

DOCUMENTARY AND NARRATIVE
CULTURAL HISTORY MATERIALS

Exhibits

I. 19th Century

1. The first census of Los Angeles, 1781.

2. Pio Pico correspondence, 1846-1849. California Historical Quarterly, vol. 13 (June 1934).

3. "Editorial," El Clamor Publico, March 29, 1856.

4. "Letter to the Editor," El Clamor Publico, March 21, 1857.

5. "To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives," Antonio Maria Pico, February 21, 1859. Manuscript HN 514, Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

6. "A Measure of Their Former Power," Carey McWilliams, North from Mexico, (1948), pp. 92-93.

7. "Since 1880 Mexicans," Carey McWilliams, North from Mexico, pp. 168-169.

II. 1900 to 1941

8. "The Colonia Complex," Carey McWilliams, North from Mexico, pp. 217-221.

9. "Que Maravilla," Carey McWilliams, North from Mexico, pp. 223-225.

10. "We are Heading Toward Life," Ricardo Flores Magon, Revolucion, July 1907.

11. "Carta a Raul Palma, Los Angeles," Lucille Norma (daughter of Ricardo Flores Magon), January 12, 1923.

12. "By the Spring of 1922," Alejandro Morales, The Brick People, (1982), pp. 120-121.

13. "Then I Thought About the Time with the Grapes," Anthony Quinn, Original Sin, (1972), pp. 112-114.

14. "The United States, Octavio Decided," Alejandro Morales, The Brick People, (1982), pp. 114-115.

15. "Manifiesto," Central Committee of the Confederation of Mexican Labor Unions, Los Angeles, December 1927.
16. "Conditions of Mexicans in California," Governor C.C. Young's Fact Finding Committee, Report, October 1930.
17. "Getting Rid of the Mexican," Carey McWilliams, The American Mercury, March 1933.
18. "Resolutions"; the 1939 Congress of Spanish Speaking People, Los Angeles.
19. "Plotting a Riot and the Origin of Pachanguismo," Carey McWilliams, North from Mexico, pp. 235-243.
20. "Blood on the Pavement," Carey McWilliams, North from Mexico, pp. 244-255.
21. Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the United States; Special Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, 78th Congress, 2nd Session, 1944, vol. 9, pt. 2, pp. 1566-1656.
22. "El Hoyo," Art Godinez, 201 (1982).
23. "Summer Time. Sunday Morning," J.L. Navarro, Blue Day on Main Street, (1973), pp. 50-51.
24. "My Time had Come," Danny Santiago, Famous All Over Town, (1983), pp. 14-15.
25. "We'll Say that Ester is Getting Married," Laura del Fuego, Maravilla, (1989), pp. 15-19.
26. "Pobreza," Luis Rodriguez, 201 (1982).
27. "Each Street, Each Story," Marisela Norte, 201 (1982).
28. "Viva Kennedy," Louis F. Weschler and John F. Gallagher, Political Parties and Pressure Groups (1966), pp. 60-63.
- 1965 to 1976
29. "Pocho's Progress," Time Magazine, April 1967.
30. "Los Angeles," Ben Luna, 201.

III.

1941 to 1965

31. "Tio Tacos are People Too," Frank Sifuentes, 201.
 32. "Brown Power Unity Seen Behind School Disorder," Los Angeles Times, March 17, 1968.
 33. "Mexican Americans in Uplheaval," Jose Antonio Villareal (author, Pocho, 1959), Los Angeles Times, September 18, 1966.
 34. "Retrato de un Bato Loco," Marcus Duran, Con Safos (1970).
 35. "Catolicos por la Raza," group statement, La Raza (1970).
 36. "Chicano Power, Congress of Mexican American Unity," La Raza (1968).
 37. "La Campana de Los Pobres," La Raza (1968).
 38. "Chicana Symposium, Corazon de Aztlan," La Raza (1969).
 39. "Instinctively, we rushed forward pulled by an overwhelming surge of energy," Laura del Fuego, Matavilla, (1989).
 40. "August 29," Consuelo Norte (1994).
- V. 1975 to 1995
41. "Latinos: Building Power from the Ground Up," Louis Freedburg, California Government and Politics Annual, 1977-81.
 42. "Linda Griego for Mayor of Los Angeles," Emily's List, February 1993.
 43. Lyrics, Los Angelinos, The Eastside Renaissance, Ruben Guevara, 1932.
 44. "Urban Exile," Harry Gamboa, Artweek, vol. 15, October 20, 1984.
 45. "Sweet 15 Dispute: Archdiocese Act for Guidelines on Quinceaeras," Nuestro Tiempo, April 3, 1990.
 46. "Just Another Painter from East L.A., Gronk Goes to LACMA," LA Weekly, March 18, 1994.
 47. "Cultural Mystery Tour, Bus Trip to L.A.'s Eastside," Los Angeles Times, July 7, 1994.
 48. "Ciudad de Los Angeles," I & III Victor Manuel Valle, 201 (1932).

49. "The Music Moves the Streets," (review of Steven Loza, Barrio Rhythm, Mexican American Music in Los Angeles), Lynell George, Los Angeles Times, Book Review, September 28, 1993.

5. *Mestizaje* The First Census of Los Angeles, 1781*

Despite the enduring myth that "Spaniards" settled the borderlands, it is quite clear that the majority of the pioneers were Mexicans of mixed blood. In New Spain the three races of mankind, Caucasian, Mongol, and Negro, blended to form an infinite variety of blood strains, and this blending continued as Mexicans settled among aborigines in the Southwest. Thus *mestizaje*, or racial mixture, was so common that today the vast majority of all Mexicans are of mixed blood. Yet until this century the Mexican upper class viewed *mestizos* as inferior and placed a high value on their own *pureza de sangre* (purity of blood). This view endures among some Mexicans and Mexican Americans today.

The first census of El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Angeles del Rio de Porciúncula, taken in the year of its founding, 1781, reveals the truly Mexican origins of that pueblo's pioneer settlers. Only two of them claimed to be Spanish. The remainder were Indian, *mestizo* (in its narrowest sense, the child of an Indian and a Spaniard), *mulatto* (the child of a Negro and a Spaniard), Negro, coyote (the child of a *mestizo* and an Indian), and *chino* (the child of an Indian and a *salta-atras*—a person with Negroid features born of apparently white parents). Notice also, the paternalistic nature of Spanish government so evident in this census report.

First Census of Los Angeles Peninsula of California

Census of the population of the City of the Queen of the Angels, founded September 4th, 1781, on the banks of Porciúncula River, distant 45 leagues from the Presidio of San Diego, 27 leagues from the site selected for the establishment of the Presidio of Santa Barbara, and about a league and a half from the San Gabriel Mission; including the names and ages of the residents, their wives and children. Also an

*"First Census of Los Angeles," trans. Thomas Workman Temple II, in *Historical Society of Southern California: Annual Publications*, 15, Part 2 (1931), 148-49. Reprinted by permission of the Historical Society of Southern California.

account of the number of animals and their kind, as distributed; with a note describing those to be held in common as sites of the different kinds, farming implements, forges, and tools for carpenter and cast work, and other things as received.

(1)	Lara, Josef de, Spaniard, Maria Antonio Campos, india sabina, Josef Julian, Juana de Jesus, Maria Faustina, (2) Navarro, Josef Antonio, mestizo, Maria Rufina Dorotea, mulata, Josef Maria, Josef Clemente, Maria Josefa, (3) Rosas, Basillio, indian Maria Manuela Calixtra, mulata, Jose Maximo, Carlos, Antonio Rosalino, Josef Marcelino, Juan Esteban, Maria Josefa, (4) Mesa, Antonio, negro Ana Cetrudis Lopez, mulata, Antonio Maria, Maria Paula, (5) Villavicencio, Antonio, Spaniard, Marta de los Santos Seferina, indian, Maria Antonio Josefa, (6) Vanegas, Josef, indian Maria Maxima Aguilar, indian, Cosme Damien,	50 23, 4, 6, 2. 42, 47, 10, 9, 4, 67, 43, 15, 12, 7, 4, 2, 8, 38, 27, 8, 10, 30, 26, 8, 28, 20, 1.
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(7)	Rosas, Alejandro, indian Juana Rodriguez, coyote indian	19, 20, 25,
(8)	Rodriguez, Pablo, indian, Maria Rosalia Noriega, indian, Maria Antonia,	26, 1. 30, 24.
(9)	Canero, Manuel, mulato, Maria Tomasa, mulata,	55, 40,
(10)	Quintero, Luis, negro, Maria Petra Rubio, mulata Josef Clemente, Maria Gertrudis, Maria Concepcion, Tomasa, Rafaela,	3, 16, 9, 7, 6, 22,
(11)	Moreno, Jose, mulato, Maria Guadalupe Gertrudis,	19, 50, 11.
(12)	Rodriguez, Antonio Miranda, chino, Juana Maria,	

NOTE

That in addition to the cattle, horses, and mules, distributed to the first 11 settlers, as set forth, they were granted building lots on which they have constructed their houses, which for the present are built of palisades, roofed with earth; also 2 irrigated fields for the cultivation of 2 fanegas of corn to each settler; in addition, a plow share, a hoe and an axe; and for the community, the proper number of carts, wagons, and breeding animals as set forth above, for which the settlers must account to the Royal Exchequer at the prices fixed: with the corresponding charges made against their accounts, as found in the Book of Poblacion, wherein are also to be found the building lots, planting fields, farming utensils, and animals belonging to the settler, Antonio Miranda Rodriguez, which will be granted to him, as soon as he appears at said Pueblo.

