Ben Gonzalez was born in Laughton, Oklahoma in 1921. He came to Minnesota with his 3 mother in 1930. The came to work in the beet fields. He served in the Army from 1942 to 1945. He married in 1946. At the time of the interview Mr. Gonzalez was very active in the Pentecostal religion.

In this interview Mr. Gonzalez discusses his background, gives advice to future generation, and especially shares with us his own experiences, and the experiences of other Mexican Americans, with the church.

This is a transcript of a tape-recorded interview edited to aid in clarity and ease of comprehension for the reader. The original tape recording is available in the Audio-Visual Library of the Minnesota Historical Society.
INTERVIEW WITH BEN GONZALEZ

July 27, 1976

Moosbrugger: This is Grant Moosbrugger, interviewing Mr. Ben Gonzalez, in Delavan, Minnesota, July 27, 1976, for the Minnesota Historical Society's Mexican American History Project. Mr. Gonzalez, could you tell us your name and where you were born?

Gonzalez: My name is Ben Paul Gonzalez. In Spanish my name is Baliriano Gonzalez, but for short my name is Ben, for service purposes and all papers. I was born on January 15, 1921 in a little town, called Laughton, Oklahoma. I am an Oklahoma man. I have Spanish blood in me. My father was an Indian from Oklahoma. My mother was mostly Spanish. She came from the low parts of Texas, by Piedras Negras. Her father was a full-blooded Spaniard. Most of her relatives are Spanish. We had the opportunity to know some of her brothers before she died. They were really white, and had blue and green eyes. They are beautiful. I never knew anybody from my father's side.

Moosbrugger: Where did your mother's relatives live? In Piedras Negras?

Gonzalez: They lived mostly around a town called Monty Springs. It has been changed now, because the Army Fort is there. They call it Fort Stockton.

Moosbrugger: That's in Texas?

Gonzalez: Yes. She had some other brothers living in another town, called McCamey. I think the oldest in the family is dead now, but he used to live in another town in Texas. As far as my father's relatives, I never knew any of them.

Moosbrugger: How many brothers and sisters, did you have?

Gonzalez: I have four sisters, and one brother.

Moosbrugger: Are they living in Texas?

Gonzalez: No. The oldest sister lives here, in Winnebago. I have a brother who lives in Florida. Two sisters live in Texas, and one lives in California.

Moosbrugger: Your sister that lives in Winnebago, is it Mrs. Juarez?
Moosbrugger: What year did you come to Minnesota?
Gonzalez: In 1930. We came in the month of February. I remember that I was just a young kid then. It was really cold, we drove up here in a 1926 Chevrolet car, with a canvas top. We didn't have any windows or anything on the side. It had what they called curtains, with the little icy glass windows on the side.

Moosbrugger: Did you come up to work the beets?
Gonzalez: Yes. We came to work in the beet fields. Just my mother and I came up with another family. The folks that we came with are already dead. Some of their daughters live in Albert Lea and some in California. They had eleven children. There were fifteen people in that car! Eleven children, the parents and my mother and I. My brother came to Minnesota before we did. He was living on a farm by Blue Earth. He met us and we drove to the farm. We stayed on that farm until spring. Then the other family got a big farm. They moved to Elmore. We stayed with my brother. My brother was married to an older lady. My mother and she never got along very well, so we moved out. My mother and I traveled through nearly all of Faribault County. They were gravel roads, they were hard to travel on. We moved from one place to another.

Moosbrugger: Did you spend most of your winters here in those years?
Gonzalez: Yes, mostly here, one of the first winters we spent in Elmore. Later on, my mother re-married an older man. We spent two or three winters in Granada, Minnesota. The rest of the winters we spent in Blue Earth, in a little house a few miles out of town. I used to walk to school. I had the time. It was two miles away.

Moosbrugger: Two miles into Blue Earth?
Gonzalez: Yes. I was drafted in 1942. We were living by Granada. It was in Martin
Gonzalez: County, but when I went in the army, I claimed that I was from Faribauldt County. They changed all my papers to Faribauldt County. I had all my training at Camp Walters, Texas. Then I joined the paratroopers. I was transferred to Fort Benning, Georgia. I was around there for a while. Finally I was disqualified as a paratrooper, for some reason or other. Then I got lost and was called for the Casual Companies.

