

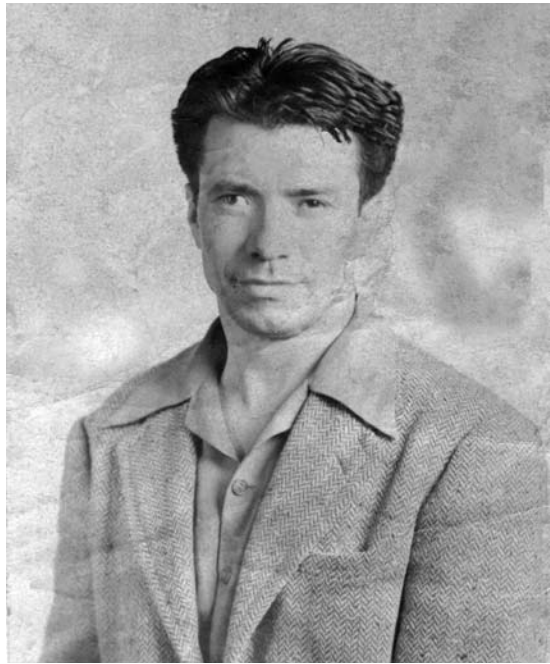
Roberto Galvan: A Latino Leader of the 1940s¹

Carlos Larralde

Roberto Galvan (1911-1958), labor union organizer and tireless worker for human rights, spent his life working to improve the lives of his people, the migrant Mexican workers in California. He worked through the International Longshoremen's Union, the Warehousemen's Union (ILWU), and *El Congreso de Habla Español* (the National Congress of Spanish-Speaking Peoples) to help the unfortunate: a Latino worker who lost his arm; a Mexican tractor worker who was battered and killed by Ku Klux Klan thugs on a narrow dark road; and desperate Mexicans who faced deportation. During the 1930s, nearly two million Latinos left the United States for Mexico in a massive "repatriation" program initiated by President Herbert Hoover. An estimated 400,000 were American citizens or legal residents of Mexican descent.²

Galvan spent years under the threat of deportation and death. His efforts to unionize Latinos caused him to be labeled as a Communist, even a Soviet spy. The Ku Klux Klan, the American Nazi Party, the John Birch Society, and the Minutemen blackened his reputation but they could not erase his legacy as a champion of civil rights.³

After his death in 1958, a "blessed Galvan" cult emerged to provide inspiration to Latinos. Families lit votive candles before his image in their home shrines. Objects that he had touched became relics. Some people even imagined that he had been reincarnated as César Chávez (1927-1993) who founded the National Farm Workers Association, later the United Farm Workers. At one meeting in Southern California, Chávez blessed his listeners on behalf of Galvan. More recently, it was suggested that Galvan had reappeared in the guise of fourteen-year-old Anthony Soltero of Ontario, California, who committed suicide on March 30, 2006, to protest the treatment of Mexican immigrants in the United States. Groups such as the National Alliance for Human Rights, also known as *Estamos*



Roberto Galvan, organizer of *El Congreso*, on April 29, 1939. Author's collection.

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Unidos (We Are United), and Justice for Immigrants also support Galvan's role as a spokesman and martyr for civil rights.⁴

Galvan used nonviolence civil right activities to promote "first and foremost" the rights of all California citizens, particularly his fellow poor and humble Mexicans in the San Diego and Southern California regions. He particularly focused on efforts to combat the Ku Klux Klan and to stop abusive working conditions. He also communicated with many people in the early civil rights movement, including Bert Corona (1918-2001), Carey McWilliams (1905-1980), and Luisa Moreno (1906-1992). This article is based on interviews with Galvan's friends, associates, and family members who sought to preserve his memory and achievements.

Galvan was born on June 6, 1911, in Leon, Guanajuato, Mexico, to a family of resourceful merchants and well-educated priests. His traditional Mexican name was Roberto or Norberto Galvan Cisneros though he preferred to be called "Bob" by family and friends. His cousin, the dignified Reverend Gregorio Farías, taught Galvan the values of respect and justice. "They instilled pride and good sense into me," explained Galvan to his son Carl. "Even if you eat beans, a good front and a nice parlor where you can conduct business and receive friends are needed."⁵

Galvan and his family arrived in San Diego on March 13, 1918, where they sought a safe haven from the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920). Galvan was a sensitive boy. When he first saw the ocean, he burst into tears and refused to speak for the rest of the day. His mother worried about his catching tuberculosis, one of the chief causes of death in Mexico during this period. Every time Galvan coughed, she fed him, and so he grew up near the kitchen. Having few friends, this loner lad did not play much. He loved to read and stare into space. If he used bad language, his mother jammed soap in his mouth. Good behavior was rewarded with chocolate dipped ice-cream cones. He grew up as the best-dressed child in the neighborhood.

Galvan began his career in sales—selling shoes, orthopedic equipment, and real estate. Later he joined the cannery industry, becoming secretary and, later, treasurer for the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). A member of the United Fish Cannery Workers Union, Local 64, CIO, he negotiated union wages for San Diego's Van de Camp cannery workers. Galvan gathered Hispanics, Blacks, Filipinos, Japanese and other organizers to pursue new strategies in the increasingly contentious battles for membership as distinct locals. From 1938 to 1952, he worked with the International Longshoremen's Union and the Warehousemen's Union (ILWU).

Galvan supported labor unions in Los Angeles during a national conference of *El Congreso de Habla Español* on April 29-30, 1939. He particularly wanted to discuss with other union leaders unfair labor conditions faced by laborers in meatpacking plants, mines, canneries, mills, and cotton fields. He had a horror of bureaucracy and, at times, single-handedly ran San Diego's *El Congreso* by using the telephone for hours. Serious, ethical, and hardworking, he considered a handshake to be as contractually binding as a signature. He kept union members united and stayed in touch with laborers and the elderly, taking flowers to the sick, attending funerals, and going to community meetings. He was shocked at nothing and his idea for life could be related to people in few words: "I do not believe in perfection. I believe in improvement."⁶



Reverend Gregorio Farias from Guanajuato helped to shape his cousin Galvan into a crusader for justice and respect. Author's Collection.

Like many Latino leaders of his generation, he did not seek personal success but social justice. Galvan said, "Etiquette and humility are powerful tools that can achieve success. Conceit only creates problems."⁷ Galvan and many of his contemporaries lived Spartan lives; many of them were Communists. As Christians, however, they also recalled the lessons of the New Testament. As Bert Corona pointed out, "No one is indispensable. Others will continue our self-reliance and arduous struggle and must adapt their thinking to the changed conditions."⁸

Paramilitary organizations that shot, tortured, or hanged Latinos, including the Ku Klux Klan, the Silver Shirts, the Italian Black Shirts, and the *Sinariquistas*,

or Mexican Gold Shirts, became the greatest challenges for Galvan and other civil rights leaders. An alien laborer who challenged his employer's authority might be hanged. Migrant workers were discovered hanging from trees in rural areas, sometimes with their abdomens split to expose the intestines. Some field workers were buried alive. A worker could have his throat cut if he or she argued with or insulted a white woman. Gas torches were used on captured minorities to "see them dance." Occasionally, the head of a Latino immigrant would be set on a fence post while the rest of his naked body lay in a ditch. The Klan once threatened to do this to Galvan if they ever caught him.⁹

According to Luisa Moreno, Galvan regularly received reports of the horrors faced by those who attempted to cross the treacherous Mojave and Colorado deserts into California. One pregnant woman trying to avoid the Klan's border patrol gave birth under a bush, screaming in pain. A compassionate man struggled to cut the baby's umbilical cord with a pocketknife, but both woman and child died. Some families were abandoned in the desert by their *Coyote* (smuggler) and left to their own fate. Women caught by the Klan in remote regions were brutally raped and assaulted, while some were murdered, their skeletons discovered in rural areas. Galvan witnessed some of the Klan's savage deeds but could rarely identify the victims.¹⁰

Galvan used Pedro Gonzalez's Burbank Spanish radio station, KELW, to warn Latinos about the Klan's activities and to encourage Latinos to join labor unions. He spoke a melodic Spanish, soft on the vowels and mild on consonants. "Dreams and optimism are the fibers of life. Otherwise we will get dried up inside and eaten up by hate like the Klan," he proclaimed. He interviewed workers, sometimes in English, who harvested and canned fruit and vegetables in the area. He reached radio listeners who lived as far away as New Zealand.¹¹

Galvan drove regularly through Southern California with union files and two battered suitcases in his car. Because he ran a labor union from a hotel room, his lifestyle was erratic, always one step ahead of the Klan. One night, Galvan's car broke down in San Diego while he was on his way home from Escondido's *El Congreso* meeting. According to Bert Corona, "The Klan spotted Galvan and almost hanged him. Exhausted, he ran into an army patrol that saved him. While running to escape, he fell and broke a leg. The pain was intense as the bones pressed on a nerve."¹²

Galvan faced regular threats from the Klan. One night, white-hooded men showed up at his office. Galvan pulled a gun out of a desk drawer and aimed it at them, cutting their visit short. Later that evening, the Klan bombed his union office causing a worker nearby to die from agonizing burns. He regularly received anonymous phone calls. On more than one occasion, he discovered his tires slashed before he was supposed to attend a union meeting or speak to a civic group. After he discovered a stick of dynamite in his car, he and several other members of *El Congreso* began carrying guns. The emotional stress caused by the Klan's activities caused one distraught member of *El Congreso*, Jesus Mendoza, to shoot and kill himself.¹³

