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Interview with
LORENZO ECHANIS
February 16, 1984

Place of Interview: Lorenzo Echanis
Interviewer: Jeri Echeverria
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Oral History Collection

Lorenzo Echanis

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello Date of Interview: February 16, 1984

Place of Interview: Brea, California

Ms. Echeverria: This is Jeri Echeverria interviewing Mr. Lorenzo Echanis for the North Texas State Oral History Collection. The interview is taking place on February 16, 1984, in Brea, California. I am interviewing Mr. Echanis to obtain his recollections concerning leaving Motrico, Guipuzcoa, and coming to the United States.

Mr. Echanis: (Chuckle) We got lots of time, anyway.

Ms. Echeverria: Well, Lawrence, as you know, we're going to do another interview here because I forgot to put the plug in.

Mr. Echanis: Okay, yes, yes.

Ms. Echeverria: If you would like to speak in Spanish, speak in Spanish. Whatever you like, okay?

Mr. Echanis: We should speak in Spanish?

Ms. Echeverria: Whatever you would like.

Mr. Echanis: Okay.

Ms. Echeverria: Lawrence, tell me where you were born and when you were born.

Mr. Echanis: Motrico!

Ms. Echeverria: Motrico, Guipuzcoa!

Echanis: The second of July.

Echeverria: What year?

Echanis: July. I was baptized the fourth day.

Echeverria: You are almost eighty-eight years old?

Echanis: I will be eighty-eight this coming July.

Echeverria: And Motrico is your hometown.

Echanis: Yes, where I was born.

Echeverria: Your family did not live in the town. They lived outside of the city?

Echanis: No, we lived in the hills. They called them the aldeas there (small village or hamlet).

Echeverria: And your house, did it have a name?

Echanis: Mendi beltzu.

Echeverria: Mendi beltzu. What does mendi beltzu mean?

Echanis: Mendi means a mountain and beltzu means black something. I don't remember. We were big mendi beltzu and little mendi beltzu--two houses together.

Echeverria: Please tell me a little about your father and mother.

Echanis: My father was Jose Maria Echanis, and my mother was Bernada Iriate.

Echeverria: Were both of them Basque?

Echanis: Both of them were Basque.

Echeverria: From Guipuzcoa?

Echanis: Father was Viscaino, and mother was Guipuzcoan. My mother was born in the same house that she died in. My father

was born four to seven miles from Vizcaya, across the border.

Echeverria: What was the name of his village?

Echanis: Father was from the mountains. He didn't have a town.

Echeverria: What was your mother like?

Echanis: What was she like? Well, she was a woman who looked about like you.

Echeverria: Was she kind?

Echanis: Yes, very.

Echeverria: And your father?

Echanis: He was a small, thin man.

Echeverria: Was he strict?

Echanis: Yes, very. Oh, yes, very hard. With all the children he was very hard, my father. Not Mother.

Echeverria: When you were young, what were your chores?

Echanis: I worked the garden, and from seven or eight years old, I raised the cows for food, herded sheep, and worked the land. Later, when I was stronger, I cut the firewood for the fireplace in the house, and all those sorts of things I did.

Echeverria: Did you go to school?

Echanis: I went only to become Catholic--learn catechism. There was a small book of doctrine, and when you were about nine or ten years of age, you have to go to confession and the chartel, they call it.

Echeverria: Chartel?

Echanis: Chartel. If you don't know the doctrine, they won't give it to you (communion)--the priests. You have to pass that. Then each year on Easter Sunday, you have to pass it again. You have to pass again and confess, and they will give you the Spirit.

Echeverria: Oh, really, No confession, no communion?

Echanis: Yes, they give it after confession. Until ten years, none. From that time on, you have to answer the questions they make--Catholic questions. If not, they will not give you communion.

Echeverria: In those days, did everyone go to church?

Echanis: Yes, yes, everyone.

Echeverria: To Mass?

Echanis: Yes, old and young, everyone there.

Echeverria: All the families in Motrico went to Motrico to Mass on Sundays?

Echanis: Oh, yes, every Sunday.