Moosbrugger: Casual Companies?

Gonzalez: Yes, they don't know exactly what they are going to do with them, (the troopers). I was put in the group to go to Maryland. So I went to Maryland. There we were assigned to the seventy-sixth division, ready to go to North Africa. The week of New Years, or the day after New Year's, they demolished the seventy-sixth division and I was sent clear across the United States to California and from there I was put on a ship to Australia. I spent a few months there with the thirty-second division from Wisconsin. I had two combat duties in New Guinea, under the thirty-second division. Then I was transferred to the forty-third division. That's from Vermont. They are called the "Mountain Fighters." Then we invaded the Phillipines. I was in the invasion of Luzon. I traveled Luzon by foot from one end to the other: from the north to the south; from the east to the west. Then I had a forty-five day furlough and came home. I had already been overseas, for thirty some months. When I was on the way home, we received word that they had butchered our points. We landed in Hawaii, there they gave me notice that I was going to be discharged instead of getting a furlough. I was sent to Camp McCoy, Wisconsin and from there I received my discharge and came home.

Moosbrugger: What year was that?

Gonzalez: In 1945.

Moosbrugger: Were you married at that time?

Gonzalez: No. I was discharged in October of 1945. I started to work in a little
Gonzalez: poultry house in Winnebago, and that is where I met my wife. Then her family, my sister's family and I went to Texas for the winter. We came back in April. We were married in 1946.

Moosbrugger: You have stayed in this section of the state since you came out of the service?

Gonzalez: Yes. I had purchased two houses in Winnebago. When I got married, we took the small house and I gave my mother the other house. We had quite a few children, before we moved out of this little house and bought a bigger one. All this time, I was working for the Fairmont Canning Company.

Moosbrugger: How long did you work for them?

Gonzalez: I worked in that plant for sixteen years.

Moosbrugger: Was that in Faribault or Winnebago?

Gonzalez: In Winnebago. When I came out of the army, there was a man that came out the same time I did. His name was Bill Hicks. He was working for the Canning Company, before he went into the army. When we came back from the service, he got me a job there. We had Mexican Nationals working there too. He was a camp foreman. I was an interpreter for the Nationals for two or three years. Then we had Mohammeds from the Mohammed Islands. I was the captain of the camp for two more years. Then I went to work in the plant. I stayed in the plant the rest of the time.

Moosbrugger: What nationality were they?

Gonzalez: Mohammeds from the Mohammed Islands. They are dark colored people.

Moosbrugger: What language did they speak?

Gonzalez: They speak a real English language.

Moosbrugger: British English.

Gonzalez: I was their camp boss for two years. I worked myself up from a clean-up man to a line-foreman. Fairmont Canning Company sold out to Stokley Van Camp, who are the operators now. I worked for them. I was line-foreman, when I quit. I went out in the fields, where I have been ever since I quit
Gonzalez: the company.

Moosbrugger: Did you ever live in St. Paul? Where did you go to school?

Gonzalez: In 1952 I went to school under the GI Bill. That's the only winter that I stayed in the Cities. Then we came back to this area and we have remained here.

Moosbrugger: What line of work did you study?

Gonzalez: Refrigeration. I went to night school for nineteen months. At the time the union got pushed into all the shops: electrical, mechanical, refrigeration, shops of all kinds. It was hard for me to get into a shop in the city, because of the union. They had a long waiting list. So, I came back again to work in the fields. In the latter part of the fifties, we went to Illinois. We stayed there four years.

Mrs. It was in 1967.

Gonzalez: In the latter part of the sixties. We stayed there until 1972. Then we came back. In Illinois I worked for the Big Rock Nursery. Then, I finally got into refrigeration. I worked for a man called Wiley. He had a refrigeration store. He re-built and sold appliances. I worked for him for nineteen months. Then I went to work for another man that had another shop in Aurora, Illinois. Finally, I quit there and came back to the fields.

