

This is an interview with Jose Anqueira conducted in Miami, Florida on May 23, 1974 by Jack Bass and Walter De Vries. Dr. Anqueira is a leader of the Cuban community in Miami. Transcribed by Joe Jaros.

Jose Anqueira: . . .the younger generation of Cubans in the United States.

Jack Bass: Can you tell us a little bit about your background?

J.A.: Yeah, I was born in Havana forty-three years ago and when I was thirteen years old, I was educated in a private school down there, a Catholic school and when I was fifteen years old, my parents shipped me off to Canada for three years. I graduated from high school in Canada. Then, in '48, I went back to Havana and graduated from the law school at the University of Havana. In '52, I joined the American Embassy in Havana as an employee and worked for them eight years there, until '60. In '60, things were getting too pinkish for me, so I emigrated, came over to the United States and I have been here since 1960, fourteen years for me now. In 1960, I couldn't find any job down here, things were rough and I had to go off to Washington and work for the State Department for four years as an escort interpreter. And then in '66, I said, "To hell with it." I got tired of traveling all over the country and what have you, being away from home ten months out of the year. So, I said, "I'm going back to Miami." My father and mother were living down here. And I came back to Miami, went into the University of Miami and got my masters and started getting my PhD. and then, just about that time, there was an opening at Miami Day Community College, a brand-new college and I applied for the job and got accepted and I've been there now for eight years.

J.B.: And you're teaching what?

J.A.: American government and International Relations. Those are my two fields. And this last year, something new opened up. The Supreme Court of Florida waived the requirements that it had, especially for Cuban lawyers, and it allowed Cuban attorneys to go back to school, to a retraining program, which is sixty credits in the law school, twenty-one months, and then to be able to apply for admission to the bar, of course after passing the entrance exams. So, I'm going to take that course, I'm going back to school at nights, now. I'm in my second semester and I hope to finish by September of next year. And after that, I don't know. I don't know whether I'll remain in teaching or go into private practice. I think that I'm leaning more at the present time more into the direction of private practice because I have political ambitions and more than that, I hope to have political responsibility to my community. So, I plan to get involved in politics. I'll probably run for office. I don't know what office, I don't know whether I will run. In other words, I may decide that there are better candidates than me and consequently, support them. But I will be involved in local politics one way or the other. I am involved now, although it's a lower file type of thing. Because I don't want to get myself in a situation where I may become too conflicting while I am teaching at the college.

J.B.: Now, you are also working for a publication, right? Part-time?

J.A.: I'm also working for, well, not working in reality, I'm writing for the largest Spanish speaking newspaper.

J.B.: Are you writing a column?

J.A.: Editorials, a column basically, feature articles, whatever I feel like writing, political, non-political politico-social. . .

J.B.: Where do you characterize yourself politically?

J.A.: Middle-of-the-road. I'm not a conservative as most Cubans are. I'm not as liberal as most northerners would be, or reputedly would be.

Walter De Vries: Are you a Democrat?

J.A.: I'm a Democrat. I'm a registered Democrat, right. So, there again, you know, the so-called myth, you know, of all Cubans being Republicans and so forth, I can tell you right off the bat that this is not true.

J.B.: So, you are a minority within a minority.

J.A.: To some extent, yes. I think. . . (interruption on the tape)

J.B.: Have you seen any figures on registration so far as Cubans are concerned?

J.A.: Not exact figures.

J.B.: What's the best guess at this time?

J.A.: I would say somewhere in the vicinity of between forth and sixty thousand registered Cubans.

W.D.V.: How would they register?

J.A.: At the present time, there is a propensity to register, I wouldn't say excessively in favor of the Republicans, but I would say contrary to what the state is. In other words, if you would press me, I would say that the estimate is somewhere in the vicinity of three to two, three to one and a half. Something like that.

J.B.: Someone told us that until a few years ago, Cubans were registering in Miami about 85% Republican but that in the last year or so, it has dropped to about 60%.

J.A.: I think that's probably true.

J.B.: Do you see that trend away from the Republican party continuing, or leveling off?

J.A.: No, I think that it is highly dependent on how the Democratic Party statewide reacts and primarily locally. It depends on what type of entree, what type of support we get from the Democratic Party. Like, if I was running for office, for example, if I wanted to run for the Republican Party tomorrow, I would have no opposition whatsoever. And I can tell you that this is a fact, because they have called me and they have said, "We want you to run, we will back you to the hilt, you will have no opposition whatsoever in the primary." Now, that takes a big load off any candidate's mind, knowing that all you have to do is make it in November and that's it. As far as the Democratic Party is concerned, there hasn't been the same type of reception. Now, I'm not saying that we are entitled to that, I'm just saying that it is good politics in order to be able to turn the tide around a little bit. Because the Republican Party, which was rather weak locally in terms of registration, is open as far as the Cubans are concerned. The vice-chairman of the Republican Party locally is a Cuban.

W.D.V.: Is Cuban registration in the Republican Party solely due to the Bay of Pigs?

