to extend voting privileges to all in attendance, not just the delegates, which caused an unforeseen development since the majority of voters were now the Mexicans and not the Mexican Americans.\(^\text{37}\)

The next agenda item, and the most controversial, was the membership of the proposed organization. On this point, Canales, strongly supported by Perales, argued

\(^\text{35}\) Cynthia Orozco, "Harlingen Convention. The Handbook of Texas Online," Texas State Historical Association, http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/pqh01, Accessed April 21, 2013; It is unclear how many delegates actually attended the Harlingen Convention since *La Prensa* stated that two hundred delegates attended but M.C. González declares there were five hundred delegates in attendance.

\(^\text{36}\) “Bienvenidos Los Delegados,” *El Comercio* (Harlingen, TX), Aug. 12, 1927.

\(^\text{37}\) Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed*, 125.
for the exclusion of Mexicans. This proposition ensured that the new organization would be composed of United States citizens only. However, this caused a very heated discussion that lasted all morning. Perales, Canales, and Idar offered their sympathies to their Mexican brethren but argued that progress could be more quickly realized through a Mexican American association. Since the majority of those assembled consisted of Mexican citizens, there was a protest demonstration. The decision was immediately put to a vote. The result was that the organization was solely composed of American citizens of Mexican descent, hence only Mexican Americans and not Mexicans. But how did this occur if Mexican citizens held the majority of the vote?

There are three factors that must be recognized to fully understand how the voting result favored the Mexican Americans but not the Mexicans. The first is that as soon as Canales and Perales argued for the exclusion of Mexicans from the proposed organization, a large majority of Mexican delegates simply left the convention. The mass walkout of some seventy-five to ninety percent of those in attendance left only a few delegates and visitors from Corpus Christi, San Antonio, and Brownsville. Orozco argued that the Mexican delegates did not simply leave for rational objections; in reality the Mexican community felt insulted and hurt. This massive shift in delegates certainly played a role in Mexican Americans winning the vote. The second factor is

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38 Yarsinske, *All For One, One For All*, 22.
39 Ibid.
40 Alonso S. Perales, "La Evolución De La Raza Mexicana En Texas," *La Prensa*, (San Antonio, TX), Sep. 13, 1927.
41 Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed*, 125; Yarsinske, *All For One, One For All*, 22; There is a debate on the actual number of delegates who left the convention. Orozco claims 75 percent, Yarsinske claims 90 percent, and Perales excludes the walkout from all of his documentation.
42 Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed*, 126.
that the Mexican delegates could not cohesively organize. Mexican organizers did not
designate speakers to advocate the Mexican perspective while the Mexican Americans
were extremely effective in their organizational methods.\(^\text{43}\) The last factor is that the
Mexican Americans were vehemently opposed to joining an organization that would be
comprised of both groups. The Mexican Americans made their intent very clear and
stated that no matter how big or politically powerful this organization could be, they
would simply quit.\(^\text{44}\) The Mexican Americans convinced the remaining Mexicans that a
Mexican American organization would benefit both parties regardless of the Mexican
exclusion. The die was cast and the convention continued.

\(^{43}\) Ibid., 125.
\(^{44}\) Ibid., 125-126; Alonso S. Perales, "La Evolución De La Raza Mexicana En Texas," *La
Prensa*, (San Antonio, TX), Sep. 13, 1927.
AFTERMATH OF THE HARLINGEN CONVENTION

The Harlingen Convention, while very much an underrepresented aspect of Latin American history, was a very confrontational event that had a profound impact on Mexican American organization in Texas. The OST, OKA, and OSA, who had come to the Harlingen Convention with the intention of uniting into a larger organization, did not merge together due to many differences in opinion and constitutional problems. Instead from this meeting emerged a new entity originally titled the Mexican American Citizens League (MACL). However, in the course of a few months, they renamed themselves the League of Latin American Citizens (LLAC). 45 This association was the first to use “League,” “Latin American,” and “Citizens” in its name. 46 Perales probably came up with the name. The use of “Latin American” may have represented Perales’ diplomatic activities for the United States in Latin America. 47 Nevertheless, LLAC’s first few moments and the end of the Harlingen Convention were not as pleasant as Perales had expected. The OSA and OKA wanted to unite with the newly formed organization that came out of the Harlingen Convention. However, M.C. González, leader of the OKA, could not agree on merging with the newly assigned LLAC due to his personal feelings on the Mexican walkout. On the other hand, the OSA general president, James Tafolla Sr., invited the newly formed LLAC to incorporate itself into the OSA. The leaders of the newly established LLAC answered that in order to incorporate themselves into the OSA, certain modifications must be made in the OSA Constitution and Regulations. It was then established within the Harlingen Convention that both parties would designate

45 Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, October 11, 1927.
46 Orozco, No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed, 153.
47 Ibid.
individual commissions to study the OSA Constitution and Regulations, and agree upon certain modifications. Perales was nominated as Acting President General of LLAC until an actual president could be elected. The Harlingen Convention came to an end and progress for the Mexican American people was definitely felt. However, along with progress and change, hardships and difficulties followed.

Many Mexicans and Mexican Americans were not pleased with how the Mexican citizens were excluded from the Harlingen Convention. Many Mexicans felt betrayed and blindsided despite Perales’ previous efforts to clarify ahead of time that the proposed organization would need to be composed of American citizens. This upset group took it upon itself to harm and discredit LLAC, specifically Perales and Canales. Newspaper coverage of the Harlingen Convention was extremely diverse and some Spanish-language newspapers provided contradictory accounts of the meeting. Some recalled events from the Mexican American perspective and others from the Mexican perspective. For example, El Comercio, Harlingen’s newspaper, hinted that the Mexican Americans practiced political manipulation and alienation, while La Prensa, San Antonio’s newspaper, accepted and validated the Mexican Americans’ political strategies without criticism. However, Perales and Canales found themselves under attack by Carlos Basáñez (C.B.) Rocha, a political refugee and publisher of a small newspaper from Mission, Texas. Rocha’s newspaper was titled Mexico en el Valle and his libelous comments were supported by M.C. González, the leader of the OKA. It

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48 Perales, En Defensa de mi Raza, Vol. II, 103.
49 Alonso S. Perales to J.T. Canales, December 21, 1927.
50 Orozco, No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed, 126-127.
51 Ibid., 127.
52 Alonso S. Perales to Ben F. Garza, September 10, 1927.
appeared that Perales and González had a falling-out during the Harlingen Convention, and González's support of Rocha’s columns was the point of no return for Perales. Perales communicated to Ben F. Garza on September 10, 1927 that he would not have any more dealings with González, but Perales will not keep this promise.53

Rocha stated in a Mexico en el Valle article released on August 20, 1927 that Perales argued for a united organization of both Mexicans and Mexican Americans but then changed his mind suddenly, arguing for a Mexican American-only organization. Perales and Canales then, according to Rocha’s account, strong-armed the delegates into voting in their favor and required that the decision be voted on twice.54 Perales was immediately informed of this publication and wrote an extremely polite letter to Rocha in order to clarify the matter. The letter stated that Perales had made his personal wishes perfectly clear before the convention, he had no influence on the voting, the matter was only voted on once, and he asked for a retraction to be made.55 Rocha published Perales’ letter on the front page of his paper on August 27, 1927 with a statement announcing that they would not publish a retraction, in fact the convention went exactly as they stated, and in addition they had proof that it did. Rocha announced that several gentlemen who attended the convention provided firsthand accounts that agreed with Mexico en el Valle’s statement on how the proceedings actually went. These gentlemen were Federico Johnson, F. Sánchez Hernández, and M.C. González.56 Moreover, Rocha congratulated Perales on his “gentlemanship” and asked that Perales

53 Ibid.
55 Ibid.
56 Ibid.
answer a question in return: was Canales present during both times the decision was voted on? This question brought into account a previous statement released by *El Comercio*, Harlingen’s newspaper, which had wrongfully declared Canales a racist against his own Mexican people on August 19, 1927.\footnote{Alonso S. Perales to J.T. Canales, September 1, 1927.}

Perales adamantly insisted in a letter to Rocha on August 29, 1927, that the decision was only voted on once and that he did not influence anyone’s decision. Perales even submitted Sáenz’s personal account of the event as evidence. Perales’ tone in this letter is much more confrontational than his previous one and rightly so, since Rocha once again used Perales’ words to his own gain in an article published in his newspaper on September 3, 1927.\footnote{“Termina el Asunto del Lic. Perales,” *Mexico en el Valle* (Mission, TX), Sep. 3, 1927.} Rocha took Perales’ tone as that of a big brother scolding his little brother. He stated that Perales perceived himself as the judge and protector of the Mexican people.\footnote{Ibid.} Rocha continued the article with various letters that he had received from other delegates, which supported his version of the convention. Most important was M.C. González’s account, which states that the “narración su periódico asunto Harlingen es correcta; no se deje intimidar sostenga su versión hasta lo último, pues mayoría concurrentes apoyánlo; defienda derechos mexicanos (narration in your newspaper regarding Harlingen is correct; do not let yourself be intimidated and sustain your version until the end, since the majority of your readers support you; defend the rights of Mexicans).”\footnote{Ibid.} Additionally, within this new edition, Rocha amended his account in order to accuse Canales of voter fraud. Rocha
concluded that his humble newspaper only printed the truth, and these facts had concluded the matter.\textsuperscript{61} However, Perales was not going to go down without a fight.

Perales took the initiative and, on September 13, 1927, published an article from his own point of view in \textit{La Prensa}. This article served two purposes. The first was to examine how the Mexican Americans and Mexicans in Texas had evolved due to education, organization, and the creation of factions. The second purpose was to clarify all previous assumptions or misgivings about the Harlingen Convention. He stated that it was absolutely false that the exclusion of Mexicans from LLAC was voted on twice, and that he himself had no influence over the voting procedures.\textsuperscript{62} Furthermore, Perales made it clear that the convention’s purpose was to unite a plethora of Mexican American and Mexican leaders in order to reach a civilized decision on how to proceed in Texas for the betterment of all Mexican descendants. Nevertheless, Rocha responded with the harshest attack on Perales yet.

In an issue of \textit{Mexico en el Valle}, released on September 17, 1927, Rocha published an article titled “The Explanation is Inescapable.”\textsuperscript{63} This article criticized a single statement made by Perales on September 10, 1927 and published in \textit{El Fronterizo}, the Rio Grande City newspaper, and the \textit{Diógenes}, the McAllen newspaper. The statement in question was as follows: \textit{no pondremos atención a las vile\textsuperscript{a} calumnias de los ingratos que no saben apreciar en su justo valer a los hombres que hoy se afanan por sacarlos del lodazal en que se baten} (let’s not put attention on the vile calumnious statements of the ungrateful who do not know how to appreciate the true

\textsuperscript{61} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{62} “La Evolución de la Raza Mexicana en Texas,” \textit{La Prensa} (San Antonio, TX), Sep. 13, 1927.
\textsuperscript{63} “La Aclaración se Impone…,” \textit{Mexico en el Valle} (Mission, TX), Sep. 17, 1927.
worth of the men who today are struggling to get them out of the quagmire in which they flounder). Rocha in his reply declared that his newspaper was the magnificent spirit which fought for Mexican rights versus Anglo-Saxon wannabe’s like Perales. He claimed that Perales was just a racist hypocrite who was in charge of an organization that believed all Mexicans were “greasers.” This last article made it clear that Rocha’s intention was simply to harm Perales and LLAC despite what future publications might state. This exchange hit home for Perales and made him admit that he certainly needed help. Perales, despite having articles published in various publications, was not a newspaperman; however, he did have a really good friend who was one. Perales sought out Idar’s help on how to handle the situation, and Idar was glad to come to the aid of his friend and LLAC.

Idar immediately went to work, putting on hold his task of finishing the LLAC’s Constitution and By-laws. It was then that he made a remarkable discovery: Idar realized that González, in addition to acting as the OKA leader, had been sent by Alejandro Carrillo, the Mexican Consul stationed in San Antonio, to observe the Harlingen Convention and if possible interfere in Mexican American affairs and incite Mexican citizens against a Mexican American organization. On October 5, 1927, Idar, within the pages of his newspaper *Las Noticias*, defended Canales, Perales, and LLAC by criticizing Rocha, González, and the Mexican consul, who he identified as the true culprit. He described Rocha as a political refugee residing in Mission, Texas who had

64 Ibid.
65 Ibid.
67 Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, September 23, 1927.
the intention of establishing good merit with the Mexican consul in order to be allowed to return to Mexico.69 Idar argued that the Mexican consul tried to control the Mexican organizations founded in the United States in order to use them in political, anti-clerical propaganda and to exclude from them refugee elements. Since the Consul General of San Antonio could not obtain control over Mexican Americans, he became very displeased, even though they had nothing to do with Mexico's politics.70

Coincidentally, Idar’s older brother, Clemente N. Idar (C.N. Idar), also defended Perales and LLAC during C.B. Rocha’s attacks. C.N. Idar was brought up in a family of journalists and publishers. He was a strong advocate for women’s right and was intimately connected to organized labor. He is best remembered as an eloquent orator who had lost three fingers during a printing press accident.71 Similarly to his brother, C.N. Idar also came to Perales’ aid and personally protested at the San Antonio Mexican Consulate regarding M.C. González’s actions.72 C.N. Idar was displeased with M.C. González and informed Perales that the law of compensation would take care of him sooner or later. C.N. Idar comforted Perales and informed him that “time will show whether it is upon sand or granite that our ideals were founded.”73 However, matters were not readily addressed as C.N. Idar had hoped. He went on to address one of the Mexican Consuls, Mr. Valenzuela, directly and asked him to stop M.C. González or face LLAC’s retaliation. Be that as it may, Mr. Valenzuela did not fear LLAC and actually

69 Ibid., 137.
70 “Insidiosos Ataques,” Las Noticias (Laredo, TX), Oct. 10, 1927.
71 Orozco, No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed, 101-103.
72 Clemente N. Idar to Alonso S. Perales, telegram, September 12, 1927.
73 Clemente N. Idar to Alonso S. Perales, September 16, 1927.
referred to the Harlingen Convention as a failure. Perales assured C.N. Idar that the Harlingen Convention was a complete success and thanked him profusely for his aid in trying to stop M.C. González. Perales noted that it was good to know who his true friends really were and to also know who was pretending to be friendly only to then betray their noble cause.

Eduardo Idar’s publication had a profound impact and shattered Rocha’s argument. He became very hesitant and ashamed due to Idar’s publication and in his next issue of Mexico en el Valle released a statement which was meant to clear up some of the supposed misunderstandings. Rocha stated that when it came to González, he was not aware that González held personal grudges with any of the gentlemen from LLAC—with reference to Canales, he was just simply reiterating a previous statement published by El Comercio, and regarding Perales, he was simply looking for an answer to a simple question as well as clarification on the issue detailed in the “Explanation is Inescapable” article. Additionally, Rocha argued that he was not trying to establish good merits with the Mexican consul, and in actuality, his words were printed with the power of one who claims they are defending the people’s rights. He claimed that when all was said and done, the future would support his actions and words and reveal LLAC’s true face. However, Rocha did not make a significant mark on history, and LULAC’s official history completely ignores his actions against Canales, Perales, and LLAC. Idar’s amazing investigative work was well praised by Perales, who claimed that if Idar ever found himself in a legal pinch, he and Canales would defend

74 Alonso S. Perales to Clemente N. Idar, September 24, 1927.
75 Ibid.
76 “Siguen Los Sentimientos…,” Mexico en el Valle (Mission, TX), Oct. 8, 1927.
77 Ibid.
him from any tribunal free of charge. Perales finally sealed the deal when he published a brief article on *Las Noticias* on October 10, 1927. He wrote that Rocha’s fraudulent and hurtful claims, which were aimed at his *hermanos de raza* (blood brothers), were performed with the intention of harming and discrediting the Harlingen Convention and that which was created due to the convention, LLAC. Unfortunately, LLAC would continue to face more trials and criticisms during its lifetime, but due to its hardships and strong leaders, it would eventually transform itself into LULAC.