Echeverria: Did the families sit together at Mass?

Echanis: Yes, everyone mixed--men, women, and everyone.

Echeverria: Motrico had one church?

Echanis: No, three churches.

Echeverria: There were three churches in Motrico?

Echanis: There was one (church) of the nuns, there was another separate one, and another farther away in the aldeas.

Echeverria: And everyone in Motrico was Catholic?

Echanis: Everyone was Catholic. There was no other thing there.

Echeverria: Then you went to this Catholic school for two or three years?

Echanis: Oh, two or three years--around there.

Echeverria: Did you learn to write there?

Echanis: Oh, a little.

Echeverria: And reading?

Echanis: Reading and later a little bit of handwriting. That was the last part of the years there, and I only learned a little--nothing more than that.

Echeverria: Did you speak Basque in this school?

Echanis: Yes.

Echeverria: All Basque?

Echanis: Yes. The teacher was Spanish, but we spoke Basque. At that time there, there was no Spanish.

Echeverria: You didn't speak Spanish in those days?

Echanis: No.

Echeverria: When did you learn Spanish?

Echanis: Here, with the Mexicans in California. When I came here, I didn't know anything (laughter). There was a man who worked here with me named Jesus Ibarra. He was a Mexican. He was Basque-Mexican, and he asked me, "What in the devil kind of Spaniard are you? You don't even know how to speak Spanish!" (laughter)

Echeverria: It's a good question, isn't it?

Echanis: Yes.

Echeverria: Then you learned your Spanish here?

Echanis: Yes, in California.

Echeverria: Before that you were speaking Basque...Guipuzcoan. Your house did not belong to your family? You were renting?

Echanis: Yes, we were renting the house.

Echeverria: Then for you there was no future in the house?

Echanis: No. There we did nothing but work and afterwards pay the rent. And later, if we had a bigger harvest, they took more still.

Echeverria: Can you describe the house you were living in?

Echanis: It was a house with two floors. Up above (in a small attic) we put away grass, herbs, hay, apples, and all that. The second floor was for sleeping. Below, we had a kitchen, and another place for the cows on the other side. We had wooden windows which we opened outward and fed the cows. So we both ate there, the cows, too.

Echeverria: Then on the first floor was the kitchen and a place for the animals behind on the same floor. And there were windows between the two?

Echanis: Yes.

Echeverria: And how did your mother cook?

Echanis: There was like a fireplace there, and she cooked everything.

Echeverria: Did she use pots?

Echanis: Yes, hanging from hooks.

Echeverria: It seems a little difficult.

Echanis: Yes.

Echeverria: And what did you use for fuel?

Echanis: Brush, kindling..

Echeverria: Then...

Echanis: And another funny thing I'll tell you. We would have garlic soup or corn and milk in the mornings. But we would be together--all of us--and we would have a big plate here in middle of the table--me here with a spoon and you there with a spoon...one plate!

Echeverria: Oh, then the whole family would use one plate, and everyone had a spoon!

Echanis: Yes, one person here and the other there and like that. It's not done that way anymore. Now they have plates.

Echeverria: But you were the youngest?

Echanis: Yes, I was the youngest.

Echeverria: Then it may have been difficult for you to get to the food (laughter)?

Echanis: Yes. Now they use plates, but when we were little, all of the houses used one plate--one big plate with soup or cornmeal and milk. At midday we'd have beans or a little meat or whatever.

Echeverria: Well, then you didn't have to wash many plates.

Echanis: No, not at all.

Echeverria: From eight years old to fourteen years old, you were

working at your house with your family, with the animals and all.

Echanis: Yes. After that I went to work at Eibar. I worked there for one year for nothing (room and board)--just learning the work. After that they paid me one peso, and it cost me 30 cents room and board. So I made 70 cents a day.

Echeverria: And you were working with rifles?

Echanis: Yes, rifles.

Echeverria: You were working six days a week?

Echanis: Yes, six days. Sundays only were off.

Echeverria: And on Sundays, did you go to dances?

Echanis: We went to dances or other places or fiestas.