J.A.: You see, to understand the Cuban process and their involvement in American politics, you have to go back to our initial coming over. And when we came over, most of us were concerned with what was happening in Cuba. In other words, we reacted in terms of politics not in the area of local politics, statewide, but primarily in the area of national politics and only in the context of what was foreign policy. Particularly in the context of foreign policy as it affected Cuba. So, if you had a national administration, if you had an administration in Washington that was favorable to the Cubans and to helping the Cubans get back to their homeland and so forth, this type of administration. And needless to say, this would generate a lot of sympathy at the local level. Regardless of whether it was a rotten

administration. I think this will help you to understand the type of support that Nixon has locally, because they have reacted primarily in terms of the fact that Nixon is the type of individual that so far hasn't been willing to compromise with Castro, to reach an agreement with Castro and so forth. That's the way that most of our people have reacted to him in the last ten or twelve years. Now, that is changing. Because people are still concerned as to what policy the national government will institute in regard to Cuba. I think that overwhelmingly, the population here is opposed to any kind of rapprochement to Castro, but there is a movement among the leadership of the community which indicates that they are concerned not only with what is happening in Cuba, but that they are also concerned with what is happening here in the county, with what is happening statewide, with what is happening in the United States nationally in areas other than foreign policy.

W.D.V.: Is there still a fundamental hold over at least the first generation of Cubans that came over, a belief that they will be able to go back?

J.A.: Yeah, I think that it's still there. In many cases, it's more theoretical than real.

W.D.V.: But it is still a real perception?

J.A.: Yes, yes.

W.D.V.: What about the second generation, those young people coming up now?

J.A.: They view the situation in an entirely different light. They still, for example, pray for a free Cuba, but I don't think that. . .in other words, the affiliation to the idea of returning, the idea of "hell or high water, I'm going to go back to Cuba" diminishes or decreases in direct proportion to the age brackets. And that's understandable. My children, for example.

I've got a couple of kids who were born in Cuba and were brought over when they were four and five and now they are nineteen and twenty. I cannot expect my children to feel for Cuba the same way that I do, because they lack that type of experience. Place yourself in the same situation, if you had children who were twenty years old, could they feel the same way for Texas as you would, if they were brought up in New York? Not by a long shot.

W.D.V.: My parents came over from the Netherlands, so, I know a little bit about that.

J.A.: So, that's it.

W.D.V.: Is this one of the reasons that it's difficult to get them to register to vote?

J.A.: It is not difficult to get them to register to vote. That's. . .

J.B.: Well, we were testing out. . .

J.A.: Yeah, well, to some extent, it is created by elements of the community who have gotten hold of the Establishment now and don't want to go out of power. In other words, there are a number of individuals here locally that would like to do their utmost to discourage the Cubans from participating. One is, let's face it, we are liked by some people, but we are not liked by everybody. Welcome to the club! That is true of every other group in the United States. Number two, they see, and this is a fact, the Cubans have a potential power bloc at election time. I mean, as the days go by and you see the number of Cubans becoming American citizens and I can tell you for a fact that one of the first things they do after becoming American citizens is to go out and register. Now, they are having difficulty in some areas with registration, because they learn enough English, "Tom is a boy, Mary is a girl," to make it through the citizenship proceedings, you know, the

naturalization proceedings, but they don't have enough English for example, to walk up on their own to the civil rights or elections office and say, "Here is what I want to do and so on and so on." And register to vote. And it's not that they are being refused, as the blacks were in certain sections of the South because of their requirements or what have you. That's not true, in other words, if a Cuban-American walks up to a civil rights or election office, he'll get registered. But it is a question of not having enough English to go up and answer the questions properly and to some extent, they feel somewhat constrained, prohibited as far as registration is concerned. However, the fact is, especially among the younger generation, is that the first step that they take after they have become citizens, is in the direction of becoming registered. My daughter, let me give you an example, my daughter. She was fifteen or fourteen, no, she was less than that when we became citizens. She became a citizen. ~~by~~. Recently she turned eighteen, I didn't have to tell her to go up and register, she had already registered to vote. And she registered as a Democrat. And I didn't tell her to register Democrat. I had nothing to do with it whatsoever. She went on her own. And the kids that I have in my classes, that I talk to and so forth, number one have a much more. . .lets say a less conservative perspective than the older people, the older generation among the Cubans. Number two, they are much more energetic, much more free wheeling and open minded in terms of doing what they feel that they have to do. Number three, they are registered. I know that, because I check it out in my classes. "Have you registered to vote?" And you'll find that the percentage of registered voters among the eighteen year olds for example is higher, in my class, among the Cubans than it is among the American native born. Now, what happens is that

there are some people who can see this, who can see this coming, a community where 30% of the community happens to be Spanish speaking and out of that 30%, 90% is of Cuban extraction.

W.D.V.: You're talking about the city of Miami?

J.A.: I'm talking about Dade County.

W.D.V.: Dade County.

J.A.: The census comes up with a figure around 217,000, something around that line. Which is entirely erroneous. Here in Dade County, we have somewhere in the vicinity of 350,000 to 400,000 Spanish speaking people. And out of that total, about 87 to 90% are of Cuban extraction, recent Cuban migration. Now, as the time goes by, they have a propensity to become American citizens. Now, this will not happen in terms of my parents. My father is seventy-two, my mother is sixty-five. They've made some money over here, they've been working hard. They had a restaurant and some of their best clients were native Americans, because they provided service. And they got along. But they haven't got enough English, if they went for naturalization, they would probably get by, out of pure sympathy, but they are inhibited from going there. Now, my parents will not become American citizens and in all probability will not register. My mother-in-law is the same. The older generation. But there are an awful lot of young Cubans that are coming up, getting married, setting themselves up in business and what have you and so on, and having children and theirs is all in the future. There, the future of Dade County lies in that area. Now, some local politicians have understood this, have witnessed that, just watching for example what they are experiencing in other areas. And I'm talking about the native American politicians, so, needless to say, they began to accept that this is a bi-cultural, tri-ethnic community.