Galvan and other union organizers received no help from law enforcement agencies. Los Angeles Police Captain William "Red" Hynes ignored the Klan's beatings, shootings, lootings, and rapes. A rural Methodist minister was charged with owning unregistered pistols and rifles. According to Judge Robert Kenny,

"A worried Galvan reported to me that these weapons were intended to be used against *El Congreso*."¹⁴

The Klan had the support of many conservative Anglo-American fundamentalists in Southern California with their network of seminaries and radio gospel hours. In the early twentieth century, the Southern Baptist Church, which considered itself the state church of the Ex-Confederacy, moved from the southeast to the southwest. Members brought with them the "good news" of a blond-haired and blue-eyed Jesus along with the values of the conservative South. Baptist preacher Frank B. Fagerburg plastered a large Confederate flag on the wall of his office and supported segregated churches in Southern California. Other leading evangelical ministers, such as Los Angeles Methodist preacher Robert Pierce Shuler (1880-1965) and spiritualist Guy W. Ballard (1878-1939), sympathized with the Klan.¹⁵

Galvan protested the practice of racial segregation advocated by the Southern Baptist Church. He denounced the church's pastoral care "with its holier than thou attitude of condemning others, creating helpless resignation in the face of the enormity of brutal injustices." Galvan believed that when "Christ walked on the face of this Earth, he never ostracized anyone. His love radiated to everyone."¹⁶

In the 1940s, Charlotta A. Bass (1880?-1969), the African American editor of *The California Eagle*, discovered that the powerful pastor, Robert Shuler had aided the Klan from his bully pulpit at his Los Angeles' Trinity Methodist Church from 1924.¹⁷ With his fire and brimstone

"Air Raids From the Pulpit" radio shows, Shuler delivered vivid scriptural revelations aimed at civil rights leaders and minorities, including Galvan, calling them "criminals who spoil paradise." Historian Kevin Starr has labeled Shuler the "Methodist Savonarola of Los Angeles," referring to the Dominican priest who preached against the moral corruption of the clergy in the early Renaissance.¹⁸ Shuler and his close friend, John Clinton Porter, mayor of Los Angeles from 1929 to 1933, insisted that civil rights leaders would bring about Armageddon. They also fought against relief programs to aid those in poverty.¹⁹

Galvan's close associate at this time was Celia L. de Rodriguez, Chairman of the *Comite de Damas del Congreso* (Ladies of the Congress' Committee). Most of the *Damas* were religious women who organized the *Damas del*



The *Imperial Night-Hawk* was a popular pro-Ku Klux Klan journal in Southern California during the 1920s. It encouraged the oppression of Mexicans and other minorities. Author's Collection

Congreso on the same guidelines as the Young Ladies' Institute, a Catholic group founded in San Francisco, September 5, 1887. Members were Anglo, Asian and Hispanic. They met together in a two-story brick building in downtown San Diego. She believed that Shuler and Porter could not be ignored. Their tacit support of the Klan encouraged brutality, particularly in multicultural regions. Rodriguez and Galvan worked together for long hours in the union hall. According to Corona, they were "faithful friends." She guarded her sharp tongue and Galvan watched his temper. Together, "they survived the treacherous world of politics and the deadly Klan. As for the refined Rodriguez, she ignored men's rough manner of speech when she often drank beer with them."²⁰ She encouraged other *Damas*, like Aurora Castillo and Margarita Flores, to tackle health problems such as tuberculosis, hepatitis and smallpox.²¹ They pressured health departments to deal with rat problems and improve sewage systems. Galvan later told California's former Immigration and Housing Commissioner Carey McWilliams, "If Celia de Rodriguez weren't a patient woman, she wouldn't have accomplished half of what she did."²² On June 26, 1947, Galvan invited Rodriguez to speak in San

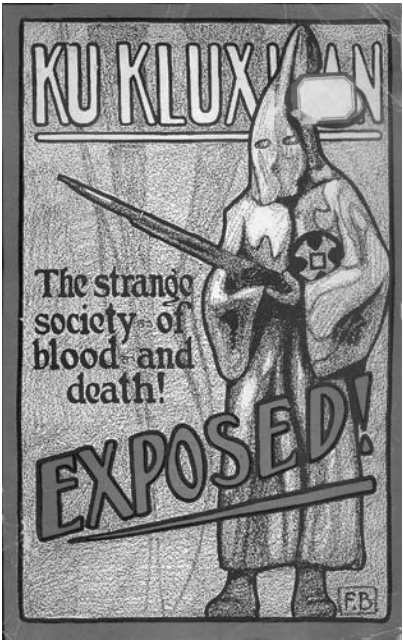


This sarcastic Klan leaflet was printed in San Diego in 1946. It promoted hate and violence against African Americans. Galvan destroyed most of these leaflets. Author's collection.

Diego against the Klan. Rodriguez, Castillo and Flores later joined the *Madres del Soldado* (Mothers of the Soldier) to boost morale during World War II.

Galvan also relied on the support of Carmen Lorenza Contreras of San Francisco who was in charge of *El Congreso's* advertising and publicity. The frugal, health-conscious woman gave eloquent speeches and inspired Latinos to support *El Congreso*. She also carried a gun, ready to shoot any Klansman who got in her way. She tangled with Senator Jack B. Tenney (1898-1970) over the Klan and, on one occasion, was jailed for contempt of court.²³

The *Damas* also faced victimization by the KKK. Galvan wept when he heard that Margarita Flores had been brutally beaten by the Klan near Brawley. She lost her right eye and several teeth. Later, Rodriguez also was beaten by the Klan and left along a road in Anaheim. A few *Damas* disappeared and were never seen again. One informer claimed that



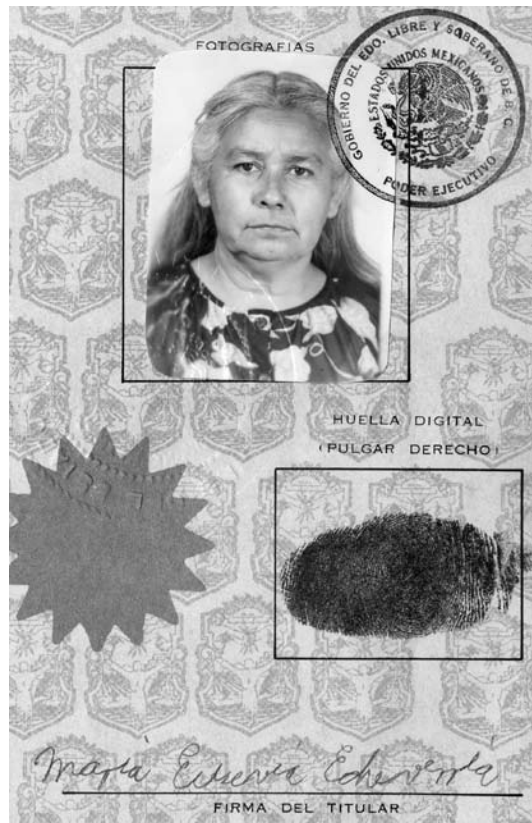
Galvan kept this anti-Ku Klux Klan reference book in his desk. Author's collection.

they were buried alive somewhere in the Imperial Valley.²⁴

Most newspapers failed to report on the activities of the Klan. *The California Eagle* was a rare exception. On July 30, 1942, the Los Angeles newspaper exposed the Klan's operations at several aircraft companies. However, few reporters or editors knew about the Klan's brutality against Mexican aliens.

Between 1943 and 1946, Galvan repeatedly appealed to William Randolph Hearst, the American newspaper magnate to recognize unions' role in empowering and protecting working people. On September 2, 1946, he went with Corona and Eduardo Quevedo, two leading union organizers, to Hearst's office in downtown Los Angeles. Hearst's secretary gave them an appointment, thinking that they were a delegation from the Mexican government.²⁵ At first Hearst, who had numerous assets and business dealings in Mexico, treated them with courtesy. They discussed Hearst's extensive landholdings in Veracruz, Campeche and the Yucatan, along with his million-acre ranch, the Babicora, in Chihuahua.²⁶ But as soon as Galvan began to make his appeal for the rights of his people, it became apparent that he was a union organizer. Hearst became furious. He pounded his elegant rosewood desk and shouted, "How did you get in here? How dare you speak to me about unions?" A crystal vase on the desk crashed on the marble floor as Hearst called for security to throw these men out. Later Galvan recalled, "I felt like the Biblical David facing the giant Philistine warrior named Goliath. Only this time, I did not have a sling with stones."²⁷ He later hoped that a patriotic Hearst would use the power of the press to tackle discrimination in defense industries that refused to hire minorities. Numerous Latinos in military service were rewarded medals for bravery. Hearst, however, showed no interest in this subject.

Later, Galvan supported the "Locked Out Hearst Employees in Southern California." Kruger Clark, president of The United Furniture Workers of America, Local 576, Los Angeles, spoke in San Diego to support union rights while Galvan gave a moving speech on behalf of the cannery workers, stressing unity and encouraging them to support the Hearst boycotts. Galvan and many Latino workers identified Hearst with the main character in Orson Welles's *Citizen Kane*.