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78 Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, October 2, 1927.
DISPUTES OVER JOINING WITH THE ORDER SONS OF AMERICA

It was established during the Harlingen Convention that LLAC and the OSA would designate individual commissions to study the OSA Constitution and Regulations, and agree upon certain modifications in order for LLAC to merge into the OSA.80 Furthermore, it was the OSA president, James Tafolla Sr., who had invited LLAC and other organizations to incorporate themselves into the OSA. James Tafolla Sr. was a third-generation American of light skin and stout build, which facilitated his entry into the San Antonio courthouse. He was an officer of the Orden Amigos del Pueblo and the Cruz Azul’s first vice president in the 1920s.81 On August 25, 1927, after complying with Perales’ wishes, Tafolla Sr. provided LLAC with six copies of the OSA Constitution and By-laws, in Spanish, since their English edition was “exhausted.”82 Tafolla Sr. stated that the “Spanish edition contains all amendments, and rules governing councils.”83 However, Tafolla Sr. proved to be the biggest obstacle to the merger after the Harlingen Convention instead of a supporting figure. Tafolla Sr. stated that LLAC did not care to get together, unless they could have their own way.84

When LLAC was founded the Harlingen conventioneers passed a resolution promoting a merger with the OSA and all others as follows:

Resolved that the chair shall appoint a committee consisting of one delegate from each of the towns here represented, of which the [committee] chair shall be the chairman, and that this committee shall have full and plenary powers from this assembly to study the Constitution and By-Laws of the Order Sons of America and make suggestions tending toward their amendment, if they see fit to amend their Constitution, and communicate with a committee from the Order

80 Perales, En Defensa de mi Raza, Vol. II, 103.
81 Orozco, No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed, 109.
82 James Tafolla Sr. to Alonso S. Perales, August 25, 1927.
83 Ibid.
84 Orozco, No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed, 152.
Sons of America with equal powers, to the end that this organization (the LAC) may be Incorporated into the Order Sons of America.\textsuperscript{85}

There were some similarities between LLAC and the OSA; for instance, both organizations’ membership application asked about occupation, citizenship, naturalization, and voting patterns. Similar rituals included the Pledge of Allegiance, Washington’s Prayer, and singing the songs “America,” “Star-Spangled Banner,” and “The Eyes of Texas Are Upon You.” Unlike the OSA, LLAC had an umbrella structure with a general president (state chair).\textsuperscript{86} In September 1927 Perales had appointed a committee to study the OSA Constitution, with himself, Canales, and Idar as committee members. Perales asked for both the San Antonio OSA, headed by Tafolla Sr., and the Corpus Christi OSA, headed by Garza, to suggest revisions. Garza created a committee within the Corpus Christi OSA while Tafolla Sr. never established a committee for the San Antonio OSA Council.

Perales kept in constant communication with Garza and sent him some preliminary confidential suggestions and revisions for the OSA Constitution. Perales insisted that the joint organization cannot be used as an instrument to further selfish, individual aims, and it must answer to a system of checks and balances.\textsuperscript{87} In response Garza, and the Corpus Christi OSA committee, approved all of Perales’ revisions except for two, provisions number 2 and 5. Provision number 2 stated that the organization’s headquarters shall be where the president resides, constantly moving. The Corpus Christi OSA committee was opposed to this idea since it seemed very chaotic to change the headquarters every time a new president was chosen. Provision number 5 stated

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid., 153-154.
\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., 155.
\textsuperscript{87} Alonso S. Perales to Ben Garza, September 19, 1927.
that members of the organization shall not be part of any public office. The Corpus Christi OSA committee believed this to be a hardship to some of the good men that may like to put in some public office work for the betterment of the organization’s interests. This exchange of ideas proved that the San Antonio OSA and Ben Garza were eager and ready to work with and merge with LLAC.

By October 2, 1927, Perales had informed Idar that the final revisions to the OSA Constitution were finished. Perales praised Idar profusely, specifically for his large contribution on the revisions themselves, and expressed his excitement in submitting the revisions to the San Antonio OSA and finally uniting both organizations. However, on October 10, 1927, Tafolla Sr. wrote to Perales: “Unless the changes or suggestions that your committee might offer are very radical, I see no reason why we could not [unite] under one banner.” Tafolla Sr. was hoping to strong arm LLAC in order to keep the OSA Constitution intact. This would place the OSA dominant to LLAC while still preserving its name. Coincidentally, Idar had warned Perales two days prior to Tafolla Sr.’s letter. Idar had been spending time with the Corpus Christi OSA council and had discovered that Tafolla Sr. was a strict president and none of the Corpus Christi OSA members were looking forward to his next term. Idar warned that Tafolla Sr. cannot remain president if the two organizations are to merge and insisted that either Perales or Canales take on the role, since it was these two gentlemen that he trusted the most. Perales’ reply to Idar made it very clear that he did not wish to hold the title of president and instead asked Idar to help him persuade Canales to take on the job. Perales stated

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88 Ben Garza to Alonso S. Perales, September 24, 1927.
89 Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, October 2, 1927.
90 Orozco, No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed, 156.
91 Eduardo Idar to Alonso S. Perales, October 8, 1927.
that “lo único que anhelo en efectuar [es] la evolución intelectual, económica, social, y política de los méxico-americanos en Texas y, hasta donde sea posible promover la evolución de los mexicanos en general que radican en dicho estado (the only thing I desire is to evolve the intellectual, economical, social, and political state of Mexican Americans in Texas and, if possible to promote wherever the evolution of Mexicans in general who live in said state).”

In the same letter, Perales informs Idar that he will not be surprised if the attempt to merge LLAC and the OSA fails. Perales fears that the San Antonio council, as well as others, will not agree with moving their base of operations out of San Antonio. He warns that this will in turn ruin the organization’s stability.

As can be observed one of Perales’ biggest concerns regarding the unification of LLAC and the OSA was that the proposed organization will not answer to a system of checks and balances.

By late October negotiations had not moved forward since Tafolla Sr. still had not created a committee to oversee the revisions to the OSA Constitution despite his agreement at the Harlingen Convention to do so. It became clear to Perales, Canales and Idar, that Tafolla Sr. was not eager to submit to LLAC’s revisions. It resulted that Tafolla Sr. had been the San Antonio OSA president since the organization’s foundation and wished it to continue so. Tafolla Sr. had an overall problem with provision number 2 which stated that the presidency should be in constant rotation. This meant that each year a new president would be elected and the organization’s headquarters shall be where the president resides, constantly moving. Tafolla Sr. wanted LLAC to

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92 Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, October 11, 1927.
93 Ibid.
incorporate itself into the OSA and maintain control over the new amalgamated organization. Negotiations were stalled and it became very clear by mid-November that Perales did not plan to merge with the OSA. Instead he was infuriated with Tafolla Sr.’s rudeness and was not going to let LLAC be destroyed so soon after its creation. He shared his feeling with Idar on November 3, 1927:

> It is almost a certainty that we shall not come to a satisfactory agreement. Our proposed changes are radical in that we intend to equalize the balance of power. We want ours to be an organization of Latin-Americans (citizens of this country), by Latin-Americans for Latin-Americans. Our noble ideals and principles are far more superior and paramount than the personal whims, aspirations or ambitions of anyone of us. We must sacrifice our personal interests for the good of all. We must advance and promote our noble, worthy cause. And any man who objects to our laying a foundation that will insure the success of our enterprise, can stay out of our League!95

Perales had abandoned the notion of waiting for Tafolla Sr. at this point and had decided to devote his attention to finishing the LLAC Constitution. The LLAC Constitution had been a side project that had undergone various drafts but was never accepted since it would have not been necessary had LLAC and the OSA merged. However, once it became apparent that the merger was no longer an option, the LLAC Constitution was given the green light. Perales and Canales agreed that they should no longer wait for the OSA and move forward with LLAC but Idar found himself in an awkward situation since he believed a merger was still a viable option.

> Despite Perales’ feelings towards Tafolla Sr. he offered the OSA one more chance at unification. This time, however, the OSA had to yield to the League who was polishing its constitution. Perales made it very clear that once LLAC’s Constitution was made public, the OSA will know where LLAC stood: as a bright promising and balanced

95 Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, November 3, 1927.
organization that intended to be the largest and strongest of its character. On November 19, 1927, in an effort to promote unity, Idar submitted organizational suggestions to Canales, Perales, Tafolla Sr., and Garza, president of the Corpus Christi OSA. He recommended that Canales serve as general president; Perales and Tafolla Sr. as honorary presidents; Clemente N. Idar as general organizer; and Roberto Vela of Laredo, Garza of Corpus Christi, and Eleuterio Escobar Jr. of San Antonio as district organizers. Idar volunteered to serve as chief of Spanish newspaper propaganda. He suggested *La Prensa* as the communications medium to publicize information for Mexican immigrants as well as American citizens in regard to the U.S. Constitution, immigration laws, etc.

However, Perales and Canales refused to submit to the OSA, seeing fundamental problems with its constitution and leaders. They disliked Tafolla Sr.’s boss style and charged him with using the OSA to further personal political ambition. Additionally, they questioned the OSA’s effectiveness. Perales suggested that what was needed was an active association, not an organization to impress the politicians and public officials with the sole objective of obtaining favors and seats in city hall and the courthouse. They had hoped to end the excessive presidential powers and gain more influence overall. Despite, Perales’ feelings towards Tafolla Sr., he did agree to meet with him one more time in San Antonio in order to discuss Idar’s organizational suggestions. During this meeting Tafolla Sr. argued that the San Antonio OSA as a whole was against the idea of a general president and rejected the notion of moving the

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96 Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, November 7, 1927.
97 See Appendix B.
98 Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed*, 156.
99 Ibid.
headquarters out of San Antonio. He asked Perales to unite LLAC with the OSA at once and bring about the reformation afterwards. Perales was opposed entirely to the idea because he was certain that once the organizations united “opposition to the reforms will ensue, feelings will grow tense, and the whole matter will go to the rocks.”

Perales believed that the OSA might eventually merge with LLAC but it may require a year or two to do so. On a side note, Perales confided to Idar that he had met with several Mexican American leaders in San Antonio and that the possibility of creating a San Antonio Council for LLAC seemed impossible at the time. He stated that local politics “seems to have ruined that territory.”

By December 1927, the prospects for a merger were almost nonexistent and sadly the relationship between Perales and Tafolla Sr. would eventually take a turn for the worse. On December 14, 1927, Idar wrote a letter to Tafolla Sr. stating that the “matter stands between you and Mr. Perales, you two are the head of both our institutions and you must meet the other half way. We, the others are simple, subordinate elements, we will agree if you two agree.”

Tafolla Sr. replied that the fault does not lie with the OSA but with Perales. He stated that the OSA was the first association to organize with the same principles, ideals, and purposes as LLAC, and yet knowing that the OSA was in existence, LLAC was created. Tafolla Sr. was infuriated with Perales and blamed him for the unsuccessful merger of the two organizations.

Tafolla Sr. will go on to claim that Perales was too young, too inactive, and too

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100 Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, November 30, 1927.
101 Ibid.
102 Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed*, 156.
103 Alonso S. Perales to J.T. Canales, December 23, 1927.
inexperienced for the work that he was conducting. Perales wanted Canales and Idar to know that blame laid solely on Tafolla Sr. and wanted to remind them that it was Tafolla Sr. who had invited LLAC to join the OSA, not the other way around. Following this further, Perales stated that Tafolla Sr. had “no cause for disappointment or complaint.” Perales wanted to sever all ties with the San Antonio OSA Council and his feelings on the matter can be observed on a letter he addressed to Idar regarding literary contributions for Idar’s magazine. Perales wrote “do not beg them --- para no darles lugar a que digan, como ya lo [dijeron] en nuestra presencia: ‘que la Orden Hijos de América nos [está] amamantando’. En mi concepto, no necesitamos que ninguna orden nos amamante (in order to not give them the excuse to say, which they have already said in our presence: ‘that the Order of Sons of America are breastfeeding us’. In my opinion, we do not need any order to suckle us).” As can be examined, relations between the San Antonio OSA and LLAC were strained by mid-December. Nonetheless, Perales continued forward with LLAC. Additionally, he helped other OSA councils secede Tafolla Sr.’s presidency and merge with LLAC. However, Tafolla Sr. proved to be one of the greatest obstacles in the unification of the organizations that split from the OSA to join LLAC in the late 1920s, which is one of the next topics of discussion.

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104 Eduardo Idar to Alonso S. Perales, March 20, 1928.
105 Alonso S. Perales to J.T. Canales, December 23, 1927.
106 Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, December 15, 1927.
CREATING A FOUNDATION FOR THE LEAGUE OF LATIN AMERICAN CITIZENS

After the Harlingen Convention, various members of LLAC were eager to start drafting and polishing a constitution for their new organization. Most of these sentiments, however, were not truly acted upon due to the belief that LLAC could have merged with the OSA. If such an event occurred, then an LLAC Constitution would go to waste. Regardless, many felt the need for an LLAC Constitution since various councils were being established rapidly. Eduardo Idar would prove to be the most valuable contributor to the LLAC Constitution. LLAC organizers sought to unite Mexican Texans in South Texas, so the Lower Rio Grande Valley was targeted first. All other associations had not focused on this area and LLAC spread like wildfire in the Valley into Harlingen, Brownville, Mercedes, Weslaco, Mission, Edinburg, La Grulla, Encino, and Peñitas. It also spread to Laredo and to Gulf and La Salle in Matagorda County.107 Perales had his hands full during this time due to his nomination as Acting President General of LLAC. Considering all that Perales had done for LLAC, it is important to mention that he was still a practicing and active attorney during this time. He was only free on Sundays which he spent travelling throughout the Valley performing various civil rights duties, not to mention, he served in two different diplomatic missions during 1928. Regardless, Perales guaranteed Garza on September 19, 1927, that LLAC was “organizing [itself] in the Valley as rapidly as possible.”108

Less than a month since the Harlingen Convention, Idar was quick to work on establishing an LLAC council in Laredo as well as drafting the LLAC Constitution; it is worth noting that LLAC at the time was still settling on a proper name and sometimes

107 Orozco, No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed, 154.
108 Alonso S. Perales to Ben Garza, September 19, 1927.
went by the name of the MACL. Idar, being a newspaperman, confided in Perales that in order to pursue an LLAC council in Laredo he will need some typography equipment, as well as stationery, envelopes, and paper. He notes that in order to not spend an extraordinary amount of money on just typography equipment and stationary he could make a general uniformed heading as well as brochures for the entire organization. He asked Perales what he should do with the receipts regarding the necessary material and then volunteered to open a credit line for LLAC. Idar recommended that any future conferences should be in both Spanish and English, and requested that if it was at all possible, to publish all LLAC propaganda in his own newspaper. Idar was a proactive member within the organization as well as a solid foundation for the LLAC community. Perales gave Idar the go ahead on opening a credit line and instructed him to print about 50 brochures per all possible future councils. Additionally, he informed Idar that it was only more than fair for his newspaper to be in charge of LLAC propaganda since his newspaper was naturally one of LLAC’s biggest supporters. Perales made it clear that LLAC’s official language should be English. He believed that many Mexican Americans understood English better than Spanish. Nevertheless, he suggested that all printed material be available in both English and Spanish. Despite Idar’s enthusiasm and quick initiative, the Laredo Council would not be established for another month.