Some of them have gone so far as taking Spanish lessons so that they can, if not speak Spanish, at least be able to say, "Good morning," or "Gracias." And that will get you votes. Others on the other hand, are wishing that Castro would be overthrown tomorrow, so that all 400,000 of us could be packed into an airplane and shipped back to Cuba.

W.D.V.: Let's speculate about that for awhile. If there was a coup d' etat or something and Castro was gone tomorrow, how many people would go back?

J.A.: I don't know, I have no way of knowing.

W.D.V.: Yet, if in a sense, if the white politician who is establishing himself, if he perceived it in that way, then why should he care about developing relationships with Cubans?

J.A.: Well, not all politicians. . .

W.D.V.: Or vice-versa. If Cubans are more oriented towards Cuba. . .

J.A.: Not all politicians are intelligent people. Right? O.K. We start from that point.

W.D.V.: I think that we would accept that. (laughter)

J.A.: There are some who have some perspective of the future. They had it in Boston, you know. There were these guys who weren't Irish, but they saw what was coming and just sort of moved over a little bit, gave some elbow room to the guy next door. And you know, like all migrations before, after the guy becomes one of you, you know longer think in terms of what my ethnic background is, whether I came from France or Cuba or what have you. Alright? But there are others who don't take that position. And they are going to get steam rolled by history. Hell, if a guy like George Wallace can in a period of ten years, change his mind, at least externally, to be able to get along with Johnny Ford, you know, and have him in his office and sort of gloss over some of the Dixie-last-ditch-stand that he

showed in the 1960's, if he is capable of doing that, I think that local politicians will go along with some of the lessons and will learn something.

W.D.V.: So, you see it as a very slow process, though. As the younger people come up, they will register and you will see it. But nothing is going to happen over night to change the power structure.

J.A.: No, I don't think so.

J.B.: Are there any or many Cuban registrars? People at the election commission. Are they bi-lingual at the election commission. Who controls the election commission?

J.A.: The County Commissioners.

J.B.: Are they Republicans or Democrats?

J.A.: No, Democrats.

J.B.: So, why don't they put. . .

J.A.: And there isn't a single Cuban on the County Commission. And there won't be a single Cuban on the County Commission until we get enough power over here to get one elected, to get in there and be abrasive and flipant, like I am, and tell the other six Commissioners, or seven Commissioners, where the hell they can get off. And to begin to make waves. That's the only reason that politicians will understand.

J.B.: When is this coming?

J.A.: I think that it's going to begin to happen in '76. I don't think that there will be a cataclysmic change, but I think that by '76, we will have enough power and if we have intelligent politicians who can play coalition politics locally, we will be able to get somebody on the County Commission.

J.B.: The County Commission is the governing body of Dade County?

J.A.: Of Dade County, right, right.

J.B.: Are they elected by areas, or county-wide?

J.A.: County wide. That's why I tell you that you have to play coalition politics if you want to get elected.

W.D.V.: That leads to my next question. Do you see coalition politics developing in the next five or ten years?

J.A.: I don't see it now.

W.D.V.: Why?

J.A.: It's not happening now. I see it if we get enough people. And I've already moved in that direction and there are others who are moving in that direction. For example, working with the blacks, and developing a Jewish-Black-Cuban coalition.

J.B.: Do you see that coming?

J.A.: If we get the type of leadership that we need in the community, I think that this is a possibility. It has already happened in the direction . . .  
(interruption by waiter)

J.B.: Is the leadership there right now to develop coalitions?

J.A.: No. It's in the making.

W.D.V.: Let me ask you this. In each of those communities, is leadership developing that is representative of those communities, or is it fragmented?

J.A.: It's fragmented.

J.B.: Well, what about the Cuban community, how near is the leadership and the willingness to follow that type of coalition, presuming that the other two parts of the triangle are willing?

J.A.: That's not happening as yet, because again, we are still in what I say is the last stage of the shedding of the old type of political philosophy where everything was geared in terms of what is happening in Cuba.

J.B.: Then let me ask you another question that we haven't gotten to,

and it's one of the obvious questions, what is the affect of Watergate on the Cuban community in Miami?

J.A.: We haven't been affected at all. Our position is that these guys were fooled, or were led into believing that they were performing a service for the government of the United States and they did so. All right? Now, if their stupidity is a crime, they should be sent to jail.

J.B.: Is there any feeling that they were taken advantage of?

J.A.: Yes. That's the general feeling in the community. That they were being played for suckers and President Nixon's statement regarding the "jackasses" and all of that, didn't help. It reaffirmed the belief. But we don't hold them guilty.

J.B.: Not them. I'm talking about what affect it will have with the Republican Party?

J.A.: I don't think that it's going to have much affect on the Republican Party in the Cuban community. I don't think so, not locally. Let me give you one example, the Democrats. . .we had an election here recently. . . the Democrats ran a strong candidate, a rather liberal one, Mrs. Land, for the state legislature. The Republicans ran a young fellow, he had no opposition in the primary. He went to the general election and he beat the Democrat, even though there is a majority of registered Democrats in the district. This is this area here. So, as far as Watergate is concerned, this is about the time that they were losing the elections up in Michigan and in Ohio and the one in Cincinnati. Down here, not a ripple. We view Watergate here, at least in our community, in somewhat of a different light. It's not the major crime, to the Cuban community, it's not the major crime that the newspapers have made it out, as far as we are concerned. It's petty politics, it's this, that and the other thing, but I'm sure that there

are revelations that we don't hear about, about the present government at any time, that would be worse than Watergate. And I'm not taking anything from Watergate. I think that it is detestable that we have to engage in that type of politics, but as far as the reaction of the community is concerned, it's not a capital crime, as far as we are concerned.