San Gabriel, November 19, 1781.

shield by which to defend their usurpation; which they have been unable to obtain notwithstanding that they find themselves aided by the influence enjoyed by two or three Mexicans who traitorously embraced the enemy's cause in dishonour of the Mother Country, they being Don Juan Bandini, deputy of the Most Excellent Assembly, Don Pedro C. Carrillo, receiver of the Custom-house of San Diego, and the 2nd Ensign of the Presidial Company of San Diego, Don Santiago E. Arguello, who is now in that post exercising the functions of civil official and of Military Commandant of that post, under the Government of the United States as your Excellency will learn by the note which I attach . . . this officer came to the frontier of Lower California in my pursuit and to raise the enemy flag, trampling that of Mexico on September 23 last.

Plo Pico to the Minister of Interior and Foreign Relations,
Hermosillo, Sonora, March 29, 1848.

I do not wish to detract Your Excellency's attention with my complaints, but allow me to say this, that for three years I have served the office of Governor of California without having seen during all that time one single real of my salary; furthermore, I have paid out of my private purse the salaries of the Secretary of my Administration, the cost of stationery, and various other expenses that have been necessary in my emigration. In my country I possess some wealth, and now with all communications cut between this State and that of my birth I am unable to furnish myself with resources of any kind. This has forced me to request, from Guaymas, that that Ministry might furnish me with some amount on account of my credit, but it has already been seen that no notice has been taken of my request.

I now entreat from His Excellency the President permission to return to my country, since I am not permitted to be of any use or service here, and that I be allowed to withdraw in a way honorable alike for me and for the people whom I have had the honor of governing.

California will undoubtedly cease to belong to the Mexican family, it seems as if Fate has thus decreed it, but let the rest of the Republic take leave of it with decorum, and let it not be delivered to its new

brothers, the States of the North, as if it were a flock of sheep or a band of horses. Let its Governor be treated, and in his person the people of California, with dignity. We want and have always wanted to be nothing if not Mexicans, and we have given brilliant proofs of our affection, but let not our cup of sorrow that our separation naturally brings us be embittered more by humiliating and scorning us.

If our dismemberment is necessary for the health of the rest of our brothers, let us be the victim, the sacrificial goat that shall pay for all the sins of the people. Providence undoubtedly wishes that it shall be thus; but although separated, we would like to conserve some remembrances of past relations and not to remember only that we have been objects of scorn abandoned to misery.

This occasion gives me for the last time the opportunity to offer Your Excellency the expressions of my highest consideration and esteem.

God and Liberty, Hermosillo, March 20, 1848.

Plo Pico

6. "The sacrificial goat" Pío Pico, 1846-48*

The following excerpts from Governor Pío Pico's official correspondence reveal the desperate situation of a California official who wanted to remain loyal during the Mexican War. In May 1846, even before he learned of the outbreak of war with the United States, Governor Pico warned his home government that hostilities seemed imminent and that reinforcements were needed if the Californios were to defend themselves. Help failed to arrive, however, and by August, Pico had fled to Baja California, exhorting his countrymen to resist and to have faith. Mexico would eventually send help.

Pío Pico remained in exile for a year and a half, begging the central government for help and proclaiming the loyalty of the Californios. By March 1848 even the staunchly patriotic Pico had lost faith in Mexico. None of his letters had been answered by the foreign minister. Embittered, Pico returned to California in July 1848, making a pathetic attempt to regain his office of governor. Clearly, loyalty had not paid.

Pío Pico to the Minister of Foreign Relations,
Los Angeles, May 25, 1846.

Excellent Sir:

The uncertainty in which we find ourselves in this Department concerning the true state existing at this date in the political affairs between our Government and the Republic of the United States of the North, the excessive introduction of armed adventurers from the Nation, leaves us no doubt of the war that we shall have with the North Americans. The critical situation in which we find ourselves constrains me more and more to politely arouse His Excellency the President through Your Excellency's mediation so that he may take care of us efficaciously; providing us with the necessary resources for an honorable resistance, that may serve as a warning to the depraved plans of that piratical Nation.

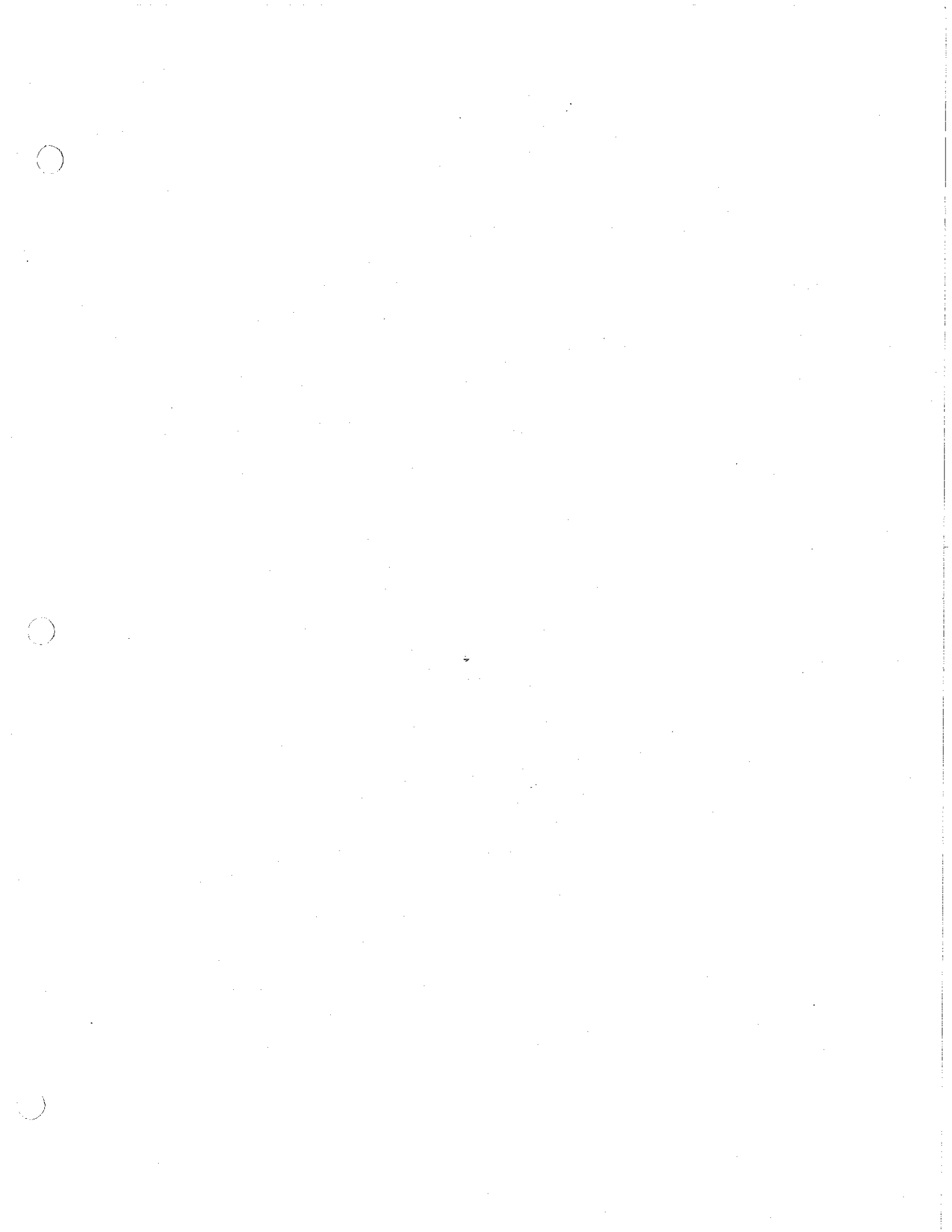
*George Tays, ed. and trans., "Pío Pico's Correspondence with the Mexican Government, 1846-1848," *California Historical Quarterly* 13, no. 2 (June 1934): 103-4, 122-23, 114, 148-49. Reprinted by permission of the California Historical Society.

Marzo 29, De 1856, p. 3

El Clamor Público
Periódico Independiente Literario
Francisco P. Ramirez, Editor

Desde que presentamos El Clamor Público a los habitantes de esta ciudad y Estado fué recibido con las mas vivas manifestaciones de su aprobacion, y desde entonces hemos adelantado nuestra impreza tanto como nos ha sido posible, y por ser el primer año de su publicacion, su acogida ha sido muy favorable. Pronto e independiente en sus denuncias y abusos del poder, puede haber hecho injusticia temporal a individuos, pero jamas ha sido infiel a los Principios, ni sordo a los clamores del oprimido ni el injuriado por las leyes y la preocupacion. En sus columnas se abogan las teorias para la mejora del bienestar general, y el fomento de la industria y el progreso; mientras que ha resistido firmemente los atentados para degradar y proscribir a cualesquier clase por causa de la diversidad de su nacion, creencia o religion. Y apesar de los mas grandes obstaculos El Clamor Público ha adelantado en la apreciacion popular desde el dia de su origen; particularmente ha sido invaluable para los nativos del pais, y agradecidos por sus repetidas muestras de su proteccion y aprobacion de nuestra conducta editorial, continuara siendo el campeon y el mas acerrimo defensor de sus intereses.

Ever since we presented The Public Outcry to the inhabitants of this city and state it has been received with the most lively declarations of your approval, and from then on we have advanced our printed matter as much as possible, and for being the first year of its publication, its reception has been very favorable. Quick and independent in its denunciations and abuses of power, could have done temporary injustice to individuals, but never has been unfaithful to principles, nor dear to the outcries of the oppressed nor the injured by the laws and the preoccupation. In its columns theories, are advocated for the betterment of the general well-being, and the fostering of industry and progress; while it has firmly resisted attempts to degrade and proscribe to any class for cause of the diversity of its nation, belief or religion. And inspite of some great obstacles The Public Outcry has advanced in acceptance to those native of the country. Particularly it has been invaluable to those native of the country. Grateful for your repeated demonstrations of your support and consent of our editorial conduct, it will continue to be the champion and the most vigorous defender of your interests.