Echeverria: Is that how you met others your age? And young girls?

Echanis: Oh, we didn't do much of that there. We danced with the girls, but that's about it. We never had girlfriends there or any of that.

Echeverria: No?

Echanis: When I decided to leave there (Spain), I went to my house for six months to be with my family and to help them and all. When I was there, I found a girlfriend.

Echeverria: Oh, yes? In Motrico?

Echanis: Yes, but after six months and getting my passports, and getting some money from an aunt I had in Madrid...

Echeverria: And how much did you need?

Echanis: One hundred and fifty dollars. I had a little that I had

earned, about \$50. I bought a suit, as I told you earlier, for \$11.

Echeverria: Eleven dollars for a suit?

Echanis: With that I came here.

Echeverria: And it didn't upset you to leave your girlfriend?

Echanis: No, no.

Echeverria: It wasn't serious?

Echanis: No, she was too old, anyway (laughter).

Echeverria: Oh, she was too old for you (laughter)! How did you get from Motrico to your ship?

Echanis: Eibar?

Echeverria: No, coming here.

Echanis: Well, I went to Guernica to get my papers, and then we went to France, and then we waited for two days there.

Echeverria: In Hendaye?

Echanis: Yes. There we got the ship and came to New York.

Echeverria: Do you remember the name of the ship?

Echanis: La Turena. It was French. We were on the ship for two weeks before we got to New York due to bad weather. We had hoped that it would take six days to get here, but with bad weather and with huge waves on top the ship and everything....

Echeverria: Then you were unable to come on deck for much of the trip?

Echanis: No, not much. In New York we went to a Basque hotel. It was Basque, and I can't remember the name.

Echeverria: Life aboard ship...was it difficult?

Echanis: Oh, the food was good.

Echeverria: Were you afraid?

Echanis: Oh, yes, of course, I was young. I was sixteen, seventeen.

Echeverria: You had never been on a boat before?

Echanis: Never. I arrived in the spring, and that July I turned seventeen. We stopped in New York, and after that we got a train to Pocatello and then to Boise.

Echeverria: Before leaving Motrico, how did you decide to do it?

Echanis: Well, here my brothers advised me and told me to come, and there I was not making anything. Life was very hard there because there was nothing there. Well, I had brothers who had sheep.

Echeverria: Then you knew that you had to do something?

Echanis: Oh, yes, and there there wasn't a chance, and I decided that it would be better to try this. You know, it's a sad thing, thinking of my mother and father, that all of their sons came here. But there was no chance there.

Echeverria: Your mother...was she sad?

Echanis: Oh, yes. My father cried when I left. I couldn't believe it. But I was his last child, and my sister was married, so we were all gone. That's all (silence).

Echeverria: Just a moment. (turning tape over)

Echanis: Then after I got here, I went to the mountains, and I didn't write them (parents) either. Once in awhile I

received letters from there. One day I received a letter from there, and Mother had died.. I came here in 1914, and she died in 1917. My Father died two or three years later. That was it (silence).

Echeverria: When you came to New York, you stayed there one day?

Echanis: One or two days, no more.

Echeverria: Do you remember anything of New York in those days?

Echanis: Not really. We came one day, entered the hotel, slept there one night, and the next day we left.

Echeverria: So you stayed there with other Basques who were traveling?

Echanis: Oh, yes, there were many Basques there. They would go down to the docks when the Spanish Basques arrived.

Echeverria: Like a business?

Echanis: It was a business.

Echeverria: Then they regularly went to the docks when the ships came in?

Echanis: Yes, they knew ahead when the ships from the Basque area would come in. Then they would drive us to the hotel.

Echeverria: You said earlier that you had to pay thirty pounds of gold upon entering the United States?

Echanis: Gold. You had to have it to come in, and you had to have health. I mean, perfect condition--your body and everything. If not, they would not let you pass.

Echeverria: There was a girl you told me about?

Echanis: Yes, a girl that they didn't let come in. She had a hand like this (twisted), and she had to go back. It saddened

me, for we had made good friends on the ship. We would have coffee. They had a little bar upstairs where you drank and ate and all that. We were about two hundred.