J.B.: Did it weaken the Republican position at all, from a standpoint of a feeling that the Cubans who were involved were taken advantage of?

J.A.: No, I don't think so. I haven't seen any evidence of that.

J.B.: What is the attraction of the Democrats to the Cuban population here? I mean, why should they be Democrats?

J.A.: The Democratic Party is doing nothing in terms of playing to the Cuban community. With the exception of in Tallahassee, the Democratic Party, perhaps Dick Stone, who comes from this area, is bi-lingual, speaks Spanish, you know, he's a very good friend of the Cubans, but aside from that, the Democratic Party, though it has control of the state government, has not shown any interest in terms of getting really involved here and really supporting good candidates and making a. . .

W.D.V.: Well, that goes back to my original question. Maybe they see the Cubans as a transigent group. And if the Cubans see themselves that way, why shouldn't the politicians see them that way?

J.A.: Well, if they see the Cubans that way, it seems to me that they are somewhat nearsighted. I told the governor that about three or four weeks ago. And I told Lou that too. Because I don't see the prospect of any overthrow of Castro. In fact, I don't see it in the next several years. I would like it to happen, but it isn't going to come about to my wishing. And that means that at least for the next couple of years, you are going

to have Cubans here. Now, if the process, and I think that you would agree with me, is longer than that, and you've got a group of people here who are becoming American citizens, I would say that local people are just going to have to take that into account. Because, they have upset the balance of power as far as southern politics and southern Florida.

W.D.V.: Well, if the Democrats aren't doing anything, are the Republicans doing anything?

J.A.: Yes.

W.D.V.: What are they doing?

J.A.: Number one: they are doing their darndest to project their image to the older generation that the Republican Party is against any type of compromise with Communist Cuba. Which I know for a fact is a lot of hogwash because that's an awful lot of hypocrisy. Because the party that has gone to Moscow, the party that has gone to China would have no compunctions whatsoever about going to Cuba and reaching a political agreement. But that's the way it comes through and that's the way that people believe in it. You hear the argument from the rank and file Cuban telling you that Nixon is an honest man, that Nixon will not go back on his word that an agreement with Cuba will not be reached. So, you handle that problem. Number two: they do have control at the national level, they do have programs at the national level, and the Republican Party steers certain programs from the national administration in Washington in the direction of the local community. Funds, for example. Last year they had some extra funds, the previous year they had some extra funds and the President of the United States made some end of the year Presidential awards, grants to communities throughout the United States and out of that, about 100,000 were earmarked for the state of Florida. Tampa got part of it for a program

at the Hayes Forbe College. We've got two programs down here. One for the Puerto Rican community, one for the Cuban community. The program was continued. Aside from that, HEW had provided all kinds of assistance to the community. You know how it is.

W.D.V.: How about the state party, have they done anything?

J.B.: What did you tell the governor? I mean, what were the circumstances? In Tallahassee, or here?

J.A.: Up in Tallahassee. I'm a member of a group which is called The Hispanic -American Council of Florida. We're not a political group, we are a civic group. But we are concerned with the problems of the community and we want to do the best possible for our community. And we went up there and we told the governor some of the problems that we had, where we needed assistance. For example, the third largest source of income from an agricultural point of view locally of the Cuban vegetables, which are grown locally, Cuban vegetables which are grown by an American supplier for the community. There isn't a single research program funded by the state of Florida for the purposes of improving the quality and variety of the vegetables that are grown locally, even though they are making money off of it. Everything is tomatoes and limas and so forth. Well, hell, I'm not against tomatoes and lima beans, but I do think that the state has neglected to take care of this, which is an important source of income to everybody throughout the state, not only the Cubans, but also the Americans. Because if that type of crop is not grown locally, we are going to have to import it from the Dominican Republic or Central America. And the governor agreed with me. When we made that type of presentation, he said, "Yeah, I'll bring this to the attention of the people in the Agricultural Department." This is fourteen years. Hell, they should have done something about it a long time before. They should have already started to work on

something like that. It's a progressive activity, an attitude which you find that the Republicans have. Anything that is happening in the Cuban community, they are there with the fastest and the mostest. As far as the Democrats are concerned, we don't have to go to Washington, because they are out of power right now, but at least as far as the state is concerned, there should be a greater receptivity on the part of the state to come down and help the community. "What do you need? How can we help you with it?" And there are other examples which I could give you.

J.B.: Has Askew ever come down to Miami to meet with Cuban positions?

J.A.: Very rarely. He may have done that. I attended for example, the dinner of the Democratic Spanish Speaking Caucus and he came down and he talked to us on how great the Cubans are, and on "what you have done" and that type of thing. But that doesn't translate. We want action, not just words. We don't want you to come down and tell us that you are our friend. We want you to come down and prove that you are our friend and that's all that we are asking for. See, it's a psychological type of thing, because many Cubans when they came over, when we came over, many of us came over with the epithet of "refugees." You wouldn't say "Cubans" without saying "refugees." And that to certain extents has inhibited some of our people from coming out and demanding what is rightfully theirs. You know, "you are a refugee, you have been accepted in this country, you should be thankful that the United States has taken you in. Don't rock the boat. Every morning when you get up you should salute the flag and you say, 'Thank you.'" Believe me, I do that. But hell, after I get through with that exercise, I want my piece of the pie, because I'm paying taxes and I'm contributing to this society and if you get a share, I get a share and I'm one of those who believes, you know, that neither the Constitution

now the laws of this country give to the native Americans of this country in terms of naturalized Americans, any better rights simply because their ancestors happened to row a little bit faster to these shores. As far as I am concerned, your ancestors just got here a little bit sooner than mine did. So what? I don't begrudge you your citizenship and your rights to this society on the basis of what they contributed or what we are going to contribute together.