Maria Eusevia Echavarría de Santiago testified as a witness to Ku Klux Klan atrocities along the Mexican border. Senator Tenney used her testimony to denounce the Klan in his 1946 weekly Los Angeles KLAN radio show, "It Is Happening Here." Author's collection.

Galvan showed the film to Hispanic laborers in San Diego and provided raffle prizes. He also joined Hearst strikers in the late 1940s and passed out thousands of flyers to support them. Hearst saw these strikers as Communist-inspired troublemakers and pressured the FBI to keep a spy list of Latino union members.²⁸

Galvan had little success unionizing newspaper workers since most were afraid to antagonize either Hearst's *Los Angeles Examiner* and Harry Chandler's *Los Angeles Times*. Hearst and Chandler had indefatigable energy, inexhaustible financial resources and efficient newspaper campaigns. Their provincial, anti-

Citizen's Committee
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- MP

Hearst's greatest weapon is his unlimited financial resources. He hopes to starve out the union members as he has done so often in the past in other sections of the country.

None of the 525 union members have received a pay check for twenty-six days. Their low wage in the past did not permit the building up of a reserve to meet this emergency.

Right now the greatest need is money to help pay rent and minimum food bills for these men and women, so that they can continue fighting for a decent life. The Citizens Committee hopes to raise \$10,000 for this purpose in the next ten days.

If any money is available over this amount, we will use it to acquaint the public at large with the real issues at stake. We hope that our activity will prevent any attempts on the part of management to break this dispute by means of force and violence.

You recall the terrible situation last year when tear gas and clubs were used by the police in an attempt to break the strike of the motion picture employees. We do not want to see a repetition of this shameful act in this situation. We feel that the very presence of a responsible Citizens Committee with sufficient funds to acquaint the public with the true issues involved, will give pause to Hearst before attempting any such action.

I am enclosing a copy of our advertisement which appeared in the Daily News last Wednesday.

Checks may be made out to Citizens Committee and forwarded to 1324 South Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, 15, Calif.

Very sincerely,
Albee Slade

929649
Andy Russell
Anthony Quinn

Draft of a 1948 fundraising letter from the Citizen's Committee to Aid Locked out Hearst Employees. The author, Albee Slade, wrote "Hearst's greatest weapon is his unlimited financial resources. He hopes to starve out the union members as he has done so often in the past in other sections of the country." He adds, "You recall the terrible situation last year when tear gas and clubs were used by the police in an attempt to break the strike of the motion picture employees. We do not want to see a repetition of this shameful act." Author's collection.



Hearst newspapers locked out more than five hundred Los Angeles newspaper guild members who sought more pay on September 5, 1946. Author's collection.

union newspapers supported the repressive police Captain Hynes who threatened to disrupt union meetings. When he needed them, Hynes had the support of other police departments. "This bilateral cooperation also included the Ku Klux Klan," wrote historian Gerald Horne. In the end, Galvan and his fellow union leaders helped mold California labor not as "a history of the struggle of unions to achieve recognition but of a struggle for power between organized labor and organized capital...[which] accounts for the periodic convulsions in...[California's] social history."²⁹

Senator Jack B. Tenney's California Un-American Activities Committee investigated the Ku Klux Klan between 1941 and 1947. George H. Weiner of the Subversive Activities Detail of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office testified that the Klan was basically harmless and that people like Roberto Galvan who complained about the Klan "have sought to gain their own purposes and make it appear like it [crimes against Mexicans] was [an] organized Klan activity." C. B. Horrall, Chief of the Los Angeles Police Department, supported Weiner's statements.

Klan members who worked for Tenney as informants did not undergo scrutiny. For example, the Committee failed to investigate the KKK Exalted Cyclops of San Diego No. 64 under the leadership of V. Wayne Kenaston. During the 1930s, the group had expanded along the Mexican border "to further the spirit of the Klancraft..." and to eliminate undesirables. When several Mexican victims in 1943 testified against William H. Shahli, who had been a member of the Klan's Exalted Cyclops in Los Angeles since July 1941, Tenney's committee ignored their testimonies. Instead, Tenney interviewed Shahli, who stated that the Klan never promoted violence and did not use hoods anymore but retained their

robes. He pointed out that the Klan had “various local units in Los Angeles” and chapters throughout California. Galvan asked Carey McWilliams why Tenney favored Shahli. McWilliams used a network of attorneys to discover that Shahli had a criminal record and that he and hundreds of trusted Klan members were “unofficial collaborators” of Tenney. Shahli and other Klan officials informed secret agents who drafted some of the extensive reports on some 20,000 people for the California Un-American Activities Committee. McWilliams informed Galvan that some of these Klan members or sympathizers were at one time or another Pinkerton detectives. They detested labor unions, Socialists, and Hollywood.³⁰

The Committee’s secret files were used to destroy careers and ruin lives. Later, the files were shipped in boxes to the state archives and forgotten for three decades. In 1998 and 1999, these dusty records were resurrected, providing some shocking revelations. The *Los Angeles Times* editors compared these state archives to the files of the Stasi, East Germany’s version of Hitler’s Gestapo. Historian Kevin Starr confirmed, “What might have been a possibly discreet and maybe even relevant investigation of Communism in certain areas of society just became a witch hunt.” McWilliams stated, “I refused to tell Bob Galvan that starting with myself, all those who were involved in civil rights were blacklisted for eternity. I was even accused of being a pedophile.”³¹

Conservative local business owners supported both the Hearst newspapers and Senator Tenney, including Walt Disney, Knotts’ Berry Farm Products and Alpha Beta under the general management of Claude W. Edwards. Disney encouraged Tenney to conduct hearings in San Diego to eliminate labor union leaders such as Moreno and Galvan. When Tenney heard that San Diego’s State Relief Administration consisted of “Stalinist gang” Communists, he did not hesitate to investigate. In fact, he used San Diego “Commies” to justify the massive expenses of the California Un-American Activities Committee. Even Latinos like Sheriff Eugene Biscailuz and Frank Alvarado, owner of the Los Angeles Crate Company, supported Tenney.³²

In the end, the Committee’s 1947 report admitted that the KKK was “fully as reprehensible and evil as the many other fanatical, crackpot organizations encountered by the Committee in its six years of investigation.” Robert W. Kenny, Attorney General of California, spoke more forcefully: “The Klan is working to destroy the democratic liberties of all people.... You will find it interesting and perhaps frightening...to investigate the Klan further, in particular in rural areas concerning minorities. The Klan and Klan-inspired acts can be stopped by you.”³³ Despite this condemnation, the Klan was not included in the prominent anti-American list of the California Un-American Activities Committee in 1949. The Klan was still seen as a minor nuisance.³⁴

Galvan failed to get support from exiled Mexican President Plutarco Elías Calles who spent five years in San Diego beginning in 1936. Observers found him to be “not always a strong leader and totally lacking in charisma.” While Calles listened to Galvan’s crusade against the Klan, he expressed strongly anti-Communist and even Fascist sympathies. For example, Calles read Adolf Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* with admiration. In September 1940 an exasperated Galvan had lunch with Calles to discuss the Klan’s atrocities along the Mexican border. After hearing him with interest, Calles suggested that they try communicating with the deceased victims through a certain spiritualist in Chula Vista. A flabbergasted Galvan later

telephoned McWilliams to tell him about the meeting. Calles' fascination with spiritualists remained with him long after he returned to Mexico in the spring of 1941.³⁵

Galvan did not serve in World War II due to disabilities that disqualified him from military service. A car accident had left him with defective vision and hearing. A newspaper reporter at a Hearst publication accused him of avoiding the draft. During the war, Galvan volunteered as an area air warden, inspecting blackout draperies. His wartime service consisted of working with Japanese Americans who had been ordered to the Manzanar Camp, two hundred miles northeast of Los Angeles. He helped internees sell their personal belongings and also provided a storage building for their belongings until they could return home. He and a few other members of *El Congreso* stayed for a few weeks near the camps to comfort the prisoners. With the help of Francis C. Ellis of Riverside's First Congregational Church and others, Galvan managed to take a number of Japanese Americans to Mexico. In the summer of 1945, Galvan's *El Congreso* joined San Diego parishioners to provide food and funds for the small Japanese community, especially his friends, the Okimoto family.³⁶

Galvan also promoted "Americanization" classes to speed the assimilation of Latinos into U. S. society. Galvan believed that, "If you cannot speak and write English, people will take advantage of you." McWilliams pointed out, "This wasn't just another noble endeavor where he had his name on the masthead. He knew exactly what it was to survive in a world where tolerance and diversity were detested."³⁷

Galvan supported those defending the Mexican Americans involved in the Sleepy Lagoon case and the Zoot Suit Riots. He drove from Los Angeles to San Diego to try to prevent the editors of the *Union Press* from printing sensationalist headlines about the Zoot-Suiters.³⁸ In addition, he put pressure on Rear Admiral David Bagley in San Diego to stop violence towards Latinos. He threatened to send letters to President Franklin D. Roosevelt and to demonstrate against Bagley and other members of the armed forces. He also united the San Diego cannery workers. As a result, Bagley reconsidered his earlier indifference to this problem and began to discipline sailors for harassing Mexicans. His influence helped the Zoot Suit agitation even in Los Angeles. Galvan and the other *El Congreso* leaders were jubilant on October 28, 1944, when Los Angeles Judge Clement Nye released the Mexican juveniles indicted in the Sleepy Lagoon case. They were also delighted when the Zoot Suit agitation died down.³⁹