Echeverria: There were two hundred on the ship?

Echanis: Yes, many from near our house, parts of Viscaya and Guipuzcoa; And there was one that they called Choritzu; he played the accordion. He came to Idaho and lived near where Felicia did (Homedale, Idaho).

Echeverria: Is he still there?

Echanis: Now I don't know. He played the accordion.

Echeverria: I didn't know that most of them on ship were Basque.

Echanis: Oh, yes.

Echeverria: More Basques than others?

Echanis: Oh, yes, there near the Snake River. They are almost all Basque. That's where he lived.

Echeverria: But on the ship...were there more Basques than others?

Echanis: No, no. There were many people. Maybe five hundred or more. But on ship there may have been up to two hundred Basques--some young girls, young men, and lots of others. Some of them had been here before. With them on board, they were a lot of help to the rest of us--eating, everything.

Echeverria: In this way, you had help understanding?

Echanis: Yes, if we needed help asking for something, they would help us. They knew a little more than we did.

Echeverria: Then you went by train to Idaho?

- Echanis: Yes, we went to Pocatello for two days because my companion had a cousin there with a hotel. So we stopped there on our way to Boise.
- Echeverria: Then you met your brother there?
- Echanis: My brother and a friend of his who had been one of our neighbors as well.
- Echeverria: From Motrico, also?
- Echanis: Yes, from a house near ours there. Txome Patchuaga was his name. The two of them were there. They came to spend some time in Boise, and there they waited for us.
- Echeverria: Then you began working with the sheep?
- Echanis: Yes, from there we went by train to a town named _____, and there they had horses waiting for us.
- Echeverria: The name again?
- Echanis: By train we went to that town above Ontario (Oregon) that they called Juntura. It was near the river. From there we went almost thirty--around thirty--miles to where the sheep were. There we left the horses. So when we arrived, we went by horseback to the sheep camp.
- Echeverria: Then in the period of some three weeks, you went from Motrico to Idaho and started working?
- Echanis: Oh, yes, around that--three weeks.
- Echeverria: How many years did you work the sheep?
- Echanis: I worked there for four years without missing one day.
- Echeverria: Four years?
- Echanis: After four years, I went to Boise, Idaho, to spend a

month.

Echeverria: Vacation?

Echanis: One month. I went there, and they had written me a check for a thousand dollars. There was a man in the hotel there who had a son who worked in the bank. He cashed the check for me. He told me, "If that check does not go through, I will kill you today!" (laughter) I was afraid that perhaps the check wouldn't go through (more laughter)!

Echeverria: But it was good?

Echanis: Oh, yes, there was around \$4,000 in the account. That's what had been earned in four years.

Echeverria: Four years without a day off?

Echanis: They didn't give me one day!

Echeverria: Please tell me what was the work like.

Echanis: I was there in the hills all the time--summer up higher and in the winter down into the deserts.

Echeverria: How many sheep did you have?

Echanis: We had a band of 2,000 sheep. Before autumn, we had a thousand sheep, a thousand lambs. In the spring, the sheep would have lambs, and we'd have more sheep again. In the spring, again more. Then we would have sheep and little ones again, you know.

Echeverria: Would you separate the young with their mothers?

Echanis: Yes. We'd separate the young and in the winter keep the rams alone. In autumn we would "throw" the rams--mix them

with the ewes. Then in the spring more lambs. In September and November, we'd "throw" the rams because you have to calculate throwing rams and when the ewes are going to give birth. If you do it too early, it gets very cold, and the lambs will die. One has to know when the lambs are born that it will be warm enough for the little ones to grow.

Echeverria: There's a lot to think about.

Echanis: Oh, yes. One has to calculate. All right, another thing they do, when they give birth in February, one has to take them to corral. They work all hours during these times--one man for eight hours, another for the next eight, like that.

Echeverria: When they're lambing?

Echanis: Yes, because they get so big they don't move, and we'd feed them hay; and if it was cold, we'd have to keep them warm. Sometimes we'd be going around with the mule all night. We'd take the ewe and lamb to the little pens and put them in there with warming pots. There we had little stoves to keep them warm and protect them. Later, when they'd get bigger, we'd put them out farther.