4. "Hanged as suspects" *El Clamor Público, 1857**

Injustice toward Mexican Americans, and the failure of the law to protect them, was not confined to the gold fields of California, but existed throughout the state. When Coronel returned to Los Angeles, he must have discovered that law enforcement had broken down there, too, and vigilante committees were formed to take over where government officials failed. Although some Californios participated in and approved of vigilante justice, more often the Spanish-speaking people of Los Angeles were its victims. Historian Leonard Pitt found that by 1854 "the Spanish-speaking of Los Angeles felt oppressed by a double standard of justice such as some of them had previously experienced in the gold mines." "Every important lynch-law episode and most minor ones involved the Spanish-speaking."¹

The following letter describes the retaliation made by the good citizens of Los Angeles against a band of thieves who were of Mexican origin. This letter, written from Los Angeles, apparently by an unidentified Frenchman, appeared in the March 4, 1857 issue of *Le Phare*, a French-language newspaper published in San Francisco. It was translated into Spanish by Francisco P. Ramirez, editor of *El Clamor Público* of Los Angeles. Ramirez, a man proficient in French, English, and Spanish, believed that the letter accurately reflected events in Los Angeles. What would have resulted if Mexican Americans had been guilty of similar brutality?

Los Angeles
February 21

Mr. Editor:

Now you must have learned through the newspapers of our city of the sad events that have occurred in the country during the present month. But these newspapers have omitted many circumstances, in spite of their being well known and of public notoriety. Under no pretext should their silence be excused. Journalism is the advanced sentinel of civilization; its life is a life of continual combat, constantly on the defense. . . .

**El Clamor Público*, March 21, 1857. Trans. David J. Weber.

1. Leonard Pitt, *The Decline of the Californios: A Social History of the Spanish-speaking Californians, 1846-1890* (Berkeley: 1968), pp. 180, 154.

For three months a band of thieves has run about the streets and outlying areas of this city by night, abandoning themselves to all kinds of wickedness, including the most refined highway robbery. Various persons have complained to the authorities, but the authorities respond: "Do you have witnesses? Do you want to pay to have them arrested?" And the band continued robbing and killing with all security, by the light of day and in the middle of the city under the chin of the police officials who seem to view this as a comedy. This is not strange; [they say] "the Mexicans are killing each other" . . . Four or five Americans have established a Vigilante Committee, made a call to all the population for the public security, and named captains of a company to go in pursuit of the bandits. Here is where the drama begins with all its horrors, and wrapped in a mystery so strange that one is obliged to believe that the bandits were not the persecuted ones. In a few words, a company (all Americans), its captain Sanford, headed toward the Mission of San Gabriel. All the Mexican residents in that place were arrested and treated with unqualified brutality. Two of these unfortunates had been arrested at the entrance of the Mission. They had to submit to an interrogation of the most provocative sort. Intimidated by the threats, and impelled by the instinct of self preservation, they began to run, especially when they saw the captain draw his pistol. But, ay! at the first movement that they made, a general volley followed. One fell wounded from various shots. The other was able to reach a lake or marsh. He abandoned his horse and concealed himself in the rushes. Vain efforts. The American hand arrived, set fire to the marsh, and very soon, among the general cries of gaiety, they discovered the head of the unfortunate above the flames. A second volley and all was done.—I deceive myself. It was not finished so quickly. The body, loaded over a horse, was transported to the Mission in the midst of cries and shouts of joy and gaiety. Here, overtaken by horror, thought stops because it is impossible to find expressions to describe the scene which took place and was related to me by many witnesses worthy of trust. The body was thrown to the ground in the midst of the mob. One being, with a human face, stepped forward with a knife in his hand. . . . With one hand he took the head of the dead man by its long hair, separated it from the body, flung it a short distance and struck his dagger in the heart of the cadaver. Afterward, returning to the head, he made it roll with his foot into the middle of his band and the rabble, amidst the cries and the hurrahs of the greater num-

ber. . . . Is it not horrible? But wait, we have not yet seen all. Another band arrived from another place with two Californios. They had been arrested as suspects, one of them going in search of some oxen, the other to his daily work. They were conducted into the middle of the mob. The cries of "To death! To death!" were heard from all sides. The cutter of heads entered his house, coming out with some ropes, and the two unfortunates were hanged—despite the protests of their countrymen and their families. Once hanged from the tree, the ropes broke and the hapless ones were finished being murdered by shots or knife thrusts. The cutter of heads was fatigued, or his knife did not now cut! Perhaps you will believe that this very cruel person was an Indian from the mountains, one of those barbarians who lives far from all civilization in the Sierra Nevada! Wrong. That barbarian, that mutilator of cadavers, is the Justice of the Peace of San Gabriel. . . . He is a citizen of the United States, an American of pure blood. . . .

Afterwards, two Mexicans were found hanging from a tree, and near there another with two bullets in the head.

On the road from Tejon another company had encountered two poor peddlers (always Mexicans) who were arrested and hanged as suspects.

The same issue of *El Clamor Público*, which carried the story of indiscriminate retaliation against Mexicans in the Los Angeles area also published the following notice:

Meeting.

We have been informed that all the individuals of *la raza Española*, residents of this county, will hold a meeting in this city for the purpose of asking the competent authorities to take suitable measures to pass sentence upon the Justice of the Peace of the Mission of San Gabriel for horribly murdering three innocent Mexicans, residents of that place.

9. "Compelled to sell, title by little by little"

Antonio Maria Pico, et al., 1859*

As Californios found themselves embroiled in costly and time-consuming litigation to confirm titles to their land, they did not stand by as passive witnesses to their demise. Rather, they fought back by any means possible, legal or illegal, to retain their property. As this forcefully argued petition to the United States Congress shows, the Californios understood well the forces working against them. Here they criticize high taxes, which they found ruinous, and the Land Act of 1851. They suggest that the Land Act was unnecessary and that it violated their rights as citizens under the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo.

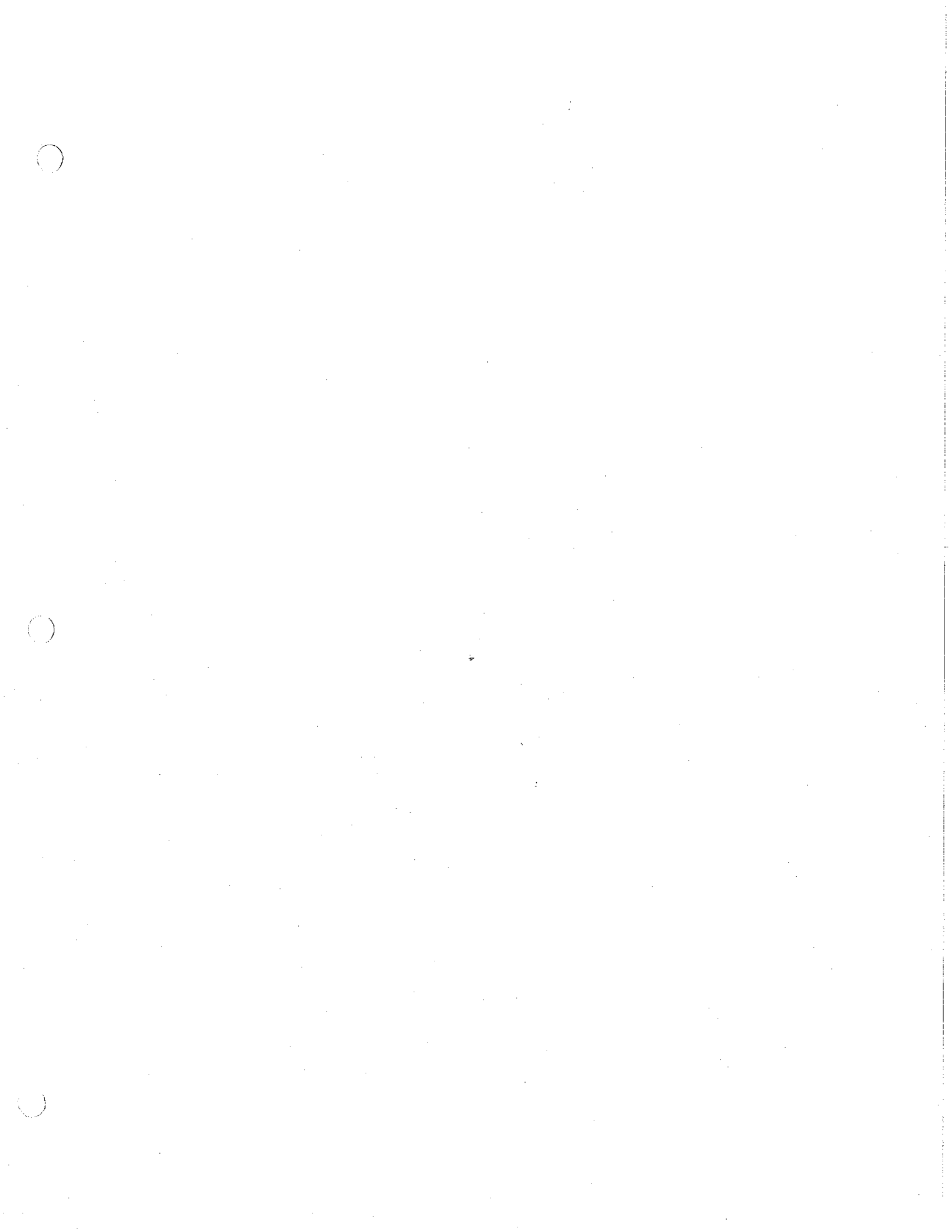
Although historian Paul Gates has found that 346 of the 813 claims for Spanish and Mexican period land grants in California were made by non-Mexicans, it is interesting that nearly all of the fifty signatures on this petition belonged to Hispanics. The Spanish-speaking landowners seem to have had greater difficulty than Anglos in adapting to United States judicial procedures.