Sadly, LLAC’s local activities are mostly unrecorded, and it cannot be deciphered what date specifically most LLAC council were established, but due to the new Alonso S. Perales Papers it was uncovered when the LLAC McAllen Council was founded. On

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109 Eduardo Idar to Alonso S. Perales, August 22, 1927.
110 Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, September 2, 1927.
August 29, 1927, at 7:30 p.m. in a McAllen courthouse various LLAC members gathered for the first LLAC McAllen meeting. Perales, introduced as the Chairman of the State Organizing Committee, began the meeting by giving a brief history of LLAC explaining the Aims and Purposes of the organization. He stated that he was firmly convinced that the evolution of American citizens of Latin extraction could be brought about by means of a well-defined program of thorough intellectual preparation, unity of action in all fields of social endeavor, and intelligent, conscientious use of the ballot franchise.111 After Perales’ introduction, all eligible members present were enrolled. The next motion in the meeting was to elect officers from those present. The following officers were elected: Mr. Diodoro Guerra as President, Mr. Modesto Guerra as Vice-President, Mr. Anastacio Guerra as Secretary, and Mr. Guadalupe Guerra as Treasurer. Upon assuming the office of President of the McAllen Council, Mr. Diodoro Guerra expressed his sincere appreciation for the honor bestowed upon him but asked to be excused since he had to leave for Laredo that night. He was released as chairman of the meeting by Mr. Modesto Guerra, Vice-President. A collection of nine dollars was raised to defray the expenses of the meeting. The meeting of the newly formed McAllen council was adjourned to meet again at the call of the President.112 The proceeding followed at the McAllen Council demonstrates how a typical LLAC council was structured and organized. The second LLAC McAllen Council meeting, called on October 23, 1927, presents a more detailed program of what a common LLAC meeting was like. The meeting was called by the President, Mr. Diodoro Guerra. The Secretary

111 Minutes of the First Meeting of the League of Lain-American Citizens, Meeting of 29 August 1927.
112 Ibid.
began by reading the minutes of the previous council meeting. He then called the membership roll, where 40 new members were enrolled.\(^{113}\) Afterwards the Secretary held elections for officer positions that were vacant. Such as, the Second Vice-President, Chairman to the Committee on Arbitration, Chairman to the Committee on Propaganda, Chairman to the Committee on Program, Assistant Secretary, Chairman of the Interior Relations Committee, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Permanent Delegate, and Sergeant-at-Arms. Afterwards a committee was designated for the purpose of looking for a permanent location to hold the LLAC McAllen Council meetings. Furthermore, an initiation fee of a dollar and a monthly fee of fifty cents were put into place.\(^{114}\) The meeting was adjourned after remarks by the President and remarks by Perales on LLAC as a whole were made.

By late-October, multiple LLAC councils were being founded simultaneously throughout the Valley. These events were very active and almost always included free food, live music, and good speeches. The Brownsville Council was founded on October 19, 1927 at 8:00 p.m. in the Brownsville, Texas courthouse.\(^{115}\) All invitees were urged to wear their best suit of clothes in order to make a good impression. The Brownsville meeting was a complete success. The courthouse was filled to capacity and all in attendance were greeted by a brass band.\(^{116}\) Alongside Perales and Canales, the Corpus Christi OSA Council, headed by Garza, also attended the Brownsville meeting. Perales was in constant communication with various eager gentlemen who wanted to

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\(^{113}\) Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, November 2, 1927. \\
\(^{114}\) Program for Meeting of League of Latin-American Citizens to be held on October 23, 1927. \\
\(^{115}\) Alonso S. Perales to Ben Garza, October 8, 1927. \\
\(^{116}\) Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, October 20, 1927.
establish their own LLAC council. He approved councils in Edinburg, Weslaco, Mercedes, La Grulla (headed by Mr. Gustavo S. García), Encino (headed by Mr. Eugenio Longoria), and Laredo. Sáenz, Secretary General of LLAC, managed to establish a council in La Grulla on Saturday, November 5, 1927. Perales attended the meeting and noted that it was a complete success. He mentioned that there were about 500 people in attendance and 73 members were enrolled. Perales stated that all of the ceremonies and regular oaths were performed and the officers were elected. The officers elected were: Tristán Longoria, President; Amado Vera, Jr., Vice-President; Andrés Longoria, Secretary; Cruz Solís, Assistant Secretary; Juan Villareal, Treasurer.

The LLAC Laredo Council, overseen by Idar, was slow in being established despite it being the first council to start forming since the Harlingen Convention. This was due to different factors such as Idar’s insistence in having Perales and Canales present during the inaugural meeting, Laredo’s heavy Mexican presence which Idar believed would interfere with the proceedings but eventually never did, a conflict between Laredo’s prospective council and a local political ring which would resurface, Idar’s work for LLAC as its main engine of propaganda, and most importantly Idar’s mission of drafting a constitution for LLAC. Idar wanted Perales to approve every meticulous detail, such as assuring that the meeting be held in English but still have a translator present who could read the “Aims and Purposes” of the League in Spanish to

117 Alonso S. Perales to Fred L. Johnston October 11, 1927; Alonso S. Perales to Sr. Amado Vera, Jr., October 12, 1927; Alonso S. Perales to Sr. Francisco García, October 12, 1927.
118 Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, November 9, 1927.
119 Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, November 7, 1927.
those in attendance who did not understand English. Furthermore, Idar wanted to make sure that Perales would be comfortable with Mexican citizens and Anglo-Saxon guests attending the meeting. While the Laredo council had over one hundred interested members, it was not established until November 13, 1927. Idar invited Perales and hinted that the LLAC Laredo Council meeting would be a large event similar to the Brownsville meeting, hinting that the Laredo Council would be a bigger affair. The officers elected for the LLAC Laredo Council were: Eduardo Idar as President; Daniel Valdez as 1st Vice-President; John L. George as 2nd Vice-President; N. R. Montalvo as Secretary; Norberto de la Garza as Assistant Secretary; Armengol Guerra as Treasurer; L. Villegas as Prosecutor; Federico P. González, Roberto Vela and Candelario Ramírez as Board of Directors.

Despite all of this great activity, LLAC still did not have a constitution, which heavily affected its ability to create more councils and acquire more members. By September 28, 1927, Idar had submitted a preliminary constitution to Perales and Canales, alongside his edits on the OSA Constitution and By-laws. Canales found Idar’s constitution so enjoyable that he read it out loud to the OSA Constitution Revision Committee. Idar’s constitution received the general approval of all the members within the committee. Perales confided in Idar that if LLAC and the OSA merged then various parts of Idar’s proposed constitution would be adopted into the OSA reforms. Perales wrote “si no llegamos a un acuerdo con los Hijos de América, es muy probable que adoptemos la mayor parte de la obra de usted, pues coincide exactamente con

120 Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, November 9, 1927.
121 Ibid.
122 Eduardo Idar to Alonso S. Perales, November 1, 1927.
nuestras ideas (if we do not reach an agreement with the Sons of America, it is very likely that we will adopt the majority of your work, as it coincides exactly with our ideas).” However, Idar’s constitution was placed in the back burner until the merger with the OSA could be resolved which, as examined above never came to fruition. After it became apparent that the possibility of merging with the OSA was not going to occur LLAC moved forward in creating a constitution, albeit a temporary one.

Idar’s constitution had been examined by multiple LLAC members and had even undergone some revisions. It must be noted that Idar’s constitution was written in Spanish. LLAC found itself in dire need of a constitution to hold it together and state its purpose, compounded by the fact that with each passing month an average of two new councils were being established. On October 31, 1927, Perales admitted to Canales that the organization was feeling the daily need of a constitution and by-laws. He proposed the idea of adopting Idar’s draft as a temporary measure until a permanent constitution could be drafted since both he and Canales were constantly busy. Perales suggested printing the constitution in both English and Spanish since there were quite a number of Americans of “latin extraction” who did not read English. By November 2, 1927, Perales examined the drafts very carefully and suggested several changes. Canales, however, was too busy at the moment and it was left up to Idar and Perales to finalize the temporary constitution. Perales mailed Idar the final revisions of the LLAC temporary constitution along with instructions on the printing and distributing of this temporary constitution to all other LLAC councils. Perales made it

123 Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, October 2, 1927.
124 Alonso S. Perales to J.T. Canales, October 31, 1927.
125 Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, November 4, 1927.
clear that this draft was by no means complete; he stated that it would have to answer as a temporary constitution until someone could be entrusted with the task of crafting an adequate and permanent constitution to be ready for the first LLAC annual convention.\textsuperscript{126} He instructed Idar with the task of finding an editor that could polish the temporary constitution into perfect Castilian Spanish, if Idar was not busy or willing at that moment.\textsuperscript{127} Perales believed that it was not necessary to translate the temporary constitution into English since it was after all only a temporary document but he made it clear that the official constitution should be written in English since it was after all the official language of LLAC. He also asked Idar to announce in his newspaper’s next issue, \textit{Las Noticias}, that a temporary LLAC Constitution would soon be ready for publication.\textsuperscript{128}

Perales had locked himself behind closed doors for a few days in order to examine and revise Idar’s draft.\textsuperscript{129} Perales mailed Idar nine modifications or items which he believed should be made before printing. The first modification dealt with the name written on the constitution which he believed should read as the “League of American Citizens of Latin Descent” in order for there to be no confusion as to the League’s membership.\textsuperscript{130} The second modification regarded the number and title of officers. Perales used the LLAC Brownsville Council officers as an outline with the addition of positions which Idar deemed necessary. For the third item, Perales provided Idar with an outline of the OSA Constitution in order for Idar to follow it, if he so desired.

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\textsuperscript{126} Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, November 2, 1927.  \\
\textsuperscript{127} Alonso S. Perales to J.T. Canales, November 2, 1927.  \\
\textsuperscript{128} Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, November 2, 1927.  \\
\textsuperscript{129} Ibid.  \\
\textsuperscript{130} Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, November 4, 1927.  \\
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In the fourth modification, Perales instructed Idar to insert the section on “Parliamentary Rules” as of that moment if he deemed it convenient. For the fifth modification Perales wanted Idar to bear in mind the main features that made LLAC unique. He wrote that the organization shall have a President General, two permanent delegates from each Council to attend the annual convention with instructions to act, and a headquarters that will be stationed wherever the President General happens to be residing. He noted that there would be several ways to call a convention; the President General may call it when he deems it necessary or two local councils can petition him to call a convention. Perales stated that “these special features make our League very different from the Order Sons of America. These are essential safeguards and we must have them.”

In the sixth item, Perales called attention to the omission of all references regarding fees or monetary percentages to be sent to LLAC headquarters. He believed that the best course of action at that moment, since there was no established headquarters, was to leave the matter up to the individual councils. The seventh item reminded Idar to acquire a master of Spanish who could edit the draft before printing. In the eighth item, Perales advised Idar to handle the pricing and printing of the pamphlets as he saw fit and to alert the Presidents of the various local councils. In the last item, Perales attached a questionnaire, prepared by Canales for use by the Brownsville Council, which he deemed satisfactory and asked it to be translated into Spanish and inserted into the constitution. Perales always made sure to pay Idar the compliment that he was owed for all of his tireless efforts. On November 9, 1927, Canales approved the constitution for printing as soon as possible and determined it was a very good

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  \item \textsuperscript{131} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{132} Ibid.
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temporary constitution that would serve LLAC for the time being.\footnote{J.T. Canales to Alonso S. Perales, November 9, 1927.} Idar managed to handle all of the revisions and modifications despite being sick and in the process of launching a monthly English-Spanish magazine that would serve as the official LLAC Laredo Council publication.\footnote{Eduardo Idar to Alonso S. Perales, December 13, 1927.} By January 1928 Idar had printed LLAC’s first constitution and by-laws and provided them to all of the councils throughout the Valley.\footnote{Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, December 15, 1927; Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, December 30, 1927.}
By December 1927 LLAC had only been established for about four months, yet had founded eight councils in Texas.\textsuperscript{136} It must be noted that the OSA, which had been operating for a few years by this point, only had four active councils by December 1927.

\textsuperscript{136} Perales, \textit{En Defensa de mi Raza, Vol. II}, 104.
Moreover, with the holidays coming up Perales was desperately looking for a break from his duties as the Acting President General of LLAC. He confided in Canales that:

> I know I am devoting too much time to this organization matter, but we are in it now and there is no way out of it. We shall either have to swim or drown. That’s all. The only reason I am working so hard is because I firmly believe that this League of ours is destined to become the greatest thing of its kind that we Mexican-Americans ever had in our entire history.\(^{137}\)

Nevertheless, LLAC kept itself busy throughout the month of December. Perales congratulated everyone for their tireless efforts and advised them to install as many councils as they could.\(^{138}\) Canales and Sáenz were then quick to successfully establish a council in Encino; Perales could not attend since he was in San Antonio at the time.

Perales’ statement prompted Idar to work up the organization of councils in Webb County, specifically in the city of Ojuelos and at the mining camp of Dolores, located 23 miles from Laredo. Idar reported that there were eighty people willing to join from Dolores and asked Perales for his authority and guidance. Idar wanted to know what would be the proper action to take and if Perales was willing to travel to Dolores, despite the distance.\(^{139}\) Perales’ reply to Idar contradicted his earlier statement, since he believed that councils should only be established where a demand for them may exist. He informed Idar that he was very glad to learn that there were several prospective councils but believed that LLAC should confine itself to organizing councils only where there was a demand. If not, such councils “will die immediately after our departure.”\(^{140}\)

He continued to state that if that might be the case, LLAC might as well save its time and energy for places where active men exist. Regardless, Perales informed Idar that

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\(^{137}\) Alonso S. Perales to J.T. Canales, November 2, 1927.  
\(^{138}\) Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, December 15, 1927.  
\(^{139}\) Eduardo Idar to Alonso S. Perales, December 19, 1927.  
\(^{140}\) Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, December 23, 1927.
he was turning Idar’s requests over to Canales who was as of December 21, 1927, the Acting President General of LLAC. Perales had been requested to serve in two diplomatic missions in 1928 and would go on to spend most of that year in Washington, D.C.; Havana, Cuba; and Nicaragua. Perales understood that he had to leave somebody else in charge of the organization while he was gone. He volunteered Canales for the position; however, Canales was not thrilled to take on such a role. Perales informed him that if he became the Acting President General of LLAC then Brownsville would become the organization's headquarters. Perales told Canales that “the Brownsville Boys could do all the work, and all you would have to do would be to advise and direct.” Canales at first declined the position but after some deliberation finally agreed to the job. On December 3, 1927, Perales submitted the proposition, making Canales the Acting President General of LLAC until LLAC’s first annual convention, to all of the active LLAC councils. The proposition was approved by six of the councils and Perales happily appointed Canales as the Acting President General.

As can be observed, Perales was heavily involved in the creation of an LLAC foundation as well as the drafting of its first constitution. While Perales certainly does not deserve all the credit, specifically when it comes to the drafting of the constitution, it was his motivational drive and insight that kept the organization moving forward. In fact, Garza praised Perales’ efforts above all. Garza stated: “it is my candid belief that you can institute twelve councils prior to your departure [to Cuba], and this achievement would demonstrate that in three months you had accomplished more than others in five

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142 Alonso S. Perales to J.T. Canales, November 30, 1927.
143 Alonso S. Perales to J.T. Canales, December 21, 1927.
years’ time. Of course, I do not aim to cast reflections upon any person, I am merely citing the magnificence of your personal opportunities to building a monument based upon your own constructive efforts.”

It must be mentioned once again that Perales was still a practicing and active attorney during this time and was only free on Sundays. On top of his duties to LLAC, his law practice and his family, Perales still perceived himself as an American citizen who was more than willing to serve his country. This is why he was more than willing to participate in the diplomatic missions of 1928. Despite his travels Perales kept in constant communication with the organization and his fellow brothers. Moreover, Perales would help and advise Idar on how to keep the LLAC Laredo Council from dissolving, despite the fact that he was in Nicaragua at the time of this incident. Perales would even convince Ben F. Garza to stand up to Tafolla Sr. and leave the OSA, joining his OSA Corpus Christi Council with LLAC.

