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Ana M. Varela-Lago: This is an interview with Mrs. Alicia Menéndez. Alicia, first of all I would like to start by talking a little bit about your family. Tell me, please, how did your family first come to Tampa? And what did they do here?

Alicia C. Menéndez: Well, my mother was the first of my parents to come. And she came. She was born in Spain, in Asturias. In Rio la Vega, which is near, I believe, Soto del Barco. And, at the age of three months, she came to Cuba. And she was in Cuba during part of the Spanish-American War. And then in 1898, at the age of three, she came to Tampa with her family. And the family included her parents and grandparents and some uncles and aunts, all from Cuba. And, well, she lived all her life—or most of her life—in Ybor City. And she went to schools here in Ybor City. And she learned the language here—English—because she attended schools here so she spoke good English and good Spanish.

AV: Did she work in the cigar industry, was she related to—?

AM: Before she was married, she worked as a cigar bander, but she didn't work again after she was married. She never worked again after she was married. At that time all the men thought it was very important for the woman of the house to stay home. And, well, that is so much for the beginning of my mother. Then my father—

AV: What was her name?

AM: My mother's name was Josefa Suárez.

AV: How about your father?

AM: And my father was born in Santander. Spain. And it was a small group of houses or a little village—not even a village—outside of Torrelavega. And he was born in 1893.

AV: And his name was?

AM: And his name was Vicente Castañeda.

AV: How did he come to Tampa?

AM: And he came, he had two uncles that had come before him. So, he came to Tampa to stay with uncles; but he came by way of Cuba. He came through Cuba first. And he was just in Cuba for the required 40 days that a lot of people had to stay in Cuba, for health purposes or whatever, you know, until, for quarantine or something, I don't know.

AV: Right.

AM: And then he came to Tampa. And he came in 19—either at the end of 1907 or beginning of 1908. He came to Tampa. And he was 14 years old when he came to Tampa.

AV: Very young.

AM: And he traveled—alone—like a lot of the young boys at that time did.

AV: Why did he leave Spain, do you know?

AM: Well, he left Spain. A lot of people won't admit it, but I'll admit it. A lot of people came trying to avoid the draft. And that was one of the reasons. And another reason is, his uncles were here already. And they had been here for quite a few years. And they were doing all right making a living here. So the parents wanted my father to have a better chance than what he would have over there.

AV: What did your family do over there?

AM: Farming. His family, they were farmers. They had their land.

AV: Was he the only one of the siblings to come, or—?

AM: Well, his brother, he came in 1921. And he arrived the day that I was—after, the day after I was born. So, I always am sure of the day that he came.

AV: So that was the only brother that—

AM: The only brother that came. Uh-huh.

AV: Okay, so he came when he was 14 years old. So what did he do, here in Tampa?

AM: Well, at first he stayed with one of his uncles. And if you want the name of the uncle—

AV: Sure.

AM: —he was a well-known man here. His uncle was Bautista Balbontin.

AV: He used to have a bar room?

AM: Uh-huh. And he lived with him for awhile. And then he lived with his uncle's brother, who used to work at the Columbia Restaurant before it was the Columbia Restaurant. It was like a little cafe and it was when the Columbia was getting started. And, he used to work there. And, my dad shared time with the two uncles. And then he learned how to be a cigar maker, a cigar buncher.

AV: Oh, I see.

AM: And then he got out on his own to work. And that is, mostly what he did all his life to earn a living, was work in the cigar factories. During the, whenever they had a strike here, he would have to go out and do something else for awhile, until after the strike was over—

AV: Did he leave Tampa when there were strikes, or he stayed in Tampa but did something different?

AM: Well, one time he went to work at Camp Eustis, in Virginia. During the war.

AV: I see.

AM: And, that was I guess in 19, 1917, or something like that. Because it was after my brother was born. And then, another time, during another war—this is the war that they called the ten, ten month—I mean not war, the strike—

AV: Strike.

AM: The ten-month strike. That's when my mother was expecting me, and everyone tells me that's why I didn't grow, because we were all hungry. And then my dad went to work at the dredge here on the channel—when they were deepening and widening the channel here. My dad went to work there, and he, he worked there until the strike was over. And then he went back to the cigar factory. So, so much for the beginning.

AV: What cigar factory did he work at?

AM: Well, he worked for many years at Regensburg, the factory on 16th Street and Columbus Drive.

AV: How did your parents meet? Do you know?

AM: Well, my grandmother, when there was a strike, she was for—this big strike—she was forced to take in boarders. So that she could make payments on her house. And my dad was one of the men that went to live at my grandmother's house. So—I'm not quite sure whether they met there at the house, or whether they had met before at the Centro Español, at the dances and the theater at the Centro Español and all that—and if because of that, he came to live at my grandmother's house, I don't know. But it's, either one of those two that they had a chance to meet there.

AV: And when did they get married?

AM: They got married in June, 1917. June 23rd, 1917. They were married, and they were married at my grandmother's house.

AV: It wasn't a church ceremony?

AM: No. At that time all the Spaniards were—or most of the Spaniards, let me say—were against religion.

AV: Why do you think that was?

AM: Having to leave Spain because, well, I guess, they felt oppressed by religion or whatever. And then because all the boys had to go, to serve in the service, you know. And that is the reason most of them came over here. And because they, really to better themselves too. So—

AV: How about your mother? Was she happy that they didn't have a church ceremony?

AM: Really, nobody seemed to care. Everybody, most of the people that I know my parent's age, they were married at home by a notary public. That is how they were married. A lot of the people that—I used to listen to all the talk when I was little, you know—and that's where they were married. And, and not only the Spaniards but a lot of the Italians too felt that way about religion. Then, later on they started getting back to religion. I guess when you better yourself and all that you don't remember the hard times and why you rebelled against something. And then they started going back to religion a little, but at that time it wasn't important.

AV: So your parents were never very religious?

AM: No.

AV: They never changed their position on that. I see. Did they educate you into religion in any way, or they just—?

AM: No.

AV: They didn't.

AM: No.

AV: Okay, tell me a little bit of your growing up in Ybor City—in Ybor City you grew up?

AM: Yes. Well, I grew up right in the center of old Ybor City, on 13th Avenue, and between 15 [Street] and 16th Street. That's where I was born. And, well, I always say that I had a very happy childhood, with very little money, but a very happy childhood. Because I always had good parents, and good grandparents; good great-grandparents, so I always had a lot of caring people around me, so I was a happy child. And so was my brother. We didn't come from any broken home or anything. My parents both died natural deaths and, they were still together. So, in that respect I had a very good childhood. And until I was about nine years old, my dad worked, and with the pay that he got, we managed to have a nice kind of living. We didn't have a lot of spending money, but it was a nice kind of living.

