



CHARLES W. BENSON
SUPERINTENDENT

CORPUS CHRISTI INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
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Dr. Hector Garcia
1315 Bright Street
Corpus Christi, TX 78405

Dear Dr. Garcia:

Thank you very much for your assistance in our recent bond election. Your radio spots certainly helped to get the facts and information about the bond issue out to the public as broadly as possible, which no doubt played a big part in the passage of most of the bond issue.

We thank you for this assistance and for your support for the school district in other areas as well.

Sincerely,

Tom Nix, President
Board of Trustees

Charles W. Benson

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MAYOR JONES, MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL, FRIENDS OF DR. GARCIA, I AM DELIGHTED TO BE HERE TODAY TO JOIN THE CITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI IN PAYING TRIBUTE TO AN OLD AND PERSONAL FRIEND OF MINE, DR. HECTOR GARCIA.

THE YEAR WAS 1949, THE EVENT WAS THE SAD RETURN OF A YOUNG U.S. SOLDIER, HOME FOR BURIAL--EXCEPT THAT THE LOCAL FUNERAL HOME WOULD NOT LET HIM LIE IN STATE IN THEIR CHAPEL. THE YOUNG MAN WAS NAMED FELIX LONGORIA, AND IT WAS DR. GARCIA'S INSISTENCE FOR EQUALITY THAT BROUGHT THE LIKES OF WALTER WINCHEL AND EDNA FERBER TO FOCUS THE ATTENTION OF THE NATION ON THE HARD AND VERY REAL PREJUDICES THAT EXISTED IN TEXAS. THESE WRITERS AND OTHERS WROTE ABOUT THE STRUGGLES OF TWO MEN:

FELIX LONGORIA, WHO DIED DEFENDING LIBERTY, AND DR. HECTOR GARCIA, WHO LIVED THEN, JUST AS HE DOES TODAY, DEFENDING THAT SAME PRECIOUS LIBERTY.

THROUGH DR. GARCIA, AND WITH HELP FROM MEN LIKE LYNDON JOHNSON AND PRESIDENT EISENHOWER, FELIX LONGORIA WAS FINALLY LAID TO REST IN ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETARY WITH FULL MILITARY HONORS.

I WAS ONE OF THE PERSONS, DR. GARCIA CONTACTED, THROUGH THE ORGANIZATION HE FOUNDED, THE AMERICAN G.I. FORUM. I TAKE

PRIDE IN KNOWING THAT I, THEN A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, ALSO PLAYED A ROLE IN THESE EVENTS.

THAT WAS OVER A QUARTER OF A CENTURY AGO, AND THE LONG LIST OF DR. GARCIA'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE THAT TIME DEMONSTRATES HE HAS NOT WAIVERED IN HIS EFFORTS AT PROTECTING CIVIL RIGHTS FOR ALL AMERICANS EVERYWHERE.

LAST YEAR, PRESIDENT REAGAN RECOGNIZED DR. GARCIA'S LIFE ACHIEVEMENTS BY AWARDING HIM THIS NATIONS'S HIGHEST CIVILIAN AWARD, THE MEDAL OF HONOR.

HE AND HIS FAMILY CAME BY TO SEE ME IN WASHINGTON AFTER THE WHITE HOUSE CEREMONY, AND AS I ADMIRER HIS AWARD, I COULDN'T HELP BUT REFLECT ON HOW ONE MAN'S EFFORTS HAVE MADE OUR STATE AND OUR NATION A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE. THERE IS STILL MUCH TO BE DONE, BUT WITH THE ROAD PAVED AND THE EXAMPLE SET BY LEADERS LIKE DR. GARCIA, THERE IS NO REASON WHY INJUSTICES AND INEQUALITY CANNOT BE ERASED IN OUR TIME--FOR ALL TIME.

DR. GARCIA, TODAY THE CITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI MEMORIALIZES YOUR LIFE WORK WITH A LIVING MEMORIAL: THIS PARK, WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE WILL PLAY AND LEARN ABOUT YOUR MANY GOOD DEEDS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS--NOW A PART OF TEXAS HISTORY--AND WHERE THEY WILL BE INSPIRED AND CHALLENGED TO SPEAK IN A STRONG VOICE, FOR THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS.

QUERIDOS AMIGOS, UN GRAN APLAUSO PARA EL DR. HECTOR GARCIA.