Galvan's enemies, however, remained determined to silence demands for unions and civil rights. They began a serious effort to have Galvan and others deported. In 1944, Hearst's editors discovered that Galvan had joined the Communist Party in San Diego in 1944. The Klan printed leaflets about him and distributed them throughout San Diego County. Galvan became conscious of FBI surveillance when he noticed photographers hounding him. He learned to be cautious and not to leave a paper trail. He burned letters and telegrams from McWilliams and his *El Congreso* co-workers. He muffled telephone conversations and eliminated useless paperwork. Books and papers were stacked on his floor. Galvan quelled petty staff bickering. He commented, "As a union organizer, I feel alone and isolated. This loneliness grows painful and depressing. We must keep silence so those who hate us never hear our frustrations. To complain is a sign of weakness."⁴⁰

Galvan learned from Rodriguez and Moreno that the FBI had hired a cannery worker and former Communist party member named "Anna" to spy on him. She intercepted Galvan's letters and tried to demoralize him and other union members. Tenney's California Un-American Activities Committee later used her legal testimony to indict him as a dangerous Communist. Around 1965, attorney Robert Kenny spoke with "Anna" but he never learned her real name.⁴¹

The evangelist Gerald L. K. Smith (1898-1976), one of the most dangerous supporters of the Klan, was known by opponents as the "Minister of Hate" because he spoke before large crowds on the dangers posed by minorities, especially "niggers" and Jews. His Christian Nationalist Crusade inspired violence throughout Southern California and undermined the work of *El Congreso*. He described migrant laborers as an "infestation of Mexican locusts preying on the wealth of California." A San Diego newspaper, *The Broom*, sympathized with Smith and the Klan and blamed Judge Robert Kenny, "Jews, Communists and their fellow travelers" for California's problems.⁴²

Few newspapers reported Smith's speeches in favor of white supremacy. Carey McWilliams wrote in 1945 that members of the press "have kept a blanket of silence on Smith."⁴³ In fact, many people did not believe that the Klan posed a threat. Los Angeles Police Investigator Anthony Collins stated that, "The Ku Klux Klan is a dead issue in this city. There is no KKK." A few days later, however, a shamefaced Fletcher Bowron, Mayor of Los Angeles, acknowledged the Klan's strength.⁴⁴ Nor did the press investigate V. W. Kenaston, leader of the San Diego's Klan chapter, which Galvan found frustrating.

Spanish-speaking workers held weekly union meetings under Galvan's direction. He published the rights of cannery workers in both Spanish and English. His life was consumed with strikes, picketing, organizing, negotiating and operating labor unions. He supplied the labor for local packing associations, hauling facilities, farm equipment and the staff to take charge of pruning and insect control. On June 14, 1946, thousands of protesters demonstrated for civil rights and against Klan abuses in the Olympic Auditorium in Los Angeles.⁴⁵

Galvan also became involved in the local incidents involving the Klan. In San Ysidro, white wooden crosses had been placed along the roadside bearing the names of Latino soldiers who died in World War II. They quickly disappeared. Marco Solano, a Mexican, reported that the Klan had taken the crosses. He was later hospitalized with a fractured jaw and an injury to his spine. One of his friends was found decapitated.⁴⁶

In a separate incident, Galvan testified against Frank Zaffina, a railroad car inspector and a suspected Klan member, asserting that he had murdered two Mexicans in San Diego. On July 21, 1950, an anti-Communist riot at the Chrysler plant in Maywood resulted in two deaths. In the end, Zaffina pleaded guilty to a charge of battery. In the summer of 1951, "KKK-type terrorists" bombed the homes of minorities in Los Angeles. Galvan was afraid that the Klan would inflict horrors on rural Mexicans.⁴⁷

Galvan walked along the waterfronts in San Diego, talking to employees in the tuna industry. Workers wore fish-streaked rubber aprons and high boots as they scaled, beheaded, gutted and cleaned fish. He saw how the Klan's attacks left workers with battered, bloody faces. One morning, a worker was discovered hanging from a light post with "KKK" carved on his forehead. To demoralize



Gerald L. K. Smith (inset) spoke in Sacramento on October 25, 1945, although his speech was greeted by hecklers and protestors. Author's collection.

Galvan and the rest of *El Congreso*, the Klan threatened to firebomb his house or to shoot him between the eyes and leave his corpse soaked in blood on the sidewalk. Galvan received chilling details of how in Ventura, Santa Paula, Los Angeles, Anaheim, Pomona and in San Diego powerful growers encouraged Klan chapters to hang and shoot unruly Mexicans. Civil rights leaders and Galvan had some success in curtailing the Klan's serial killers by getting laborers into unions and by pressuring regional authorities to uphold the law.

Galvan himself endured insults and threats. People confronted him and his family on the street, sometimes throwing eggs, tomatoes or stones. Anonymous letter writers threatened to shoot him. He responded by resisting authority. For example, he refused to salute the American flag at public meetings since he believed that it represented oppression to minorities. His co-workers, Rodriguez and Moreno, thought that Galvan could have avoided clashes with the Klan. However, the Latino community saw Galvan as their champion, bringing him flowers and candy. McWilliams wrote, "Galvan's suffering was their own and sealed a solemn pact with this dignified warrior who inspired confidence. He was their only political voice and hope."⁴⁸

Undocumented Mexican workers crossing the border continued to face death. Many perished in vehicle compartments. One migrant was found strapped under the metal bars of a car seat with the vehicle's driver sitting over him. On another occasion, U. S. border inspectors discovered young boys hidden inside a gas tank, their clothes soaked with fuel. A three-year-old girl was stuffed inside a box. Another small girl barely survived in the side panel of a truck. A laborer was



Fletcher E. Bowron, mayor of Los Angeles from 1938 to 1953. During World War II he supported the removal of Japanese into concentration camps. He later supported Senator Tenney's anti-Communist loyalty check ordinances. He ignored Ku Klux Klan atrocities. Author's collection.

found frozen stiff and purple inside a meat freezer truck traveling from San Diego to Santa Barbara. Others drowned in rivers or decomposed under the hot Mojave or Colorado Deserts' withering sun. Witnesses gave accounts of skeletal fragments of Mexican workers discovered in locked grain cars on the Southern Pacific Railroad routes or in storage facilities in Oceanside. In August 1947, a worried Galvan talked to an *El Congreso* chairman Leroy Parra and Carmen Contreras about fragmented families that had lost their children during the border crossing. In one instance, a mother handed her baby to a fellow migrant in a truck full of people while she collected her belongings, then watched helplessly as the truck drove away.⁴⁹

FOR YOUR OWN SECURITY Take This Home - Read It - Discuss It With Your Friends

DO YOU KNOW that some citizens of today may not be citizens of tomorrow?

DO YOU KNOW the Terminal Island Four?

Here are the facts:

Frank Carlson, militant trade unionist; David Hyun, architect; Harry Carlisle, writer; Miriam Stevenson, dancer; all foreign-born Americans have been arrested under the infamous McCarran Law and have been held without bail on Terminal Island for four months.

DO YOU KNOW that this dangerous precedent may be used as a wedge to intimidate and attack the naturalized as well as native-born citizens?

DO YOU KNOW that the attack against the foreign-born and the deportation hysteria against the Mexican-Americans is only the opening shot for a general attack against all militant trade unionists and progressive Americans?

For the security of your own interests, the full weight of your conscience must be brought to bear for the immediate halt to this drive against the foreign-born.

To guard your own freedom, you must raise your voice for the freedom of the Terminal Island Four.

The ILGWU, along with the National CIO, AFL and thousands of educational and religious leaders have taken their stand against the McCarran law as unconstitutional and un-American.

You can support this stand and help free the Terminal Island Four by

1. **WIRING OR WRITING TO ATTORNEY-GENERAL HOWARD J. McGRATH WASHINGTON, D. C., DEMANDING THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF THE TERMINAL ISLAND FOUR.**
2. **WRITING OR TELEPHONING HERMAN LANDON, IMMIGRATION SERVICE, LOS ANGELES, FOR IMMEDIATE GRANTING OF BAIL FOR THE TERMINAL ISLAND FOUR.**
3. **WRITING TO YOUR CONGRESSMAN FOR THE IMMEDIATE REPEAL OF THE McCARRAN LAW.**

Please fill out and mail

I wish to help win FREEDOM for the Terminal Island Four and repeal the McCarran Law in the best interests of the American people.

Contribution: Amount \$.....

Name

Address

Phone

I wish to obtain more information.

LOS ANGELES COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF FOREIGN BORN

Room 311, 326 W. 3rd St., Los Angeles 13, Calif.

Telephone MUtual 1469



This 1950 leaflet by the Los Angeles Committee for the Protection of Foreign Born warned Latinos and other minorities that "the attack against the foreign-born and the deportation hysteria against the Mexican-Americans is only the opening shot for a general attack against all militant trade unionists and progressive Americans." Author's collection.



This political cartoon, printed in newspapers and leaflets during the McCarthy era, identified union organizers and civil rights activists with "underground commies and sympathizers" who served the interests of Stalin's USSR. Author's collection.

Galvan believed that the hardships faced by migrants at the border were made worse by the activities of white supremacist groups. He argued that Klan activities, in particular, created a chaotic atmosphere that led to violence. U. S. authorities seemed incapable of bringing order.