And, then, during the crash—I figure it's about 1929—because after this crash that we had, and then came the Depression; then I still had a happy, a happy, many happy years, but with very, very little money. But that never seemed to make a difference. Not to me, not to any of my friends. Because we were all in the same position. Nobody had any money. But we had a lot of family, all of us. So, and families got together and everything—so that we always, I don't know, we managed to do things that didn't cost any money, but that gave a lot of pleasure. That is the kind of life that I lived.

When I was four years old, my father built our house on 16th Street. And, we lived there until we went to New York. So that's the house that I grew up in. And we still had it when we left New York, we hadn't sold it; we sold it later from New York, because we never intended to come back to Tampa. And, so we sold our house here. But then, after the war, when things were better here; there were a few more industries then—not only the cigar industry and all that—and my mom always wanted to come back to Tampa. So then we came back again.

AV: When did you leave for New York? When did you decide—?

AM: Well, I had family already that was living there—cousins of my mother, that they were living in New York. And I had an uncle. And before that, my grandmother had gone to New York for a while, and two other uncles. So, my mother would hear the stories, you know, they all went there and they started working, and here when the cigar factories stopped for Christmas, holidays, and things like that, well, there was no way of having an income or anything and it was getting to be very, very bad for us. So my mother was always the one that would tell my father, "Let's do this," and "Let's do that." So, she finally convinced him, "Let's take off and go to New York." And we did.

AV: The whole family went, and when—

AM: The four of us, yes.

AV: When was that?

AM: My dad and brother left in September of 1938. And, then my mother and I left in October. I arrived in New York on Halloween night.

AV: So, what did you do there in New York? I mean, do you—where did you stay, first. Did you rent your own apartment, you stayed with family there?

AM: Well, the first month that we were there, we stayed with some friends from Tampa. And they had gone to New York about three or four years before us. So they were already settled there. And we stayed with them for about a month. And then we got a very small apartment. And my dad started working at one of these, let me see, what do they call it, in Spanish they call it *chinchal*. One, the—

AV: Right, the small cigar factory—

AM: Yes, uh-huh. A *chinchal*. My dad started working there with several other people from Tampa. They had all started working there. And then my brother, who used to be a musician here in Tampa, he started working there with a band, with a small band. And then, about a year later, with a big band—a very big band. And he did very well. And then I started working too; because I didn't like to, I didn't want to go to school in New York.

So, I started working and, where I used to work it was in, like, places where they made cosmetics, lotions, like hand lotions and shampoos and things like that. They had a chemist there that would make these things, and then we would pack them, and then they were delivered to the different stores in New York and things like that—and it was pleasant work. And, in two or three of the places that I worked, there were a lot, a lot of girls from Tampa, that they had left with their families too. And we all told one another, "Well, why don't you go and apply for a job here where I'm working?" and that's what they did, so that's why we had our groups of Tampa girls working here, and there and there. You know? So.

AV: So a lot of people from Tampa actually went to New York during the Depression?

AM: Yes. Oh, New York was full of people from Tampa. New York was full of—my husband went to New York—I didn't know him at the time, but he and his family went to New York before I did.

AV: Also from Tampa?

AM: Also from Tampa. And they worked in restaurants, because his father was a very good cook. And they worked in restaurants and then they worked as waiters and bartenders and whatever they could get.

AV: So, after work did people from Tampa use to get together, do other things together?

AM: Well, yes. We used to get together. They had dances, the Spanish clubs in New York, La Casa Galicia, and the Centro Asturiano, they had dances. And we used to go to those affairs. They had like they have here, stage shows, you know, variety numbers and things like that. So we used to attend those things.

And then, I believe it was in 1939, but I didn't know about this because I hadn't met my husband. But he and a group formed a club that was called the Floridanos. And there were a lot of people there from Tampa who joined the club. And they used to have dances, and then they had, they formed baseball teams and things like that. And it was, it got to be a little bit like living in Tampa, among your own people, because we used to do a lot of socializing. We used to get together and have parties at different homes and things like that. So we did a lot of socializing. I guess everyone that leaves home, they go someplace else and they look, they always try to look for people like, like themselves—that we have the same kind of good times. So, that's what we tried to do there.

And it was through this Floridano group that later, in 1941, I met my husband. And, well, then starts another kind of life in New York.

AV: How long did you stay in New York, or your family, how long—?

AM: My parents came back in 1953; my parents and my brother. And they brought my son with them, because I thought that I was going to follow them. But it didn't happen that way. Because I didn't get to come to Tampa until 1958. So that means that I was gone for 20 years. Because, by that time, we had a business that we had had already—when we sold it, we had had the bar and grill business for 13 years. And, we were waiting to make a good sale; not give it away. And get most, get all our money. You know. So, we waited and waited and it finally happened.

AV: Right.

AM: And then we came back here to live.

AV: Was it very different after 20 years, or were you pretty much—?

AM: Well, it was different. It was different because Tampa was already beginning to change in 1958. It was beginning to change a lot. And a lot of people were leaving Ybor City. And, I don't know, you break up what you know. You know. And it's not replaced by anything better. Everybody starts moving far away. And the young people wanted new houses; they don't want to buy a little old house if they have to transfer to West Tampa or someplace. So they bought a house a little further out and people started to spread and we

started to lose track of our people.

And, that, I didn't like. I found that not to my liking, because I wanted to come back to the old Tampa, but that had been gone—going—already, and then it was gone for good. But, we went to, we bought some land on Highway 19, expecting to maybe build a motel or a trailer park or something there, but we found out after about two years that we didn't like to live there. And so, we started looking for a place. And when my mother saw these two lots here on Kathleen Street, she says, "This is where I want to live out the rest of my life." So we built these two little houses. And we came to live in West Tampa. Because by then, Ybor City had changed a lot. So we came to live in West Tampa. And I have been here ever since.

AV: Yes.

AM: And, my husband was from West Tampa, and he actually was glad to be, come and live here. Because he had, all his family lived here in West Tampa, north and south of Columbus Drive. All his family; aunts and uncles and cousins, they all lived here. So we fit right into this neighborhood.

AV: I see. Where did his family come from? In Spain also?

AM: Yes, yes.

AV: Were they from Spain?

AM: Yes, they come from—

AM: Tell me a little bit about his family.

AM: They come from Asturias.

AV: His name was José Menéndez?

AM: José Menéndez. And his parents came from Asturias.

AV: Both of them?

AM: Um-hm. And, the little place where they come is on top of a mountain, it's called Alienes. And it used to be on some maps; I don't think they even have it on any maps anymore. And that is not—it is far, because you go up a mountain—but in distance it's not far from Luarda. A beautiful little town in Spain.

AV: You've been there?