Echeverria: When you were working out in the mountains by yourself, with the sheep, were you bored?

Echanis: Well, what can one do (laughter)? The only thing I had was a dog.

Echeverria: And a horse?

Echanis: No horse.

Echeverria: All on foot?

Echanis: On foot.

Echeverria: And the camptenders, did they come?

Echanis: Oh, they'd come about once a week with food, that's all.

Echeverria: Did you ever have doubts at this time?

Echanis: Oh, yes.

Echeverria: Did you ever want to leave?

Echanis: Oh, yes. But in the summer, up on the high peaks, there in the mornings the sheep would pasture for two or three hours in the morning. They would rest there and not move until the afternoon. I would be here (gesture)--one herder--another would be over there (gesture), and yet another would be farther over, and we would get together then--one day at yours, next at mine, like that. In the summer, it wasn't so bad. But the winter, no.

Echeverria: And they were all Basques?

Echanis: Yes. Almost all herders were Basque. There were a few Scotch that had sheep, but 95 percent were pure Basque. In Boise, Idaho, they said that if they could get Basques to herd their sheep, they didn't want anybody else, not American or anyone. They only wanted Basques to herd sheep. They were the favorite of all people for herding sheep.

Echeverria: Then you worked eight years in total?

Echanis: Yes. Later, we went broke with the sheep. A friend of my older brother screwed us out of all of our sheep. We were broke. Me and my brother were on the side of a road there, and the sheep weren't ours. We weren't watching our own sheep anymore, and I told my brother, "What the devil are we doing here?" I told him, "I'm leaving," and he said he was going to stay a little longer.

Echeverria: He remained? Benito?

Echanis: No, Joe. I didn't have ten cents in my pocket. There on the side of the road, I began to run the twenty-eight miles to Boise.

Echeverria: Twenty-eight miles?

Echanis: Yes. In a while a car came by and picked me up. In Boise there was a man that I knew who had a store. His name was Sam. He sold clothes--dry goods and everything. I went there and said, "Sam, I don't even have a penny. I would like to have a little clothing, and if you would, a little money." He told me, "Here you have everything. Take what you want." Then he gave me \$50. I went to the hotel there, and after staying there a few days, I had to go herd sheep because I didn't know anything else. I worked six months and then said, "No, I'm not going to stay here anymore. I'm going to go."

Echeverria: You'd had enough?

Echanis: It didn't matter where--I was going. There was this woman that I knew, and I married her, and we came here (Southern California).

Echeverria: You married there?

Echanis: We got married, got on the train, and headed for here.

Echeverria: And had you known her before?

Echanis: We knew no one here.

Echeverria: But had you dated her before?

Echanis: Oh, yes, for about six months.

Echeverria: Did you go to dances together?

Echanis: Oh, yes, we went to the hotel, to dances, and different places. Then we came here. In Los Angeles alone and not knowing what to do, I began walking the streets. Thank God that I encountered a fronton (jai alai court). I knew that I would find some Basques then. I went in there and just watched and listened and then said, "Well, there will be something here." I asked them, and she said, "Oh, yes, this is a Basque hotel!" And she was named Ines.

Echeverria: She was the owner?

Echanis: She was the owner of the hotel, and they treated us so well there. We were there one week and had such a fine stay. Then later I knew I had to go to work. One day Valdivino came there, and he told me to come down here: "We have work."

Echeverria: This was with the Bastanchury Ranch?

Echanis: Yes, in 1922. I began there then. I worked until 1941 or 1942, I think.

Echeverria: Almost twenty years?

Echanis: Yes, twenty years I was there at that ranch.

Echeverria: And you lived there on the ranch?

Echanis: Oh, yes.

Echeverria: In a small house?

Echanis: Yes.

Echeverria: Your children were born on the ranch there?

Echanis: Yes.

Echanis: Yes, all of them.

Echeverria: Do your children follow the Basque ways now?