TO THE HONORABLE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

We, the undersigned, residents of the state of California, and some of us citizens of the United States, previously citizens of the Republic of Mexico, respectfully say:

That during the war between the United States and Mexico the officers of the United States, as commandants of the land and sea forces, on several occasions offered and promised in the most solemn manner to the inhabitants of California, protection and security of their persons and their property and the annexation of the said state of California to the American Union, impressing upon them the great

*Petition of Antonio Maria Pico *et al.*, to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States. Manuscript HM 514 in the Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Reprinted by permission of the Huntington Library. This item has previously been published in the appendix to Robert Glass Cleland, *Cattle on a Thousand Hills: Southern California, 1850-1880*, 2nd. ed. (San Marino, Calif.: 1951), 239-43.



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advantages to be derived from their being citizens of the United States, as was promised them.

That, in consequence of such promises and representations, very few of the inhabitants of California opposed the invasion; some of them welcomed the invaders with open arms; a great number of them acclaimed the new order with joy, giving a warm reception to their guests, for those inhabitants had maintained very feeble relations with the government of Mexico and had looked with envy upon the development, greatness, prosperity, and glory of the great northern republic, to which they were bound for reasons of commercial and personal interests, and also because its principles of freedom had won their friendliness.

When peace was established between the two nations by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, they joined in the general rejoicing with their new American fellow countrymen, even though some—a very few indeed—decided to remain in California as Mexican citizens, in conformity with the literal interpretation of that solemn instrument; they immediately assumed the position of American citizens that was offered them, and since then have conducted themselves with zeal and faithfulness and with no less loyalty than those whose great fortune it was to be born under the flag of the North American republic—believing, thus, that all their rights were insured in the treaty, which declares that *their property shall be inviolably protected and insured*; seeing the realization of the promises made to them by United States officials; trusting and hoping to participate in the prosperity and happiness of the great nation of which they now had come to be an integral part, and in which, if it was true that they now found the value of their possessions increased, that was also to be considered compensation for their sufferings and privations.

The inhabitants of California, having had no choice but to dedicate themselves to the rural and pastoral life and allied occupations, ignorant even of the laws of their own country, and without the assistance of lawyers (of whom there were so few in California) to advise them on legal matters, elected from among themselves their judges, who had no knowledge of the intricate technical terms of the law and who were, of course, incompetent and ill-fitted to occupy the delicate position of forensic judicature. Scattered as the population was over a large territory, they could hardly hope that the titles under which their ancestors held and preserved their lands, in many cases for over half a century, would be able to withstand a scrupulously

critical examination before a court. They heard with dismay of the appointment, by Act of Congress, of a Commission with the right to examine all titles and confirm or disapprove them, as their judgment considered equitable. Though this honorable body has doubtless had the best interests of the state at heart, still it has brought about the most disastrous effects upon those who have the honor to subscribe their names to this petition, for, even though all landholders possessing titles under the Spanish or Mexican governments were not forced by the letter of the law to present them before the Commission for confirmation, nevertheless all those titles were at once considered doubtful, their origin questionable, and, as a result, worthless for confirmation by the Commission; all landholders were thus *compelled* to submit their titles to the Commission for confirmation, under the alternative that, if they were not submitted, the lands would be considered public property.

The undersigned, ignorant, then, of the forms and proceedings of an American court of justice, were obliged to engage the services of American lawyers to present their claims, paying them enormous fees. Not having other means with which to meet those expenses but their lands, they were compelled to give up part of their property, in many cases as much as a fourth of it, and in other cases even more.

The discovery of gold attracted an immense number of immigrants to this country, and, when they perceived that the titles of the old inhabitants were considered doubtful and their validity questionable, they spread themselves over the land as though it were public property, taking possession of the improvements made by the inhabitants, many times seizing even their houses (where they had lived for many years with their families), taking and killing the cattle and destroying their crops; so that those who before had owned great numbers of cattle that could have been counted by the thousands, now found themselves without any, and the men who were the owners of many leagues of land now were deprived of the peaceful possession of even one vara.

The expenses of the new state government were great, and the money to pay for these was only to be derived from the tax on property, and there was little property in this new state but the above-mentioned lands. Onerous taxes were levied by new laws, and if these were not paid the property was put up for sale. Deprived as they were of the use of their lands, from which they had now no lucrative returns, the owners were compelled to mortgage them in

order to assume the payment of taxes already due and constantly increasing. With such mortgages upon property greatly depreciated (because of its uncertain status), without crops or rents, the owners of those lands were not able to borrow money except at usurious rates of interest. The usual interest rate at that time was high, but with such securities it was exorbitant; and so they were forced either to sell or lose their lands; in fact, they were forced to borrow money even for the purchase of the bare necessities of life. Hoping that the Land Commission would take quick action in the revision of titles and thus relieve them from the state of penury in which they found themselves, they mortgaged their lands, paying compound interest at the rate of from three to ten per cent a month. The long-awaited relief would not arrive; action from the Commission was greatly delayed; and, even after the Commission would pronounce judgment on the titles, it was still necessary to pass through a rigorous ordeal in the District Court; and some cases are, even now, pending before the Supreme Court of the nation. And in spite of the final confirmation, too long a delay was experienced (in many cases it is still being experienced), awaiting the surveys to be made by the United States Surveyor-General. The general Congress overlooked making the necessary appropriations to that end, and the people were then obliged to face new taxes to pay for the surveys, or else wait even longer while undergoing the continued and exhausting demands of high and usurious taxes. Many persons assumed the payment of the surveys and this act was cause for objection from Washington, the work of those surveyors rejected, and the patents refused, for the very reason that they themselves had paid for the surveys. More than 800 petitions were presented to the Land Commission, and already 10 years of delays have elapsed and only some 50 patents have been granted.

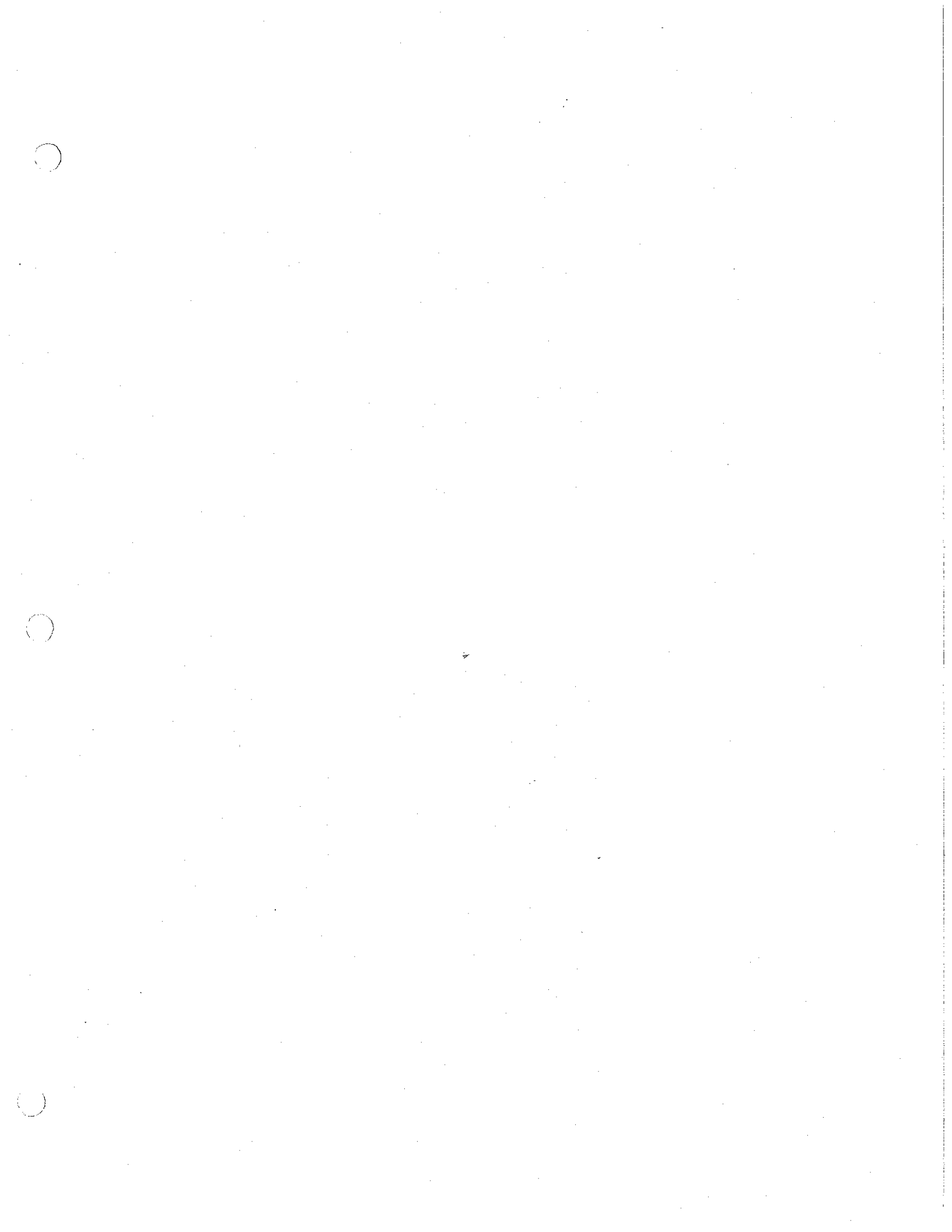
The petitioners, finding themselves unable to face such payments because of the rates of interest, taxes, and litigation expenses, as well as having to maintain their families, were compelled to sell, little by little, the greater part of their old possessions. Some, who at one time had been the richest landholders, today find themselves without a foot of ground, living as objects of charity—and even in sight of the many leagues of land which, with many a thousand head of cattle, they once had called their own; and those of us who, by means of strict economy and immense sacrifices, have been able to preserve a small portion of our property, have heard to our great dismay that new legal projects are being planned to keep us still longer in suspense, consuming, to

the last iota, the property left us by our ancestors. Moreover, we see with deep pain that efforts are being made to induce those honorable bodies to pass laws authorizing *bills of review*, and other illegal proceedings, with a view to prolonging still further the litigation of our claims.