Moosbrugger: Have you done any other work, since you came back to Minnesota, besides working in the fields?

Gonzalez: Yes, I became involved in the Minnesota Migrant Council. I had a girl from Elmore who worked for me as a case-worker. My office was in St. Paul. David Ramirez was the director at that time. Later on, I was on the state board. When the program started growing, we hired a new director, Jose Valdez, from Laredo, Texas. He is the one who brought the program up to where it's at now. We went from $95,000 in federal funds, to over a million dollars. I have been in contact with the program for just about a year. I learned all the ropes of the program: how it operates and how to
Gonzalez: go about getting things done. Then we created another organization in Southern Minnesota. I was on the Board of Minnesota Migrants. I was the Chairman of this other organization. I changed it to "Minnesota Citizens for Migrant Affairs". That's still going on. The original office is around St. James. When I went to work for Minnesota Migrants, I had to quit as chairman of the Minnesota Citizens of Migrant Affairs, which is still in operation in Southern Minnesota. Our organization is more organized. We put a taco stand in the Martin County Fair, in Fairmont to raise funds for the organization. We all pitch in and help for five days. We have had a few funds from different churches, and different clubs. We put on a couple of picnics during the summer for the migrants. In the fall, we have what we call the "Christmas Fiesta" in St. James. It is for all the migrant workers and Mexican people. We have a big dinner for that day.

Moosbrugger: Could you tell us about your sons and daughters, and your family? Do you have a family?

Gonzalez: I have a family of thirteen. The oldest boy is at home now. He is working in the fields. He had been living in Dallas, then he moved to Houston. He will be going back to Dallas, at the end of the month. I have three sons in Channel-view. One of my sons works for a ship company as a welder.

Moosbrugger: Channel-view?

Gonzalez: Channel-view is a suburb of Houston. Another son is a manager for the McDonald's Company, hamburger stand. When they put up a new stand, he helps out. Last summer, he was in Illinois, where they built one, to hire the people and show them how to operate it.

Moosbrugger: So, he is in various states, working with McDonald's?

Gonzalez: Yes. Another son works in an all night filling station, at a truck-stop.

Moosbrugger: In what state?

Gonzalez: He is in Channel-view, Texas. I have a daughter in Houston. She works in a hospital, as an aide. I have another daughter. She is married and she
Gonzalez: works in St. Paul, for a big commercial company. She is a key-punch operator. Her husband is going to school, he never finished school, then he will be going to vocational school. The other seven children are at home. The oldest daughters go along with the taco wagon. I go along with them to help them set it up, take it down, and drive the pick-up.

Moosbrugger: They go to different state fairs?

Gonzalez: To different county fairs. We just finished Blue Earth's Fair, which is a Faribault County Fair. This week we will be going to the Wabasha County Fair. After that, we go to the Zumbrota County Fair. Then we come back to the Blue Earth County Fair, Garden City. Then we go to the Clay County Fair, which is up in Hutchinson. Then we take in the softball state tournaments, which are held in Young America. We are there for three days. The first or second week of September, we take in the Jesse James Celebration Days, in Northfield, for five days. That is the end of our route for the summer.

Moosbrugger: You sell tacos?

Gonzalez: Tacos, burritos, and the last two or three weeks, we sold a little chile, we also sell coffee and pop.

Moosbrugger: Have you taught your sons and daughters, how to make typical Mexican foods?

Senora: Some of it.

Moosbrugger: It seems like every generation loses a little bit of the skill.

Gonzalez: Our oldest girl at home is Marcella. I am letting her do the cooking for the tacos now. She is learning how to cook the meat; how to season it; how to prepare the shells and the vegetables. I turned the wagon over to them. Our wagon is M & L Tacos, which stands for their names, Marcella and Lyla. They are the ones doing the work. I just go along with them.

The other boys that are at home now are planning to have their own concession. Perhaps you saw that red stand outside? We are going to try to get it in the Wabasha County Fair this week. My boys, who are twelve and thirteen
Gonzalez: We are going to operate it. It is a round table with some holes on the side, and a big side glass on it. On the sides, we are going to have a rat. This little rat goes around and crawls into holes. The holes will be of different colors. On the table there will be circles of different colors. The people put their money on the circle, and whatever color the rat goes in, is the one that wins.