In the late 1940s, Galvan faced the threat of deportation due to his association with the Communist party. He resigned his membership in 1947.⁵⁰ However, many journalists and business leaders in the tuna industry and agriculture remained

uncertain about his political loyalties. Tenney's Committee sent reports to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) of the U.S. Department of Justice, suggesting that Galvan and other Hispanic union leaders were Soviet Communist agents. Interrogators interviewed both Galvan and Leroy Parra more than once. "Tenney harassed Hispanics like Galvan who lacked political clout," revealed John Ternan, even though "not one of those defended was charged with using violence." Instead, "about two-thirds of the current cases were based on alleged past membership in the Communist Party." Eighty-two percent of those investigated had ended their Communist party membership before 1940.⁵¹

Fearing deportation, Galvan gave his wife Consuelo power of attorney on March 25, 1948. A year later, in March 1949, the INS issued a warrant of deportation to Galvan. They issued a second warrant on December 12, 1950. He discovered that colleagues Roberto Reyes and Randy Resendez, among others, had provided information about him to the FBI and reporters in order to gain U.S. citizenship. For over two years, the FBI had tapped his home and work telephones, bugged his car and home, and opened his mail. At the same time, he found that his support of union and public officials had begun to erode.⁵²

The Cold War caused many people to become suspicious of labor and unions and civil rights organizations like *El Congreso*. Public officials feared that undocumented immigrants could bring A-bombs to the Southwest to aid Communist Russia. Journalist Bill Davidson wrote of Mexican smugglers: "Crossing the U.S. Border by plane, they land contraband at secret fields. A-bombs could be brought in the same way." Klan leaders, including Kenaston, persuaded U. S. border patrols to use walkie-talkies to search the California-Mexico border for Mexicans or other aliens with potential weapons. Government proposals suggested that armed forces with machine guns and tanks be used along the extensive Mexican border. They also recommended the construction of massive concrete walls. In addition, the Bureau of Customs and the INS (with assistance from the FBI and Army and Navy Intelligence) began halting "dangerous aliens" who were simply people who were willing to take other low-paying jobs.⁵³

Richard H. Wells of the Los Angeles district of the Border Patrol (a branch of the INS) received a tip, probably from the Klan, on June 15, 1950, that a plane carrying Mexicans had landed near Brawley. Border Patrol agent J. E. Parker, in a Simpson airplane, warned Wells of further danger of "wetbacks" hiding in thick brush and waiting to join anti-American terrorism. Parker also searched for insurgents and other signs of trouble along the Mexican border. Moreno later told Galvan that she thought Parker was a Klan member.⁵⁴

The Klan also tried to undermine the political clout of Latinos in San Diego. San Diego's Masonic lodge *Anahuar* supported Latino civil rights and invited Galvan to join their organization on December 27, 1951. However, Cardinal Francis Spellman, a fierce anti-Communist, prohibited Catholics from joining the Freemasons. It was thought that Klan members had drawn his attention to the rising Latino membership in *Anahuar*.⁵⁵

In the 1950s, many union organizers were exiled from the U. S. in what the Border Patrol crudely named "Operation Wetback." Over 1.5 million Mexicans were either jailed or deported. Luisa Moreno was deported in 1950. Her husband Grey Bemis joined her in Mexico. Herman Gonzales-Landsberg, a restaurant worker, and Juan Diaz, a cannery worker, were served with warrants because



Galvan's supporters printed this political cartoon in leaflets, comparing his deportation case with those of Carl Latva and Louis Ragni. The cartoon was originally published in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, August 26, 1952. Author's collection.

of their association with Galvan. Gonzales-Landsberg proved that he was an American citizen but he remained blacklisted. Two *El Congreso* members, Andres Hernandez and Juan Lopez, also faced deportation. Another labor union associate of Galvan, famous Chicago trade unionist Refugio Ramon Martinez, was banished to Mexico.⁵⁶ Martinez later told McWilliams, "Those who have made anything of our departure as labor organizers, I am afraid they have made too much. This is but a transition, a passing of the baton." Years later McWilliams recalled, "Erasing options and political mobility, Tenney's disciples and the Klan damaged Moreno and later Galvan and untold thousands of victims beyond repair. It all started when McCarthy hysteria hardened into dogma that made it impossible to calm fears and unify the nation. Ignoring facts, public officials were too busy trying to

score political points and ready to freeze out those who disagreed. There was no room for compromise.”⁵⁷

When Galvan heard that the Republican Senator Joseph McCarthy hoped to address the California Legislature in Sacramento about Communist investigations on Latinos, he countered with, “If we are going to invite a rat to visit our state, why not invite a good rat, like Mickey Mouse?”⁵⁸

Galvan also questioned the legitimacy of the Committee on Un-American Activities. By 1950, the “Tenney Committee” had become the State Senator Hugh M. Burns’s Committee. Burns, a defender of McCarthy, had files on some 20,000 Californians. For the most part, members of the Klan were ignored. Instead, Burns condemned Galvan and *El Congreso* “as a Communist front for racial agitation.” At a press conference, Galvan responded, “We the ordinary people can shape history instead of suffering it and create a new world. Something has to be done since your committee has created untold upheaval and caused California much grief.” Politicians, television cameras, reporters, and curious crowds stared at him in silence. McWilliams recalled how “Burns teased and baited Galvan as a dangerous alien. Public feelings ran high and Burns was inundated with mail against Galvan.”⁵⁹

From 1952 to 1953, Galvan as a Communist alien was incarcerated in the Federal Prison System, Terminal Island, next to Los Angeles harbor, for deportation proceedings since he was not an American citizen. His wife Consuelo visited him in prison with their daughter Frances and son Carl. Galvan was relieved to learn in 1953 that their stepson James, a Korean war veteran, was helping to support the family. At home, Consuelo kept Galvan’s papers in perfect order on his walnut desk and never allowed any one of his numerous pens to run dry.⁶⁰

Amelia Aguayo, an active member of *El Congreso* in East Los Angeles, also came to see her former colleague. She refused to talk about labor union conflicts or Klan issues. Instead, she hoped to cheer him up by telling him fictional stories about Klan members imprisoned by the FBI. Aguayo brought him mail and political news concerning the American policy toward Mexican immigration. She and other visitors noted that Galvan seemed under severe emotional strain. He washed his hands constantly and changed his underwear several times a day.

For two years, Aguayo and Celia de Rodriguez continued Galvan’s work in the San Diego, Imperial and Orange County unions. Rodriguez required all her fellow union members to practice shooting and to carry concealed guns in the event they had to defend themselves against the Klan. They hoped to organize laborers in the citrus groves, the vegetable fields, and in the cotton fields. In the canneries, they tried to have Galvan’s recommendations passed into state law. He wanted to provide workers with rest breaks, clean water, and sanitary restrooms. At this time, migrant women workers did not have access to toilets and so had to gather around each other for privacy when performing bodily functions.

Galvan was released from prison on March 24, 1954 on \$2,000 bail after Judge A. Douglas concluded that Galvan was “being punished for what he once was, for a political faith he briefly expressed over six years ago and then rejected.” Galvan had been a member of the Communist party from 1944 to January 1947 but the judge believed him to be innocent of espionage or other unlawful acts.

However, on May 24, 1954, Judge Jacob Weinberger sustained the expatriation of Galvan as a Mexican alien. He supported the 1951 INS order to deport Galvan on a

playful, even combative, attitude. To stay slender, he took long walks, sometimes over four miles a day.⁶⁴

Galvan worked in a novelty shop, *El Cielo Lindo*, and studied to become a legal secretary. He often sat in the shop until midnight, reading Mexican law. He detested Mexican jails, typically full of citizens who had no hope of an early trial. Graft and corruption prevailed. On September 16, 1955, he became a certified legal secretary in Baja California. Judge Pedro Carlos Valencia came to respect Galvan's legal talents and his skill in both Spanish and English. On February 19, 1957, Galvan received an identification card as a professional translator and hoped to become a Mexican attorney.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, he remained wary of FBI or CIA investigators in Tijuana. According to Moreno, they "may have been the baker, waiters or the bookseller."⁶⁶

Galvan's health failed him. He was diagnosed with liver and kidney cancer by Dr. Miguel Huerta. A special thirty-day permit allowed him to visit his family in San Diego and to undergo surgery and radiation treatments there, but the treatment came too late. His son Carl recalled his last days in the Paradise Valley Sanitarium in National City: "Deathly pale and with dark shadows under his eyes, my dying father in his home blessed visitors with trembling hands."⁶⁷ Father John Moore administered the last rites. Galvan tried to remain lighthearted, requesting a coffin with a built-in telephone and television and insisting that angels would serve him slices of rich chocolate cake. At the end, Galvan blessed himself, folded his hands against his chest, and drew his last breath on May 12, 1958.



The San Diego Masonic Anahuac Lodge certificate issued to Roberto Galvan on December 27, 1951. Senator Tenney believed that such organizations harbored Communists. Author's collection.



Galvan, deported to Tijuana, posed for a Mexican certificate in 1955. Author's collection.