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144 Ben Garza to Alonso S. Perales, October 27, 1927.
Figure 6 - Alonso S. Perales and his wife, Marta, walking on Houston Street in San Antonio.
NICARAGUAN ELECTORAL MISSION OF 1928

By June of 1927 Perales was contacted by Francis White, Assistant Secretary of the United States State Department, who was wondering if Perales would be interested in accompanying the United States Delegation to the Sixth Pan American Conference held in Havana, Cuba in January 1928.\textsuperscript{145} White informed Perales that the conference would last about six weeks but his services would be needed before and after the conference. White wrote that none of the details had been worked out but he wanted to know if Perales was interested before plans were made. Perales wanted to express his “sincere appreciation of the opportunities which the Department of State [had] given [him] to serve [his] Government at home and abroad.”\textsuperscript{146} Unfortunately, Perales, while grateful for the opportunity, respectfully declined. At that exact moment, Perales was trying to settle back in Texas. He was extremely busy trying to establish his law practice without even mentioning his future efforts in arranging the Harlingen Convention. Perales wrote that “to accept your kind offer would mean that I would have to again postpone the beginning of my private law practice until January 1929. In as much as I am here now, ready to begin the work which I have chosen as my life's task, I believe it is best that I do so without further delay.”\textsuperscript{147} Perales was very clear that at the time he wanted to concentrate on establishing a law practice in the Lower Rio Grande Valley and did not know if he could be ready to participate in the commission to Cuba by December 1927. However, by late-September 1927, Perales had changed his mind and gave joining the Sixth Pan American Conference further consideration. He

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{145} Francis White to Alonso S. Perales, June 21, 1927.}\nspace
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{146} Alonso S. Perales to Francis White, June 28, 1927.}\nspace
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{147} Alonso S. Perales to Francis White, July 15, 1927.}
contacted White wondering if the position that he had offered Perales earlier that year was still open. White responded that the State Department was definitely interested in his service as a Special Assistant to the Delegation.\textsuperscript{148} Perales accepted the position and prepared to arrive at Havana, Cuba on January 16, 1928.

In addition to White’s acceptance letter, Perales received a job offer from C.L. Bouvé, an Agent of the United States, General and Special Claims Commissions, United States and Mexico. Bouvé offered Perales a vacant attorney position within the Agency of the United States, Mexican American Claims Commission.\textsuperscript{149} The position paid $3,250 per year and would begin on March 1, 1928. Bouvé have heard of Perales’ work with the United States government and desired him for the job. Perales was at first not sure if he was qualified for the job, but Bouvé had convinced him that he was more than qualified for the position being offered.\textsuperscript{150} Perales informed Bouvé that he was more than willing to accept the position assuming that his duties as a Special Assistant to the Secretariat of the Delegation of the United States to the Sixth International Conference of American States were completed by that time.\textsuperscript{151} However, Perales had no intention of staying in this capacity for a long period of time since he had his eye on joining the Nicaraguan Electoral Mission. Perales would go on to serve in Cuba and then come back to work in Washington D.C., spending little time during the first half of 1928 in Texas, aside from a few weeks during the months of March and April.

\textsuperscript{148} Francis White to Alonso S. Perales, September 29, 1927.  
\textsuperscript{149} C.L. Bouvé to Alonso S. Perales, December 21, 1927.  
\textsuperscript{150} C.L. Bouvé to Alonso S. Perales, December 31, 1927.  
\textsuperscript{151} Alonso S. Perales to C.L. Bouvé, December 27, 1927.
On February 29, 1928, Perales received a letter from White, informing him that General Frank R. McCoy had asked for Perales to serve in an electoral mission to Nicaragua appointed by the President of the United States, Calvin Coolidge. Perales replied to White, on March 19, 1928, that he gladly would accept the position but on the terms that he be granted the title of Attorney and Associate Adviser to the American Electoral Mission and not the title of Clerk or Secretary like his previous services. However, Perales wrote to Mr. White that he was “always willing to serve [the] Government unconditionally.” Perales was also given the task of recommending appropriate peers to the State Department for the electoral mission. He recommended Gregorio R. Salinas and Manuel G. Vela to accompany him to Nicaragua. Perales purposely recommended Mr. Salinas and Mr. Vela to the U.S. State Department because as he stated he “wanted Uncle Sam to know the high character of some of his Latin-American citizens” however, in the long run they did not accompany Perales to Nicaragua due to the expense it would cost the U.S. government to transport both. As soon as arrangements were made within the State Department, General McCoy sent a cablegram to the Agency of the United States, Mexican American Claims Commission requesting that Alonso S. Perales be released from service due to Perales’ special qualifications for the mission. On April 17, 1928, Colonel Parker wrote to Perales from Managua, Nicaragua and informed him that the mission was “in need of someone with your qualifications just at this time and shall have special need of you.” Colonel Parker also wrote that he “hope[d], therefore, that you if you find you can come down

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152 Alonso S. Perales to Francis White, March 19, 1928.
153 Ibid.
154 Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, June 30, 1928.
155 Colonel F. Lej. Parker to Alonso S. Perales, April 17, 1928.
you will make arrangements to start promptly; in fact I rather hope that this letter may arrive after your departure.” With nothing else holding Perales back from leaving the United States he set out without delay to Managua, Nicaragua. Perales’ previous work for the Department of State had granted him a degree of notoriety. He was highly valued and personally requested by General McCoy however, Perales wanted to use his newly acquired influence to promote the betterment of Mexican Americans.

By May of 1928, Perales had settled in Managua and started overseeing the different conventions held at the time. On May 20, Perales was present at the Convention of the Conservative Party at the Margot Theater. Perales’ main role at the convention was to be the legal adviser to Lieutenant Inteli and Lieutenant Salguera who were attending the convention along with Perales. Perales’ secondary role was to record the convention for the electoral mission and as Perales noted the convention was orderly and harmonious, unlike past political conventions. The Convention of the Conservative Party at the Margot Theater was very essential in the election of 1928, since it was decided then who the new officers of the Nueva Junta Directiva were to be but it primarily established that Dr. Carlos Cuadra Pasos was the presidential candidate of the Conservative Party. Perales explains that this decision was unanimously applauded throughout the party. Nevertheless, while Perales was extremely busy in Nicaragua he still found time to support the Mexican American efforts back home. For example, in a letter sent on June 30, 1928, Perales informed Idar that he was disappointed in the lack of support for Sáenz’s efforts in erecting a Memorial to the World War Heroes of Mexican Descent and wrote that he was “indeed very much

156 Ibid.
disappointed to notice that our League has not gone on record as supporting the movement. It should have been the first organization to do so.”\textsuperscript{158} Perales recommended that Canales take action in installing an LLAC Council in Rio Grande City and to not ignore Jorge P. Vera of La Grulla who was proposing new elections.\textsuperscript{159} These letters symbolize the problems that LLAC was facing at home without Perales’ guidance. Many LLAC members felt that Perales had abandoned the fight, and in fact many of his supporters had pleaded with him to not go on these diplomatic missions. On another matter, Perales confided to Idar that he found Nicaragua to be hot, dusty, filthy, and backwards. He admitted, however that he could not criticize Nicaraguans when small Mexican villages in San Antonio, Houston, Dallas and other parts of Texas were just the same. Perales explained that he had no right to criticize Nicaraguans for their filthy and backward cities because while he was a citizen of the leading country in the world, he still belonged to the Mexican American element. Perales also presented a question to LLAC; he wrote that Mexican Americans “have not accomplished anything that we can point to with pride. … What are we Mexican-Americans going to do about the matter? Are we going to continue in our present backward state, or shall we get out of the rut, catch up and keep pace with the hard driving, progressive Anglo-Saxon?”\textsuperscript{160} This letter to Idar proved just how passionate and involved Perales was in his role as a civil rights leader for the Mexican American community even miles away from home, Perales managed to stay up to date on all events and proceedings, and made sure his opinions were expressed back home. On a side note, Perales joked that “the best

\textsuperscript{158} Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, June 30, 1928.  
\textsuperscript{159} Alonso S. Perales to J.T. Canales, June 9, 1928.  
\textsuperscript{160} Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, June 30, 1928.
remedy that Uncle Sam could invent for radicals and bolshevists in the United States would be to ship them to Nicaragua." Additionally, Perales was extremely involved in the Nicaraguan party conventions which would lead him to befriend many future Nicaraguan political leaders. This small action cannot be overlooked since it will greatly impact Perales' future.

![Figure 7 - United States Electoral Mission to Nicaragua.](image)

By August 1928, the electoral mission turned its attention to polishing the details of voter registration and the actual balloting itself. In order to ensure order at the polls and minimize procedural irregularities, General McCoy saturated Nicaragua’s electoral

161 Alonso S. Perales to J.T. Canales, June 9, 1928.
machinery with Americans. Each of Nicaragua's thirteen departments received its own electoral board. Grouped under each department were district boards, one for each 352 precincts, so no Nicaraguan would have to go far to vote. Perales spent most of his time during August 1928 examining and settling charges of electoral fraud or similar misdeeds. Like most legal cases Perales spent most of his time arguing over law jargon often trying to find the right translation for Spanish words such as falta (mistake or fault) and delito (crime or offense). However, the decision was made that no arrest or seizure could take place until the electoral period had expired. Perales’ work in Nicaragua was quickly gaining recognition. So much so, that the Honorary Judge Clement L. Bouvé, Head of the United States General and Special Claims Commission for the United States and Mexico, asked General McCoy to release Perales from the electoral mission in Nicaragua so he could accompany a group that was being sent to Mexico City. The Honorary Judge Bouvé wrote by radiogram to General McCoy that Perales was needed in Mexico City because “recent developments [had made] it most important that I should have him if you can spare him.” However, General McCoy replied that Perales’ “present situation here is such that his release before [the] end [of the] electoral period would seriously hamper the work of this Mission.” Perales had contributed greatly to the McCoy Law of 1928, had become thoroughly familiar with the Dodds Law of 1923, and had gained extensive knowledge of the conditions in Nicaragua which earned him very high regard in the U.S. State Department. Overall,

162 Bacevich, Diplomatic History, 258.
163 Captain A. W. Johnson to Alonso S. Perales, telegram, 1930.
164 Alonso S. Perales to Honorary Clement L. Bouvé, August 16, 1928.
165 Ibid.
166 M. B. Ridgway to National Board of Elections, September 26, 1930.
the election of 1928 turned out to be extremely successful; there was an 88 percent turnout of registered voters which resulted in an unequivocal victory for the liberal party. What is important is that the conservatives agreed that the election was fair and honorable and were willing to abide by the outcome. Both parties were so pleased with the supervision of the campaign that they called upon the United States to supervise the succeeding presidential election of 1932. The electoral mission of 1928 was perceived as an impressive success.\textsuperscript{167} Above all Perales’ consolidation as a thriving diplomatic legal adviser needs to be observed. Once the mission was finished in November 1928, Perales departed to the United States. General McCoy wrote to Perales thanking him for all his work:

\begin{quote}
I wish to express my sincere appreciation of the splendid service you have rendered … your professional knowledge and ability, tact, mastery of the Spanish language and thorough understanding of Latin-American character and customs, have been of great help to me in the solution of the many and perplexing problems which it was foreseen would arise in connection with the work of a Mission of this kind.\textsuperscript{168}
\end{quote}

Perales’ contribution to the mission of 1928 was extremely beneficial to the State Department and the Nicaraguan elections.

Perales’ announcement that he was leaving for Havana, Cuba, was not met with very high praise; neither was the eventual realization that he would not return until late-1928. Many LLAC Councils and individual members felt that Perales was leaving at a very inopportune time and some even accused him of abandoning his work of \textit{la raza’s} betterment. Garza warned Perales that his absence would be a handicap to LLAC and it would not be fair to the organization to leave his activities lying dormant during his

\textsuperscript{167} Bacevich, \textit{Diplomatic History}, 2458-259.
\textsuperscript{168} General F. R. McCoy to Alonso S. Perales, November 17, 1928.
absence. Garza wrote to Perales that he “would return from [his] journey to find a
cadaverous looking sort of social organization, and [that] this [was] a time in [his] life
that should not be permitted to associate itself with failure.”

Perales took Garza’s advice to heart and was sure to keep up constant communication with LLAC. Canales would often tease Perales informing him that if he did not keep in constant
communication with him, he would have to order five airplanes to drop 500 pounds of
TNT on Havana, Cuba.

1928 was a tough year for Idar as well as the LLAC Laredo Council. Idar informed Perales that he was not able to launch his English-Spanish
magazine and furthermore would have to discontinue his newspaper, Las Noticias.

Once Idar learned that Perales would not be able to return directly to Texas from Cuba he wrote that he “[felt] sorry because we need you here.”

By March 1928, the LLAC Laredo Council had come under attack by a local political ring. When the Laredo Council was being founded several of its prospective members were being summoned and interrogated by local political groups.

It seemed that the Laredo LLAC Council had greatly scared various political groups who believed that a Mexican American-only organization must be up to something. Idar tried to make it clear that LLAC was not a local organization but a statewide association that had no direct interest with Laredo politics. However, one of these local political rings had started a struggle with the Laredo Council. Idar reported that the “local 'ring' is fighting us very strong and persistently and yet with the fact that we are not taking a hand in local matters but they do not want us under any circumstances to hold a civic organization permanently

169 Ben Garza to Alonso S. Perales, October 27, 1927.
170 J.T. Canales to Alonso S. Perales, February 15, 1928.
171 Eduardo Idar to Alonso S. Perales, February 6, 1928.
172 Eduardo Idar to Alonso S. Perales, October 18, 1927.
among our people.” Idar had to reorganize the Laredo Council because as he wrote “a strong majority … of our boys had deserted because they were anxious to fight the ‘ring’ while others were afraid and they also deserted.” Idar had printed various invitations to send to several of the Laredo Council’s deserters as a tactic to get them to return. This struggle did not improve and in fact by late-July it had worsened. On a side note, LLAC had not made any important improvements and had not established any new councils since February 1928, coinciding with Perales’ absence. Idar sought Perales’ help specifically, since he had not heard any news from either Canales or any other LLAC Councils in a long time. Idar confided in Perales that the Laredo Council was extremely close to being dispersed. Idar believed that it was not possible to “inyectarle vida una vez más (inject life one more time)” into the Laredo Council. Idar confided to Perales that “si usted viniera a Texas nos podríamos poner de acuerdo para volver a activar los trabajos y darle a la organización perfiles más exactos (if you would come to Texas we could all agree to reactivate the work and put the organization into a better shape).” Perales responded that it was disheartening to learn that the Laredo Council was about to disband since he had always considered it to be one of the most important LLAC Councils. Perales wrote:

Please make another effort to keep the Boys together. Try to instill in their minds the fact that if we Mexican-Americans (and the Mexican citizens too, for that matter) ever amount to anything in the United States it will be thru united effort and, therefore, it behooves us to organize ourselves (and remain organized) in the various fields of human endeavor. In this connection, the uppermost thought in every Mexican’s mind (regardless of citizenship) should be to make every effort – or even sacrifice – to bring about the redemption of our race as a whole,

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173 Eduardo Idar to Alonso S. Perales, March 20, 1928.
174 Ibid.
175 Eduardo Idar to Alonso S. Perales, July 26, 1928.
176 Ibid.
for once our people recovers its prestige as a race its [members will be] respected individually.\textsuperscript{177}

Perales assured Idar he was the right man for the job and could not wait to be in Laredo by November. Perales was in constant communication with LLAC. Canales was not doing too well as the Acting President General and often hinted that he wanted Perales to come back. He once wrote: “I wish you would come back and take charge of this organization as it needs stirring up and you are the best man for this job. I am still acting as president pro-tempore and will be more than glad to turn it over to you as soon as you arrive in the Valley.”\textsuperscript{178}

\textsuperscript{177} Alonso S. Perales to Eduardo Idar, August 25, 1928.