Moosbrugger: If they get the right color?

Gonzalez: If they have the money on the right color.

Moosbrugger: A game of chance! Do any of your children speak Spanish?

Gonzalez: They all do. Our youngest one, who is six, speaks more English than Spanish. But he understands and speaks Spanish. They are all bilingual.

Moosbrugger: Do you ever have Mexican music in the home?

Gonzalez: Yes, we do.

Moosbrugger: That's good. That is one good way for them to learn it. Do you ever celebrate any of the national feasts, like the 16th of September, and the 5th of May?

Gonzalez: No. We never have. Years ago, when I was young, we used to celebrate them. They still do in Albert Lea. We have gone to a couple of the celebrations, but not very often. A long time ago, we used to celebrate them here in Elmore, on a little lake called Wood Lake. They had a pavilion there. I was just a young boy then. They celebrated one 5th of May and one 16th of September. At that time, there weren't many cars. They came by horses, buggies, and little cars; like Model-T's, and the old Chevys. I remember the family I came up with from Texas. He bought a big car, in Blue Earth. It was called an Overland. It had great big wooden wheels. He used to drive around a lot, between here and Albert Lea, and up to Hollandale. We used to go to Hollandale for the summer harvests. Then we'd come back for the beet harvest around Blue Earth. I was fourteen years old when I bought my first car. I remember, I told my mother, who
Gonzalez: had married an older man, we stayed with him until he died. He said to me when I was fourteen, "I am going to buy you a car." He bought a 1926 Pontiac. We drove that car all summer. Then in the winter, it wouldn't start. We traded it in for a 1926 Chevy. The Chevy, was one of those little short cars, that had a solid disc wheel. I drove that for a couple of years. Then we went into a Ford. They were called "Model-A's". We had that car for two years, in Texas. In fact, after I got married, I had a 1939 Model-A truck. My wife and I went down to Texas in it. She was pregnant. On our way back, our second son was born, just as we entered the state of Iowa. So we had one son born in Iowa. Our youngest was born in Illinois. The rest were all born in Winnebago Hospital. I think we had one born in the Blue Earth Hospital, too.

Moosbrugger: Do you have hopes to travel? Do you do any traveling back to Texas or Mexico?

Gonzalez: Well, it's been about fourteen years since my wife and I became involved in the Pentecostal religion. There are three other families with us. We bought a church in Guckeen, about six miles west of Blue Earth. We still have that church in operation. There was a White man, from Granada's Assembly of God Church, who helped us. He was our minister at that time. He stayed with us for four years. Now he is a missionary in Mexico. He was at our church last Friday. He showed us pictures of the mission where he is working. He works in Aguascalientes, about 300 miles from New Mexico.

I would like to go to Mexico, for ministry. But I have a big family and it would be pretty hard for me to get all the necessities to go there. If I had some kind of support behind me, or had an income I could do it. Maybe in the near future, when we won't have a big family, maybe we can go to Mexico, or some other country. My ambition is to go into the mission field. I am acting as a minister in our church, because we don't have a regular minister now. This was one of our jobs in Illinois too. I became
Moosbrugger: There is a large number of Mexican Americans living in the United States. It seems like maybe the Catholic Church isn't getting the job done, because the people of Mexican descent are turning away from the Catholic church. Do you have any thought on that?

Gonzalez: My thoughts are like we were discussing before. I the central states, like: Kansas; Oklahoma; Texas; and the others, the Catholic church has had a policy which caused discrimination. Now, in Texas, they set a date for services for the Mexican people. They probably send you a Mexican priest or a Spanish speaking priest. But they set the date aside. They can't attend the regular mass. The Mexican people, mostly come from Catholic descent. Their parents were mostly Catholic. For this reason, they have been trying to find religious help in other churches. They have found that the Pentecostal Church has taken in all nationalities. There is no discrimination in our religion.

Moosbrugger: They make religion more personal?