Galvan's funeral was held at St. Anne's Catholic Church, a block from his home in San Diego. He was buried in the Holy Cross Cemetery. He had set money aside for his interment as he had a horror of cremation. The priest noted that Galvan never had received ribbons, awards or citations. Corona responded, "Survival is a privilege that entitles obligation; that is our honor." He later recalled how Klan members threatened to empty gunshots into the casket to obliterate Galvan's face, shouting, "One death is not enough for the Commie."⁶⁸

Galvan's legacy continues with the work of activists like Jorge Reyes, a printer in Corona, who brought to light the continued activities of the Klan in Modesto, California.⁶⁹ In 2003, the Southern Law Poverty Center Intelligence Report reported that hate groups affiliated with the Klan, such as the Hammerskin Nation, the Aryan National Alliance, and the Underground Skinhead Action, maintain chapters in Fontana, San Diego, Long Beach, Hemet and Riverside.⁷⁰ Meanwhile, leading ministers of the World Church of the Creator and the Ministry of Christ Church support the Klan's biblical analogies and beliefs.

Groups such as the Neo-Nazis, the Klan, and the Minuteman Civil Defense Corps (MCDC) seek to shatter the achievements of civil rights leaders like Galvan. They act as vigilantes on the U. S.-Mexico border and promise to "weed out" the estimated eleven million illegal immigrants in the United States. In July 2006, white supremacist Howard Michael Marshall, a resident of Riverside County, received clandestine funds from the MCDC to build observation posts along the border. He remains in jail on attempted murder and assault charges.

Nearly three decades ago, Carey McWilliams reminded us that "Roberto Galvan's life is an example of how civil rights cease and political innovations are seen as a threat to democracy. Such conditions promote demigods. History has taught us this bitter lesson in different ways."⁷²

NOTES

1. The author thanks Professor Molly McClain for her editorial assistance. Roberto Galvan shared many details about his life with Bert Corona. Carl and Frances Galvan also shared valuable anecdotes about their father and family. Many of Galvan's papers were lost through the years either due to carelessness or because his papers reminded his family of his suffering as a labor union organizer.
2. President Herbert Hoover's "repatriation" program started in 1929. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt ended the program in 1933 but some state and local governments continued it through the decade and as late as 1944. According to an analysis of California Senate Bill 645, "an estimated 400,000 American citizens and legal residents of Mexican descent were forcibly removed to Mexico from California." Senate Rules Committee, Unfinished Business, SB 645, http://info.sen.ca.gov/pub/bill/sen/sb_0601-0650/sb_645_cfa_20050906_192632_sen_floor.html (accessed 9/17/06). In 2005, the California State Assembly voted to establish a state fund that could be used to pay reparations to the estimated 5,000 survivors of an immense deportation of Latinos during the 1930s. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger vetoed the bill. Steve Lawrence, Massiel Ladron de Guevara, "Braceros Want Pay for Past: Mexican Laborers Say They Are Owed a Decades-old Debt," *The Press-Enterprise*, (Riverside) August 16, 2005; "Hispanic Reparations Bill Passes Assembly," *The Press-Enterprise*, September 7, 2005; Wendy Koch, "U. S. Urged to Apologize for 1930s Deportations," *USA Today*, April 5, 2006; "The Scandal of Cheap Mexican Labor—43,000 Face Arrest and Deportation," *National Guardian* (New York), April 9, 1952.
3. The Minutemen were founded in June 1960 as an anti-Communist organization. They should be distinguished from the earlier Minute Men Association, a Los Angeles urban reform group operating from 1932 to 1938, and the Minuteman Civil Defense Corps, created in April 2005.
4. Sharon McNary, "Inland Youth Mourned as 'Martyr,'" *The Press-Enterprise*, April 10, 2006; McNary, "Suicide Victim Honored at Demonstration," *The Press-Enterprise*, April 16, 2006. The practice of lighting candles before images of respected individuals is an act of respect rooted in Mexican Catholicism. Toríbio Romo González, a priest from Jalisco, Mexico, has become known as the patron of migrants. See Alfredo Corchado, "Legend of Saint Grows," *The Press-Enterprise*, July 30, 2006.
5. Carl Galvan, interviewed by author, February 26, 2002.
6. *Ibid.*; See also Carlos Larralde, "El Congreso in San Diego: An Endeavor for Civil Rights," *The Journal of San Diego History* (JSDH) 50, no. 1-2 (2004): 17-29.

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7. Carey McWilliams, interviewed by author, April 12, 1978. McWilliams quoted Galvan.
8. Bert Corona, interviewed by author, May 9, 1971.
9. "New Party Aids Victim of Klan Terror Incident," *Daily World News*, July 30, 1948; For the most recent interpretations of the Klan, see Shawn Lay, ed., *The Invisible Empire in the West: Toward a New Historical Appraisal of the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2004); Matt Garcia, *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 75-77, 91-92; Martha Menchaca, *The Mexican Outsiders: A Community History of Marginalization and Discrimination in California* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995), 31-58. See also Larry L. King, *Confessions of a White Racist* (New York: The Viking Press, 1971); David J. Williams, *Sinarquismo in Mexico and the Southwest* (master's thesis, Texas Christian University, 1950).
10. Luisa Moreno, interviewed by author, April 17, 1971; Carlos Larralde and Richard Griswold del Castillo, "San Diego's Ku Klux Klan, 1920-1980," *JSDH* 46, nos. 2-3 (2000): 68-88.
11. McWilliams, interviewed by author, January 12, 1979. See Cecilia Rasmussen, *LA Unconventional: The Men and Women Who Did LA Their Way* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Times, 1998), 114-116. Pedro Gonzalez's radio career was documented in a 1987 feature film, *Break of Dawn*, starring Mexican folk singer Carlos Chavez and Maria Rojo. In 1984, Mayor Tom Bradley proclaimed December 22 "Pedro Gonzalez Day" in Los Angeles.
12. Corona, interviewed by author, May 9, 1971.
13. Corona, interviewed by author, May 9, 1971.
14. Robert W. Kenny, interviewed by author, January 12, 1979; Michelle Tuchman, "Robert W. Kenny Dies: Colorful Politician, Judge," *Los Angeles Times*, July 21, 1976.
15. "Baptist Church Denies Membership to Negroes," *Los Angeles Eastside Journal*, October 31, 1951. On Rev. Frank B. Fagenburg, see "Church Edict Hits Negroes as Members," *Los Angeles Daily News*, October 25, 1951. The same problems reoccurred years later. See John Dart, "Joining the Rush to Repent," *Los Angeles Times*, June 19, 1995; Larry B. Stammer, "Reforms Are Urged for Baptist Church Group," *Los Angeles Times*, April 11, 1999. See also Kevin Philips, *American Theocracy: The Peril and Politics of Radical Religion, Oil, and Borrowed Money in the 21st Century* (New York: Viking, 2006), 148, 154, 158, 168; Donald E. Miller, *Reinventing American Protestantism: Christianity in the New Millennium* (Berkeley: University of California, 1997).
16. McWilliams, interviewed by author, January 12, 1979; Corona, interviewed by author, May 9, 1971.
17. Charlotta A. Bass, *Forty Years: Memories From the Pages Of A Newspaper* (privately printed, 1960), 55, 59. Although her office was not bombed, Bass faced the same Klan threats in Los Angeles. See Rasmussen, *LA Unconventional*, 12-13, 108-109.
18. Kevin Starr, *Material Dreams: Southern California through the 1920s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 136; Mike Davis, *Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1998), 305.
19. John Clinton Porter (1871-1959) presided at the opening of the Olympic games in 1932 and ignored the needs of minorities in Los Angeles during the Great Depression. A petition recall drive against Porter failed. Starr, *Endangered Dreams: The Great Depression in California* (New York: Oxford University, 1996), 227. For Captain William "Red" Hynes, see Carey McWilliams, *The Kramer Bill and Charles Kramer*, (Los Angeles, CA: United Anti-Nazi Conference of California, [1940]), 12, 13.
20. Bert Corona, interview, May 9, 1971; Young Ladies Institute, *The History of the Young Ladies' Institute* (privately printed, 1956), 1, 37. Roberto Galvan's copy in the author's collection contains the signatures of members who indicated their intention of joining a religious group. For more on the *Damas del Congreso*, see Mario Garcia, *Mexican Americans: Leadership, Ideology, & Identity, 1933-1960* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 164, 165.
21. Aurora Castillo, interviewed by author, May 18, 1995. Castillo co-founded the Mothers of East Los Angeles in the 1960s to prevent poor neighborhoods from being targets by environmental damage caused by industries. See Michael Quintanilla, "The Earth Mother," *Los Angeles Times*, April 24, 1995; Myrna Oliver, "Aurora Castillo; Advocate for East L.A.," *Los Angeles Times*, May 15, 1998; Elaine Woo, "Margarita Flores, 92, Watts' Walking Example of Love," *Los Angeles Times*, October 4, 2002.
22. McWilliams, interviewed by author, January 12, 1979; Corona, interviewed by author, May 9, 1971.

See also Mario T. Garcia, *Memories of Chicano History: The Life and Narrative of Bert Corona* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 109-111; Nancy Lynn Schwartz, *The Hollywood Writers' Wars* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), 120.

23. Manuel Ruiz, interviewed by author, April 12, 1973; McWilliams, interviewed by author, January 12, 1979. Ruiz, a Los Angeles attorney, worked with Contreras concerning civil rights issues. He and other professional Latinos tried to get the Library of Congress to record interviews with the *Damas* and other civil rights leaders in order to chronicle the Klan's outrages. "These oral history projects should take their place alongside other priceless personal chronicles of America, such as the interviews describing the attacks on Pearl Harbor," stated Ruiz. The Library of Congress showed no interest in the project. See Manuel Ruiz, *Mexican American Legal Heritage in the Southwest* (Los Angeles: privately published, 1974), 81-88. Shortly before McWilliams died in 1980, he predicted the revival of Neo-Nazis, white supremacists, and the Militiamen by 2004. Authors Jim Gilchrist and Jerone Corsi envision the collapse of the United States due to millions of illegal migrants "ready to destroy democracy." See their *Minutemen: The Battle to Secure America's Borders* (New York: World Ahead Publishing, 2006).

