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Dear Jack:

I am glad to help you out and wish you all of the luck in your teaching and studies. Certainly your interest in President Johnson shows that you are a serious person and sincere. Personally, I would have loved to have been a teacher but; unfortunately, I did not become one.

In answer to your first question. President Johnson wanted to serve all of the people as president. In spite of his Texas background, he was interested in Civil Rights and in all peoples. Therefore, as a Texas Senator he would have had to always serve his constituents (Texans) and their oil, agriculture and monetary interest or else be voted out. As a Vice-President and President, he could serve all of his people. He had the power and acquaintances as a Senator, but he chose to serve the people. From the very beginning, he wanted to be President. The Vice-Presidency served as an opening towards the Presidency. There is no question in my mind Johnson was a great humanitarian and a sincere person. I am speaking as a minority group person and I should know because of my sensitivity on such matters.

Yes, he loved Mexican Americans and he loved all Texans. He felt that he knew we were not being given equal opportunity in anything. Many things he did can prove this. However, the greatest proof is that he always gave us everything we asked for with one exception-- that was, a 'Mexican American Assistant in the White House.' Furthermore, the Cabinet Level Committee for the Mexican Americans with Commissioner Vicente Ximenes as Chairman was his idea and thinking completely. No one had thought about this agency but himself. This is something he did on his own without any of us asking for it.

Third, I met him many times. I served with him and under him for many years. I met him in victory and defeat. I knew him in moments of joy and in moments of tragedy. He asked of my time and services and I willingly served. From the moment that he helped us bury Felix Longoria in Arlington National Cemetery I never questioned his sincerity or love for mankind.

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After the Three River--Felix Longoria Incident, I continued to be his friend. He was in my thinking "Mi Presidente".

He took me in Air Force One Plane to the funeral services of Dennis Chavez in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I flew with him in his plane and I felt greatly honored to be asked.

He invited me to several Bar-B-Ques in his Ranch, to help him with reception for Mexican American, Latin American and other dignitaries. He gave me small gifts that I will always cherish. His wife is a lady of charm, grace and kindness; and she is these things to all of us.

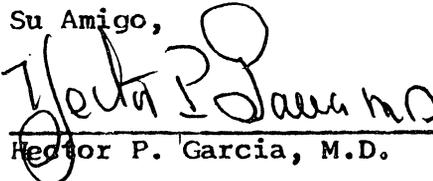
I met him in many conventions, and I supported him in all elections. I saw him last as he was gently lowered into his own earth in the Pedernales Ranch. Our friendship was one of mutual respect for two hard working human beings, both bent on seeking justice for the people that we loved and we individually represented.

He was responsible personally for the funding of "SER" after we had been refused funding and had been kicked around by the OEO and Department of Labor.

He loved us. Mexican American people were his friends--we never abandoned him. While at the White House he would show us the movies that he had taken showing the warm and massive wonderful reception he received while visiting Mexico City.

Presidents like the rest of us have their greatness and their weaknesses. We, minority group members, who have been abused perhaps are better able to see in a man what this greatness can be. We seek not to judge him by his wealth, economics, or efficiency but rather; we judge him as a human being, who has compassion, love and understanding. One who is willing not just to give a lending hand, but to bend down, give us his hand and lift us high into the air of freedom, decency, and equality. This is our yardstick, and by this our own yardstick. Lyndon B. Johnson was indeed a great man and will be entered in the annals of history as one of the Greatest Presidents this county has ever had and one of the truest, greatest, friends, we Mexican Americans ever had.

Su Amigo,


Hector P. Garcia, M.D.

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PS: I have enclosed some other material. I am interested in what you will write about my friend. Would you favor me with a copy for my files.