\textsuperscript{178} J.T. Canales to Alonso S. Perales, December 24, 1928.
PERALES AND THE CORPUS CHRISTI OSA COUNCIL’S SECESSION

By 1928, prospects for a merger between LLAC and the OSA were almost nonexistent. However, Perales sought another strategy for unification by bypassing the San Antonio OSA, and Tafolla Sr. by convincing the Corpus Christi OSA Council to join LLAC. On a side note, and parallel to these other activities, Perales would also convince the OKA to merge with LLAC. Even though Perales was away during 1928, he always kept thinking about LLAC and the Mexican Americans’ struggle in the United States.\(^{179}\) Perales had been laying the groundwork for convincing Garza to join the Corpus Christi OSA with LLAC since December 1927. Perales had kept in constant communication with Garza throughout 1927 even during the dispute with the San Antonio OSA. Garza and Perales shared similar ideals and goals when it concerned the Mexican Americans’ future and organization. Perales explained that Garza was “un líder Activo, Sincero y Honrado; precisamente, el tipo de hombre que necesitaba nuestra Raza (an Active, Sincere and Honest leader; exactly the type of man our people needed).”\(^{180}\) Garza and members of the Corpus Christi OSA were always invited to all LLAC functions. Garza would sometimes attend LLAC events held by the Laredo Council due to Laredo’s closer proximity to Corpus Christi than any other council in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Perales had informed Garza that “regardless of whether or not we come to a satisfactory agreement with the Order Sons of America, let me express once more the hope that the League of American Citizens of Latin Descent and Council No. 4 of the Order Sons of America may always cooperate in every way


\(^{180}\) Ibid.
possible.”\footnote{Alonso S. Perales to Ben Garza, October 30, 1927.} Garza spent the beginning of 1928 until June 1 in Tucson, Arizona where he was spending time on vacation as well as receiving treatments for his tuberculosis. In April 1928, Perales had asked Garza to try everything possible to persuade the Corpus Christi OSA Council, as well as the OKA, to join LLAC and had even offered Garza the position of President General.\footnote{Perales, \textit{En Defensa de mi Raza, Vol. II}, 106.} Garza declined the position stating that while his intentions were good he lacked the proper education to be at the front of such an organization. Additionally, he replied that as soon as he returned home he would “begin working on your case. I know it can be done, and, furthermore, it will be done, if God is willing.”\footnote{Ben Garza to Alonso S. Perales, April 21, 1928.} Perales was very happy with Garza’s reply and happier still to learn that the Corpus Christi OSA Council was willing to work with LLAC. He offered Garza the position of President General once again stating that in his humble opinion Garza was well qualified for the post since he was intelligent, energetic, honest and deeply interested in bringing about the evolution of \textit{la raza} in Texas. Perales noted that “as far as our cause is concerned, we do not need educated politicians but sincere and honest men [who] really and truly endeavor to improve the condition of our people in Texas.”\footnote{Alonso S. Perales to Ben Garza, May 22, 1928.} However, Perales made it clear that LLAC was not a political club and he did not intended for it to ever become one. He did not wish for Garza to misunderstand and believe that Perales did not wish for LLAC members to vote come election times. Quite the contrary, Perales believed it was the LLAC members’ duty to vote as good American citizens, he just wished for it to be clear that he despised unintelligent corrupt mass
voting. Perales instructed Garza to get in touch with Canales and Sáenz at once and if possible to go to Brownsville and have a conference with Canales regarding the merger. Perales was hoping that this matter of unification would be finally settled before he came back home from his diplomatic missions.

Figure 8 - Corpus Christi Order Sons of America Council, No. 4.

185 Ibid.
Perales spent the next few weeks writing letters to various LLAC members whom he trusted enough to handle the possible merger. He wrote Canales a letter that informed him of the proposal that Perales had made with Garza. Perales wrote that he informed Garza “that if the Corpus Council would sever all connections with the San Antonio Council of the Order Sons of America and join our league, they could retain their present name.”\(^{186}\) Perales expressed his enthusiasm and encouraged Canales to meet with Garza and resolve the merger between the Corpus Christi OSA Council and LLAC. Perales vouched for Garza’s character stating that “Ben is a very active young man, and although he says he did not receive a very good education, I believe he would make a good President.”\(^{187}\) Perales had kept in constant communication with Sáenz after replying to Garza also regarding the merger between LLAC and the Corpus Christi OSA Council. He begins his letter to Sáenz on June 17, 1928, by stating: “Did you get in touch with Ben Garza? If not, do so at once, I told you in my previous letter that he had replied to my letter of April 1st wherein I suggested that the Corpus Christi Council of the Order Sons of America join the League of Latin-American Citizens. He favors the idea, and it seems to me that all he needs is a little encouragement from you and Canales.”\(^{188}\) Sáenz was one of Perales’ most trusted colleagues. He knew he could rely on Sáenz whenever he needed help, and at the time Perales required his help since he was not in Texas. Perales had once again recommended Garza for the office of President General and instructed Sáenz to do all he could to help this merger come

\(^{186}\) Alonso S. Perales to J.T. Canales, June 9, 1928.
\(^{187}\) Ibid.
\(^{188}\) Alonso S. Perales to J. Luz Sáenz, June 17, 1928.
to fruition. However, Garza was still not convinced his group should abandon Tafolla Sr.’s OSA.

During his time abroad, Perales had kept in contact with Mauro M. Machado, the Chairman of the OKA Ways and Means Committee as well as the OKA’s cofounder and first president. Both gentlemen kept each other informed of their activities; Perales was interested in Machado’s labor work and Machado was interested in Perales’ diplomatic work. Machado would often ask Perales to refer him to General McCoy since he was eager to participate in the Nicaraguan electoral mission. Machado wrote “you do not realize how glad I would be to go with you to Nicaragua or any other country you may be sent to: I want to get away from here [there are] many things I want to forget.”

Machado attended the Harlingen Convention and was a strong supporter of the unification of all Mexican American organizations into one association. However, as examined above this did not come to pass, but nevertheless Machado, assisted by Perales, pressed his organization to take the correct step forward. Machado and Perales shared the same goal of a strong united Mexican American association. Machado never stopped trying to get the OKA to merge with LLAC and by May 24, 1928, a decision was made. A breakthrough had occurred and the OKA was ready to join LLAC provided that the Corpus Christi OSA also merged. Machado was grateful to Perales for his constant support in this matter. Machado wrote to Perales that “we are in complete control down here now, that is, the men who have always stood by you.” Additionally, he informed Perales that he had been in contact with Garza and was aware of the possible merger between LLAC and the Corpus Christi OSA. He made it

189 Mauro M. Machado to Alonso S. Perales, March 27, 1928.
190 Mauro M. Machado to Alonso S. Perales, May 24, 1928.
clear that the OKA was ready to go Corpus Christi to finish all preliminary steps by June 10. However, Machado informed Perales that M.C. González was accompanying the OKA members traveling to Corpus Christi since he was the new head of the OKA.\footnote{Ibid.}

Even though Perales was still sour with M.C. González for aiding C.B. Rocha’s periodical attacks against LLAC, Perales decided to let the subject be if it meant the creation of a strong unified Mexican American association. Perales was extremely happy with Machado’s achievement and noted that it would be a great thing if they could bring about the consolidation of the three organizations. Perales suggested that Machado quickly get in contact with Canales, Sáenz, and Idar regarding the OKA merger; Perales himself had already done so. Perales addressed a letter to Machado similar in content as the one he wrote to Garza. He informed Machado that the OKA could retain their name and be known as Knights of America Council of the League of Latin American Citizens.\footnote{Alonso S. Perales to Mauro M. Machado, June 21, 1928.} Perales also informed Machado that the OKA council would have complete freedom of choice in selecting its officers. However, Perales pointed out the council should elect a man who will live up to the principles of LLAC, possibly a blow aimed at M.C. González. Additionally he pointed out that LLAC will expect the OKA Council (San Antonio) to be loyal and devoted to the league and to really do everything possible to bring about the rapid evolution of \textit{la raza} in Texas\footnote{Ibid.} However, Perales made his feelings clear to Canales on a letter he sent him on June 23, 1928 where he informed Canales of the OKA’s desire to merge with LLAC. Perales wrote that “although González betrayed us in Harlingen and stabbed you and me a little later, if the
San Antonio boys want him as their leader it should make no difference to us, as we shall have little or nothing to do with him. However, we must insist on one hundred percent loyalty and devotion to our League and the principles for which it stands from every leader and member thereof.”¹⁹⁴ As can be observed, Perales was willing to set matters aside for the future of la raza. Perales truly believed that the unification of all three organizations would be a memorable moment and he would not let anyone treat it like a political club. However, Canales would not work in direct contact with the OKA and LLAC unification efforts would not move forward. It can be argued that while Perales was willing to forgive González, Canales was not. Canales’ decision slowed down the unification effort but time would prove that Canales’ hesitation was not unfounded.

Fig. 9 - Medieval knight and shield of Order Knights of America

¹⁹⁴ Alonso S. Perales to J.T. Canales, June 23, 1928, emphasis in the original.
Despite the OKA and Perales’ support of a merger, Garza was still not convinced that his group should abandon the OSA. On August 22, Garza explained that he was working slowly but surely in trying to merge all three organizations but detailed several obstacles that the Corpus Christi OSA might face in a possible merger. Garza’s biggest worry was that the Corpus Christi council would lose all of the nearby support that it had established. Garza alerted Perales that he was working on a scheme that he believed could solve all their problems and would satisfy everybody. Garza wrote that the “hardest part is when it comes to merging the Sons of America, without the consent of Mr. Tafolla. Of course when it comes to council no. 4 we could desert the Order and join yours, but as we have already [established] such a good reputation in this town, we hate to lose what we have already accomplished.”

Garza confirmed that Machado and the OKA would arrive at Corpus Christi within the next few days for a conference regarding the merger. Garza was not sure what step to take next and asked for Perales’ opinion and guidance. In late August, OKA representatives traveled to Corpus Christi in order to step up the unification efforts. Both parties, the OKA and the Corpus Christi OSA, decided that Eulalio Marín, editor of *El Paladín*, should start on a propaganda effort that would press for unification. Marín called for the formation of:

> [only] one big and strong [organization], it is time for us to sacrifice some [of] our ideas and all of our selfishness and admit our errors … Let’s form a new race at the border of these two great and powerful nations [Mexico and the United States] and we shall continue being Americans, so we can comply religiously with our duty and Mexican when it comes to getting our rights, most especially in South Texas.

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195 Ben Garza to Alonso S. Perales, August 22, 1928.
196 Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed*, 158.
Perales’ response after receiving this initiative stated that “frankly speaking, I am somewhat disappointed to learn that the Corpus Christi Council of the Order Sons of America and the Order Knights of America have not yet joined the League of Latin American Citizens.” Perales’ answer was to have all three organizations merge at once and a later convention could be held for the purpose of electing officers. He also added that the League’s Constitution could be revised at the same time so as to insure its efficient and harmonious functioning. Additionally, Perales added that Tafolla Sr. had ample opportunity to try to consolidate his organization and the only logical thing left to do was for the Corpus Christi OSA to sever all connections and join LLAC. Perales wrote that “we Latin-Americans must organize. We must get out of the rut and forge ahead … For the sake of posterity and the good name of our race, let us get together, my friends, and begin to solve our great problems. We can only do it thru a well disciplined, solid, powerful organization.” Overall, Perales noted that the OSA’s only option was to join LLAC.

Sadly, Marín’s call for a new organization or a new race was not as excitedly answered as expected. Garza contacted Perales and narrated how the conference between the Corpus Christi OSA and the OKA went. Garza wrote:

being that we (the local Council) were and are, anxious to join something that perhaps would enlarge the activities of what you and I and many well-intentioned American citizens of Mexican blood have dreamed of for some time, we suggested to the Paladin to start a propaganda through its [columns] to see if there were somebody that really wanted to have an Organization … not only it would give us an opportunity to disband our local Council, and join it, but it would give those that were not [satisfied] with their Organization, to start all over again and it may happen from the experience that we have accomplished in that line, that we would make a one solid Organization regardless of the name. But to my

197 Alonso S. Perales to Ben Garza, September 13, 1928.
198 Ibid.
Garza’s plan had not worked. Garza was discouraged and admitted to Perales that the Corpus Christi OSA was helpless when it came to dictating what to do within the OSA. Garza knew that the only salvation that he could see was to join some other organization as Perales had instructed. Garza proposed to Perales that all organizations with similar ideals and principles should gather at a mass meeting where things could be worked out. Garza noted that if Tafolla Sr. did not want to join a new organization then he could stay with his group alienated from the rest. He explained that the entirety of the OSA was asleep, but he could not blame them since it was the San Antonio OSA council’s fault for not leading them correctly and efficiently. Perales received Marín’s call for unification, published in *El Paladin*, and submitted a list of items that Mexican American leaders should convene and agree upon.

Months went by and the three organizations still had not merged, Canales and LLAC were not taking the initiative despite the OKA’s eagerness to unify. Garza was still unsure of what to do but kept informing Perales that the process was a slow steady and delicate matter. Perales kept urging Garza to break free from Tafolla Sr.’s OSA. By December, Garza finally took steps toward a merger following Perales’ directions. Garza and fellow members of the Corpus Christi OSA traveled to San Antonio to speak with Tafolla Sr. Machado was present at the time and reported the details to Perales. Machado wrote:

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199 Ben Garza to Alonso S. Perales, September 18, 1928.
200 Ibid.
201 See Appendix C.
Thanks to the advice from you … the progressive bunch of men headed by our old pal Ben Garza, took ‘the bridle in their teeth’ and came down here and told our friend Tafolla to ‘resign’ or they would quit the Order! You know how foxy an old politician, and the bunch of ifs and whys and alibis, he can muster to his defense. He pleaded with the Corpus boys for one more chance, but they just simply ‘burned him up’.202

Machado informed Perales that a convention was agreed upon during Garza’s visit. The convention would take place in Corpus Christi on the second Sunday in January 1929. Machado stated that it was decided during Garza’s visit that five men would be sent from the San Antonio OSA council, five from the OKA, five from the Corpus Christi OSA council, and five from LLAC. These twenty men would then form a Ways and Means Committee that would discuss the matter of unification into one solid organization. Tafolla Sr. recalled Garza’s visit and commented that at “that meeting it was decided to call the Convention, but rather disagreeable incidents arose at that meeting.”203 Machado admitted to Perales that the OKA did not care what name the organization was given since they would do their share in helping solve the problems in Texas, but their biggest objection was that they would not consolidate into anything Tafolla Sr. may lead.204 He explained that if Tafolla Sr. was not given presidency over the new organization, then ninety percent of good men who had deserted the OSA would come back and join the cause again.

Perales was extremely happy with Garza and Machado’s achievements and congratulated their determination in bringing about the consolidation of la raza in Texas. He suggested that Machado send the official convention invitations to Canales and Sáenz, whom he had already informed of the events that had transpired in San Antonio.

202 Alonso S. Perales to J.T. Canales, December 28, 1928.
203 Orozco, No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed, 158.
204 Perales, En Defensa de mi Raza, Vol. II, 112.
Canales informed Perales that per his suggestions, Canales would appoint a committee of five men to attend the convention. These five were Eduardo Idar from Laredo, Tristan Longoria from La Grulla, J. Luz Sáenz from Peñitas and McAllen, Eugenio Longoria from Encino, and either himself or Federico Recio from Brownsville.\(^{205}\)

Canales could not guarantee he would be there but stated that he would try to attend as the chairman of this committee. Canales was extremely busy during this time with his law practice and had very little time for LLAC. He wrote that he wished Perales would come back and take charge of LLAC since he was the best man for the job.\(^{206}\) Perales was content with the men selected for the LLAC committee, but Machado had taken it upon himself to warn Perales that Eduardo Idar was a traitor to the cause. Machado informed Perales that Idar had “bucked” the principles of LLAC and had “turned out to be a tool and henchman of the District Attorney of Webb County.”\(^{207}\) Machado claimed to have other evidence in his possession that implicated Idar and that he would someday show it to Perales. Machado even informed Perales that Idar’s brother, Clemente N. Idar, would not like Eduardo Idar to be present at the Corpus Christi convention. Perales could not believe such an accusation but replied to Machado that if Idar was selected as one of LLAC’s candidates, then he should be admitted without objection. He explained that LLAC “reserves the right to select anyone it pleases to [represent] it at the Convention.”\(^{208}\) Machado understood that if Idar was selected by Canales as one of the LLAC delegates then his presence would not be questioned by any delegates at the convention. However, Machado informed Perales that Canales

\(^{205}\) J.T. Canales to Alonso S. Perales, December 24, 1928.  
\(^{206}\) Ibid.  
\(^{207}\) Alonso S. Perales to J.T. Canales, December 28, 1928.  
\(^{208}\) Alonso S. Perales to Mauro M. Machado, December 19, 1928.
and Idar had had a falling out and no longer confided in each other. Machado wrote
that the only discomforting element that any of them expected at the convention was
Tafolla Sr. and the San Antonio OSA and he was glad to hear that Perales would
attempt to be present at the convention. He responded that “the boys here are very
enthusiastic to hear of your coming; and all hope your presence will serve to pacify –
the now very turbulent waters – that seem to divide our uncertain future.” The
accusations regarding Eduardo Idar’s betrayal greatly surprised Perales since he was
not aware of any dissent within LLAC.

