

# AMERICAN GI FORUM OF THE U. S.

G. I. FORUM BUILDING  
621 Gabaldon, N. W.  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Office of National Chairman

Memorandum No. 4

## DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT OF SPANISH SPEAKING

The American GI Forum recently received a part of the Constitution of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen as it was revised and amended in July and August, 1956. The part on membership reads as follows:

"He shall be white born of good moral character, sober and industrious, not less than 16 years of age, and be able to read and write the English language and understand our constitution. Mexicans or those of Spanish Mexican extraction are not eligible" The constitution then adds that in case there are laws or court decisions which are in conflict with their regulations then the law or court decision supersede the provisions of their regulations on membership.

The time has come to remove this blot on the Spanish speaking American citizens who did the back breaking work in the building of the railroads. Yet, in the entire history of the Santa Fe Railroad, not one single person of Spanish or Mexican extraction has ever been employed as a fireman or engineman. The company and the Brotherhood have carried a policy of discrimination. Recently the former New Mexico Lt. Governor, Tibo Chavez, spoke to the New Mexico GI Forum State Convention and pointed out that the Santa Fe railroad discriminated against Spanish speaking people. A person by the name of Gonzales publicly denied that the Santa Fe railroad or the Brotherhood discriminated. We feel sorry for the ignorance of Mr. Gonzales, for he evidently has never read the Constitution of the Brotherhood.

But talk is getting us nowhere in the removal of this shameful dishonor brought against a loyal group of people whose war record in the defense of our country is second to none.

Now for some action. First, we must bring the matter up before every State that has a Fair Employment Practices Commission. Second, we must ask for a hearing before the President's Committee on Government Contracts, and third, we must bring it to the attention of the National Labor Relations Board. All this will require research, time, and money.

If you as leaders of the GI Forum and other persons are ready to put a stop to this disgraceful situation, please let me know. I am ready as your national chairman to lead the fight. All those who wish to help out the national office in this fight are requested to answer immediately, and I will send instructions as to what you are to do.

VICENTE T. XIMENES  
National Chairman