AM: Yes. I love that place.

AV: So did you visit the places where your family came from also?

AM: Oh, yes, yes. I visited the homes of all my husband's family. Because, they lived in, they didn't live in the same place because the old, old folks like—my husband's father, his parents had died naturally, you know, many years ago. So the land went to all the children. To all their children. But then they all married and they left home. Usually the oldest son is the one that stays in the family home and everyone else moves out, especially if they are daughters. They move to where their husbands have their homes that maybe they got from their parents. Because that is the way that they lived. So, we visited all the houses. And we slept in some of them. And we had, either dinner or lunch in one of them—and in all of them at one—

AV: When was that? Was that one trip you made—?

AM: Well, that was over a period of five trips that we made. We got to learn all about that part of Spain, you know. And it was very nice.

AV: Were there a lot of people returning to Spain, I mean a lot of people from Ybor City, West Tampa?

AM: Well, before the [Spanish] Civil War, quite a few people, but this was before the war. And then during the war, that some that volunteered, they went to Spain. And some, then, they were caught there during the war. And they really wanted to come back, but they couldn't. And some of them made it back during the war. And some went and they stayed, some people that I know, they sold their house here because they intended to stay in Llanes, which is on the border with Santander. And it's a very pretty spot there. And they remembered it and they wanted to stay there. But they found the way of life in Spain, compared to all the years that they had stayed in Tampa, they didn't like it any more so they came back and they bought another house.

AV: I see.

AM: But then, when I visited there, we visited some people that had returned to Spain to stay when they retired, you know. We visited near, oh, let me see, what you call that—I don't remember the name now.

AV: Do you think that was common, for people to go back to Spain after—?

AM: I don't think so, no. No, I don't think so. I don't think so. The way of life that we had here, although the cigar makers sometimes used to complain a lot, all because we, here we were cigar makers. "We're nothing," they used to think of themselves. But really they had very pleasant work. And the life that we lived here, it was a pleasant kind of life. Because you didn't live, like, say, in another state, among strangers; you lived among your own people. And there were places to eat your own food, to hear your own music; everything—so it was really a pleasant place to live. And when they tried to move back to Spain, well, it was hard. It was hard because you had had another kind of life here.

And Spain, at that time, didn't have all the modern facilities that it had now. Now Spain is, going to Spain is just like going to any other American city. Now. Because they have all the things that we have. And they gotten—acquired—all the habits that we have. They live their life the same way that we have, they all have credit cards, everything, you know. So, now it would be easier, but at the time that a lot of these Spaniards tried to go back, things were not easy, and there was no work. You would have to go back to the farm. And you don't want to go back to the farm after you have lived in cities. It's almost impossible to do that. My uncle went, the one that arrived here when I was, the day after I was born, he went back when I was 13 years old and he stayed there. He had his own farm. He raised his children. And he died there in the house that he built. But not many people do that.

AV: Yes. How about—going back to your husband's family—they, the parents came from Asturias. Was he born here in Tampa?

AM: My husband was born here. He was born in Ybor City. But then, right away they came to live in West Tampa, so he grew up in West Tampa.

AV: And they were always in kind of the restaurant business?

AM: Yes, my father-in-law always worked as a cook. And my mother-in-law used to work at the cigar factories. I don't know exactly what she did in the cigar factory, whether she was a roller, that I don't know, but she worked in a cigar factory.

AV: Let's start talking a little bit now about the war in Spain that you mentioned before. Tell me, what memories does the war bring to your mind when you think of those years? What's the—

AM: Of what, of the war?

AV: Yes.

AM: Well. When the war began—

AV: How did you find out there was a war in Spain?

AM: Well, because all the Spaniards in Ybor City, that's all they talked about. You know. They used to read *La Gaceta* and *La Traducción* and all those papers, so—and then, we used to subscribe to Spanish magazines too. You know, my dad used to subscribe to a magazine that was called *Estampa*.

AV: Oh. What kind of magazine was that?

AM: It had magazines about different things in Spain, you know. And would have about different parts of Spain, all the provinces in Spain, and the people and what they did there for a living, and my father subscribed to that, so we used to read a lot about Spain all the

time. And then in the papers. And then, of course, on the radio, that we would listen to the news on the radio. And then, in the theaters and all this as well. The minute that there was, we knew there was a war on, and then that how bad it was going, for the people, you know, not for the military, but for the people that were not in power. And it was really going real bad for them.

So everybody started, as they always do, when somebody is in trouble, they all go to help the person that is in trouble. And then, we started hearing about a lot of men that volunteered to go and fight in Spain. And, a lot of them went on their own, and a lot went with this brigade that they formed, and all that. And of course the bigger the war got, and the fighting, the worse it got, then we knew that it wasn't enough just to listen to what was happening and be interested—that we had to help.

So that's when everybody started to help. All the clubs here in Tampa, they started to help. They started to have different kinds of benefits, plays that they put on, and picnics that they had. And all kinds of things that they had to make money. And they did make a lot of money. Because—I had read books, you know. And it tells you about all the money that was raised here in Tampa; to be a small city like Tampa was, with the enthusiasm that everybody went into this, and how they made big amounts of money to buy things for Spain. And, we had the children participating not only the grownups—the grownups did their thing, what was in their power to do—but we, as, and then the, the young people, you know, Las Damas and all that, they had their little things that they did—which brought in a few dollars too every time they had a benefit for this, or that. And then the children—we were taught that this was a very important thing that was going on in Spain. And we heard the talk all the time.

So, we did all these things with a lot of willingness and enthusiasm too because we, when you're a kid and they ask you to do something to help, it makes you feel very big and very important, you know. So we learned all kinds of things. We learned all the songs that they taught us. And we learned dances that they did in Spain to do at picnics; to make the people want to go to the picnic. And there was one time when we had this picnic that we danced *la danza montañesa*. There were quite a few teary eyes there because it reminded them of what they had in Tampa, you know. So with all these things, I know that we made a lot of money because of the sums that I have read, and that it was always, it was also published in newspapers in New York that we did, according to the size of the city, we did as much if not more, than other bigger cities, with bigger populations that we had, that we raised more money.

AV: Why do you think that was so? I mean, why do you think Tampa—the people in Tampa—were so enthusiastic compared with people all over the country?

AM: Well, because other places, they didn't have all these clubs that we had, that we had since the beginning; when all the Spaniards came here, their dream was to have a place of their own, for mutual aid. So, that brought them together. And we never left our group. So when something like the war happened, well they were already formed to get into action. Whereas in other places, they would have to start from scratch. You know.