24. Moreno, interviewed by author, April 17, 1971. She was active with the *Damas* throughout Southern California and, for several years, kept in touch with Margarita Flores and Cecilia de Rodriguez.

25. Corona, interviewed by author, May 9, 1971. Corona remembered these dates well since he kept the dates in his records, especially the appointment at Hearst's office in Los Angeles.

26. Galvan began his appeal to Hearst on January 12, 1943. W. A. Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst* (New York: Galahad Books, 1996), 29, 351, 356, 468-471. Hearst's problems with the Mexican government are reported in the *San Francisco Examiner*, November 13, 1921, and the *New York Times*, December 28, 1921. In 1953, the Mexican government bought Babicora from him for \$2,500,000. Years later, Hearst saw his properties with American ambassador Josephus Daniels and remarked, "I suppose they will take it all, piece by piece." Josephus Daniels, *Shirt-Sleeve Diplomacy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1947), 354.

27. "Judge Moffatt Frees Jailed Red," *Los Angeles Express*, September 8, 1950; William R. Bidner, Executive Director, Civil Rights Congress, "To Whom It May Concern," June 28, 1947. For more on Hearst's conservative policies, see *Selections From the Writings and Speeches of William Randolph Hearst* (San Francisco: private printing, 1948), 100-137; Anita Brenner, *The Wind that Swept Mexico: The History of the Mexican Revolution, 1910-1942* (New York: Harper & Row, 1943), 25, 177; *Los Angeles Times*, October 6-7, 1938. Unfortunately, scholars have had limited success in gaining access to the William Randolph Hearst papers since the bulk of his papers remain in the possession of the Hearst family.

28. Kruger Clark, President, United Furniture Workers of America, Local 576, Los Angeles, October 24, 1947; Albee Slade, "Citizen's Committee to Aid Locked Out Hearst Employees," undated, author's collection; Luisa Moreno, interviewed by author, April 17, 1971; Corona, interviewed by author, May 9, 1971.

29. Gerald Horne, *Class Struggle in Hollywood, 1930-1950: Moguls, Mobsters, Stars, Reds & Trade Unionists* (Austin: University of Texas, 2001), 62. See also "Hearst Locks Out L.A. Guild: Strategy Committee Formed," *Labor Herald: Official California CIO Newspaper* (Los Angeles), September 6, 1946.

30. "Mayor Bowron is Exposed as Gerald L. K. Smith's Pal," *State Labor News* (San Francisco), October 14, 1946; *Report Joint Fact-Committee on Un-American Activities in California, 1943*, 229, 245, 246, 259, 280; "Tell This Sordid Tale" (editorial), *Los Angeles Times*, April 18, 1998.

31. Jennifer Warren, "Newly Released State Papers Detail 'Red Menace' Era," *Los Angeles Times*, November 11, 1999. In an interview on July 12, 2000, State Librarian Kevin Starr, stated, "Tenney has remained a disgrace to California history and a demon to exorcise." McWilliams, interviewed by author, April 12, 1978. See also McWilliams, *The Education of Carey McWilliams* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978), 146-147; Stefan Kanfer, *A Journal of the Plague Years: A Devastating Chronicle of the Era of the Blacklist* (New York: Atheneum, 1973), 94-95; Cedric Belfrage, *The American Inquisition, 1945-1960* (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1973), 76, 112.

32. McWilliams, interviewed by author, April 12, 1978; Marc Eliot, *Walt Disney: Hollywood's Dark Prince* (New York: Birch Lane Press, 1993), 172; Lindley Bynum and Idwal Jones, *Biscailuz: Sheriff of the New West* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1950); Ray Haller, Mile McMahan and Frank Alvarado, *Baja California* (Los Angeles: 1953); Esther R. Cramer, *The Alpha Beta Story: An Illustrated*

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History of A Leading Western Food Retailer (privately published, 1973). A San Diego County official, A. Roe, told the Committee about San Diego's "Stalinist gang" Communists.

33. *Report Joint Fact-Committee on Un-American Activities in California, 1947*, (Sacramento, CA: Report of the Joint Fact-Finding Committee to the Fifty-Seventh California Legislature, 1947), 57, 58, 59, 60, 62. Robert Kenny, interviewed by author, August 12, 1979. There are several files on this topic in the author's collection.

34. *Report Joint Fact-Committee on Un-American Activities in California, 1949*, (Sacramento, CA: Report of the Joint Fact-Finding Committee to the Fifty-Fifth California Legislature, 1949), 267-410, 550-551. It is thought that Senators Fred H. Kraft and Clyde A. Watson, friends of the powerful Hearst, kept the activities of the Klan, the American White Guards, the National Copperheads and the Militant Christian Patriots, from being constantly mentioned in the report.

35. Carey McWilliams, interviewed by author, January 12, 1979. One biographer writes, "Calles's archives—lovingly maintained and ordered by his daughter Hortensia—conserve some surprising information." Enrique Krauze, *Mexico: Biography of Power: A History of Modern Mexico, 1810-1996* (New York: Harper & Collins, 1997), 435-437. For more information on Calles character, see Ramon Eduardo Ruiz, *Triumphs and Tragedy: A History of the Mexican People* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992), 344-345.

36. Corona, interviewed by author, May 9, 1971; McWilliams, interviewed by author, January 12, 1979; First Congregational Church, *The Lighted Cross: The First 100 Years of Riverside's First Church, 1872-1972* (Riverside, CA: First Congregational Church, 1972), 35; Laura Wides, "For Ex-Internees, Closure Conferred," *The Press-Enterprise* (Riverside), August 22, 2005. For more on San Diego's Okimoto family, see Bill Bradley, *Time Present, Time Past: A Memoir* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996), 331-332. Cecilia Rasmussen, "L.A. Then and Now: Southland's Way Station for WWII Internees," *Los Angeles Times*, September 17, 2006. Apparently Galvan never realized that FBI agents in 1942 also rounded up more than 2,000 Japanese in Latin America and brought them back to Southern California to exchange them for American civilians trapped in Japan. They were sent to camps and classified as "dangerous enemy aliens." The National Archives in Laguna Niguel documents these activities.

37. McWilliams, interviewed by author, April 12, 1978. *Report Joint Fact-Committee on Un-American Activities in California, 1949*, 425-429; "Galvan Case Four Years Old," *Evening Tribune* (San Diego), May 24, 1954.

38. Moreno, interviewed by author, April 17 and 18, 1971.

39. Moreno, interviewed by author, April 17, 1971; McWilliams, interviewed by author, April 12, 1978. See Sleepy Lagoon Committee Collection, Box 3, Petitions, F 3, UCLA Special Collections, Los Angeles; Carey McWilliams, *Southern California County: An Island in the Land* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1946), 319-320; Pagan, *Murder at the Sleepy Lagoon*, 221, 225-226.

40. Moreno, interviewed by author, April 17, 1971.

41. Robert Kenny, "To the Legal Committee For the ACLU," October 29, 1953, 2, author's collection; Kenny, interviewed by author, January 12, 1980.

42. Glen Jeansonne, *Gerald L. K. Smith: Minister of Hate* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1988); Laurence I. Hewes and William Y. Bell, *Intergroup Relations in San Diego: Some Aspects of Community Life in San Diego Which Particularly Affected Minority Groups* (San Francisco: The American Council on Race Relations, 1946), 26, 33, 36; "Bob Kenny's Gang Burns KKK Crosses in Los Angeles," *The Broom* (San Diego), October 21, 1946; Carey McWilliams, "Throngs Turns Out Not to Hear Gerald Smith," *PM*, July 30, 1945; "Cross Burners Defied by Negro Doctor," *People's Daily World* (New York), October 23, 1948; "Demonstration At Scene of Cross Burning," *California Eagle*, October 28, 1948; "Los Angeles Wants No Part of Gerald L.K. Smith," *Los Angeles Daily News*, October 17, 1948; "Smith Will Appear At Series of Meetings," *People's Daily World*, October 18, 1948; "GLK Smith Calls For Defeats of Liberals," *People's Daily World*, October 29, 1948; "Police Bullets Kill Wetback Knife Slasher," *Los Angeles Mirror*, December 4, 1959.

43. McWilliams, interviewed by author, January 12, 1979.

44. Moreno, interviewed by author, April 17, 1971; Corona, interviewed by author, April 12, 1999; "No Klan Here, Says Cop Boss," *People's World*, October 26, 1948; "Mayor Says He'll Act on Klan Terror," *People's World*, October 28, 1948. The broadcasts by Mayor Fletcher Bowron, Los Angeles Station KFI, on September 12, 1946 and September 15, 1946 concerning the Klan are in the KKK files, author's collection.

