

April 7, 1958

Vicente Ximenez, National Chairman
American GI Forum
621 Gabaldon Rd. NW
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Dear Chente:

I thought that it would be nice if you could be presenting in a graph form at different state conventions that we attend, the states that are organized and also the new groups organized within that state. For instance, I know that new groups have been organized in Ohio, California and New Mexico and Texas. New groups have been organized in Kansas, and Arizona. I don't believe that any new groups have been organized in Utah, Wyoming, Nebraska, Missouri, Illinois and Indiana. A new group was organized in Michigan. In this way, the State Groups will know who is moving along and who is not. It could be sort of nice competition and an inspiration. Of course I know that you can do a better job than I can, and I would like to offer that as a suggestion.

Of course, we are doing pretty good in this area. We have organized about four or five new groups in the last week and just last week, I sent the organizers to the valley to organize new Jr. GI Forum groups.

Certainly, if you can make this in duplicate charts, I would appreciate it very much. Of course, you should write to Mr. Velasco for him to give you the new groups that we have organized. In this area, we have organized new groups, although perhaps they have not completely paid up their membership dues in: Main Drive, Aransas Pass, Clarkwood, Rockport and other places. We expect to organize other groups in the surrounding area. In the meanwhile, new groups have been organized in Mercedes, Texas City, Eagle Lake and others. In the meanwhile, please send me, as requested all the names and addresses of possible contacts in the states that I previously mentioned to you like Oklahoma, Arkansas, North and South Dakota, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Fraternally yours,

Hector P. Garcia, M.D.

HJG/mt

April 8, 1958

Mrs. Denise Gordero
Chairman, Auxiliary GI Forum
P. O. Box 333
Alamogordo, New Mexico

Dear Mrs. Gordero:

Your letter of April 1, was received in this office and had not been answered because I was on a trip to Winslow, Arizona. Winslow GI Forum just elected their queen to represent them at the Corpus Christi convention. I was invited to be the principal speaker and crown the queen. It certainly was a most encouraging meeting, because it was only one year ago that I was there and spoke to 10 people, but this past weekend I spoke to about 500 persons in attendance.

I have already expressed my opinion as to the GI Forum's constitutional position on civil rights. I have always tried to carry out the principles of the constitution of the American GI Forum and I have always spoken out in no uncertain terms against those who would take advantage of a person because of his race, color, or religion. Every organization that has a charter from the national office operates under this principle:

"That the American GI Forum is established for veterans and their families for the main purpose of mutual helpfulness, striving to procure for all persons as well as veterans, the equal privileges to which they are entitled under the laws of our country regardless of color, race or creed. That we believe in; the procurement and safe guarding of the ideals of democracy for which this country has fought in all wars; fostering the practice of unquestioned loyalty to our government; the training and education of its citizens in order that the government from its lowest unit to its highest may exist as a real and true democracy"

I, as national chairman, believe in the above principle of all our chartered Forums. We could have never obtained the recognition we did if we had tried to work strictly for Mexican or Spanish speaking people. It is doubtful if any State in the union would have issued a charter to the Forum if we had put down in the constitution that we were working the betterment of the Spanish speaking people only.

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Just recently we applied to the Bureau of Internal Revenue for a certificate of tax exemption. We wanted to be tax exempt as an organization and also if a person contributed to our organization, the amount he contributed would be deductible from his income tax. Notice that the District Director states that "Accordingly, you are not required to file income tax returns unless you change the character of your organization, the purposes for which you were organized, or your method of operation. Any such changes should be reported immediately to the District Director of Internal Revenue, Albuquerque, New Mexico in order that their effect upon your exempt status may be determined." The U.S. government has looked with disfavor upon organizations organized and working exclusively as a nationalistic group rather than as an American group.

As for the meeting held by GI Forum #2 of Alamogordo, I see absolutely nothing wrong with showing that film as long as it was shown with the proper intention. The intention being to further good human relations among all people. If the showing of that film was done to acquaint the members with the work of Booker T. Washington as part of an educational program, then that is proper too. I will talk to Mr. Melendez for an explanation as to the reasons for showing this film. If his reasons were as I have explained above, then there can be no objection to it. If it was done for any other reason, then I will certainly write to you and let you know the results.

I have great faith in the many people I know in Alamogordo. The members of Alamogordo have worked for the GI Forum, and the GI Forum has also responded to the work by having the first State meeting there and also a State convention. I certainly do want very much for the Ladies Auxiliary to continue the work of the GI Forum. I certainly think that these are times for both original Forums of Alamogordo to assume a position of leadership.

I could go on to tell you of many other reasons for my wanting you and the officers and members of the GI Forum Auxiliary to continue. Our own National Chaplain, Father Erwin Juraschek is most interested in the work of the GI Forum. He too can tell you about the moral side of the issue on civil rights. I am therefore asking him to write to the Forums in Alamogordo to explain the importance of carrying out our work as American citizens for all Americans.

I have gone to some extent to explain my answer to you because I consider all of you as my personal friends and not just members. In fact I will go so far as to beg of you to do some soul searching on this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Vicente T. Jimenez
National Chairman

cc: National officers