Echanis: No, they're not Basque (pause).

Echeverria: Each time you came to a new place, you found a Basque hotel.

Echanis: Oh, yes. And there was one in San Francisco, also, a Basque hotel. In almost all the northern places, there was a Basque hotel.

Echeverria: They were places to find work?

Echanis: Yes, and they all would help you. Well, if you were a herder and they knew you, they knew you would come back. There you go.

Echeverria: They knew that you would pay them back?

Echanis: Yes. Almost all of the hotels were...in Boise, Idaho, at

one time there were eleven Basque hotels--all of them full.

Echeverria: Then in the years you worked with the Bastanchurys, you worked the lemons, oranges...

Echanis: Oh, yes, all citrus. Here I worked as a foreman. Then later, after about four years, I got tired of being a "picking boss," you know, and decided, "I'm going to quit. I'm going to do something else." Then a man who knew me--that Roy, who was my foreman when I came here--said to me that there was work with McCoy that was in Fullerton later with the cars.

Echeverria: McCoy-Mills?

Echanis: That man. Roy told him that he would find him a good man. He came to me, and I went over there to work.

Echeverria: And it was there that you learned Spanish--working with the Mexicans?

Echanis: Yes, earlier than that (tape changed).

Echeverria: Okay, Lorenzo, you were speaking of the ranch.

Echanis: Yes, I went to work with McCoy-Mill. They were paying \$250, and the rest was free, you know, the water, the house, the electricity--all free.

Echeverria: Then it was a good deal?

Echanis: Yes. I worked there for something like five years. After that they sold the ranch.

Echeverria: McCoy?

Echanis: Yes. They gave me \$500 every Christmas for a Christmas present. They were very good to me.

Echeverria: This life was much better for you than herding?

Echanis: Oh, yes! After there, when that work finished, your father and I started the cantina as partners.

Echeverria: You have met many Basques in this area, haven't you?

Echanis: Oh, yes, there are many around here. Earlier, I knew so many because we came to Chino from here to play ball (jai alai). Your Uncle Laida and the Hueca family...in Puente you would meet all of the Basque families. But now all of them are dead.

Echeverria: But even when I was younger, we went many times to the hotel for a fiesta or a dance or a gathering.

Echanis: Oh, yes. In Chino all of my brothers, your uncle, and others would go play cards (mus), ball (jai alai), whatever. Sometimes we would come to the old ranch (Chilibolosts), and all of us would get together there to play ball. It used to be we'd go to play poker in Chino and know almost everyone, but now almost all of them have gone.

Echeverria: Lorenzo, of those Basques who came here, more have stayed than gone back?

Echanis: Oh, yes. Many of them married, and most of them stayed here. The only ones who go back there are those who have made a little money and go back and buy some land and all that. I knew some Basques here in Santa Ana that had a chicken ranch. They had two daughters, and they were named Panadero. He was a very good man, but he was a little

sickly. They made a little money with the chickens, and they went back to Spain. They had two girls, and when they moved to Guernica, the girls began to cry and did not want to stay there. They didn't like it there at all. They didn't like absolutely nothing!

Echeverria: Life here and life there are very different?

Echanis: Yes. They had to return here. I knew another in Boise, Idaho--whom they called Barbero, who had a hotel. He made contraband whiskey, and he made lots of money this way. He went over there, bought a house and everything. He didn't like it even a bit. He decided it would be better to go back to Boise and live where he was before and went back to the same street he used to live on. They didn't like it.

Echeverria: Was it the same for you?

Echanis: The same.

Echeverria: It would have been difficult to return?

Echanis: Oh, yes. No comparison. I don't say to go for two or three months if you have the money. But outside of that, no. No, I wouldn't want it a bit.

Echeverria: Is life there harder?

Echanis: Very hard. For a working life, it is very hard. I don't say like the Mexicans that work here a little while, have a good time, then say "Viva Mexico." I don't say that, no ma'am.

Echeverria: What do you say then? "Viva America?"

Echanis: "Viva America," I say. They couldn't take me away.

Echeverria: When you think about yourself, do you think you are more Basque or more American?