Perales was quick to contact Canales regarding Machado’s accusations and
stated that he was unable to comment on the situation until he investigated it further
himself. Nevertheless, he instructed Canales to immediately investigate this matter and
to select the members of the LLAC delegation accordingly, if such accusations were
true. Canales took upon himself to do some investigation and answered Perales within
a week. Canales was indeed shocked by the accusations, which were a surprise to him
since he had not heard anything that even implicated Idar as a traitor to LLAC’s
principles. Canales was, however, able to shed some light on the matter. He first
started by explaining that for quite a few years there had existed a tense rivalry between
the two Idar brothers. Furthermore, Canales deducted that John Valls, District Attorney
of Webb County and an LLAC Laredo member, had recently published, within one of
Eduardo Idar’s publications, a rather insulting letter about Mexican President Plutarco
Elías Calles and Acting Mexican President Emilio Portes Gil. Canales argued that
Clemente N. Idar, a firm activist within the American Federation of Labor, and M.C.

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209 Mauro M. Machado to Alonso S. Perales, December 24, 1928.
210 Ibid.
González, a tool of the Mexican General Consulate at San Antonio, took great offense to this publication.\footnote{J.T. Canales to Alonso S. Perales, December 31, 1928.} Due to this turn of events, Clemente N. Idar and M.C. González deemed Eduardo Idar a traitor to the Mexican American cause and to LLAC’s principles. Canales was able to cast aside Machado’s accusations and come to Idar’s aid, which both Canales and Perales promised they would offer after Idar helped them with the C.B. Rocha press accusations. Despite Canales’ aid neither of the Idar brothers would attend the unification meeting.

By late-January 1929, Perales had finally returned to Texas and efforts for unification were in full swing. The proposed January 13, 1929, meeting did not occur, most likely because Perales was still in Washington D.C., despite his insistence that his absence not impede the Mexican American progress or unification.\footnote{Orozco, \textit{No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed}, 159; Perales, \textit{En Defensa de mi Raza}, Vol. II, 113.} Perales had informed Machado that he would “not stand in the way; on the contrary, I will do everything in my power to achieve [a triumphant] end.”\footnote{Perales, \textit{En Defensa de mi Raza}, Vol. II, 113.} Other delegates argued that other factors impeded the convention of January 13. Tafolla Sr. declared that a member of the San Antonio OSA had made a motion to rescind the action taken during the meeting that took place on December, between Garza and Tafolla Sr. and to not call a convention. The San Antonio OSA member argued that the OSA “should not allow any man or set of men from the outside to dictate to us as to what we should do or should not do.”\footnote{Orozco, \textit{No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed}, 159.} A Corpus Christi OSA member, Andrés de Lunas Sr., stated that Tafolla Sr. had promised that he would study the case and make his decision known

\footnote{J.T. Canales to Alonso S. Perales, December 31, 1928.}
\footnote{Orozco, \textit{No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed}, 159; Perales, \textit{En Defensa de mi Raza}, Vol. II, 113.}
\footnote{Perales, \textit{En Defensa de mi Raza}, Vol. II, 113.}
\footnote{Orozco, \textit{No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed}, 159.}
before the January 13 convention. However, Lunas Sr. declared that Tafolla Sr.’s decision was never received, indicating that the endorsement for the foundation of another organization was not approved within the San Antonio OSA. On February 7, 1929, Perales met with a group of Corpus Christi OSA members headed by Garza. They agreed then and there to sever their connection with the OSA, stating that they were utterly disgusted with Tafolla Sr. The following day Garza and the Corpus Christi OSA mailed back their charter to the San Antonio OSA. They then decided to invite LLAC and the OKA to a conference to be held in Corpus Christi on Sunday, February 19, 1929. Their invitation was signed as “Ex OSA, formerly OSA.” Perales spent the following days traveling to Laredo, San Antonio, Corpus Christi, and Alice. He made sure that the OKA was ready to meet and consolidate with the others; the last person Perales needed to convince and bring together was Canales. Canales was allegedly reluctant to recognize the work of the two other groups. He did not like the idea of changing the LLAC’s name and claimed that the OKA and the Corpus Christi OSA had not earned their medals in civic and social work towards the betterment of la raza. Despite Canales’ feelings on the matter, Perales was able to convince him that in order to unify the Mexican Americans in Texas, a more perfect civic Mexican American organization was the only logical solution. Canales’ new feelings on the matter can be examined on a letter he addressed to Perales. Canales wrote:

I am very glad to have talked with you Tuesday night, as I now know just what you have in mind. It makes me feel good to learn of your optimism regarding the labors of our League … I believe we should go there with an open mind, ready to

215 Ibid.
217 Orozco, No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed, 159.
hear and to be heard and perfectly determined to make any concessions which may be necessary to bring about the end desired; namely, our unification. 219

Perales responded within the same day presenting his opinion that if each delegate attended the conference on February 19, with no intention of yielding one iota and with a mind already made up, then nothing would be accomplished. He noted that each delegate must attend the conference with the resolution to make any concession in order to achieve the desired end. He stated that in order to evolve as a race, Mexican Americans must “unite. Remember: United we stand; divided we fall.” 220

At one o’clock on a cold, rainy Sunday about 175 people gathered at Salón Obreros y Obreras for the Corpus Christi convention. Delegations from the ex-OSA council of Corpus Christi, the Alice OSA council, the OKA, and the Brownsville, McAllen, Encicno, and La Grulla councils of LLAC attended. There were more LLAC council delegates present than from any other organization. The San Antonio OSA refused to send delegates, but Tafolla Sr. did attend but remained silent throughout the event. Garza called the meeting to order and was selected the presiding officer; proceedings were conducted in both English and Spanish. After the opening hymn and prayer were conducted, Perales was the first one to speak in favor of unity. He ended his speech with the declaration “I vote for unification,” to which was received by a prolonged applause. 221 To solidify the merger, conventioneers selected a commission composed of two representatives from each existing organization to select a name and to provide a basis of operation. Perales and Canales represented LLAC despite the fact that various LLAC councils had sent individual delegates to the convention. The commission

219 J.T. Canales to Alonso S. Perales, February 14, 1929.
221 Orozco, No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed, 161.
decided to adopt the name United Latin American Citizens (ULAC) and proposed that the local councils represented at that meeting automatically become chapters of the ULAC. It was decided that a constitutional convention would be held in Corpus Christi on May 19, 1929, and that English become the organization’s official language. Canales suggested the motto “all for one and one for all” for the ULAC. *El Paladín* was declared the official organ and Corpus Christi was declared ULAC’s temporary headquarters. Conventioneers selected the following temporary executive officers: Ben Garza, President; M. C, González, Secretary; and J.T. Canales and Prof. J. Luz Sáenz, Trustees. The ULAC was readily embraced by most except for a few OSA councils. By May 1929 councils had been established in Alice, Brownsville, Corpus Christi, Encino, La Grulla, San Antonio, McAllen, Robstown, Falfurrias, Edinburg, Laredo, and Mission. On a side note, Perales’ efforts and extensive work had granted him a certain degree of notoriety. He had quickly become a popular Mexican American leader who would come to the aid of those who were in need. His popularity grew to the extent that a Mexican musician in the Lower Rio Grande Valley wrote and dedicated a waltz to his achievements.

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222 Ibid., 162-163.
223 J.T. Canales to Alonso S. Perales, August 22, 1929.
On May 18 and 19, 1929, about one hundred fifty people gathered at Salón Ignacio Allende. The organizing committee planned the event as a family and community affair with a banquet and dance. Perales was not able to attend due to this diplomatic work keeping him busy in Washington, D.C. Garza opened the meeting, and then allowed the constitutional committee to conduct its work. The committee, apparently appointed in February, consisted of two representatives from each delegation present. Twenty-one delegates helped draft the constitution; among them were Canales, González, Solís, Marín, Eduardo Idar, de Luna Sr., Joe Stillman, and

Figure 10 - First LULAC Convention, Corpus Christi, TX - 5/17/1929
Sáenz. The convention changed the name from ULAC to LULAC. The officers elected were Ben Garza, President; González, Vice President; de Luna Sr., Secretary; and Louis Wilmot, Treasurer. Members named Perales as the honorary president due to his hard work towards unification and Laredo was chosen as the 1930 convention site. After much toil and effort, a united organization had finally been born, League United Latin American Citizens.²²⁴ Perales' tireless efforts towards unification had finally come to fruition but his struggle for the betterment of la raza was not over yet. 1930 would turn out to be an eventful year for Perales, aside from being nominated LULAC’s second president; Perales would face harsh trials and some betrayal within LULAC’s own ranks.

²²⁴ Ibid., 164-165.
In 1926, the rising tide of Mexican immigration led to fresh efforts to curb it by a variety of nativist groups and allies in public health agencies, social service agencies, and labor unions. Congressman John Calvin Box of Jacksonville, Texas, introduced a bill to include Mexico in the national origins quota system that was part of the Immigration Act of 1924. Congressman Box’s proposal would enlarge the immigration patrol on the Mexican border exponentially as well as charge deportees who had been deported and then unlawfully gained entrance into the United States again with a penalty of two years imprisonment and a thousand dollar fine. Overall, the bill was primarily designed to tighten the immigration regulations against aliens coming into the United States from Mexico seeking employment. Many Mexican workers would travel back and forth, working in the United States but living in Mexico. During the remainder of the decade, Mexican immigration was studied and discussed extensively by the House of Representatives and Senate committees. At the hearings, representatives of railroad, mining, agricultural, and cattle interests, among others, testified the need for Mexican immigration. Even the State Department opposed limitations, arguing that it would be a violation of the long tradition of special relations with our southern neighbors. Congressman Box’s main argument in the installation of his bill was that the Mexican people were a degenerative and inferior race incapable of properly assimilating into American society.

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225 "House Passes Immigration Bill by Box," *Dallas Morning News* (Dallas, TX), Feb. 16, 1929.
Congressman Box’s bill, also known as the Box Bill or H.R. 8523, was not passed in 1926. In fact, the bill sat in Congress and did not proceed forward. However, on February 1929 the Box Bill was reintroduced to the United States’ Congress at the request of the House of Representatives Immigration Committee, who Congressman Box was a member of. By the end of the month, the House of Representatives had adopted the Box Bill but had declined an integral section that would place Mexico under a two percent immigration quota. Congressman Box had been working since the early 1920s towards a two percent immigration quota on Mexico but stated that the House Immigration Committee “would not go as far with me as I desired.” Nevertheless, the Box Bill moved on to the Senate where it stayed until the 70th United States Congress came to a close, once again failing in becoming a law. However, in 1929 Congressman Box was faced with harsh criticism back home and many complaints were placed against his policy of “wholesale deportation.” LULAC members were among some of his critics, Perales definitely was one of them. Perales took offense to the Box Bill and specifically was insulted by Congressman Box’s argument that Mexican people were a degenerative and inferior race incapable of properly assimilating into American society. The Box Bill was submitted once again to the 71st United States Congress, including Congressman Box’s proposal to place Mexico under a two percent immigration

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227 "Box Bill Hits Aliens Seeking Work in U.S.,” Dallas Morning News (Dallas, TX), Feb. 6, 1929; "Deportation Of Mexicans Is Attacked," Dallas Morning News (Dallas, TX), Jul. 2, 1929.
228 "House Passes Immigration Bill by Box," Dallas Morning News (Dallas, TX), Feb. 16, 1929.
229 "Deportation Of Mexicans Is Attacked," Dallas Morning News (Dallas, TX), Jul. 2, 1929.
quota. Immediately after Perales had learned that the Box Bill would be under review he placed a call for all fellow defenders of la raza to meet him in Washington D.C. in order to combat the “abominables mentiras sobre nuestra gente (abominable lies about our people)”.

On the early morning of January 29, 1930, Perales, alongside Canales and Garza stood in front of the House of Representatives Committee on Immigration and Naturalization in order to speak up against the Box Bill and answer any questions any committee members might have had. The Committee on Immigration and Naturalization was made up of twenty-one congressmen with Congressman Albert Johnson, from Washington, acting as its Chairman. Perales began by introducing himself as an American citizen born and raised in Alice, Texas. He then addressed the committee and explained that he had prepared a written statement ahead of time and would like to make a few observations before turning the floor over to the committee for any questions. Congressman Schneider informed Perales that an orator could only speak for ten minutes per committee regulations. Perales acknowledged the regulation, stating that he did not wish to prolong the committee any more than needed, and asked if his prepared statement could be added to the record. Congressman Schneider approved of adding Perales’ prepared written statement to the record and Congressman Gibson seconded the motion. Perales then initiated his address by making it clear that he did not oppose the Box Bill or any other project which only promoted the betterment of the American people. He did however take great offense with the notion

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230 Ibid.
232 Perales, En Defensa de mi Raza, Vol. II, 82.
that had been campaigned by the supporters of the Box Bill, declaring that the Mexican people were an inferior and degenerative race. Perales articulated that being as extremely proud of his Mexican blood as he was of his American citizenship, he must emphatically negate any claim that the Mexican people could be inferior to any other. Perales at this point presented the committee with a stack of declarations written by various authors declaring the Mexican people a dignified race. Some of these contributors were Gaspar Whitney, Frank Tanenbaum, George McCutcheon, Hernann Scheizner, Carlton Beal, L. Spence, Robert W. McLean, O. Douglas Weeks, and L. W. Maus.

Perales next tackled the claim that Mexican Americans do not wish to assimilate into proper U.S. citizens. He stated that as a founder of LULAC he wished for it to be clear that LULAC promoted each of its members to become proper, loyal, and honest U.S. citizens. Perales continued and commented that the Mexican people had produced outstanding men such as Dr. Mata, one of the most respected surgeons in the world, as well as Francisco León de la Barra, a Mexican attorney who had overseen various international claims commissions. He then proposed the question as to why the Mexican people had not produced outstanding men in Texas. Perales answered that Mexicans faced a racial prejudice in Texas which provided poor stimulus for Mexicans to progress and become profitable American citizens. Perales added that in addition to the racial prejudice, many Mexicans in Texas were faced with blatant attempts to impede their progress but they nevertheless pushed forward and he offered LULAC as

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233 Ibid.
an example. Congressman Green then proceeded to ask Perales a series of questions ending with “Would not it be better for us to Americanize all foreign elements we have in our country instead of allowing more immigrants [to] come?” Perales admitted that he was not interested in whatever method the committee decided upon as long as it promoted the betterment of the American public. Perales claimed that if anyone could prove that Mexican workers were hurting Americans by performing the same work but at a lower price, then any restriction placed on Mexican immigrants was justified. However, he explained that the reason he was present at that committee was to put to rest such fictitious claims that Mexicans were a degenerative and inferior race. Congressman Schneider then adjourned the committee for an executive session.