W.D.V.: Can I try some Cuban coffee?

J.A.: Yes. (interruption with waiter, ordering coffee.)

W.D.V.: You said that the leadership in the Cuban. . .

(end of side A of tape)

J.A.: It's a number of things. I think that a generalization that we can make about the Cuban community is that it's pluralistic as eternally as the American society is.

W.D.V.: Is it generational?

J.A.: To some extent. It's political to some extent. It's social to some extent, it's cultural to some extent. You cannot pinpoint it. Rebozo. Commissioner of the City of Miami. Member of the Democratic Party, just recently elected Commissioner to the City of Miami. Where does he get his support, his backing? Well, among the community, he has a great deal of backing, because he is a Commissioner of the City of Miami.

W.D.V.: Well, you are going to need a candidate that is. . . I don't want to use the word, "charismatic", but somebody that will unite that whole community. Will it work that way?

J.A.: I don't think that it would.

W.D.V.: Well, the way to work that is to get a candidate from the community and then unite it.

J.A.: You see, one of the ways to really polarize the community, which is what you are talking about, would be to get an individual who came out with an anti-American stand. Local. I don't mean against the United States, I mean anti-establishment. "You see those bastards over at the County Commission. You see that guy Ray Good?" And so on and so on. Get an object of hate and have the community react negatively to that. That is possible where you have individuals who take the point of view that Dade County is theirs and that they are not going to let go of the power nor share it with anybody else. That's a possibility, that the community may become polarized.

J.B.: Do you see that happening?

J.A.: I don't think so.

J.B.: That it could be polarized around alienation.

J.A.: Yeah, that's another possibility except that I don't think that in reality we have been. Let's face it, we have been. . .

W.D.V.: Have you got a bastard like that, that you can polarize the community around?

J.A.: Well, we have a couple of guys locally, you know, that we could point to and do that. It hasn't reached a state where you can get the whole community together, I don't think so. Furthermore, I think that responsible leadership wouldn't go that way. I for one, wouldn't like it.

W.D.V.: If that road is not open because it is irresponsible, what road is open? If you are going to work as a bloc, you have got to act as a bloc. And you can basically do that better around candidates than you can around party organization?

J.A.: Yeah, I agree with you wholeheartedly. I think that it is a piecemeal type of approach. In other words, little by little, you get this position today, you get that position tomorrow. You accomplish participation in the

local society by win a skirmish today, win a battle tomorrow, and eventually you will win the war. I don't want to see the community divided into Anglos, Blacks and Cubans. Because I think that in the long run, this would be inimical to the community, to my children.

W.D.V.: That means coalition, though, doesn't it?

J.A.: Of course. And in my thinking, a perfect opinion of that. Basically, what I am saying is that those elements who still maintain. . .(interruption by waiter)

J.B.: What would have happened if Lou had run for the Senate, insofar as the Cuban community was concerned?

J.A.: You know, he would have had a tremendous and substantial support. Both from Republicans and Democrats. And not only from the ethnic identity.

J.B.: But what about in the primary? What would have happened? Would the Republicans have switched registration?

J.A.: No, I don't think that it would go as far as that. Aside from the fact that people are not fully aware that they can switch registration, they are not familiar with what a closed primary means, they are not fully educated in terms of the American political process. Hell, this is nothing new, some of my kids in college are not fully educated as to what the American political process is. They are not fully educated as to what a closed primary is, what is important about registering for one party or the other. So, I'm not suprised.

W.D.V.: So, strategically, the way to get at this thing is to whittle a coalition behind a couple of candidates and be successful with that and then sort of prove to the rest of the community that it can be done that way? Is that the strategy?

J.A.: I think that this would be a good strategy. For example, Commissioner Gibson, from the city of Miami, in the last election, ran for Commissioner

for the City of Miami. Over 50% of the money that he got, campaign funds, he's a Democrat, he's a black man, over 50% of the money that he got, he got it from the Cuban community. Now, we haven't been able to switch around. I think that the Cubans are much more receptive to the idea of a black representing them than the blacks are to the idea that a Cuban should represent them.

W.D.V.: Is it possible for the community to run an issue other than foreign policy.

J.A.: It is quite possible, it just isn't happening. I hope that it doesn't. Because polarization is quite easy, but depolarization is a lot more difficult.

W.D.V.: Are there any peculiar political behaviors that are particular to Cuba that were carried over here by these people? I mean, a way of looking at politicians, a way of thinking about the political process that is different?

J.A.: The older generation manages to view such things as Watergate with a somewhat skeptical attitude, you know, with an "Oh well, that's politics in Miami." The younger generation tends to be as shocked as American kids are. I think that in that respect, the Cuban community is very much like the Ango community.

W.D.V.: Do you expect a little corruption with your politics, is that it?

J.A.: That's right. By the older people. "After all, they are politicians." The younger generation, it's a little bit different.

W.D.V.: Any other differences between those generations?