Echanis: Well, I came here, and in 1917 they called me to be a soldier. I was not an American or anything, really. They asked me what if there were a war between Spain and America. I told them, "I will go for America." I signed it (loyalty papers). And then after that they called me to go to the war (chuckle).

Echeverria: Oh, really?

Echanis: Yes. I was herding then, and because I was a herder, they told me that those who were working the sheep were working for the government--raising food.

Echeverria: Yes, and also wool?

Echanis: Yes.

Echeverria: This was the First World War?

Echanis: World War I, yes, 1917, and they didn't take me.

Echeverria: But your ways are Basque, aren't they?

Echanis: Oh, yes, it's natural. I am Basque. Later, in 1940, I became an American. I was really proud of it.

Echeverria: It was an important day for you?

Echanis: Yes. I went to Los Angeles, and we had a big dinner. I don't remember the name of the place now. There were around twelve of us. We wanted to celebrate.

Echeverria: Then your decision to leave Motrico was right?

Echanis: Oh, yes, there is no comparison. Life is very hard there. As I have told you before when we talked, even the last time I was there, the poor young women how they worked. For nothing! But what can they do? They have no other place. Fifty cents a day, twelve hours a day. I have seen it many times until their knees bleed in the hotels-- cleaning stairs of stone from top to bottom on their hands and knees and there like this (stooped over low). And the owners, the bastards, whatever little thing they would do, they would hit them in the face! No, no, I don't like that type of life!

Echeverria: Lorenzo, when you think of your life, do you think you've had some luck?

Echanis: Yes, I have had some luck. Oh, I have had some failings, but never was I without something in my pocket in America. Never, in America. In the Depression I still had a little money--all the time. Then your father and I bought into a business there with Sam Becker, and we were making money. We made \$14,000 there each. We had a difficulty with whiskey, and they closed the place for one month. Then we fixed it up and spent all our money to fix it (laughter)! I told your dad, "Why don't we go to another place with all this money?" Because the place was not our own.

Echeverria: The same question you asked your brother earlier? Why earn money for someone else?

Echanis: Yes, and then we spent all the money and lost it. We didn't make anything. And then I had the good fortune to enter into business, thank God, with your mother and uncle. I was looking for work in the ranches, after all of that. I left your father, saying, "What are we going to do here?" "Well, I am going to stay here," he said. (Chuckle) So I found some work with someone who would hire me to drive a tractor, but I told him I was too old to drive tractor then. I don't know if you know that Tony from Andaluz. Later...

Echeverria: Yes.

Echanis: Well, he was looking for a man to hire, and he called me to work. Later, he decided he wanted to go back to Spain.

Echeverria: Antonio?

Echanis: Yes, and I told your uncle and mother, "Why don't we buy that place?" And the three of us did it, and we had luck.

Echeverria: Yes, it was a good decision (chuckle)!

Echeverria: When you went to Spain to visit Motrico again after some twenty years, how did you find it?

Echanis: Oh, a little different.

Echeverria: Still difficult?

Echanis: A little better but still very behind. There were people there very behind. The houses there...very few had

electricity; very few had water. Still they had to go to the river to get water to drink, to clean clothes, all those things. But there are some that have water in the houses and everything. Cutting the firewood, also...with an axe only. Now my nephew with my niece, they have an electric saw. But some houses are still very behind. I had a friend. He was named Cortnes. He was very young. He married one from one of the houses up on the hills. He married one named Maitia. But his house was a disgrace. One couldn't eat there! There were thousands of flies, and every spoonful you took you didn't know what it was. I was ashamed not to eat, and I said to myself, "How in the devil do they live like that?" (upset)

Echeverria: And the floor...what?

Echanis: Well, it was dirt.

Echeverria: Still, huh?

Echanis: Yes.

Echeverria: Well, Lorenzo, a million thanks, eh?

Echanis: Oh, it's nothing.

Echeverria: Oh, no, the second time (laughter)?

Echanis: No, those people there are still poor. Some have a little money, and they live normal. They work the land and have a little more. But the majority are poor.