Getting people to get interested in doing something. We didn't need that; we already had it. Every club was vying—one, with the other—either sometimes a little jealously, I wanna do more than you or something, and sometimes pulling together, to do whatever was able to be done. And, we had a lot of Spaniards here that were very good speakers. Our own speakers from our clubs and all that. And whenever they had something, they always had two or three speakers that used to give—I always loved to listen to people talk—I always loved that. And it was, they spoke with such passion, you know, that it stirred up everybody. And even if you didn't have too much money in your pocket, you would dig in our pocket after the speeches and everybody would leave the little contribution—[phone rings]—you better stop, the phone's ringing. [recording stops]

AV: Yes, you were talking about all these speakers that used to—

AM: And, like I said, they were so good, you know, that they got people all worked up and everybody contributing and everybody thinking well, when we get over this night, now, we have to plan something else. They were always planning. They were always planning something.

AV: Who were these people who planned the activities to do, and planned—?

AM: Well, they were mostly cigar workers. They all belonged to the different clubs, and they had their meetings. And then their wives too, they got behind them. Their wives got behind the men to do whatever they could do to help.

AV: Do you remember any of the leaders? People—you mentioned all these speakers—who do you remember?

AM: Well, I tell you, there were so many of them. You know. And they all had Spanish names and now it's hard to remember—not that I, because they were all either Fernandez or Martinez or Menendez or Suarez or whatever you know? So, since—

AV: But, is there somebody that really sticks in your mind? Like, say, oh, I remember this person used to—

AM: Well, I remember one man that was particularly interested in us kids. To get us to do things.

AV: Yes?

AM: And he would pick us up, and take us wherever we had to go, you know, to rehearse, and this and that, and whenever we were going to put plays, and everything. Yes, there was also another man, his last name was Tojo, and he used to be with the kids a lot; like chaperoning us when we were rehearsing and things like that. And there used to be another man here, from West Tampa, Modesto Maseda. He used to rehearse us too, little dances and things that we did. Everybody worked very hard. To rehearse for the grown-ups when they put up their plays, and to rehearse the kids. And to go and buy

material if we needed some kind of costume. And then, to measure us, you know, the length of the dress, for whatever thing we were going to need. Like, to dance *la danza montañesa*; they gave us the material and then the ribbons that we wore to dance. And, when we did that *danza montañesa* at a big picnic that we had, we had some young man that, the father was Enrique Santos. That he was the one that used to take us around all the time. And he went to the woods to get some, like some cane, you know?

AV: Oh, yes.

AM: To make the decorations for the dance. Everybody pitched in, doing whatever they could. Everybody pitched in. And then there was this lady—like I have mentioned—that she in her house, she would have the ladies from my neighborhood go and make the little sacks to send the tobacco to Spain for the, for the *milicianos*.

AV: Oh, who was she?

AM: She lived at the corner of my house on 16th Street and 21st Avenue, and her name was Encarnación Rosete. She was always very enthusiastic about doing things to help, you know, and attending the things that they had—because this is what brought in the money. Because if they had the things and nobody would attend, so she'd always make sure that she could attend whatever was going on. Like, my parents, somehow, we managed the little quarters; I'd look at the prices sometimes and I laugh because you could get in to many places, you know, for 25 cents, for 20 cents. But it was all, that big mountain of 25 cents, and all that, that made all this worthwhile doing, you know. Even though the prices at that time were very cheap.

So she was one that, like I say, she offered her house to do whatever she could. And she would always tell the ladies, "Let's do this, and let's do that." And then, this other neighbor that we had, that she was always very enthusiastic, and she used to march in parades when they would ask the government, you know, we should do this, and the government should help the people of Spain—for different things that now I don't remember, because that happened so many, many years ago and I was just a young teenager. But, she was always in the meetings, you know, making sure that she found out what was going on so that then she could inspire the others to want to work too, the women that didn't go to the meetings. Because my mother didn't go to the meetings. If she was asked to do something, she would do it, but she was not one to go to the meetings. But this lady was. Well—

AV: Who was she?

AM: Her name was Soledad, Soledad Acebal. And she was active in that, and she was the one that started, or was involved in this boycott against the silk.

AV: Oh, tell me about that.

AM: Coming in from Japan. And she and a group of women that worked in the cigar

factories, they got all the women at that time, that the women had never gone without stockings, to not wear stockings for the duration—because at that time we didn't have nylons, we only had silk stockings—so, they organized an army, not to wear silk stockings any more so that, well, it would make a dent in the, if everybody did it, it would make a dent in the Japanese economy. So that was one of the things that I remember that she did her little part for the war effort—she and who, the others who organized that.

AV: Were there more boycotts of other products? Do you remember?

AM: No, not really.

AV: I see. So what other women do you remember that were into the organizing? Soledad Acebal was one.

AM: Well, there was another lady, but I don't remember her name; her first name was Elisa, and I wish that I could remember her name, because she was really some lady. But I don't remember her last name.

AV: Was it Morán? Elisa Morán—?

AM: No, I don't think so. I don't think so. I don't know if anybody that I know among all these people that I know if they would remember her name, but I don't remember—I know it was Elisa. And, she was very involved in all these things, too. Very, very involved. And Aida Azpeitia's mother and father too, they were people that were very, very involved in that. Aida's father I know was involved in this thing for the ambulance. And you will be seeing the famous picture of the ambulance.

AV: I see. Now did women organize separately from men? Did they have their own meetings and their own activities, or—?

AM: Well, most of the time, when they got together was when they had the theater and the dances and the things like that, then everybody went. You know. But it was to socialize. Although it was to benefit the war effort. It was more to socialize; when the men and the women got together they had their meetings and Las Damas had their meetings, and we had our little things. Oh and I forgot to tell you about the family in the neighborhood that, I tell you, that they were the only ones that had the short-wave radio.

AV: Yes, tell me more about that.

AM: Well, they lived at the corner of my house—16th Street was a very famous place! A lot of people were very energetic on 16th Street. And they bought their short-wave radio, and then, a lot of people from the neighborhood, we used to go over to their house at night, when the news from Spain came in, to listen to all the *noticias*. "It's time for the *noticias* now," so we would all shuffle over there to listen to all the news, to see if we had good news or bad news. And that was at their house. And, I asked my brother if he remembered the man's name, and my brother says it was Felix Gardana.

AV: I see.

AM: And I think my brother is right. It was Felix. And the lady was María Luisa. María Luisa. And we would go over there to their house.

AV: All the people from the neighborhood?

AM: A lot of people; some would go one day and others would go another day, but they always were, I mean they were friendly enough to allow you to go in their house to listen to all this, you know, because we were all interested—

AV: So what did you do while you were listening to the news? Were there mostly good, mostly bad, or—?