J.A.: I told you before their attitudes regarding freedom to dissent, for example, the right to be open-minded. The older generation tends to be more conservative. Speaking of the campuses, the older generation, "Good heavens! What is this country coming to?" ~~The younger generation will~~

. This is the beginning, to some extent, of the differences between the two.

W.D.V.: Would that make it difficult to put together a political coalition? Because you have essentially conservative Cubans, philosophically, trying to coalesce with Democrats who are basically liberal.

J.A.: Here in Dade County? We don't have any Democrats who are liberal.

W.D.V.: Strike that. Well, more liberal than the Republicans.

J.A.: Yes, well, it's possible. And I'll tell you why it is possible. Because again, we are talking about generations. The force lies not with the older generation, in terms of holding power, but it lies with the one that is coming up. The Democratic Party has a greater opportunity now, in 1974, to begin to work for 1976 and provide opportunities for the Cubans locally to have some representation. However, we don't want to control the whole area. That's far from our idea. We just want to participate. And that means that we have to have representation at the local level. We have to have representation on the County Commission, we have to have representation on the City of Miami, we have to have representation everywhere. Including, of course, Tallahassee, and if we don't get that, if we don't get that type of activity on the part of the Democratic Party who will go out and say, "We are interested in you people, we want to help you," what will happen is that the greater majority of the Cubans will continue to register in the Republican Party. It will be nobody else's responsibility but that of the Democratic Party.

W.D.V.: Well, that means that you are going to end up with Republican office holders in Miami and Dade County.

J.A.: And that is exactly what is happening. It was inconcievable ten years ago that a Republican could be elected to any type of office in Dade County. Well, today, they have two Congressmen, two Representatives and one Senator.

And they are moving up. Why? Because they are conservative, they are highly organized and they know how to move in politics. They know where power is moving to and they are getting ahead. They have the foresight to say, "Come on in, we want you."

W.D.V.: Is there any statewide political action group of Spanish speaking Americans like LAPA in some of the other states?

J.A.: Well, there isn't, not now. We are hoping that this Hispanic American Council of Florida, which we have here locally, will be able to tie in with Hispanic Americans in Key West and in Tampa, in St. Augustine, in Orlando, so that we can create a statewide coalition. But we don't want to stress too much the question of the ethnic group, because that may backfire.

J.B.: Who is the key man in the Democratic Party in all of this, the governor?

J.A.: You mean statewide? To bring this about? I think to some extent, the governor. He is probably going to get re-elected in November. Another key individual as far as the party is concerned, would be Mallory.

W.D.V.: How, how is he a key?

J.A.: If he gets the nomination for the Senate and runs and gets elected against Guernsey, he would be a very influential figure. And I know that Mallory, although he comes from the Panhandle, is progressive thinking in terms of local politics. He's shown that.

J.B.: How about Pettigrew?

J.A.: Well, the problem with Dick Pettigrew is that I like him dearly, he's a good friend of mine and all that, but he's too liberal and he's too liberal for up North, and you cannot win the state exclusively on the basis of Dade County, because our people down here don't go out and vote 80% and 90%. You don't have that type of turnout. You're lucky if you get a 40%

turnout down here. And a primary is closer to 20%. You can't win the state of Florida, you can't win the nomination on that basis.

J.B.: Are you supporting Mallory?

J.A.: Well, obviously the basis of my support for Mallory is because Lou supports Mallory.

W.D.V.: Oh, he does?

J.A.: Aside from the fact that Lou is the only one in the state who really worked for us since we came over here, he is the only politician statewide who has really taken an interest in this community although he is from Tampa. But he has worked, his office has always been open to us, he has worked his rear end off to provide assistance to us and to give us all kinds of help in Tallahassee. So, whatever Lou says, I'm going with Lou. And I only hope that the gossip that is going around now, turns out to be true. That Ruben is going to pick him as his running mate, because I think that he will make one hell of a lieutenant governor. He's one heck of a honest man, whatever the party.

W.D.V.: He told us that he wouldn't accept it. But we took that with a large grain of salt.

J.A.: It would be a mistake on his part, and I told him. Because Ruben has a great chance for '76 to get on the ticket. I don't know whether Ruben will go as the Vice-Presidential candidate or not, but if he does, Lou will become the governor of the state. And he will make a darn good governor, because he works like the dickens and he is for all the people. He is one of our ethnic group, you know, but in all honesty, I've never heard Lou come out and say, "Gee, I'm Spanish, gung-ho, you know. Right on, brother." You know, that type of thing. He's for everybody, but he hasn't neglected us, he hasn't forgotten us. And if Lou is running for office, I will be out there pounding the pavement, getting money right and left for him. Because

he is the type of individual who has worked for us. Now, Lou can understand on that basis why it is that the Republicans are making some headway locally. Now, you go up to Washington, and you see a Republican up there, Mitchell and Stans, and all that, you don't have to like the son-of-a-bitch, you don't have to live with him. But he is the type of guy who would say, "Gee, we've got a group of Cubans down there and we need to help those poor bastards. Help them out. Let's supply some type of assistance for them." That's sound politics. I thought, you know, that there would be a great furor over the President saying, "Those jackasses down there" and all that. Nothing happened. Deep in their hearts, they still like Nixon.

J.B.: How about Gu~~er~~ney?