Gonzalez: Oh, yes. There is more personal attention toward them. I was raised in the Pentecostal Church. Now, I am a minister. As a Pentecostal minister, I see no other reason why some of these Mexican people, or Spanish people from the south, have turned out to be Pentecostal. It has to be because of discrimination in the Catholic church. Now, when they come to the state of
Gonzalez: Minnesota, these churches take them in. The people had the feeling that it was discrimination. They were afraid to go into the churches. When these four families got together, we started going to the farms, here in Minnesota. When the migrants were here, we used to go and have services once a week. Every day, we went to a different farm. We started getting people together like that. Now, when some of these people went back to the south, they started looking for the Pentecostal churches. They always have been there, but they weren't really known.

Moosbrugger: You said this service that you offered, was in Spanish?

Gonzalez: Yes. This man who helped establish the church we have in Guckeen, Minnesota, took the trouble of learning the Spanish language. Then, when he got together with us, we tried to talk to him in Spanish all the time, so that he could learn it quicker. Within a year, he could read, write and sing in Spanish. He plays the guitar, the piano and other instruments. Now he is a missionary in Mexico. He has a wonderful family. This man went with us to different farms. We sang in Spanish and he would play the guitar. We would bring the service to a lot of migrant families. Some of the migrant families only received us once. Then they didn't want any more, because they were strict Catholics. Yet, they wouldn't go to their church.

Moosbrugger: They wouldn't go the Catholic church, either?

Gonzalez: No. Because they were afraid. That barrier has been broken down quite a bit. We do have a lot of Catholic Mexicans in the state of Minnesota. They attend the Catholic churches. They meet some of the local people. They invite them into the church. They go in more freely than they do in the southern parts of the states.

Moosbrugger: It really helps if someone reaches out to you, and lets you know that you are welcome. If you go into a new town, or a new part of the country, and just walk in on your own, maybe your get bad looks or bad reactions from the people.
Gonzalez: Yes, you don't know what the rules or the customs are. Some of the Mexican families, even the local ones, are Catholics in Winnebago. In fact, we were raised with some of them. Like the Hernandez family, we were raised together in Winnebago. I brought that family from Texas, in 1940. I went to Texas in 1940 to meet my brother down there. My brother wanted to come back to Minnesota with me, and he said that his father-in-law wanted to come back with us. There were about ten in the family. I bought an old school bus. I drove back to Minnesota bringing the family with me. They all have families now, some of them are even grandfathers already. They all live in Winnebago and they are Catholics and really our good friends. Sometimes we take the service to their homes, but that's as far as we go. They go to a Catholic church in Winnebago.

Moosbrugger: Are there Hernandez' living in Winnebago?

Gonzalez: Yes. There are two Hernandez' in Winnebago. All of their families attend the Catholic church. In fact, all of their children were married in the Catholic Church, in Winnebago. Years ago, the Winnebago Catholic Church used to have a priest from Germany. He was really strict. He wouldn't accept the Mexican people in the church. He and I had a couple of rounds about that and after awhile, they got a different priest. He went to visit the Spanish people, house to house. He got them to go to church.

Moosbrugger: So the priest makes a lot of difference?

Gonzalez: The Catholic church now has younger priests and they are more liberal, and more interested in the people, than the older priests were. The older priests stay in the church, they don't go any place, or do any visiting at all. Now the Catholic church has a program, which is called, "Visitation", like we have. I haven't attended mass for quite a few years, but I have heard some of the churches are going into music, like the Pentecostals are. I went to the Catholic church in St. Paul, on the West Side. You probably know where that is.
Moosbrugger: Is it "Our Lady of Guadalupe Church"?

Gonzalez: Yes. Now I understand they have a little extra. They are playing for the services, and masses, and introducing hymns, like the Pentecostal church. Years ago, the Catholics didn't go for that. I don't criticize the Catholic religion. We are living in a free country. We can serve or participate in any religion we want. We are all serving one God. It's just that they have this custom. I told one priest, in Guckeen, "There are only two churches in Guckeen, on the northside of the highway, we have our Pentecostal church; on the southside of the highway, is the Catholic church. He came up to visit the family that lives right next to our church. We started talking about it. I tried to ask him what he preaches in his church. I asked him a lot of questions about the Bible. He tried to deny he knew about it. I told him, "Wait a minute! This much I know: to become a priest, you have to study the Bible for eight years. So you know everything about the Bible." He said, "We limit it to what we preach in the church." I said, "Well, that's one thing that's wrong. The people should know everything that is in the Bible."