The manifest injustice of such an act must be clearly apparent to those honorable bodies when they consider that the native Californians were an agricultural people and that they have wished to continue so; but they have encountered the obstacle of the enterprising genius of the Americans, who have assumed possession of their lands, taken their cattle, and destroyed their woods, while the Californians have been thrown among those who were strangers to their language, customs, laws, and habits.

It would have been better for the state, and for those newly established in it, if all those titles to lands, the *expedientes* of which were properly registered in the Mexican archives, had been declared valid; if those holders of titles derived from former governments had been declared perpetual owners and presumptive possessors of the lands (in all civilized countries they would have been acknowledged legitimate owners of the land); and if the government, or any private person or official who might have pretensions to the contrary, should have been able to establish his claim only through a regular court of justice, in accordance with customary judicial procedure. Such a course would have increased the fame of the conquerors, won the faith and respect of the conquered, and contributed to the material prosperity of the nation at large.

San Francisco, February 21, 1850.
Antonio Maria Pico [and forty-nine others]



In Southern California, however, the *gente de razón* retained a measure of their former power and influence for some years after the conquest. Here they were concentrated in sufficient number so that they remained an important political factor through the 1880's. In most elections, from 1849 to 1880, the newcomers were pitted against the Spanish-speaking. "Down to the end of the 1870's," writes Owen O'Neil, "local politics in Southern California were complicated by a natural tendency to diverge on racial lines. Vast and complex family connections would make it impossible to trace these cleavages by any process so simple as noting Spanish names, but they were a real and potent factor which became more evident after 1865, when so many of the old Californians, once magnates of the land, were being crowded to the wall by economic misfortune." Among the first representatives of Santa Barbara County in the state legislature were such individuals as Pablo de la Guerra, Antonio María de la Guerra, Romauldo Pacheco (later lieutenant-governor), and J. Y. Cota. An Estudillo and a Coronel became state treasurers and, in Los Angeles, a member of the Sepúlveda family was elected to the bench. As late as 1870, native Californians outnumbered Anglo-Americans in Santa Barbara, owned more than a third of the property, and occupied most of the political positions; but, by the end of the decade, the native element was almost entirely eclipsed.

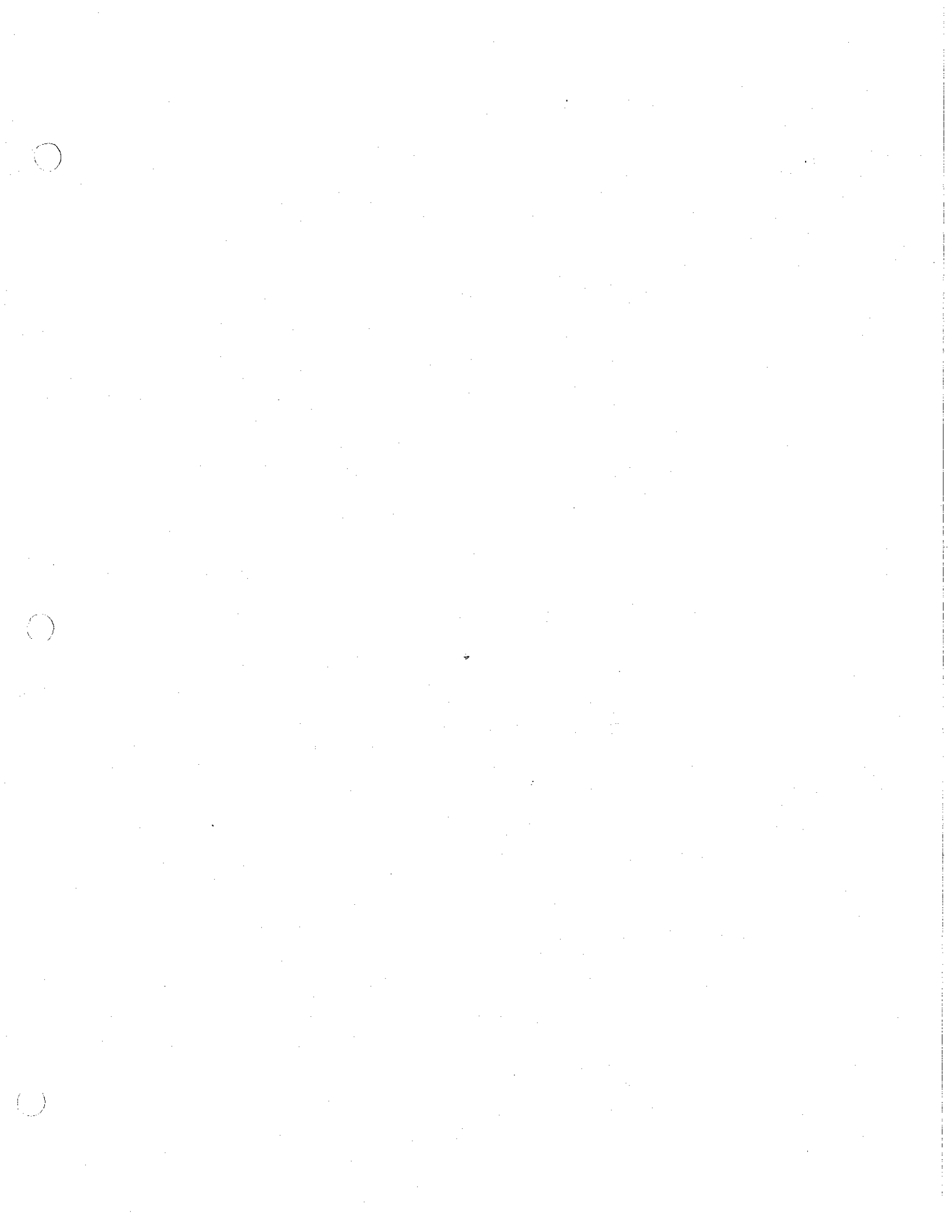
Unlike New Mexico, California was engulfed by a tidal wave of Anglo-American immigration after 1848. While the northern counties received the bulk of this immigration at the outset, the tide shifted to Southern California in the 1880's. "This overwhelming horde of new arrivals," wrote Willard, "took possession of the land and proceeded to make things over to their own taste." The Spanish-Mexican appearance of the Southern California towns changed overnight. As much as anything else, this transition was symbolized by the rapid disappearance of the adobes. "Death and emigration," wrote J. P. Widney in 1886, "are removing them [the Californians] from the land. . . . They no longer have unnumbered horses to ride and vast herds of sheep, from which one for a

meal would never be missed. Their broad acres now, with few exceptions, belong to the acquisitive American. . . . Grinding poverty has bred recklessness and moroseness."

If this process of change bore heavily upon the *gente de razón*, it had a simply crushing effect upon the Mexicans. One after another the economic functions for which they had been trained were taken from them. The Mexicans were excellent and well-trained vaqueros but this function disappeared with the collapse of the rancho regime. The rapid rise of the sheep industry after 1860 momentarily provided employment as herders and shearers; but the period of bonanza sheep-raising soon came to an end. The Mexican then reappears in the local annals as a farm worker and livery-stable hand. Long before the livery stables disappeared, however, the Chinese began to displace the Mexicans as farm workers. Visiting Southern California in 1888, Edward Robert noted that the "houses of the Spanish-speaking people are being taken over by the Chinese, who have invaded the adobe cottages." Anglo-Americans infiltrated New Mexico; they engulfed California. The difference in impact was also a function of the size of the Spanish-speaking element in the two states: 60,000 in New Mexico, 7,500 in California. In California, moreover, there was no buffer group to stand between the Spanish-speaking and the Anglo-Americans in the manner that ten thousand well-settled Pueblo Indians stood between Anglos and Hispanics in New Mexico.

With the eclipse of the Spanish-speaking element after 1880, few visible evidences of Spanish culture could be noted in California. Some Spanish words had been incorporated into the speech and important elements of Spanish-Mexican jurisprudence had been woven into the legal fabric of the state. A considerable amount of Spanish-Mexican blood flowed in the veins of local residents with such names as Travis, Kratner, Reeves, Locke, and Rowlands. Most of the Spanish street names had been Anglicized, although few of the place-names were changed. At the turn of the century it appeared—in fact it was generally assumed—that the Mexican influence had been thoroughly exorcized.

But what had really happened was that the "old life,"—the Mexican life,—of the province had retreated "along the coastal plains that reach from Los Angeles to Acapulco." Just as the Spanish-speaking had retreated from the northern counties to the southern, so they later withdrew, to some extent, to Mexico. But the number of Spanish-speaking residents in Southern California was at all times sufficient to keep vestiges of the earlier life and culture alive. Later, in the period from 1900 to 1920, these surviving elements of the old life were renewed and revived by a great influx of Mexican immigrants and the long-dormant conflict of cultures entered upon a new phase.



Since 1880 Mexicans have made up seventy per cent of the section crews and ninety per cent of the extra gangs on the principal western lines which regularly employ between 35,000 and 50,000 workmen in these categories. In 1930 the Santa Fe reported that it was then employing 14,000 Mexicans; the Rock Island 3,000; the Great Northern 1,500; and the Southern Pacific 10,000. According to the census of 1930, 70,799 Mexicans were engaged in "transportation and communication" mostly as common laborers on the western lines and as maintenance workers on the street-car systems of the Southwest. In Kansas and Nebraska, Mexican settlements will be found to extend along the rail lines while the colonies of Kansas City and Chicago are outgrowths of Mexican railroad labor camps. As late as 1928 the boxcar labor camps of the railroads housed 469 Mexican men, 155 women, and 372 children in Chicago.