J.A.: Gu~~er~~ney who? (laughter) (interruption over serving dessert)

. . .from a political point of view, it will depend to a large extent on the type of leadership that we are capable of developing in our community. And that's what I was saying a little while back, the idea of responsibility that we have. O.K. I know, I have witnessed it, I know what we went through in Cuba. I know what can happen. That's why I'm not pulling out of this one. I want to be in there. I may not be running, but I know that if I'm not running, I'm going to pick a darn good candidate, somebody that we can trust, that will work for the community, to run in my place.

J.B.: What are the odds that you see, you know, if you figure out five years from now, where are the Cubans of Miami~~4~~ going to be? One, they could be where they are now, divided to some extent, predominantly Republican, but unsure where they are going still. That's one option. What are the other options?

J.A.: We will continue to be divided. Because in essence, we are not divided. What we are is pluralistic. In other words, you won't see, and I could drive you around, you won't see the Cuban community fighting with

each other. Oh, we have our minor squabbles and so on, but it's not the type of thing that the community is split right down the middle. I haven't seen that. And this is the type of thing that will probably happen five years from now, it's in our character to be like that, very individualistic. And you may be a friend of mine, you may be a leader and what have you, and I have a great deal of respect for you and so on, but if you press a little bit hard, if you push a little bit hard, I'm going to tell you to go jump in the lake. So, I think that the characteristics of that type of division, you know, again, we have a propensity in the United States to look to ethnic groups and say, "Who needs that community. Who's the boss?" "Fitzgerald." All right, you talk to that guy, it simplifies matters. That's not true, and I doubt if it is going to be true in the Cuban community. Even ~~for example, who is the mayor of Miami,~~ doesn't have that kind of control so that he can say that he speaks for everybody, "whatever I say goes." And this is not true. So, five years from now, you will have that. Unless the Democratic Party begins to move at the local level, provides some help, trained leaders within the party itself, to run for office, the Republicans are going to steal the show from them. And what will happen is that you will have locally a strong Republican Party that will challenge the Democrats throughout and needless to say, will get an awful lot of people elected. As they have been doing. Just put yourself in the situation of being a candidate, the party coming up to you and saying, "We want you to be our candidate and we'll give you the ticket throughout without opposition and we'll give you the money and we'll give you the support and we'll give you the organization." And it takes an awful lot of gumption and party affiliation to say "No, I'm not going to do that."

W.D.V.: Well, why couldn't somebody say, "O.K., I'll take that." And do

that and. . .

J.A.: They have.

W.D.V.: It doesn't matter whether you are Republican or Democrat, the point is that you would end up in a position of leadership.

J.A.: They have, but what I'm saying is that if this type of thing happens, if you get this type of offer from the Republican Party. . .

W.D.V.: That strengthens the party in the Cuban community.

J.A.: And if the Democratic Party doesn't deliver, if it doesn't come through with something similar to that, if the Democratic Party says, " Fine, you're a Cuban and all that, but you are on your own, you raise your own money and all that, we won't give you any help whatsoever, we'll sit by and let the whole thing go. . ." well, there won't be any type of Democratic Party development in the Cuban community. The Republicans will steal it.

W.D.V.: Where do Cubans get their information about politics? Basically from the papers here or. . .?

J.A.: Right.

W.D.V.: How does that work?

J.A.: The most important spokesman, element of the news media right now is right here. WQVA or Quarenisima.

W.D.V.: That's a Cuban station.

J.A.: That's a Cuban radio station. WFAB, that's another Cuban one. It's owned by Americans, but it's run by Cubans. WOCEAN, that's another one. We have four radio stations.

W.D.V.: That has become a Cuban station?

J.A.: Yes. It's ~~run by~~ Berhold, but. . .

W.D.V.: Is there an emphasis on those stations on mainland Cuban news?

J.A.: Well. . .

W.D.V.: What about in the coverage of state politics. . .

J.A.: Very little.

W.D.V.: Very little?

J.A.: Almost absent. None whatsoever.

W.D.V.: Why is that?

J.A.: Because of the process, we haven't reached the stage yet where people believe, where they need to see their relationship as a citizen of the community in terms of the state or in terms of the local government. I go out there, I go out the door and stand and talk to three or four of my friends that go by and I start talking to them about Castro and Cuba and all that and before you know it, we'll have a crowd. They get all excited. If you start to talk about Ray Good, well, "Goodby, we'll see you later." That hasn't come about. But it's happening.

W.D.V.: And when that comes, then of course, the media will change. What about the newspapers, as a medium for receiving political information?

J.A.: Well, for example, our particular newspaper, which is the Dairo Las Americas, is more concerned with inter-American news than with local news. That's one of the criticisms, there's very little local news. The news that they have from a local point of view, it's pictures of , very little of the local issues. Now, I'm one of the few that is beginning to bring out this sort of thing, you know. I take a critical attitude of the County Commission at times, a critical attitude of the County Manager. For example, I ran an article about the history of Cuba, when the Indians were on the island and so on, and I get five phone calls from people who read it, people that I don't know. This man here, the waiter, when I came in, I don't know the guy, I said, "I'm Dr. Anqueira, I'm expecting some friends. . ." and so forth. Well, "Oh, there is an Anqueira who writes in the newspaper." "Yours truly." "Oh, Dr.," and so on. And he gets all excited about an article written in a cultural context. Now, he may be

the type of person to call me at my house, because I have my name and telephone in the telephone book, and they will call me and let me know how much they liked the article. An article on Mother's Day, and so on and so on. I write an article about Ray Good and nobody calls. They still are not. . .

J.B.: Ray Good is what?

J.A.: The Manager.