45. Moreno, interviewed by author, April 17, 1971; *Los Angeles Times*, June 15, 1946; Bass, *Forty Years: Memories From the Pages of A Newspaper*, 136-140.
46. Corona, interviewed by author, May 9, 1971 and September 12, 1999; Tony Acevedo, interviewed by author, January 12, 2000. Like some war veterans, Acevedo decided to dedicate his life to preserving the memory of Americans who fought the Axis powers during World War II. For more, see Flint Whitlock, *Given Up for Dead: American GI's in the Nazi Concentration Camp at Berga* (Cambridge, MA: Westview Press, 2005), 9, 194, 207, 228-230; Joe Vargo, "A POW's Spirit: He Knows the Names of Those Who Never Came Home," *The Press-Enterprise*, September 9, 2006.
47. McWilliams, interviewed by author, January 12, 1979; "Riot Victim Asks Charge Be Dropped," *Los Angeles Daily News*, July 29, 1950; "Ask for Jury Trial in Anti-Red Riot," *Los Angeles Daily News*, July 1, 1950; "Anti-Red Riot Case Ends With Order for Fine," *Los Angeles Times*, August 30, 1950; "Blasts Due to Race Dispute," *Los Angeles Mirror*, July 26, 1951; "Race Enmity Blamed in Home Bombs," *Los Angeles Daily News*, July 26, 1951; "Second Man Confesses in Bombings," *Los Angeles Daily News*, July 26, 1951. "Protect Citizens in L.A. to Prevent Recurrence of Home Bombings," *Los Angeles Times*, March 18, 1952; "L.A. Home Bombings Draw Denunciation from Mayor," *Los Angeles Daily News*, March 20, 1952; "Two More Threatened by Racists," *PW*, April 2, 1952; "Legal DDT Needed For KKK Vermin," *Los Angeles Mirror*, March 19, 1952.
48. McWilliams, interviewed by author, April 12, 1978.
49. Moreno, interviewed by author, April 17, 1971; Corona, interviewed by author, May 9, 1971.
50. Galvan remained friends with Ivan Ochoa and Henry Steinberg, both Communists. Steinberg was a 1949 candidate for election to the Los Angeles City Board of Education. Ochoa was knifed by the Klan and died from the stab wound. The eccentric Steinberg kept an embalmed Ochoa in his home. During dinner, he would talk to him. He kept the body until the decomposed corpse fell apart.
51. John Ternan, interviewed by author, August 24, 1999; Carl Galvan, interviewed by author, March 12, 2002; *Un-American Activities in California, 1940*, 33; Howard O. Welty, "Others to Face Contempt Trial in Red Hearing," *San Diego Union*, September 11, 1948.
52. McWilliams, interviewed by author, April 12, 1978; Moreno, interviewed by author, April 17, 1971; Corona, interviewed by author, April 12, 1999. For more recent information about the activities of the INS and FBI see Jonathan Peterson, "Bush Likely to OK Merger of INS, Customs Into Border Agency," *Los Angeles Times*, March 20, 2002; Eric Lichtblau, "Hanssen Spied for the Money, Report to Say," *Los Angeles Times*, April 3, 2002.
53. Bill Davidson, "Smugglers Now Take to the Air," *Collier's*, November 18, 1950, 29. Members of the Un-American Activities Committee made large sums of money by selling articles to newspapers and magazines concerning "Reds" and the "dangers of the Mexican border." For example, Representative J. Parnell Thomas (Republican, New Jersey) sold sensational articles about "red spies" in the atomic bomb plants. See *Who's Un-American?* (Philadelphia, PA: CIO: Food, Tobacco, Agriculture and Allied Workers Union of America, 1947), 20.
54. Moreno, interviewed by author, April 17, 1971.
55. Certificate of *Gran Logia de Estado "Anahuar"* to Roberto Galvan, December 27, 1951, San Diego, author's collection.
56. Information about Refugio Ramon Martinez in Chicago and the role of Filipinos in the Alaska Cannery Workers Union can be found in records and pamphlets such as *Union Busting! Department of Justice Style* (New York: American Committee For Protection Of Foreign Born, 1951). Most Filipinos in Alaska were deported by 1951.
57. McWilliams, interviewed by author, May 12, 1978; "High Court Balks Deportations," *People's Daily World*, April 26, 1950; Laurent B. Frantz, "Deportation Deliriums," *The Nation*, March 26, 1955, 262-63; Tom Stempel, *FrameWork: A History of Screenwriting in the American Film* (New York: Continuum Co., 1988), 120, 121, 148.
58. McWilliams, interviewed by author, May 12, 1978; "Deportation Looms for Compton Teacher," *Los Angeles Mirror*, October 12, 1951; "Deportation Hearings Near for Red Suspects," *Los Angeles Daily News*, October 16, 1951.
59. U. S. House of Representatives and Committee on Un-American Activities, *Guide to Subversive Organizations and Publications* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1951), 54, 97, 100, 122, 147;

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McWilliams, interviewed by author, April 12, 1978. McWilliams quoted Galvan.

60. Corona, interviewed by author, April 12, 1999; McWilliams, interviewed by author, May 12, 1978; Consuelo Galvan to Roberto Galvan, June 11, 1953, author's collection. Letters were never addressed to the Federal Prison System, Terminal Island, San Pedro, CA. Instead, they were addressed as to the recipient care of Immigration Services, Terminal Island, San Pedro, CA. The government used to see this prison as a "detention shelter" or as a "transfer center."

61. United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, "[Roberto] Galvan versus Press, Officer in Charge, Immigration and Naturalization Service," October Term, 1953, No. 407 (Washington D. C.: Government Printing Press, 1954), 523-534; "McCarran Act Bar to Reds is Ruled Valid," *Evening Tribune* (San Diego), May 24, 1954. For an extensive analysis of the Roberto Galvan case see: "Unequal And Alien Comments On The Limits Of Brown," *New York Law School Law Review* (Summer 2004).

62. Attorney Robert Kenny "To the Legal Committee For the ACLU," October 29, 1953, author's collection; Carl Galvan, interviewed by author, January 30, 2002.

63. John McTernan, interviewed by author, May 12, 1978; "The Changed Atmosphere for the Practice of Law," *Lawyers Guild Review* (Fall 1957), 104; "Galvan, S[an] D[iego] Alien, Faces Deportation," *San Diego Union*, May 25, 1954; "The Deportation Cases," *Lawyers Guild Review* (Fall 1958), 107; Dennis McLellan, "John T. McTernan, 94; Lawyer Fought to Protect Civil Rights," *Los Angeles Times*, April 4, 2005; Myrna Oliver, "Maury Maverick, 82; Texan Defied Tradition as Lawyer, Legislator," *Los Angeles Times*, February 7, 2003.

64. Corona, interviewed by author, April 12, 1999; Carl Galvan, interviewed by author, February 6, 2002; Karl M. Schmitt, *Communism in Mexico: A Study in Political Frustration* (Austin: University of Texas, 1965), 60-61. Aguayo helped Galvan's wife to collect his social security benefits.

65. Identification card of Roberto Galvan issued February 19, 1957, Tijuana, Baja California, No. 524354; certificate by Judge Pedro Carlos Valencia to Roberto Galvan, undated, Tijuana, Baja California; author's collection. As late as 1954, Galvan still used his old San Diego address, 2296 Julian Avenue. He used his Social Security number, 556-01-5500 until he died (author's collection). Diana Anhalt, *A Gathering of Fugitives: American Political Expatriates in Mexico, 1948-1965* (Santa Maria, CA: Archer Books, 2001), 135.

66. Moreno, interviewed by author, April 17, 1971. Galvan took notice of the case of Helen and Morton Sobell. On August 16, 1950, Mexican agents burst into the Sobell's Mexico City apartment and kidnapped Sobell, taking him to Texas. Once in the United States, Sobell was charged with conspiring with Ethel and Julius Rosenberg to commit espionage. Elaine Woo, "Helen Sobell, 84; Activist Fought to Save Lives of Rosenbergs," *Los Angeles Times*, April 24, 2002.

67. Carl Galvan, interviewed by author, February 6, 2002.

68. Corona, interviewed by author, April 12, 1999. Isabel Gonzalez, a co-worker of Galvan, attended his funeral. A few years before his death, she had written that "the threat of deportation has served... to keep the Mexican people as a whole in bondage." Isabel Gonzalez, *Step-Children of A Nation: The Status of Mexican-Americans* (New York: American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born, 1947), 13.

69. Jorge Reyes, interviewed by author, April 28, 2005; Douglas Quan, "Activist Vows to Keep Fighting," *The Press-Enterprise*, May 1, 2006.

70. The Southern Law Poverty Center Intelligence updated its research report on hate groups on October 14, 2003. They listed 602 active U.S. Hate Groups. Because Skinheads are migratory and often not affiliated with groups, these listings understate their numbers. In Southern California, they are well camouflaged in regions like San Diego, Los Angeles and the Riverside area. Some Skinheads and other dangerous gangs have moved to high desert settlements like Victorville and Apple Valley. See Joe Nelson, "Stain Spreads on Desert Sands: Migration Pace Alarms Officials," *The Sun* (San Bernardino), April 27, 2006.

71. Jeffrey Snesner, "Rousing the Zealots," *Time* (June 2006); Tammy McCoy, "Inland Man Explains to Court his Views on White Supremacy," *The Press-Enterprise*, July 20, 2006; "Minuteman Finances Questioned," *The Press-Enterprise*, July 21, 2006; Tammy McCoy, "Man Not Guilty of Aiding White Supremacists," *The Press-Enterprise*, August 4, 2006.

72. McWilliams, interviewed by author, May 12, 1978.