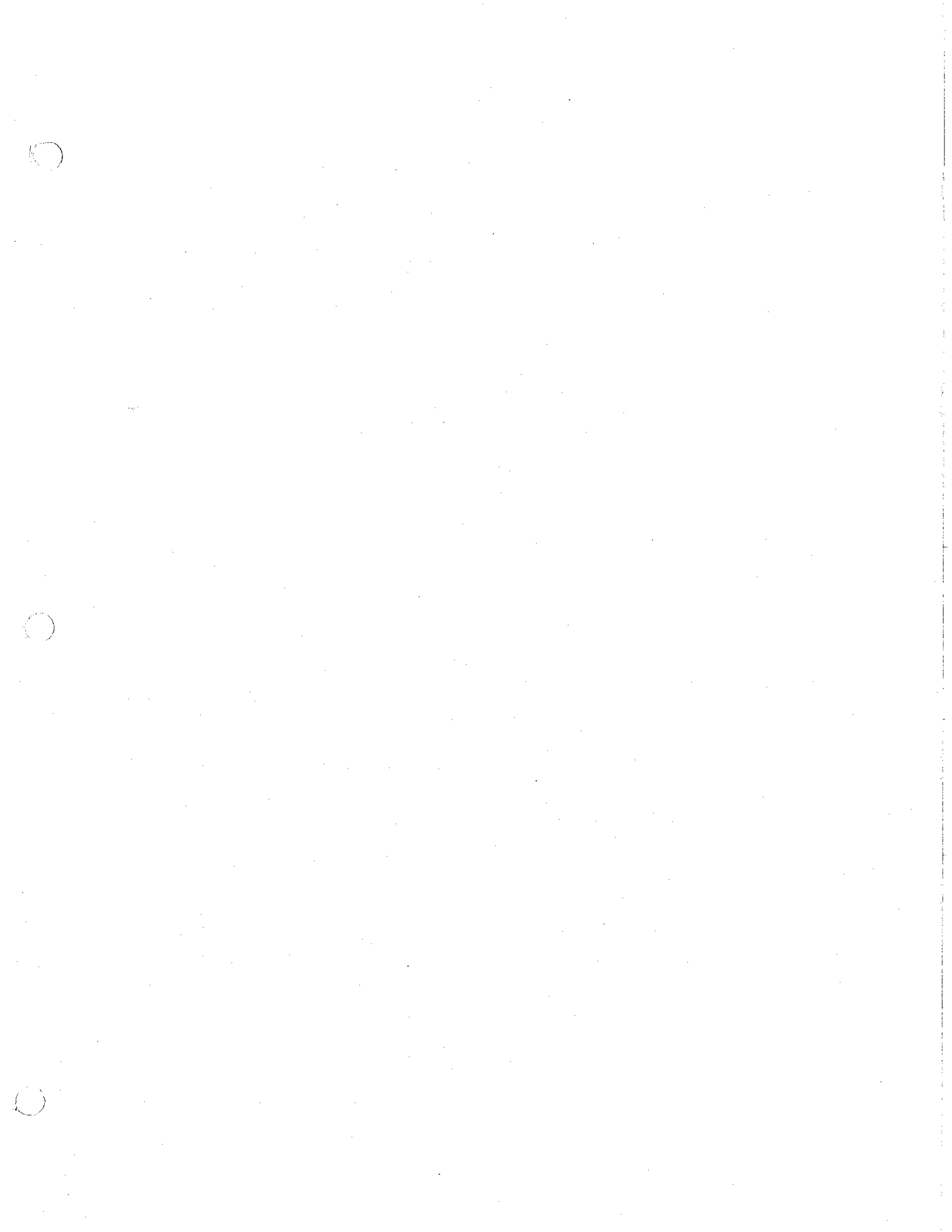
The principal large-scale importers of Mexican labor, the rail lines of the Southwest constantly fed workers to other industries since so much railroad labor is seasonal in character. Forever losing labor, the railroads kept recruiting additional workers in Mexico. This process was greatly accelerated as increased freight and passenger traffic paralleled the economic development of the region. Railroad employment naturally stimulated migration, since the companies provided transportation to various points along the line. Just how important the railroads were in setting the tide of Mexican immigration in motion can be seen from a statement made by an investigator for the Department of Labor in 1912. Most of the Mexicans then in the United States, he said, had at one time or another worked for the railroads. For years the prevailing wage for section hands in the Southwest was a dollar a day—considerably below the rate paid for similar labor on the middle western and eastern lines.

Recruited by labor agents and commissary companies, Mexicans were assembled in El Paso and from there sent out on six-month work-contracts with the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe. In 1908 some sixteen thousand Mexicans were recruited in El Paso for railroad employment. Two years later as many as two thousand Mexicans crossed the border into El Paso in a single month at the instigation of the commissary companies. Starting around 1900, railroad recruitment reached its peak in 1910 and 1912. Originally recruited by the Southwestern lines, Mexicans were used after 1905 in an ever-widening arc which gradually extended

THE BORDERLANDS ARE INVADDED 169
through Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.

As early as 1900 the Southern Pacific was regularly employing 4,500 Mexicans on its lines in California. By 1906 the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe were importing as many as two and three carloads of *cholos* a week to Southern California. The rapid extension of the Pacific Electric interurban system in Southern California also greatly stimulated the demand for Mexican labor. Wherever a railroad labor camp was established, a Mexican *colonia* exists today. For example, the Mexican settlement in Watts—called *Tajauta* by the Mexicans—dates from the importation of a carload of *cholos* in 1906. While the lines were being built, the *cholos* lived in boxcars and tents. Later the company built row-houses on its property and rented these houses to the employees. Thirty or forty such camps are still to be found in Los Angeles County. Around the initial camp site, Mexicans began to buy lots at \$1 down and \$1 a week and to build the shacks in which their children live today.

In the sparsely settled semi-arid Southwest, the construction of the rail lines was well in advance of actual settlement. Elsewhere in the West and Middle West, settlers had promoted railroads; but here railroads promoted settlement. The first great land "boom" in Los Angeles, for example, was strictly a railroad promotion. In the economic development of the region, railroads have played an all-important role. Prior to the completion of the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe lines in the 'eighties, the Southwest was hardly a part of the United States. In every state in the region, the modern phase in its development dates from the arrival of the first passenger or freight train. Largely built by Mexican labor along routes first explored and mapped by Spanish-speaking people, the railroads of the Southwest have been maintained by Mexicans from 1880 to the present time. All the products of the region,—copper, cotton, lettuce, produce, wool, beef, and dairy products,—move to markets on desert lines dotted at regular intervals by small, isolated clusters of Mexican section-crew shacks lost in time and space.



5. THE *Colonia* COMPLEX

Scattered throughout Southern California outside Los Angeles are, perhaps, 150,000 or 200,000 Mexicans and Mexican-Americans, for the most part immigrants or the sons and daughters of immigrants. Approximately thirty per cent of the total is made up of "aliens" but the alien element is rapidly diminishing. Most of these people—perhaps eighty per cent of them—live in "colonies" or *colonias* which vary in size from a cluster of small homes or shacks to communities of four, five, six, eight, and ten thousand people (3).

The history of these settlements is almost uniformly the same. They came into existence some twenty or thirty years ago when the first immigrants began to arrive. Most of them are located in unincorporated areas adjacent to a town or city but invariably on "the other side" of something: a railroad track, a bridge, a river, or a highway. Site location has been determined by a combination of factors: low wages, cheap rents, low land values, prejudice, closeness to employment, undesirability of the site, etc. None of the colonies was laid out or planned as a community, although a few are located on the sites of abandoned "boom towns." Some are outgrowths of labor camps; others have been grafted on a pre-1900 *barrio*; while a few have come into existence more or less accidentally. For example, the settlement known as Hick's Camp came into existence thirty-three years ago when a river-bottom camp was washed out by a flood. The health authorities and the Red Cross moved

the families to the river bank where a squatter camp grew up because the land was cheap. Nowadays completely surrounded, the *colonia* in San Gabriel is located near the old Mission—one of the few cases where a Mexican settlement is to be found at the center of an Anglo-American community.

North Town, a community near Upland, is a fairly typical *colonia*. Located on the site of an abandoned subdivision, it is within fifteen minutes' driving radius of the wineries, packing houses, truck farms, and citrus groves where most of the residents are employed. Here a few Mexican families lived before the great wave of migration began and to these residents the immigrants attached themselves. Today some 1,500 Mexicans live in the six square blocks of North Town surrounded, on all sides, by agricultural land. North Town has a small grocery store; a pool hall; and a motion picture theater. Most of the residents, however, make their purchases in Upland. Two or three blocks from the village is an elementary school in which the enrollment is ninety-five per cent Mexican.

With as many as three shacks to a lot, the structures are unpainted, weatherbeaten, and dilapidated. The average house consists of two or three rooms and was built of scrap lumber, boxes, and discarded odds-and-ends of material. Ten, twenty, and thirty years old, the houses are extremely clean and neat on the inside and much effort has obviously gone into an effort to give them an attractive appearance. Virtually all the homes lack inside toilets and baths and a large number are without electricity. Almost every family owns an automobile, a radio, and any number of American-made household gadgets of one kind or another. Being unincorporated, almost all forms of municipal service are lacking. Water is purchased from a private owner at rates higher than those paid by the conspicuously successful residents of Upland. North Town is one of dozens of similar *colonias* scattered all the way from Santa Barbara to San Diego. Occasionally the *colonia* is part of an incorporated town or city with the Mexican population comprising from twelve to twenty-five per cent or more of the total population.

It would be misleading, however, to convey the impression that the location of the *colonias* was accidental or that it has been determined by the natural play of social forces. On the contrary, there is a sense in which it would be accurate to say that the location of the *colonias* has been carefully planned. Located at just sufficiently inconvenient dis-

tances from the parent community, it naturally became most convenient to establish separate schools and to minimize civic conveniences in the satellite *colonia*. "Plainly," writes Fred W. Ross, "it was never intended that the *colonias* were to be a part of the wider community; rather, it was meant that they were to be apart from it in every way; *colonia* residents were to live apart, work apart, play apart, worship apart, and unfortunately trade, in some cases, apart."