AM: Well, I remember when they were bombing certain places, you know, and how people who had families in the places where the news came, that they had bombed here and there, you know, they felt pretty bad because they knew that eventually they would lose some member of the family if the war didn't stop soon. I don't remember exactly when the war began. What month it began; I don't remember exactly. I remember when it ended because I was in New York already. The day that, the last day of the war, my dad went out to buy the newspaper. And we read the news that the war had ended the day before. I remember that day, but I don't remember when exactly I learned that there was the war going on in Spain; I don't remember that.

AV: And before the war started, do you remember people following news on Spain? I mean, were people getting the sense that something terrible is going to happen in Spain? You know like they know what's happening. Or was this like a big surprise, that suddenly the war started?

AM: I don't think. I don't think it was such a surprise. I don't think it was a surprise, because the people here in Tampa always followed the news in Spain.

SIDE B:

AV: Alicia, you were telling me about the news from Spain before the war began.

AM: Well, I remember since I was little, we had this Spanish man, he was a friend of my father's, and he used to bring the *Estampas*. And *Estampas*, they always carried things about what was going on in Spain—in the government, political things and things like that; it had stories. You know. And, we used to exchange papers, or reading material with other neighbors. They would get something and alter they read it, give it to my father like this, so that everybody would be informed about what was going on. And, of course, they used to talk politics all the time. The women would sit and do embroidery and the men would stand on the sidewalk and discuss politics. But the thing is that, before this time when Spain became a Republic—when do you say it was, in '31?

AV: '31, yes.

AM: See, I was only ten years old. And at that time, the things didn't interest me that much. So that I don't remember very well the names that were mentioned that were in politics in Spain at the time. See? Later on I would pay attention and I remember things. But at that time, when it was, Alfonso XIII, that I remember.

AV: The king.

AM: And, when he was ousted, I know that I know the name, but I don't remember now who came into power. I know that I have heard the name many times—

AV: Azaña? No.

AM: There was, that, there was mention of that name. But there was another name that was mentioned a lot but, that I can't recall—I was a little bit too young to recall those names. But talk, there was a lot of talk. Because the people were always interested in what was going on in Spain. They really were. And I know that they all knew that something was leading up to this war. They knew because things were so bad, and when things get so very, very bad, something is going to explode, so they all knew what was going on. But there, I really can't help you. Unless I would read something and refresh my mind, you know, but I, just off my, the top of my head like that, I can't remember the names. I can't remember. But I know that many names were mentioned.

AV: And people were interested in what was going on in Spain.

AM: Just—yes—just like all the people, like Ambassadors and all that that came from Spain during the war. I remember the grown-ups all talking about Don Fernando de los Ríos and this other, [Marcelino] Domingo, and La Pasionaria and I, so many of them, you know. Because these people went all over the country here—if they came to this country they went all over the country—talking to people to get them involved in what was taking place in Spain. Because, what started to take place in Spain there, as I remember hearing, is that people from the outside came to fight a war there that wasn't their war. That's what I remember all the grownups saying, you know. That the Italians came there to fight. And the Germans came there to fight. And it really wasn't—Spain wasn't at war with anybody. It was a civil war. So why did they come there to bomb?

So, those things, I remember all those arguments going back and forth. And sometimes people talking, and a lot of times—I don't like to say this when there are Italian friends of mine around—but sometimes people got into arguments. Because you know, they says, "No, the Italians are doing this, they're bombing, they're doing this—Mussolini—" they hated [Benito] Mussolini and all that. And sometimes there were arguments. And sometimes there were.

I know that at times there was one or two bad fights, you know, among people like that.

Because they defended their beliefs; but the Spaniards have more reason to defend their beliefs because it was in their homeland where the fighting was going on. Destroying all their cities, and their people were the ones that were dying. Because they were the ones that were doing all the bombing. This was really like a rehearsal that they had in Spain for all the wars to come after that. They rehearsed with all their planes and all their bombings and all that. All this rehearsal took place in Spain. And I remember the conversations, but I couldn't tell you exactly what was going on, in the beginnings, or before, you know.

AV: Right.

AM: But, it was pretty bad, and how everybody hated [Francisco] Franco! And now, when I look at it, I hate the time that he was in power—during this war and all that, that I hate. But after the war, I think that he did a lot of good for Spain, because he kept everybody on their toes. You know. He was very strict. He was a very strict ruler, and he kept everybody on their toes. And I think that made the people go—everybody tried to follow a pattern, because they had no other choice—and then the people started, like everything else, time passes, and the people start getting together again. You know.

AV: So you think it was good in the end?

AM: I think that, after the war—because the war ended in '39 and the first time that I went to Spain it was in '66. And people used to complain about Franco quietly—nobody was really shouting it out, you know—but people used to complain about him. But, I could, I could see, at least I think that I could see that he was doing some good things and he had law and order. And not only that, I would always hear my parents say that "*España es para los españoles.*" You know, I always remember that. And he, I think that one of the reasons that—I don't know, I don't even know if I should say this—but we are disliked. We are disliked. Other countries in Europe, they talk about the other countries and they're good, but when they talk about Spain, sometimes they have like a slanted way of talking about Spain. And I think—some of the reasons—is because we never let somebody go into Spain and tell the Spaniards what to do. You know. Like I say, "*España es de los españoles.*" That's why we didn't like the Italians and the Germans going in there. Trying to fix our place. You fix your house and I fix mine, that's the way we look at it.

AV: I see.

AM: And even, the first trip that I made to Spain in '66, I had a friend that was in the Air Force in Spain. And we sat there and we talked—we visited him—my mother he says well you're—his mother—said, "You're going to Spain? Here. Here is Eddie's address and be sure and go and see him in Madrid. He lives in Madrid." And he was on the base there in Madrid. And we sat around and talked. Well, we went out together. You don't see one American uniform, even though they were stationed there, they were not allowed to wear American uniforms on the street. You can have your base here, and in your base you can wear your uniform. Once you leave the base, you mingle with the Spaniards, and

nobody knows what you are. And there's no preference. You are a person. A human being. And that's that. And I think that is fine.

But they don't like for you to be independent. You know. They, like for, maybe, to put their shoe on top of you, and the Spaniards are not the kind of people to let anybody step on them. Especially when they are in their own home. And they make their laws. Spain hasn't been in any of these other wars that they have—they had this war, which was bad enough already. And they're gonna do their darnest to stay out of anything else. And the Spaniards who are ruling at the time, they have kept Spain out of any difficulty like this. So for that, I think that maybe we are disliked. I think so. I really think so.

AV: Yes. You were mentioning that there were some discussions between the Italians here and the Spaniards?

AM: Uh-huh.

AV: Could you tell me more about that?

AM: Well, because the Spaniards all used to think that Mussolini had no business sending in his planes and his soldiers into Spain. And they used to argue about that. He had plenty to fix in his own backyard, that he didn't have to come over there. And if we were going to argue with anybody, it had to be with the Italians, because we didn't have hardly any Germans here—we had some—but in fact—

AV: Right. But were they supportive of Mussolini in any way—?