Moosbrugger: It seems like that priest is not willing to talk about everything that is in the Bible.

Gonzalez: Right. He tried to get around me. I wasn't too liberal in the Bible, that was quite a few years ago. He came to point where he was in tears. He said, "Well, brother, I ask you to pray for me." That was the last time that I talked to him. There are different kinds of Pentecostal movements. The Bible talks about false prophecy, false leaders; and false masters. That has become real in the Pentecostal movement right now. I say this, because in Elgin, Illinois, we contacted a minister. He had a brand new church and a 500 membership in the church. He had some Spanish people in there. We tried to get a place in his church to have services. We started talking about what he teaches, what he preaches and what we
Gonzalez: We didn't agree on the same doctrine. So, his church was the first Pentecostal Church of God. He had his school bus, in which he would go around picking up people from the town. We were on the fairgrounds. We had a party there with the people. I went as far as telling him that he was lying with the advertising on his bus. It said, "First Pentecostal Church of God," and he wasn't teaching Pentecostal. There is a lot of teaching in the Bible. He wasn't Pentecostal. Later on, the church divided. He lost the congregation. In between times, we used to have a church at the YMCA. As far as I know, last summer it was still going on.

Moosbrugger: So his big new church failed?

Gonzalez: Yes. This is a false doctrine, and it's a great movement in the Pentecostal religion. I warn people about this, because it is written in the scriptures.

Moosbrugger: What are your hopes? Would you like to stay in the southern Minnesota area?

Gonzalez: We don't have any plans of moving off, or anything, unless I become dissatisfied, or I get the feeling and the need to go work in the mission field. Right now, we are planning our little church here, in southern Minnesota. It is the only church here that preaches in Spanish. We have Spanish services. We are trying to get into St. James and Madelia, for services. There are a lot of Mexican people there. We used to go to Albert Lea and Hollandale, but it takes money to do that. It takes funds to do all this. We run out of funds. Our church isn't big enough to have big funds. We just have enough funds, to supply the needs of our church, like heat in the winter and the lights. We have our own pump. There are still a lot of expenses to operate the church. We are hoping that in the near future, we can branch out into little towns. It is a mission, to minister around the little towns of our area. This has been one of our businesses, too. I like to do that. Next Sunday, is one of our big days. Perhaps you have seen some posters in the Cities, and on the news? Do you listen to the Spanish radio program on Sundays?
Moosbrugger: The Mexican American program?
Gonzalez: Yes.
Moosbrugger: Dave Ramirez' program?
Gonzalez: No, Ruben Longoria's.
Moosbrugger: Oh, Ruben Longoria. I have listen to it. Not recently, but once in a while.
Gonzalez: Recently, he has been advertising and announcing on the radio. We have four stations in the City announcing that we are going to have a crusade, with the Evangelists, who are coming from Texas. The crusade will begin in our church next Sunday. It will be the first day we move into the cities; in Minneapolis and St. Paul. We are going to have six days in the Cities, for the crusade for Mexican and Latin people. This is the only crusade that has ever been in Minnesota for the Mexican and Latin people. We are hoping to have more, later on. It is the first one we are going to have for the state. I was telling the people in the church, Sunday, that I thought there were 15,000 Mexicans outside the cities.
Moosbrugger: The way we figure, there are probably 20,000 Mexican Americans living in the state of Minnesota, outside the Twin Cities.
Gonzalez: Yes, and maybe ten or twelve thousand in the Twin Cities. I was advertising in the service, Last Sunday, that there were 30,000 Mexican families or people living in the state of Minnesota. Our goal is to reach all of them. We are going to start in the Cities. The first day will be here, in our church. Then we are going to the cities, to spend three days at the "Bethel Church" in Minneapolis, which is on Thirteenth Street. That will be the last three days. The days, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday will be in West St. Paul, at the "Gospel Mission Assembly of God Church," which is on Congress Street.
Moosbrugger: Is that "Asemblea de Dios?"
Gonzalez: Yes.
Moosbrugger: Is that Reverend Juan Rios' Church?