At 10:30 a.m. the following morning, January 30, 1930, Chairman Johnson opened the committee by reading a telegram addressed to the committee from San Antonio, Texas. The telegram was from Clemente N. Idar and M.C. González, who introduced themselves as officers within the San Antonio LULAC council. They sent the telegram in order to inform the House committee that the three gentlemen present, Canales, Perales and Garza, were not acting on behalf of LULAC. Additionally, the telegram stated that these gentlemen were not endorsed or supported by LULAC’s collective members. They stated that besides Perales’ title as LULAC’s Honorary President, he did not possess the power to speak on LULAC’s behalf. Lastly, Clemente N. Idar and M.C. González wanted the content of the letter to be read to Perales so he could acknowledge its content. Perales, Canales, and Garza were furious with both

236 Ibid.
237 Ibid., 83-84.
238 Ibid., 87.
Clemente N. Idar and M.C. González and could not believe that they had embarrassed them as well as sabotaged and discredited their work in such a matter. Garza and Perales immediately wrote Clemente N. Idar and M.C. González. Garza was angry as well and could not believe that they had proceeded to embarrass Canales and Perales in such a matter. Garza wrote “¿Qué tenía usted en la mente cuando envió dicho telegrama? (What were you thinking went you sent said telegram?).”239 Perales had a much harsher reply. He wrote Clemente N. Idar and M.C. González a letter which ended with the following statement:

The next time you decide to send telegrams to committees in Washington, be sure you know what you are talking about. Do not make asses of yourselves as you did on this occasion. Men of your age, who profess to be leaders of our race, must know how to better behave. You have made a fool of our League with your telegram.240

Ultimately, the committee did not approve the Box Bill and what eventually became the Immigration Act of 1930 repealed several sections of the Immigration Act of 1924. Perales had accomplished his goal; he defended the Mexican American people and informed a congressional committee that respected and driven Mexican American men like him existed in Texas. For his part, Congressman Box was an unsuccessful candidate for reelection in 1930.

Despite Perales’ success, the insult afflicted upon him, Canales, and Garza could not be discarded. Garza and Canales eventually took matters into their own hands and brought charges against Clemente N. Idar and M.C. González. A special convention was summoned on February 16, 1930, at San Diego, Texas. Clemente N. Idar and

239 "Carta Abierta Al Licenciado Manuel C. Gonzalez," El Defensor (Edinburg, TX), Apr. 4, 1930.
240 Perales, En Defensa de mi Raza, Vol. II, 90; Translated from Spanish.
M.C. González were tried by the LULAC Supreme Council headed by Canales. Both were given plenty of time to explain themselves and seek forgiveness, before the special convention was summoned, but neither took the opportunity. Garza had actually contacted Clemente N. Idar and M.C. González right after his trip to Washington D.C. and insisted that both of them ask for forgiveness and resolve the issue in a friendly manner. However, they had refused to do so which prompted the special convention at San Diego. It was then resolved by the Supreme Council at San Diego that both had acted in an "unfair, unjustified, and unpatriotic" manner. The resolution adopted by the Supreme Council was that both would have until February 26 to seek forgiveness and mend any damage they had caused. However, both gentlemen would not carry out the resolution placed upon them. Perales argued that Clemente N. Idar and M.C. González were not ashamed of their actions which in turn meant that they could not be allowed to stay in LULAC. Perales commented that if they were allowed to stay they would only be “obstruyendo nuestros trabajos pro-raza y violando y traicionando así los principios básicos de nuestra Sociedad (obstructing our pro-raza work and violating and betraying the basic principles of our Society).” Neither Clemente N. Idar or M.C. González apologized by February 26 which caused another special convention to be summoned on March 16, 1930, in Alice, Texas. Once again both were brought to a Supreme Council; however this time around they both retracted

242 "Carta Abierta Al Licenciado Manuel C. Gonzalez," El Defensor (Edinburg, TX), Apr. 4, 1930.
243 Ibid.
244 "A Los Miembros De La Liga De Ciudadanos Latinoamericanos," El Defensor (Edinburg, TX), Mar. 7, 1930.
their telegram and apologized before a final judgment was given.\textsuperscript{245} However, they gave a general apology to the convention and never offered Canales, Garza and Perales a sincere apology. Perales was not pleased with this process and criticized the LULAC with being too magnanimous.

Perales eventually confronted González's wrongdoing in an extensive article he released to \textit{El Defensor}. Perales released this article to clear the misconception that both lawyers just wanted to eliminate the other due to professional rivalry.\textsuperscript{246} Perales wanted to demonstrate that González was a bad influence for LULAC and had on purpose gone out of his way to harm the League. Within this article, it can be examined that González had plenty of time to retract his telegram before it was actually read by the congressional committee. González was informed before January 31, by both Perales and Garza that Perales was speaking to the committee as a concerned Mexican American and not as a member of LULAC. In addition, Garza had informed various councils of Perales' intentions as a concerned Mexican American and not as a LULAC representative. Either way Garza mentioned that Perales was LULAC's Honorary President and could have used his position to help his cause in eliminating the fictitious lies spread by the Box Bill. Perales argued that the reason González did not retract his statement was due to his work within the Mexican Consulate.\textsuperscript{247} Perales made it clear that the Mexican Consulate motivated González's betrayal once again, similar to the earlier C.B. Rocha incident. Furthermore, it seemed that González had kept in constant communication with Perales since the congressional committee but not

\textsuperscript{245} "Carta Abierta Al Licenciado Manuel C. Gonzalez," \textit{El Defensor} (Edinburg, TX), Apr. 4, 1930.
\textsuperscript{246} Ibid.
to seek his forgiveness. Perales had grown tired of González’s outbursts and informed him that he needed to take responsibility for his actions and publicly confess that he was in the wrong by sending the telegram to the congressional committee. Perales argued that if González did not take responsibility for his actions, then how could he be trusted with the betterment of *la raza*? González responded that if it were not for their work within LULAC; he would not have communicated with Perales at all. Perales finished his article by agreeing with González that “prefiero no tener nada, ABSOLUTAMENTE NADA, que ver con ustedes en lo particular (I prefer to have nothing, ABSOLUTELY NOTHING to do with you in particular).”248 Despite González’s actions, he would never be properly punished by LULAC and continued to serve as a member. The bad blood between these two LULAC Leaders however never subsided and Perales would go on to claim that he regretted allowing the OKA element, such as González into LULAC since it caused great upheaval to the League. Perales years later reflected back on the matter and wrote that “although my idea of making our union more perfect was very good, unfortunately because of a certain intriguing and envious member of the Order Knights of America (now the No. 2 Council of our League), we have had conflicts and disputes within our Organization which has not benefited our League nor our race, but rather, it has caused it much harm, and was certainly not consistent with the spirit of unity that led the members of the Original Latin American Citizens League to merge with other groups.”249

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248 "Carta Abierta Al Licenciado Manuel C. Gonzalez," *El Defensor* (Edinburg, TX), Apr. 4, 1930.
The 1930 LULAC convention was supposed to be held in Laredo but due to local political problems it was moved to Alice, Texas, Perales’ hometown. The convention took place on Saturday, May 4 and Sunday, May 5. LULAC President, Ben Garza, opened the convention at ten in the morning at the Alice Courthouse. After various ceremonies, speeches were delivered by Canales, Dr. Weeks, M.C. González, and lastly Perales; who gave a speech on “Citizenship and Democracy.” On Sunday, elections were held for the office of General President and General Vice President. The candidates chosen were Alonso S. Perales and E.E. Peña respectively. The Secretary and Treasurer remained the same since the positions were not left up to popular choice. Festivities continued and various honorary members were selected. It was decided that the next convention be held in Edinburg, Texas. Perales would spend

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250 “La Convencion General De La ‘LULAC’ en Alice, Tex,” *El Popular* (Del Rio, TX), May 9, 1930.  
251 Ibid.
his time as President of LULAC establishing various councils and working towards the betterment of Mexican American education. By January 11, 1931, Perales had established a Pro-Defense School Children Committee in Mission, Texas. This committee, headed by Perales and Garza, had prepared a petition to Mission’s School Board with the goal of desegregating schools.252 This is just an example of the many obstacles Perales had planned on tackling during his presidency.

Despite his election as LULAC’s second President, Perales’ work in Nicaragua was not finished. In the summer of 1930, Perales was approached and asked if he would be willing to serve as one of President Hoover’s personal representatives to Nicaragua, alongside Captain A.W. Johnson, the chairman of the group in another American electoral mission in July. Perales very willingly agreed to return to Nicaragua and departed on August 9, 1930, by steamship. Perales informed Mr. Walter C. Thurston, an agent in the Division of Latin American Affairs of the U.S. State Department, that he intended to “leave nothing undone [and] to make [his] visit to Nicaragua a success.”253 The American Electoral Mission of 1930 was a short-lived attempt at revising the Electoral Law in Nicaragua. Perales was in charge of the recommendations for changes in the law and many believed that the mission would be a quick success, but there proved to be too many changes, omissions, and additions that when it came down to it, there was just not enough time to finish. In addition, Perales was in charge of handling and reviewing all criminal cases that had been

252 “Actividades de la Liga de Ciudadanos Latino-Americanos Unidos.” La Prensa, January 01, 1931.
253 Alonso S. Perales to Walter C. Thurston, July 17, 1930; Alonso S. Perales to Walter C. Thurston, July 31, 1930.
postponed or not properly prosecuted that involved the election of 1928. While most of Perales’ revisions were not achieved during the electoral mission of 1930, they were eventually put into action. On the other hand, Perales had rekindled friendships with people that he had not seen since the election of 1928 and made new acquaintances while working on the Nicaraguan Electoral Law and reviewing postponed criminal cases. Perales left Managua on November 14, 1930, and returned home in time for the holidays.

On March 31, 1931, an earthquake devastated Managua, Nicaragua establishing 1931 as a devastating year for Nicaraguans. The earthquake had a magnitude of 6.0 on the Richter scale and killed approximately two-thousand people as well as caused a major fire that destroyed thousands of homes and structures. Approximately forty-five thousand people were left homeless and the losses totaled thirty-five million dollars. Even though Perales did not travel to Nicaragua in 1931, it became an important factor of Perales’ life that year. Perales along with Ross S. Sterling, Governor of Texas at the time, formed el Comité de Auxilios para los Damnificados de Managua (the Committee for the Assistance of the Injured Residents of Managua) on April 1931. Perales sadly lost many dear friends and acquaintances due to the earthquake which might have been the driving force behind his support for the earthquake committee.

Perales had received a letter from a dear friend who at the time was residing in León, Nicaragua which had been established as a refugee center for people from

254 Captain A. W. Johnson to Alonso S. Perales, telegram, 1930.
255 M. B. Ridgway to National Board of Elections, September 26, 1930; Captain A. W. Johnson to Lieutenant Hollett, October 19, 1930; Lieutenant Hollett to Captain A. W. Johnson, October 23, 1930; Alonso S. Perales to Captain A. W. Johnson, November 10, 1930.
Managua. Sadly, Perales’ friend described the state of ruin that Managua was in and explained that nine of Perales’ dear friends had died due to the earthquake.\textsuperscript{256} Perales released a call for help in La Prensa. Perales wrote that “los Nicaragüenses son hermanos de raza nuestros porque ellos, al igual que nosotros los mexicanos, o son de sangre española pura o de sangre india pura o por sus venas circulan ambas. Además, su idioma es el español y sus costumbres e ideología son idénticas a las nuestras (the Nicaraguans are our blood brothers because they, like us Mexicans, are descendants from either pure Spanish blood or pure indigenous blood or through their veins flow both. Additionally, their language is Spanish and their customs and ideologies are identical to ours).”\textsuperscript{257} Perales explained that the committee hoped to raise at least fifty-thousand dollars to help with the construction of temporary shelters for those that lost their home and grant them hope for a better future after such a disaster. Perales insisted that he and his fellow Mexican Americans must “demostrar nuestra solidaridad racial y nuestro humanitarismo en casos como éstos (demonstrate our racial solidarity and our humanitarianism in cases like these).”\textsuperscript{258} The committee eventually merged with the Pan-American Chamber of Commerce’s Nicaraguan Relief Fund. Perales’ opinion on Nicaragua changed greatly from that of the letter he had sent to Idar in 1928, either due to the great tragedy that the country and people he had come to know had suffered or simply due to the time he had spent working alongside Nicaraguans. Perales wrote that he had “el honor y placer de vivir entre los nicaragüenses… y sinceramente el pueblo nicaragüense es muy digno, simpático y

\textsuperscript{256} Unknown to Alonso S. Perales, April 17, 1931.
\textsuperscript{257} Alonso S. Perales, “A mis hermanos de raza radicados en los Estados Unidos,” April 13, 1931.
\textsuperscript{258} Ibid.
hospitalario, y muy merecedor de nuestras simpatías, nuestro afecto y nuestro auxilio
(the honor and pleasure of living alongside Nicaraguans … and sincerely the
Nicaraguan people are dignified, nice and hospitable, and very deserving of our
sympathy, our affection and our help).”259 Perales’ efforts and contributions alongside
with the American Red Cross and the Nicaraguan Relief Fund surely made an important
difference in Nicaragua.

259 Ibid.
Perales' Last Diplomatic Mission to Nicaragua

Similar to the election of 1928, the United States had agreed to once again supervise the Nicaraguan election of 1932. Perales knew of the upcoming electoral mission to Nicaragua and wanted to once again serve on such an occasion. In February 1932, Perales contacted Lieutenant General Charles F.B. Price, who at the time worked at the U.S. Department of State, and expressed his desire to serve on the electoral mission of 1932 to Nicaragua. Lieutenant General Price informed Perales that money was a constricting issue at the U.S. Department of State as well as in the Nicaraguan government, due to the Great Depression and Nicaragua's earthquake disaster, but Admiral Clark H. Woodward, chairman of the mission, had expressed great approval in the hiring of Perales. Although, Perales was very hesitant to leave his law practice behind he ultimately agreed to attend the mission on the condition that he maintain the same title of legal adviser accorded him during the missions of 1928 and 1930. Meanwhile, Perales had to haggle back and forth with Lieutenant General Price over his commission. Perales wanted to receive a pay increase from 1930 as long as he was not being paid by the Nicaraguan government. On May 1932, Lieutenant General Price had finally managed to gather enough money to fully fund the mission; the delay was mostly caused by the United States Congress who opposed the idea of sending another mission to Nicaragua. Perales departed to Nicaragua on May 21, 1932 by steamship. The political situation in Nicaragua was markedly different from that which had prevailed during the election of 1928. When Perales arrived in Nicaragua, he

came to the conclusion that there were now three political parties and not two. The previous liberal party had split and each faction held their respective convention and selected their respective presidential candidate. The conservative party however, had not held their convention yet and was instead waiting for the American electoral mission to arrive at Managua. Shortly after arriving, Admiral Woodward decided that the Liberal Party could not have two presidential candidates and decreed that a new convention take place where a single liberal candidate was to be chosen. Perales had two tasks on July 1932, the former was to draft a letter to the heads of the two opposing factions of the liberal party addressing the legality of their respective conventions, and the latter was to conduct a legal investigation into the credibility of both previous liberal conventions. Perales used his influence, which he had acquired from the previous electoral missions within the two factions of the liberal party to try and get them to talk to each other and reach a compromise. In the end, along with the approval of the Department of State, Perales sided with Admiral Woodward and claimed that the two previous liberal conventions had no legality. Both opposing liberal factions were not pleased and chose to not attend Admiral Woodward’s third convention. The two opposing liberal factions petitioned Perales to reconsider the mission’s decision or they were not at all going to participate in the election of 1932. Ultimately, the liberal presidential candidate was Dr. Sacasa, nominated from the third liberal convention, and the conservative presidential candidate was the previous President Adolfo Díaz. The

263 Ibid., 5.
264 Alonso S. Perales to the heads of the two opposing factions of the Liberal Party, July 16, 1932.
election of 1932 caused strong party dissension in the country but Dr. Sacasa prevailed
and won the election. On December 2, 1932, Perales’ contract was up and his services
terminated. He had once again proven his worth as a great legal adviser and
counselor. Admiral Woodward praised Perales:

thorough knowledge of Nicaraguan code law and electoral precedent in this and
other Latin American governments, your acquaintance with the points of view of
the Nicaraguan citizenry, its political leaders, and its public officials… your efforts
on behalf of the Electoral Mission and the people of Nicaragua have reflected
great credit upon yourself and the United States Government … Your official
presence in Nicaragua has been of substantial benefit to that Republic in the
administration of its political affairs.265

Perales had handled the liberal party schism effectively to where there were no acts of
aggression while simultaneously attending to the conservative party.