The physical isolation of the *colonias* has naturally bred a social and psychological isolation. As more and more barriers were erected, the walls began to grow higher, to thicken, and finally to coalesce on all sides. The building of the walls, as Mr. Ross puts it, "went on concomitantly from without and from within the *colonia*, layer by layer, tier by tier." While the walls may have the appearance of being natural growths, they are really man-made. For the relationship that finally emerged between parent and satellite community is the civic counterpart of the relationship between the California Fruit Growers Exchange and its Mexican employees.

Living in ramshackle homes in cluttered-up, run-down shantytowns, set apart from their neighbors, denied even the minimum civic services, the residents of the *colonia* have come to resent the fenced-in character of their existence. They are perfectly well aware of the fact that they are not wanted, for their segregation is enforced by law as well as by custom and opinion. That the *colonias* lack swimming pools might be explained in terms of the ignorance or indifference of the Anglo-Americans were it not for the revealing circumstance that Mexicans are also denied access to municipal plunges in the parent community. Hence the ostracism of the Mexicans cannot be accounted for in the facile terms in which it is ordinarily rationalized.

When public-spirited citizens in the parent community have sought "to do something about the Mexican Problem," they have generally sought to impose a pattern on the *colonia* from without. Establishing a clinic or reading-room or social center in the *colonia* has no doubt been helpful, but it has not changed, in the slightest degree, the relationship between parent and satellite community. In the face of this reality, it is indeed annoying to hear Anglo-Americans expatiate about the Mexicans' "inferiority complex" and to charge them with being clannish and withdrawn. Friendly, warm-hearted, and generous to a fault, it would be difficult to find a people more readily disposed to mingle with

other groups than the Spanish-speaking people of the Southwest. Their "inferiority complex" is really a misnomer for a defeatist attitude arising from their frustration at being unable to break out of the *colonia*.

Resenting the implication of inferiority that attaches to segregated schools and being well aware of economic discrimination, a majority of the youngsters have not bothered to transfer from the segregated elementary school to the usually non-segregated high school. Dropping out of school at the eighth grade level, they have been unable to compete successfully with Anglo-Americans for the more desirable jobs and have fallen back on those for which their fathers were imported. According to the census of 1930, only 5,400 Mexicans were to be found in clerical jobs; 1,092 were teachers; 93 were lawyers and judges; and 165 were physicians and surgeons—this in a population of close to three million people. Once the cycle of employment has been repeated in the second and third generation, writes Mr. Ross, "the insidious process, which began so long ago with low wages and relatively low, dominant group hostility, almost swings full circle." By the time this has happened, the hostility of the dominant group is fully reciprocated" (4).

Hedged in by group hostility, the immigrants long ago lost interest in citizenship. Lack of funds, the language difficulty, and illiteracy were important factors but not nearly as influential as segregation and discrimination. Mexicans have never been encouraged, by prevailing community attitudes, to become citizens. Bogardus, who studied the problem years ago, concluded that in both rural and urban areas segregation was primarily responsible for the lack of interest in citizenship. For the last twenty years, the number of Mexicans who have been naturalized has averaged about a hundred a year. In a Mexican community of fifty thousand in California, Bogardus found only 250 registered voters in 1928, not all of whom were of Mexican descent. In the same year, Charles A. Thompson reported that only two or three naturalization petitions a year were filed in El Paso with a Mexican population of fifty thousand. To some extent, of course, this reluctance to seek naturalization may be traced to the fact that so many Mexican immigrants are in the United States illegally; but this, too, has been a secondary factor. Voluntary disenfranchisement, whatever the cause, has perpetuated the caste-like social structure in which Mexicans are encased.

The second generation, however, has begun to show a lively interest in the ballot. Residents of a few citrus belt settlements have, in recent years,

electd Mexican-Americans to school boards and city councils and have begun to exercise a measure of their great potential political strength. Wherever they have "come of age" politically, an immediate change has been noted in the attitude of the Anglo-Americans. Anglo-American politicians cannot afford to ignore the needs of Mexican-American communities if the residents will assert their political rights. Acting in liaison with the well-organized Negro community in Los Angeles, Mexicans could easily become a balance-of-power group.

While a few political victories have been won, it requires no special insight to foresee that a point will soon be reached when a serious struggle will develop between Anglos and Hispanos. The average Anglo-American community will accept, if somewhat reluctantly, one Mexican-American on the city council or the school board; but there are communities in which Mexican-Americans could elect a majority of the officeholders. In these communities, resistances will stiffen for the stakes are high. Once this has happened, Mexican-Americans will have to seek out allies in those segments of the Anglo-American community which are now disposed to cooperate with them, namely, in the liberal-labor-progressive groups. By comparison with Negroes, Mexicans are still novices in the tactics and strategy of minority-group action and politics.



7. *Qué Maravillosa*

The oldest settlers in Los Angeles, Mexicans were pushed aside and swept under by the extraordinary velocity and volume of Anglo-American migration after the first great "land booms" in the 'eighties. Isabel Sherrick, a Middle Western journalist, reported in the 1880's that the Mexicans "little by little are being crowded out and one by one the adobes are falling into ruins or giving way to the thrifty homes of Americans." Some of the sections in which Mexicans formerly lived are today occupied by factories, terminal facilities, and office buildings.

The typical residence of Mexicans in early-day Los Angeles was the "house court" derived from the Mexican *vecindad*: a sort of tenement made up of a number of one- and two-room dwellings built around a court with a common water supply and outdoor toilets. This same type of settlement, similar to the *plaza*, is still quite common in Los Angeles, San Antonio, and El Paso. House-courts multiplied in Los Angeles as the demand for Mexican housing became acute with high land costs and rising rents. In 1916 the city had 1,202 house-courts, occupied by 16,000 people with 298 house-courts being occupied exclusively by Mexicans (5). In some respects, the house-court was not unlike the "bungalow courts" of a later period. The house-court areas quickly became slums as the city pushed westward from its original center in the old Plaza section. One of the first studies of Mexican housing conditions indicated that some twenty or thirty thousand Mexicans were living in the courts of Old Sonoratown, near the Plaza, in the shacks and houses of Chavez Ravine, and similar areas, and in the railroad labor camps. The houses and courts had dirt floors; wood was used for fuel; there were no bathing

facilities; and the outdoor hydrant and toilet, used by a group of families, were universal. Made in 1912, this survey is still up-to-the-minute so far as Mexican housing is concerned, for little improvement has occurred in the last thirty-five years.

When the great wave of Mexican immigration reached Los Angeles, an unincorporated section on the "east side" known as Belvedere became the principal area of "first settlement" for most of the immigrant families. "*Qué Maravilla!*" the immigrants exclaimed when they first arrived in Los Angeles: what a marvel! what a wonderful city! Maravilla was their name for Belvedere and Maravilla it still is to thousands of Mexicans. With a Mexican population of fifty thousand in the middle 'twenties, the Belvedere section has a population today, mostly Mexican, of around 180,000. A city in size, it is still governed by remote control as an unincorporated area.

Aside from Maravilla, Mexicans are nowadays scattered in "pockets" of settlement in Los Angeles. While they are not segregated as rigidly as Negroes, the various pocket-settlements are almost exclusively Mexican and are, if anything, more severely isolated than the *colonias* of the outlying sections. The "pockets" are all similar in character,—Chavez Ravine, Happy Valley, *El Hoyo* (The Hollow), and the rest. Chavez Ravine, located in the hills between Elysian Park and North Broadway, is an old Mexican settlement. Shacks cling precariously to the hillsides and are bunched in clusters in the bottom of the ravine. For forty years or more, the section has been without most of the ordinary municipal services. At various points in the ravine, one can still see large boards on which are tacked the rural mail-boxes of the residents—as though they were living, not in the heart of a great city, but in some small rural village in the Southwest. Goats, staked out on picket lines, can be seen on the hillsides; and most of the homes have chicken pens and fences. The streets are unpaved; really trails packed hard by years of travel. Garbage is usually collected from a central point, when it is collected, and the service is not equal to that which can be obtained in Anglo districts bordering the ravine. The houses are old shacks, unpainted and weather-beaten. Ancient automobile bodies clutter up the landscape and various "dumps" are scattered about. The atmosphere of the ravine, as of *El Hoyo* and the other pocket-settlements, is ancient, antiquated, a survival,—something pushed backward in time and subordinated.

One can make a swift turn off the heavy traffic of North Figueroa or

North Broadway and be in Chavez Ravine in a minute's time. In this socially regressive dead-end, goats bleat and roosters crow and children play in the dirt roads. Were it not for the faraway hum of traffic, a visitor might well imagine that he was in some remote village in New Mexico or Arizona. From the City Hall to Chavez Ravine is a five-minute drive by modern traffic-time; sociologically, the two points are separated by a time-span of between fifty and seventy-five years. Today a great modern highway span is being built over the Hollow. Bulldozers have moved in and houses have been jacked-up and lifted out of the way. The shacks not directly in the way of the juggernaut mechanical progress of the city are now left perched on the sides of the Hollow, thirty years old, still bony in need of paint, gradually falling apart. Thousands of motorists will rush over the new span every hour, travelling so fast that they will probably not even notice that they are passing over the remains of what was once a small Mexican village.

At 720 San Vicente Boulevard, near the intersection of San Vicente and Santa Monica—on the "west side" of Los Angeles—is an ironic little island of Mexicans completely surrounded by middle-class residences many of which have been built in the so-called "Spanish-Colonial" style with white stucco walls, patios, and red-tiled roofs. This "island" is a thirty-year-old Pacific Electric labor camp where forty Mexican families live as they might live in a village in Jalisco. The company has generously provided four "outside" showers for 120 residents. It has even provided them with "hot water"—on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays! The only facilities for washing clothes or dishes consist of outside sinks, detached from the shacks in the court, and used by all the families. Probably not one per cent of the people who live in the surrounding areas know or have ever heard of the camp's existence.