AM: Well, some were and some weren't. Some weren't. Some donated money to the Spanish cause and things like that. But others naturally, you always tried to support your own.

AV: Right.

AM: That's something that is human. You always like to support your own. So, some—I know that people got into arguments over that. And some people would, even if they didn't get into an argument, they would criticize some family because they were Italian. Which is not right. Because, what do you have to do with what you are? Italian, or whatever—it just happened that that's what you are. And if the person is not doing any wrong, then you shouldn't criticize. But being that everybody was, you know, sitting on pins and needles, with what was going on in Spain and things like that, well when you heard something that you didn't like, right away you blow your top and you got into a discussion.

And I used to listen to a lot of people say—the grown-ups—because we kids, we didn't do that. We grew up, the three of us together, the Italians, Cubans and Spaniards, we grew up like rice and black beans, you know, in Ybor City, so we didn't fight one another. But I know that grown-ups argued and discussed; they had these discussions

with one another. They did. Because it wouldn't be right to say that there never was a discussion. Not many, considering the number of Italians that we always had here, but we did have some.

AV: And how about the Cubans? Did they participate?

AM: The Cubans, they helped. They helped too. They would go to the affairs that we had and they would help. Of course, the Cubans too—if any Cuban hears this at the university they'll probably shoot me!—But you know, they don't like us because they say that we enslaved them in Cuba. You know. So for that reason we are not liked. And you see that Americans here, they always take the side of the Cubans. I don't know if you have noticed that or not. But anything that in Cuba, they always say, No, because we held the Cubans down, and we did this and that to the Cubans. They don't realize how many Spaniards came to Cuba. And how they slept on the floor. They didn't have a bed; they slept on the floor, in kitchens and restaurants, to learn how to be cooks and this and that. So that they could put themselves up. You know. And as soon as they could they started a little business—a little corner business—and then they enlarged it and this and that. While the Cubans were out maybe playing their guitar and singing their little songs and things like that and they didn't work as hard. Then when you finally get to have something, then they say that you are taking it away from somebody else, but that is not the way it is. You have what you worked for.

But that is not the way that it is seen. Because I always notice, whenever anything comes out in the paper, when you read this *página* you know from *Qué pasa*, and other pages that come like that in the *Tribune* too, and it's an article that has to do with Cuba. They always tell you that the Spaniards were the ones that oppressed the Cubans. All right? So now, why don't they do something for all the Cubans now in Cuba? It's not the Spaniards that are ruling there. The Spaniards on the contrary are coming and building up Cuba. But the Americans, what are they doing? Blockading. But now it's all right to do that to the Cubans because *we* are doing it. See? But that's not the way that it used to be—and for some, for that reason, maybe the Cubans didn't help as much as they could have, or they might have helped. Because there's always that little antagonism. Between them. But they did, there were many that did help. Many that contributed, many that did help.

AV: And how about the Americans, did they help?

AM: And there were Americans too who were interested in that. Yes. There were Americans too. Of course, since I didn't hear the American names at home, I couldn't go telling you any American names, because at home we only spoke Spanish and we spoke about the Spaniards and Spain and things like that and we didn't hear about the American side. You know. So, but I know that they helped in certain things and certain ways; they did put in, like they say the little grain of sand too. Yes, they did.

AV: Because most of the events took place in Ybor City, I was wondering, do you remember events taking place more in the American quarter or bringing more of an American public?

AM: No. I don't think so.

AV: Out of the Latin community?

AM: I don't think so. If we had parades for any protest or for anything, it was in Ybor City. And, like, in Cuscaden Park—on 15th Street—they had events there, because that is in the center. Of course, that was in the newer Ybor City, because the old Ybor City was around the Centro Español and all that; that was the old Ybor City. But even so, we were Ybor City. Maybe it has another name on the map of the City, but we all considered ourselves from Ybor City, all along our neighborhood and all that. So they had a few things in Cuscaden Park. And they had, like in DeSoto Park in Palmetto. And then in the different parks that they had over here, like they have the Columna Park that was used for a lot of events like that; they had *verbenas*, they had things like that. For all those things, but it was mostly us that had it. It was mostly us. And it was advertised in our papers, it was advertised in all the flyers that were sent to all the homes. It was always us, that we did all the things for us. We were, like a trailer that is self-contained and you go on the road and you have everything you need—we were self-contained.

AV: Yes. How about the American newspapers? Do you have any memories of Latin people complaining or commenting on how the American newspapers reported on the war, or how they reported on the activities of the Latin community, or there wasn't any conflict?

AM: I think that at times there was a little conflict. I think that at times. But you know who probably would have a lot of that stuff that you can, if they let you, you can look it over and see is Salcines, E. J. Salcines. Because his dad was one of these people that did things for Spain too, you know. The old man, E. J. Salcines, the old man. And he may have clippings like that about the paper, because I know that his dad cut out all the pictures during World War II of all the boys from Tampa—especially all the Latin boys, whether they were Italian, Cuban or Spanish, that were drafted or that volunteered in the Army and all that. And he has the pictures of all of them—in fact they used to have them as you enter the hall at the Centro Asturiano, from Nebraska, on the right hand side wall. That big wall, it used to be full, full, all covered with pictures of all the boys that went into the war. And that was Salcines that he, he collected pictures—he went around collecting pictures, you know. And so that all the boys would be represented there. And he did that.

And we had some picnics here at MacFarlane Park. And he took all the, on big, big pieces of cardboard like that—he had put like newspaper things with the boys and the story accompanied the, whatever the boys—where they had been fighting. This was World War II. But I mean he probably has a lot of things like that because he was the kind of person that liked to do things like that. And he probably has some things that you can get an idea. Of what you want. From that. See? That I know. So.

AV: Now how about the Spaniards who weren't that supportive of the Republic?

AM: There were some. Yes. There were some.

AV: Who were they? I mean—

AM: That I don't remember, but there were some. There were some. And people used to talk about them. In fact, I don't—this, I don't want to say. So, I don't want that to come on.

Recording paused

AV: Going back again to the people who supported Franco, were there organized in any way, did they have their own demonstrations, or their own rallies, or their own—?

AM: I don't think so. I don't recall that they were organized. But, you know, you hear things because people go in a public place and they're talking and they hear things; you're sitting at the next table. You hear something and then, you know, well, he's against me. He's not for us. You hear these things, you know. And it aggravates a lot of people. And then, at some time or other they get together or they come into another situation where they're together again and they have an argument. And things like that, yes, they used to happen. Things like that used to happen. And usually, it was with someone that was in a position that they were better off money wise. They were on a little, a higher scale, money wise. And that is how some of the things happened sometimes. Because whoever is on top, naturally if you are on top, you don't care. You have it better and that's all you worry about. And that is why those things come about—discussions and arguments and things like that.