Gonzalez: Yes. Another church is putting on the crusade, but we are going to have it in his church. The other group doesn't have a church. The church that is sponsoring the crusade, those three days, is the "Faith Temple of God". Then we go to Minneapolis, to the "Bethel Baptist Church", that is a real nice big church.

Moosbrugger: Is that right in downtown Minneapolis, by the freeway?

Gonzalez: Yes.

Moosbrugger: That is quite an undertaking.

Gonzalez: The way we got this crusade, was our church; the church from St. Paul; and the church from Minneapolis got together and we created what we call, "The United Churches." We had meetings since May. We established our committee, treasurer and the officers that it takes to operate a crusade. Our Evangelist is Paulino Bernal. I think he is from Corpus Christi, Texas. Paulino Bernal has a great story behind him. He was a famous singer and player. He had his own orchestra. He traveled in Mexico; the United States; and other countries. Then he was converted. Now he has his ministry. He has what it's called a "Conjunto", with him. They have music and singer. There will be a troupe of twelve coming up with his crusade. We are trying to sponsor the crusade. We have been trying to raise money, especially in the cities. Longoria is working on different ways of raising money. It is going to cost a lot of money for this crusade. We are hoping that we can reach all the Mexican people.

Moosbrugger: Terrific!

Gonzalez: In St. Paul, I wouldn't be afraid to say that half of the Mexican people don't attend church, Pentecostal or Catholic. This is what we are trying to do; to break this barrier; to get the people, even if they don't go to the Pentecostal church, to go back to a church, any church!

Moosbrugger: Gracias. Along those same lines of thinking, when you consider this will
Moosbrugger: be permanently in the Minnesota Historical Society for twenty, thirty, or even a hundred years; and some day, your great, great grandchildren will be interested to hear what you had to say back in the 1970's; what advice would you give them? What philosophy of living?

Gonzalez: As I have told my daughters and sons, there is only one way of living in this world, actually two ways. The Bible shows us which is the wrong way and which is the right way. I would say that most of the world, not only Mexican people, are living the wrong way. I say this because they are doing just what they want. They don't care if they hurt their neighbors. They don't care if they hurt their families. They don't care whom they hurt. They are going to live the way they want. They are going to do what they want. That is the wrong way. The people in the world, especially in the cities, or nationalities, should be so close together, that they have contact with one another. This is what religion teaches; to love one another. I would say, stay in religion. Never lose the contact of religion, because that is the only help in this world, right now, as far as trying to live the right way.

Moosbrugger: So your hopes for your children; your grandchildren, and great grandchildren, are that they keep a spiritual life?

Gonzalez: Yes, that they keep a spiritual life, that is about the only way they can try to live a good life. The little church in Guckeen, is owned by four families. Each family has a large family. We hope that our children will keep it up after we are gone. This is our purpose. We have a hard time keeping it up. It is just a small group, and it consists mostly of our children. This is the only advice that I can give anybody: not only my children; or my grandchildren; or my great grandsons; but anybody! You have to keep in contact with the spiritual in religion. The easy way in the world, comes natural, I think. Like young people going into drugs; drinking; smoking; sex; and every other thing they can think of. I think
Gonzalez: all that comes natural to the natural man. But the spiritual has to be taught to him. It has to be learned. That is why the Bible says, the word of God is craziness to the natural mind. This is scriptural. I believe that it is. It is easy for a young teenager, or a young girl, to go to the other things first, than to really get into religion or spiritual things. I have raised some of them. I am not ashamed to say that some of my children don't have a religious background. Now they are growing up. Some of them are going the other way. They don't attend church. Some of them do attend church. Some have gone into different organizations. I think the only way to stay the right way, is to keep close to religion.

Moosbrugger: Very good. Thank you very much for the interview.