J.B.: County Manager?

J.A.: Right. I wrote an article and I said, "Look, watch out. This guy is going to raise our taxes." And then, "The old son-of-a-gun, look what he's up to." No, they are blind. And this is a hot issue locally. If I had written something like that in the Miami Herald, I would have had a dozen letters. But we haven't reached yet the point where we are truly involved in the universality of politics. We are still very much hampered by this idea of reacting to politics in terms of what is happening in Cuba, the State Department, foreign policy, that type of thing. But it is coming, because people are becoming much more aware and we have groups and people are talking about it. Things are changing. The changes will not happen over night, though.

J.B.: How about John ? Has he expressed any interest in the Cuban community in Miami insofar as the Democratic Party of Florida. . .

J.A.: No.

J.B.: Should he?

J.A.: It seems to me that anyone who has any type of local or statewide dreams, objectives, would do well to take it into account. The local community here and this is a powerful community from the economic point of view. I wish that you had more time and I could take you around and show you what is going on. In a matter of ten years, Dade County is going to be owned by

Cuban-Americans. I mean literally. This is going to be a gravitating force for the rest of the Hispanic-Americans throughout the state.

W.D.V.: Well, if they are going to hold it economically, the political power can't be far behind.

J.A.: Ah, you are looking into the future. All right, let's see what happens. The Cubans are making money right and left. The gross income of our community right now is in excess of one billion dollars a year.

W.D.V.: How does that compare with the economy of Cuba?

J.A.: Oh heck, there is no comparison whatsoever. You've got the professional class of Cubans right here. I'm telling you, the cream of the crop is what came over initially. (interruption with the waiter serving coffee) The other thing is what happens to the Cubans locally. They are very conservative as far as investments are concerned. They made money and when they made money, instead of investing in the New York Stock Market, the New York Stock Exchange, the American Stock Exchange, they want to put their money locally where they can see it. Across the street. Take a look at that building there. You come back ten years from now, you won't recognize this area, because the Cubans are buying up the property right and left, all over the place. And they are rebuilding. There is a massive urban renewal program going on.

W.D.V.: Privately, you mean?

J.A.: Yeah. Financed by the Cubans.

W.D.V.: You think that it is going to be possible to coalesce the Cubans in St. Petersburg and Tampa and so on who are second and third generation Democrats, who are from a much different social and economic background from the Cubans here, to coalesce that group statewide?

J.A.: I don't know.

W.D.V.: Here you've got a basically different social and economic group,

the professional, refugees in a sense, Republican. You think that you can get that together politically?

J.A.: I don't know whether we will be able to do that. I don't know whether this will become a reality. But we are going to try it. The group in Tampa is obviously entirely different. Lou's ancestors in Tampa are very much like my own. His father is very much like my own. Hardworking people you know. Monied laborers. My father was a fish peddler. But the migration to Tampa was somewhat different from the migration to Miami, because what was brought from Cuba was the best of Cuba, the cream of the crop. After that, you know, we had fishermen come over, and people of the lower classes, the guy who is playing the bongo there and what have you. The skills, the trading skills, the professionals, the physicians, the attorneys. The guy who serves us, the waiter, he's an attorney from Cuba. So, the skills which we brought over, we put to good use in different areas. It's a different type of individual from the one that you find in Tampa. So, we may have a situation where there would be a clash of personalities, not being able to get along.

W.D.V.: If you ended up with, first of all, the control of the Miami city government, perhaps Dade County, you would end up with a minority or ethnic group that would be very conservative philosophically, which would be atypical of what has happened to other minority groups, I don't know if I'm making sense, but do you see what I'm saying?

J.A.: Yes, you sure do, you sure do. Again, consider that the political development of this group in the United States has been somewhat different than the other migrations that the United States has had.

W.D.V.: Well, it's not the same kind of dispossessed group. It's not ~~dispossessed~~ <sup>dispossessed</sup> in terms of social and economic status and skills as other

migrant groups.

J.A.: No other migrant group has received the receptivity, the friendliness right off the bat from the native political party that we have had. In other words, you sort of ended up in the Democratic Party because that's it, the party of the poor people and what have you. Here, we've had entree with the President of the United States. He created a committee for the Spanish Speaking, and he has named two people from Miami, two Cubans, to serve on that committee. Local Republicans, they have a problem, and they call the White House. They say, "Look, we've got problems." "Come on up, we'll talk to you." The President comes down, this group raises 350,000, half a million dollars for the presidential campaign. It's a two way deal. I don't like it, I'm a Democrat. I don't like it, but these are the facts of life. We asked the County Manager, Ray Good, who is a Democrat, we asked him to grant us an appointment to let us tell him about the needs of the community. We wanted to talk to him. We're tax payers. The secretary says that the County Manager will unfortunately not grant us an appointment unless we will put into writing beforehand what things we want to discuss with him.

J.B.: That's scary.

J.A.: Well, we didn't shoot the governor, you know, when we went up there to Tallahassee. We didn't place a bomb in his office, we didn't shoot him. On the other hand, we took a box of cigars, which he enjoyed very much. We thanked him for an appointment to the School Board that he had made. Why should this guy be scared of us? We want to work with him. We don't want the whole pie, we want a piece of the pie.

J.B.: You are saying though, and what I think is an unlikely event, that if the governor picked Lou Delgado as his running mate, he ought to accept. That would result, then, in telescoping all the potential for coalition.

Almost immediately.

J.A.: And locally, Lou would have a tremendous. . .

(end of tape)