AV: I see. And how about the church? What do you remember of the relationships between the Latin community and the Catholic church here during that time?

AM: Well, like I tell you, people didn't go to church too much. Although they had started going—their children, not the older people, their children. And, I think that a lot of people at that time, they rebelled again, and they started not going to the church or not sending their kids. Some people. I remember hearing about that. I don't know, because I didn't go to Catholic school, so I don't know who was missing. But I remember that some people actually took their kids out of the Catholic school during this period, during the war. Yes. Because they were not in favor of the war because they say, Well, the Church sided with Franco. So they were against it. You see? I don't know to what an extent, but I would hear things that some people that had their children in school had taken them out. That I did hear.

AV: You said before that you were already in New York when the war finished, when the war ended. In that period that you were in New York, what kind of things were going on there in terms of support for the Republic? Similar things, like in Tampa, or—were you involved also there?

AM: No, because I was too new in New York. You see, I went to New York the last day of October, and it was March or April when the war ended?

AV: April.

AM: April. In Spain. So I was very new in New York; I wasn't involved in anything yet.

AV: Yes, but did you hear of other people—?

AM: But I heard of other people that were involved. Yes.

AV: What kind of things did they do there?

AM: Well, to raise funds and things like that, because I know that they raised money for ambulances; I don't know how many, from New York. And there were a lot of cigar makers there already, ahead of us. Because a lot of people started going to New York like in '33, '34. I didn't go until '38. So there were a lot of people that had been there, and they had come in contact with a lot of Spaniards. But Spaniards that were not Tampefios too, you know. Spaniards that just came from Spain and settled in New York. But being that they were Spaniards, they got involved too. And the Tampan's, well, they sort of got together with the Spaniards and they got involved in those things, too. And I know that, after I started going out there, once we were settled and all that and we started joining things, but that was after the war, already. See? That was after the war had ended. But they had, like I say Casa Galicia, which they used to have a lot of dances and theater and things like we used to have here. And they had a Centro Asturiano too. And they used to have their things. But that's about all I can remember.

I used to know some Spanish people—not really too many, but that I would see them at the dances; they were a big crowd, you know, that went to the dances, but I didn't know them. I used to tell my husband, one time we saw somebody at a dance, and I told him, "You know, Joe, I have seen this young man here at a dance one time and what attracted me to him, the way he talked, that I kept looking at him was, he say, *'Te juro que esta noche le hablo a mi padre!'* " *Hablaba así.* And that was at a Spanish dance there. But he talked like that, you know, with that heavy way the Spaniards have of talking. And I would tell my husband that; he would start laughing. Because we did go to quite a few dances and to a couple of picnics that they had, like outside of Manhattan, you know. We had to take the subway, and then at a certain station, get off and take the bus to go to this open field that they had there. And they had music there and everybody danced, and we took our food and they sold some food there. We had those things there. Yes. But all this was after the war.

AV: Right.

AM: I wasn't involved in anything there. But I know that they were involved. I know that because, even after the war some of the, like my cousins' mother, she was not my aunt; her husband was my mother's uncle. That's why I say her mother. And she was involved

in these things. She was *asturiana*, from Cañas de Onís.

AV: Cangas de Onís?

AM: Cangas de Onís. That's where she was from. And she, and a lot of other Spaniards, they were involved in this before I got there. Because she had been there for quite a few years herself. So I know that she was involved in these things.

AV: Do you remember the reaction within your family or your circle of friends when Franco actually won the war? Do you remember any feelings?

AM: Well, I wasn't here.

AV: Yes, but even in New York. I mean your parents, your family, your cousins?

AM: Oh, naturally we were glad that the war was over. Sure. We were all glad that the war was over. Everyone in New York that, like I say, there were a lot of Spaniards there in New York. And a lot of us used to live on 96th Street. Because when one goes, then there's quite a few that follow. So we had a group of us that lived there on 96th Street. And they were all glad that the war was over, sure. Because a lot of them, they had a lot of family. And like I say, for many years, my dad never wrote to Spain. See? He never wrote letters to Spain.

I was the one, when I was 12 years old, that I said, "I want you to help me to write a letter to my grandparents." And my father helped me a little bit. He didn't go to school much; he could write, he could write a letter. But to them writing a letter was almost like sitting down and trying to write a book. It took them so long. And, because they had to make a letter flowery like, you know, that's the way they wrote. They don't write like I write. When I sit down I write; however, I think. That's what I put down on paper. But that's not the way the Spaniards used to write. I have letters that I get from Spain now and they don't write like that anymore. Because now they go to school and they write letters—and they write short letters that say a lot. But that's now. And this was then.

So, I had a time getting my father to help me write a letter. And I did write a letter to my grandparents asking them to send me a picture. Which my father scolded me for because they had to go to, from their little neighborhood there, into Torrelavega, to have a picture taken at a studio. Who had a camera in Spain in those days? So they had to go and they did, poor things, and they took a picture, and they sent it to me. But being that they never wrote or maybe they didn't know how to write—who knows what address they put?—and I never received the picture. And they took a big picture like that. Because I've seen it in Spain. Because one of the first things that I did when I got to my parents—my father's family—was I asked to see a picture of my grandparents. And, in each of my aunt's houses, they had a picture.

And the reason that they haven't given me one, is because all these little bugs and things that eat pictures, there's only one left. And that aunt wouldn't give them—no, the aunt's

daughter-in-law—wouldn't give it to me. I told her, "Look, during the days that I'm here, give it to me; I'll take it to Torrelavega, have a picture made, and I'll return the picture to you." She wouldn't do it. And this last trip that I made, I brought that up, too—not to her—but to a cousin of mine. And he says, "Well, that picture is actually my picture that my father gave to that aunt. When hers was destroyed. So I am going to see if I get it for you." But I haven't heard any more about the picture. I don't know, if I go again, maybe I can still get the picture.

But that's the way that things were. We didn't write, so we didn't get any mail. And now I get mail because I am the one that writes. My brother doesn't write. He never sits down to write a letter. But I write to my husband's family. Because we don't talk to my husband's family any more for something that happened about an inheritance and we don't talk to them anymore. So I can't get any news from them. So if I want to have news, I have to write to my husband's family. And they write to me, and they're very nice. And I write to my family and I get news from my family. I always know who is sick and who dies and who got married and who enlarged the family and I get things like that, information like that.

AV: When was the last time you were there?

AM: In '93.

AV: Oh, so it was pretty recently.