By examining Perales’ time in Nicaragua, we can shed light on and truly
understand an important aspect of his life. Perales did not simply participate in three
different electoral missions; he spent the equivalent of two years of his life living in
Nicaragua. His time spent in Nicaragua changed Perales, he was not an entirely new
man, but he viewed the world differently which is expressed in his future work. By 1932,
Perales had gained a hemispheric approach to the world and began participating in Pan
American level politics, conventions, and conferences. While his main driving force was
always the betterment of Mexican Americans, he also began to fight for the rights of all
American citizens of Latino descent and to employ his international support to end the
discriminatory practices against Latino origin populations in the United States.266

265 Admiral C.H. Woodward to Alonso S. Perales, December 2, 1932.
266 F. Arturo Rosales, "Writing a Biography of Alonso Sandoval Perales," (paper
presented at the University of Houston conference In Defense of My People: Alonso S.
Perales and the Development of Mexican-American Public Intellectuals, Houston,
Perales had also cemented what would prove to be lifelong relationships with many important political leaders in Nicaragua and the United States. During his missions, he worked alongside prominent American leaders like Frank R. McCoy and Clark H. Woodward, as well as, future Nicaraguan Presidents such as Benjamín Lacayo Sacasa, Víctor Manuel Román y Reyes, and future Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza García. Perales’ work as a civil rights leader never faltered once, even with the distance between him and his home. Perales was always informed and prepared to act for and on behalf of his people. Perhaps the most important outcome from the electoral missions was Perales’ future involvement in the Nicaraguan delegation at the United Nations conference in San Francisco, his employment as Consul of Nicaragua, and eventually Consul General, a post that he gladly and willingly accepted from 1939 until his death in 1960.

Figure 12 - President of Nicaragua, Anastacio Somoza. Signed and inscribed in Spanish in the lower left, "For my dearest friend Dr. Alonso S. Perales, affectionately, A. Somoza."
WHY HAS PERALES BEEN FORGOTTEN?

On February 17, 1929, LULAC was founded by the merging of the following organizations: the Corpus Christi council of the OSA, the OKA, and LLAC (bringing the largest amount of councils and members to the organization). Perales had to convince Canales, the president of LLAC at the time that an amalgamation of all these organizations only worked for the betterment of the Mexican American race. Perales insisted that the new organization keep the name the League of Latin American Citizens, but it was agreed that the word “United” be added to represent the amalgamation of all the groups, hence the League of United Latin American Citizens. As can be observed, Perales was a vital aspect of LULAC’s formation and without his involvement LULAC would have never been created. Why is it then, that Perales has not received the proper academic or LULAC recognition?

Sadly this question has no simple answer. While it is true that the Alonso S. Perales Papers have just been released recently, this fact cannot serve as a ready argument because various publications have been readily accessible which clearly portray Perales’ role in LULAC’s creation. A few of these sources are newspapers which can be easily accessed online, letters to and from Perales which can be examined in the Ben F. Garza collection as well as the Professor José De La Luz Sáenz Papers, Adela Sloss-Vento’s book that while brief is very well written, and Perales’ own publications, which were re-released by Arno Press in the 1970s and in the past year again by Arte Público Press. While LULAC has not completely forgotten Perales, it certainly has downplayed his role in its creation and in their official history his name is oftentimes misspelled as “Alonzo Perales.” Additionally, LULAC seems to have almost
completely forgotten LLAC, its very own predecessor, and the hardships it faced. The few times that LLAC comes up, it mostly refers to either the Harlingen Convention or how it was an organization that merged into LULAC. Cynthia E. Orozco, in her book titled *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed*, provides the most extensive account of Perales’ role in LULAC’s creation but once again gives LLAC a minor treatment. Similarly to the official LULAC history, Orozco credits Garza with many achievements that led to LULAC’s creation, but in reality, Perales had ordered Garza to perform many of these tasks.

Perales may have been the most essential piece of the puzzle in regards to LULAC’s creation and certainly when it came to LLAC’s creation. Perales’ organization of the Harlingen Convention changed many things for Mexican Americans in Texas, exclusively the creation of LLAC. Perales stood by his people and defended them when the time came. He founded an organization which had more councils and members in its first five months of its life than some of the other Mexican American organizations had been around for six years. Some claim Perales is LULAC’s undisputed leader, but sadly most do not remember his story. Hopefully, this will be a step forward in correcting LULAC’s history. Perales went on to fight for his raza, and there are many more stories that need to be told. Many remember Perales for his tireless efforts, and he certainly needs to be remembered. Sadly there might never be an answer to as why Perales and LLAC have been forgotten, but hopefully, this will be a small advancement so this founder and his organizations can claim their rightful place in Mexican American history.
CONCLUSION

Alonso S. Perales died on May 9, 1960, but his legacy and work live on to this day. Perales was considered one of the most effective leaders of all time. He was seen as a noble man, a true leader, one who loved people especially the socially and economically disadvantaged Mexican Americans. There is no doubt that Perales dedicated his life to eradicate bigotry and racial discrimination. He championed for the rights and liberties of all our citizens regardless of race, color, or national origin. He did it zealously, for several decades, and did it thoroughly. Perales had organized, along with other LULAC members, the Flying Squadron. This group of people, now legendary within LULAC, would travel 30 miles every week in old automobiles condemning discrimination in public schools. Perales would often hold meetings with school officials and other community leaders. He would also hold citizen rallies in the barrios to educate and give moral support to all Mexican Americans. His goal was to keep children with Spanish surnames in school and in this, Perales excelled. Alonso S. Perales was an untiring leader who needs to be remembered within the annals of Mexican American history.


Thanks to Alonso S. Perales for defending the God-given rights of individuals, for promoting first class citizenship through the education process, and for defending our constitutional rights which guarantees us “Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.” If Alonso S. Perales were here today, he would point his finger straight at you and say: “We have come a long way, but we still have a long way
to go.” In my opinion, we have put up a good fight for you, now do your part. Prove that you are an American of this great country of ours, yours and mine.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁷ Sloss-Vento, Alonso S. Perales, 97.
APPENDIX A

OBJECTIVES AND AIMS OF THE LATIN AMERICAN
CITIZENS LEAGUE, CIRCA 1927
1. To define with clarity, and absolute and unequivocal precision our indisputable loyalty to the ideals, principles, and citizenship of the U.S.

2. To assume complete responsibility of educating our children in the knowledge of all their duties and rights, language and customs of this country as far as there is good in them.

3. We declare for once and forever that we will maintain a respectful and sincere worship for our racial origin and be proud of it.

4. Secretly and openly, by all right means, we will aid the culture and orientation of Mexican-Americans and we will govern our life as a citizen to protect and defend their life and interests in so far as is necessary.

5. We will destroy every impulse put forward to create racial prejudices against our people, we will combat the infamous stigmas which are imposed upon them, and we will claim for them the respect of the [U.S.] Constitution and the prerogatives which belong to us all.

6. Each of us considers himself with equal responsibility in our institution to which we voluntarily swear subordination and obedience.

7. We will create funds for mutual protection, for defense in the courts, for the education and culture of our people.

8. This organization is no political club, but as citizens we will participate in the local, state, and national political campaigns from the point of view of collective interests, paying no attention to and abjuring for once and all any compromise of personal character not in harmony with our principles.
9. We will aid with our vote and influence the election of individuals who by their acts show respect and consideration for our people.

10. We will elevate as our leaders those among us who by their integrity and culture show themselves capable of guiding and directing us aright.

11. We will maintain means of publicity to define these principles, to extend the ramifications of our organization, and to consolidate it.

12. We will pay our poll tax and that of our households in order to fully enjoy our rights.

13. We will spread our ideals by means of the press, lectures, and pamphlets.

14. We will oppose all violent, radical manifestations which tend to create conflicts and violate the peace and tranquility of the country.

15. We will respect the religious ideas of everyone and we will never refer to them in our institutions.

16. We will encourage the creation of educational institutions for Mexican-Americans, and we lend our aid to those already in existence.

17. We will [work] toward the end that our people have more representation in the juries and the public administration in general.

18. We will denounce every act of peonage or mistreatment as well as work of our minor children.

19. We will resist and attack with energy all machinations tending to prevent our social and political unification.

20. We will combat every tendency towards putting our children in separate schools in the towns of this country.
21. We will establish statistics which will inform our people with regards to the conditions of work, life and agricultural and commercial activity in various parts of this country.
APPENDIX B

ORGANIZATIONAL SUGGESTIONS SUBMITTED TO J.T. CANALES,
ALONSO S. PERALES, JAMES TAFOLLA SR., AND
BEN GARZA BY EDUARDO IDAR
November 19, 1927,

J.T. Canales,
Alonso S. Perales,
Santiago Tafolla,
Bernardo de la Garza,

Gentlemen:---

I submit to the consideration of all of you the following suggestions:---

That it is urgent to determine if we are to merger the League of Latin American
Citizens with The Sons of America;

That immediately we must get together to study a new Constitution and By-Laws
for both organizations;

That in case we consolidate them into one, we must have a Central Council;

I suggest that J.T. Canales be appointed as General President, for the reason
that he is well known in the State;

That we must determine a banner and emblem for local Councils;

That initiation of members must be $1.00 and 50 c. as monthly dues;

That half of all this amounts must be sent to Central Council for general
propaganda, expenses of sending delegates for installation of new councils, etc;

That we must try to get from LA PRENSA cooperation in order to have published
through its columns general information to Mexican immigrants as well as American
citizens in regard to the U.S. Constitution, immigration laws, etc.;
That we must appoint Mr. C.N. Idar, General Organizer of new councils and remunerate Mr. Idar in a possible way;

I solicit appointment to be in charge of Spanish newspapers propaganda

That Mr. Perales and Mr. Tafolla must be appointed honorary presidents to became active either of both in case that Mr. Canales presents resignation any time;

That we must have district Organizers, in Laredo, Mr. Vela, in Corpus Mr. de la Garza in San Antonio Mr. Escobar, etc.;

That we must designate honorary members in the State;

That we must designate in each local Council persons to give lectures in the subjects and aims of the organization;

That we must appoint a General Secretary with instructions to answer all correspondence of local councils and consult with General President every problem.

Thinking that you are of the same opinion I solicit your immediate action to solve and determine at once all this and other matters so we can know how we are organized and so we can go ahead and work actively to bring credit and importance to our Organization.

Very truly,

Eduardo Idar
APPENDIX C

SUGGESTIONS ON WHAT MEXICAN AMERICAN LEADERS SHOULD CONVENE AND AGREE UPON SUBMITTED TO EL PALADÍN

BY ALONSO S. PERALES
I. Que los líderes de la Orden que surja de la propuesta consolidación de sociedades méxico-americanas sean hombres inteligentes, activos, sinceros, honrados, que tengan el valor civil necesario para actuar como nuestros líderes y que, además, puedan dedicar el tiempo necesario a los trabajos de la Orden. Deben ser hombres que inspiren confianza absoluta a nuestros conciudadanos.

II. Que haya funcionarios generales y locales, quienes deberán ser elegidos cada año; que todos los miembros de la Orden tengan amplia oportunidad para ser elegidos funcionarios generales o locales; que los funcionarios generales sean elegidos por mayoría de votos de los delegados de los diversos concilios en una convención que deberá celebrarse anualmente.

III. Que se equilibre el poder de tal manera que ninguna persona, miembro o funcionario de la Orden pueda usarla como instrumento político para beneficiarse él mismo a expensas de nuestros conciudadanos de origen latino. El que desee llegar a ser una potencia política que se dedique a la política y procure triunfar en buena lid, pero que no intente adelantar tales fines bajo el disfraz de labores pro-raza. Seamos sinceras.

IV. Que una vez formada la Orden se obre activamente en todos los asuntos que afecten los intereses de los méxico-americanos, y de nuestra raza en general, en Estados Unidos.

V. El asunto del nombre que se deba dar a la Orden es de importancia secundaria. Hay tres modos de convenir en un nombre:

(a) Conviniendo por mayoría de votos en retener el nombre de cualquiera de las organizaciones ya existentes.
(b) Si no se puede convenir por mayoría de votos, la cuestión puede resolverse por sorteo.

(c) Como último recurso puede elegirse un nombre enteramente nuevo.
APPENDIX D

CONSTITUTION, LEAGUE OF UNITED LATIN AMERICAN CITIZENS,

1929 ARTICLE 2, AIMS AND PURPOSES
1. To develop within the members of our race the best, purest and most perfect type of a true and loyal citizen of the United States of America.

2. To eradicate from our body politic all intents and tendencies to establish discrimination among our fellow-citizens on account of race, religion or social position as being contrary to the true spirit of Democracy, our [U.S.] Constitution and Laws.

3. To use all the legal means at our command to the end that all citizens in our country may enjoy equal rights, the equal protection of the laws of the land and equal opportunities and privileges.

4. The acquisition of the English language, which is the official language of our country, being necessary for the enjoyment of our rights and privileges, we declare it to be the official language of this Organization, and we pledge ourselves to learn and speak and teach the same to our children.

5. To define with absolute and unmistakable clearness our unquestionable loyalty to the ideals, principles and citizenship of the United States of America.

6. To assume complete responsibility for the education of our children as to their rights and duties and the language and customs of this country; the latter in so far as they may be good customs.

7. We solemnly declare once and for all to maintain a sincere and respectful reverence for our racial origin of which we are proud.

8. Secretly and openly, by all lawfully means at our command, we shall assist in the education and guidance of Latin-Americans and we shall protect and defend their lives and interest whenever necessary.
9. We shall destroy any attempt to create racial prejudices against our people, and any infamous stigma which may be cast upon them, and we shall demand for them the respect and prerogatives which the Constitution grants to us all.

10. Each of us considers himself with equal responsibilities in our organization, to which we voluntarily swear subordination and obedience.

11. We shall create a fund for our mutual protection, for the defense of those of us who may be unjustly persecuted and for the education and culture of our people.

12. This Organization is not a political club, but as citizens we shall participate in all local, state and national political contests. However, in doing so we shall ever bear in mind the general welfare of our people, and we disregard and abjure once for all any personal obligation which is not in harmony with these principles.

13. With our vote and influence we shall endeavor to place in public office men who show by their deeds, respect and consideration for our people.

14. We shall select as our leaders those among us who demonstrate, by their integrity and culture, that they are capable of guiding and directing us properly.

15. We shall maintain publicity means for the diffusion of these principles and for the expansion and consolidation of this organization.

16. We shall pay our poll tax as well as that of members of our families in order that we may enjoy our rights fully.

17. We shall diffuse our ideals by means of the press, lectures and pamphlets.

18. We shall oppose any radical and violent demonstration which may tend to create conflicts and disturb the peace and tranquility of our country.
19. We shall have mutual respect for our religious views and we shall never refer to them in our institutions.

20. We shall encourage the creation of educational institutions for Latin-Americans and we shall lend our support to those already in existence.

21. We shall endeavor to secure equal representation for our people on juries in the administration of Government affairs.

22. We shall denounce every act of peonage and mistreatment as well as the employment of our minor children, of scholastic age.

23. We shall resist and attack energetically all machinations tending to prevent our social and political unification.

24. We shall oppose any tendency to separate our children in the schools of this country.

25. We shall maintain statistics which will guide our people with respect to working and living conditions and agricultural and commercial activities in the various parts of our country.
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