AM: '93. And I'm telling you that we had a ball! My first trip was the best one. Because naturally I had never been to Spain, so that I will never forget. That was the best trip. But, this last trip, my daughter came, and my grandchildren, and my son-in-law, and my son-in-law's mother. All seven of us. And we traveled all over in of these big vans that we rented. And then towards the end of the trip we went to northern Spain, to Santander and to Asturias. And we, I had written to them to please get this get-together in Santander with as many of my cousins. Because, at least, about three I think have died already. So I says, "Before they die, my daughter wants to meet all of my cousins and all of their children." No aunts are left; I got to know all my aunts over there, and most of their husbands.

So, we got together, and we ate in the barn. What had been the barn, that is next to the house. They had put in, you know, walls on the inside and fixed it up, it was like a Florida room. And they put two big tables there, and they cooked and we had a feast there. And all my cousins came, and their children and their wives and their husbands. And we spent the day there. And then, a couple of days later, we went to Asturias, and we did the same thing in my father-in-law's house, on top of the mountain. Because they all live, they don't—that house is not occupied any more—but it belongs to the family.

And that is what my daughter wanted to see, was the house where her grandfather and all her, my husband's uncles all came from and all that. So that's where we—they all went up there with all the food that they had cooked. Each house contributed to the banquet that

we had. And we went up there to Alienes, *donde Cristo dió las tres voces*. And we went up there, and we had the most enjoyable day. All the kids got together and they played with my grandson. We had the best time over there. And the food and everything. And they are wonderful people. And that's my husband's family. It's not my family. I consider them mine because I love them all, they're so good; so good, so generous with everything that they have. So, we had a wonderful time there and my daughter got to visit her grandfather's house, which is next to the house where he was born. It's a very old house, but compared to where he was born, it's new.

AV: Right.

AM: But it's very, very, very old! Because the house where he was born was like a little igloo. Like an Eskimo igloo like that, made out of rocks and things like that. And all it had was a little platform towards the back of the house where the kids slept and the parents slept underneath. And then a little, like a fireplace where they used to cook. That is the house where my grand, my father-in-law was born. And my granddaughter—my daughter got to see that and my grandchildren and they took pictures of that.

So, I love Spain. I don't want to live there. But I love to go on trips. I love to go on trips. But, I don't want to live there. To me, there's no place like Tampa. I have done quite a lot of traveling in this country, and whenever we went to Spain, that we went to different places. And I like to go and see all those places, in France we went through all the countryside in France to get to Paris. And the same in Italy, and in Portugal. All those places, I like to see them. And in Spain I have been all over Spain. All through the center. All through the, all around the coast, all, we have been all around Spain. All around Spain. We travel by car. I love it. But I don't want to live there. To me there's no place like Florida, and no place like Tampa. This is the best place in the world.

We have—my cousin's father, when he came from Spain that my father-in-law brought him, and when he got off the boat, this is what he did: he got off the boat, and he knelt down, like this, and outside the boat on the dock, and he said a little prayer. When he got here. He went back, because he just came for a month's vacation, but he was so glad to be in Florida where he has so much family. And they all write letters to Spain, you know. And then they have all been back, all of my husband's uncles and aunts, and a lot of the cousins that were born here and everything. They have all gone back to Spain. So, and they have all sent money to help remodel the old homes there, that the people that are still working on, living on farms and things like that.

AV: I see.

AM: A lot of them have, at different times, sent money, you know. We sent money to one of the young girls to add a bathroom to the house, and she added a beautiful bathroom, all light blue tile and everything, and to another one to put a toilet. And, I don't know, for many things that we have sent money, you know. Because—

AV: Did people here used to send money back to their families?

AM: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. Yes. I tell you, my father didn't. But I knew of other people, that they would send money. And this was when I was a little girl. I was a little girl. I don't know if you have heard of Tony Huerta? That he was at one time the president of the Letter Carriers?

AV: No, I don't know about him.

AM: And his mother. When I was a little girl, my mother used to take care of Tony at home while his mother worked. And his mother, she used to send money to Spain. She worked, and every so often, she would send a money order or a check or whatever to Spain, because she still had family there. And a lot of people used to do that. They couldn't send much because people didn't make that much money here, and then the Depression and all that. But they always tried to save a little bit of money and send money there. That they did. We only did that, now, since they have all gone on trips there and they see—the ones that went, like in the '60s and the early '70s, that the people still hadn't really done anything to upgrade their homes. And, so everybody started helping out. You know.

The lady that lived here across the street, her brother-in-law married to her sister, they have sent so much money to Spain to bring electricity into the house, and to buy a refrigerator and to actually repair the house that was in very, in a very sad state of disrepair. So they sent money, many times, to do that. And then the little old lady died, but her daughter was still living in the house. I visited the little old lady; she was 101 or 102 years old, and she was blind already and she couldn't see me. And she kept feeling me. She kept feeling me. She says, "Oh, if you are a neighbor of one of my grandchildren, you have to be a good person." Oh, I get goose pimples!

And a few days later she died. If I had waited, on that trip, two or three days more, she wouldn't have been there. She was ready to die. And you should have seen how excited she got when I told her that I was Gloria's neighbor, and I took her some money that Gloria had given me. And my brother before me, another trip, my brother had gone to take her a sweater and to take her money too. They were all very good to their grandmother. Because you know, when you don't know anything about any, about a place, or about the people, well, you sort of put it aside. But once you know, and you know their difficulties, and you know their need, and then you say gee, I'm so much better off, that I can do without this and that and send something. And then you start doing it, you know? Then you start doing it.

So you see, I have things to talk about but, really about the war and all that, I remember things that were done—I remember names that I used to hear and things like that but, that's what I remember. But I know that if people would come out, because I am sure that this Angeles, if she goes, I am sure—she was born in Spain. She came when she was a little girl, but she was born in Spain. And I'm sure that she will have maybe some conversation to contribute. And Aida, I am sure that Aida Azpeitia will have some conversation. It's just getting them out of that house and going—you know.

AV: That's the toughest part.

AM: Yes. The other day she made me laugh when I walked into this church here Sunday, Saturday for that dinner. She says, "I already have the pictures of the ambulances." She stopped me before I asked!

AV: You keep going, keep going—okay, Alicia, before we conclude this interview, I would like to ask you, is there anything else you would like to add, or some aspect we haven't discussed that you would like to include in this interview. Maybe some topic I have forgotten to question you about, or? I just want to make sure that everything gets into the tape recorder.

AM: I don't know. I don't know.

AV: There's nothing else you would like to add? Okay. Well, this concludes the interview and I want to thank you very much for participating in this project. And, you'll be getting a transcript of the interview very soon.

AM: Okay, okay.

AV: Thank you very much, Alicia.

AM: Okay.

End of interview