What the Mexican immigrants probably think of Maravilla today is suggested by one of their best-known *corridos*—*El Enganchado** (literally, "the hooked-one"—the labor contractor):

I came under contract from Morcia
To earn dollars was my dream,
I bought shoes and I bought a hat
And even put on trousers.

For they told me that here the dollars
Were scattered about in heaps;

* Quoted from *Mexican Labor in the United States* by Dr. Paul S. Taylor.

VIVA LA REVOLUCION: WE ARE HEADING TOWARD LIFE

by Ricardo Flores Magon

In the Southwest the *gusto*, ideas, fears, and *corazon* (heart) of the Mexican Revolution had a dual effect. To some it was the signal to conceal their Mexican identity; to others it revived *gritos* of pride and retribution. Ricardo Flores Magon was a newspaper editor and a crusader for La Causa, in the years before World War I, who brought the "revolutionary cosmos" to La Raza in California. He came to believe in anarchism and socialism, condemning the war as an "imperialist" adventure. For this he was jailed, and he died in Leavenworth prison. In his writing, such as this editorial from his newspaper, *Revolution* (July, 1907), Flores headed the contemporary Raza movement. (*Antologia Ricardo Flores Magon*, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, 1970; this selection translated by Luis Valdez.)

"Every man," says Carlos Malato, "is at once the REACTIONARY of another man and the REVOLUTIONARY of still another."

To the reactionaries—"serious" men of today—we are revolutionaries; for the revolutionaries of tomorrow our deeds will have been those of "serious" men. The ideas of humanity concerning progress are forever changing, and it is absurd to pretend that they are immutable like plant and animal fossils imbedded in geological strata.

But if God-fearing and "serious" men pale with fear and are scandalized by our doctrine, the coming generations are inspired. Faces made ugly by misery and pain are transfigured; down the sunburned cheeks, tears no longer run;

the faces are humanized; better yet, they are deified, animated by the sacred fire of rebellion.

What sculptor has ever sculpted an ugly hero? What painter has ever left the deformed figure of a hero on canvas? There is a mysterious light that surrounds heroes and makes them dazzling. Hidalgo, Juarez, Morelos, Zaragoza, dazzle like suns. The Greeks placed their heroes among their demigods.

We are heading toward life; that is why our heirs are inspired, that is why the giant has awakened, that is why the brave will not turn back. From his Olympus, built on the rocks of Chapultepec, a musical comedy Jupiter puts a price on the heads of those who struggle; his old hands sign blood-thirsty sentences; his dishonorable white hairs curl up like the hairs of a rabid dog. A dishonor to old age, this perverse old man grasps on to life with the desperation of a shipwrecked victim. He has taken the life of thousands of men, and he desperately resists death so as not to lose his.

It does not matter; we revolutionaries are moving onward. The abyss does not hold us back, water is more beautiful in a waterfall.

If we die, we shall die like suns: giving off light.

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33. "Carta de Lucille Norman"

Torreón, Coahuila, México
Jan. 12th., 1923

My dear Raül:

I can not write you much as my eyes are so bad, and my emotions overwhelm me.

Last night we arrived at Gómez Palacio, Durango, at about 8:30. As we were approaching, the whistling of the factories deafened us. Thousands of people were at the depot with red torches, the depot was decorated the same as in all previous little towns, with the emblem of the conscientious workers; the red flag. All labor element is organized here. Scores of banners representing the different trades unions were there while a patch formed of the people, several blocks long, made way for my darling father's coffin carried on by the sons of toil—shrouded in red and black.

At a local theatre the eloquence of the soul flowed from the hearts of many orators, while classical music vibrated—making the occasion a most solemn one!

Raül: my heart is so full . . . that no words could ever express my feelings. Our Ricardo's martyrdom was not in vain—the golden dream of his life is now being transformed into vivid reality. His teachings have been embraced as a drowning man takes to a rescuing log. . . . But he did not see this, if he had, I am sure he would bless his darkest moments, to see this wonderful fruit of his work!

I am writing you from our special train, but the electric lights are now out of commission and you may imagine how hard it is for me to write by candle light. I must tell you a little more, though it is quite a sacrifice for my weakened eyes.

As a reflex of the radio of his work, and typical of the purity of the latin blood to appreciate sublimity; the highest functionaries of the government have paid tribute and openly admit that my darling father's pen was the only real factor in bringing Diaz down from tyrannical throne, and that they owe their comfortable positions to his heroism.

In Chihuahua, my surprise and joy was immense. . . . About thirty wreaths were presented at the memorial by organizations. The Governor and members of the State's Legislature came in while the revolutionary Marsellaise was being sung. The leaders of all the Unions are young, enthusiastic and with red blood coursing in their veins to carry on . . . their idealism instead of the passiveness that so lamentively moves our comrades of the "eight hour day and increase of salary!"

In Torreón, as we arrived this morning, the multitude was immense. While the thousands marched through the streets a step was made in front of the American Consulate where a speaker denounced as pure camouflage the land of liberty."

We are leaving for Aguas Calientes to-night. Will arrive there about 12 A.M., where a greater demonstration is expected. All predict that Mexico City is a volcano ready to erupt at the view of the whitest soul sacrificed for the most unselfish ideal. "The sublime teacher" "The spirit of light," "The second Nazareth," as he is called by the innumerable speakers.

This is the reaction of Soviet Russia. The road to them is straight and clear and

"Raül Palma

they all pledge their gratitude to this awakening to the supreme devotion my father of whose details you and I know so well

Pray that I get well. I am anxious to feel normal again. So far I have had no relapse and feel stronger only my eye sight is weak and it exasperates me!

How gratifying these wonderful demonstrations which are marking "the beginning of the end" which my dear father so much predicted, would mean to you. All orators have spoken from their hearts, which is the true eloquence, but I know you are privileged with the art of oratory and your words would have a wonderful echo in the hearts of these intelligent workers where there do not seem to be any petty vanities but the desire to progress and honor the memory of my father by following his teachings, nobleness and courage. This is why I wish you were here.

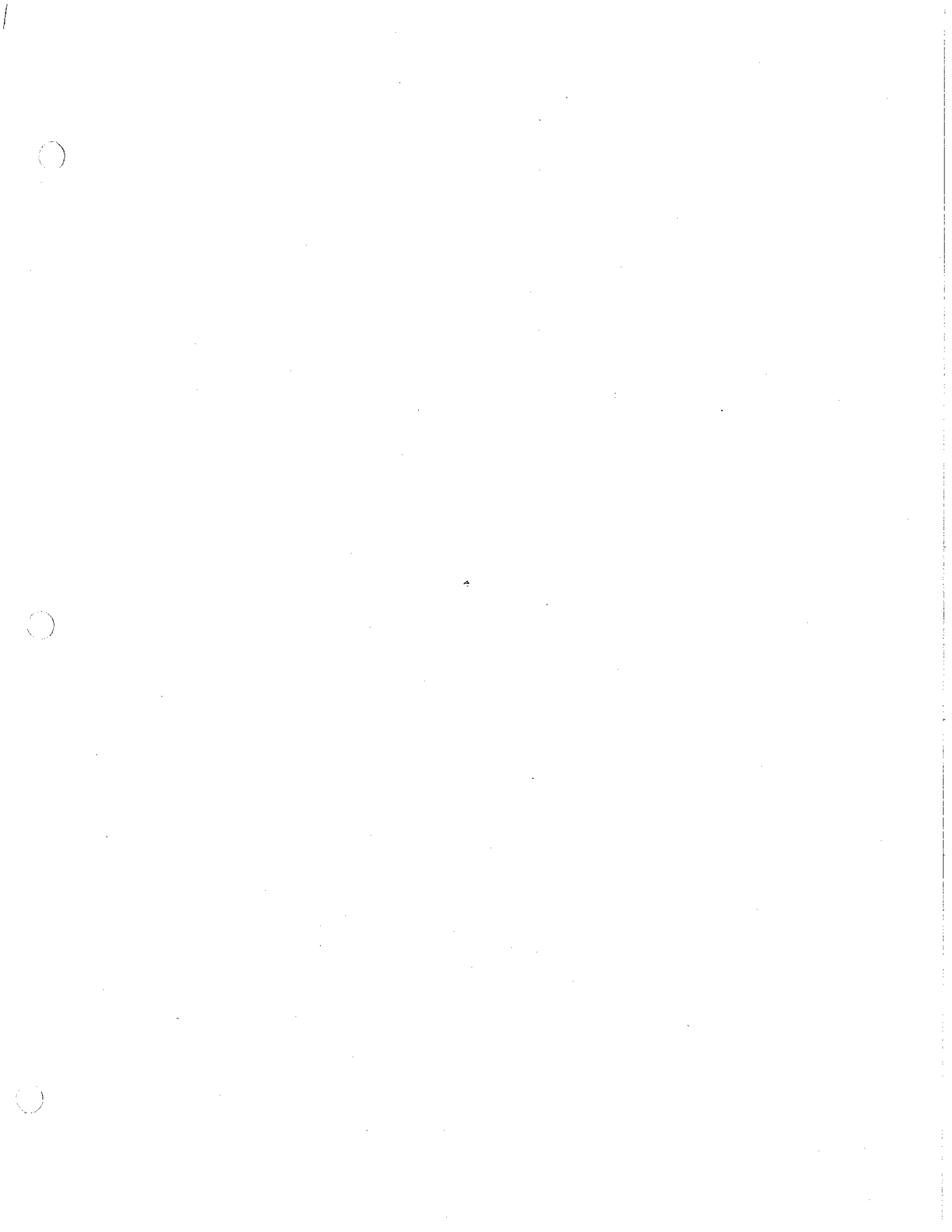
I feel blue for L.A.,* that spot of nature's predilection has nothing to do with the egotism of men, that mars and deforms what must have originally meant to be equally shared by all.

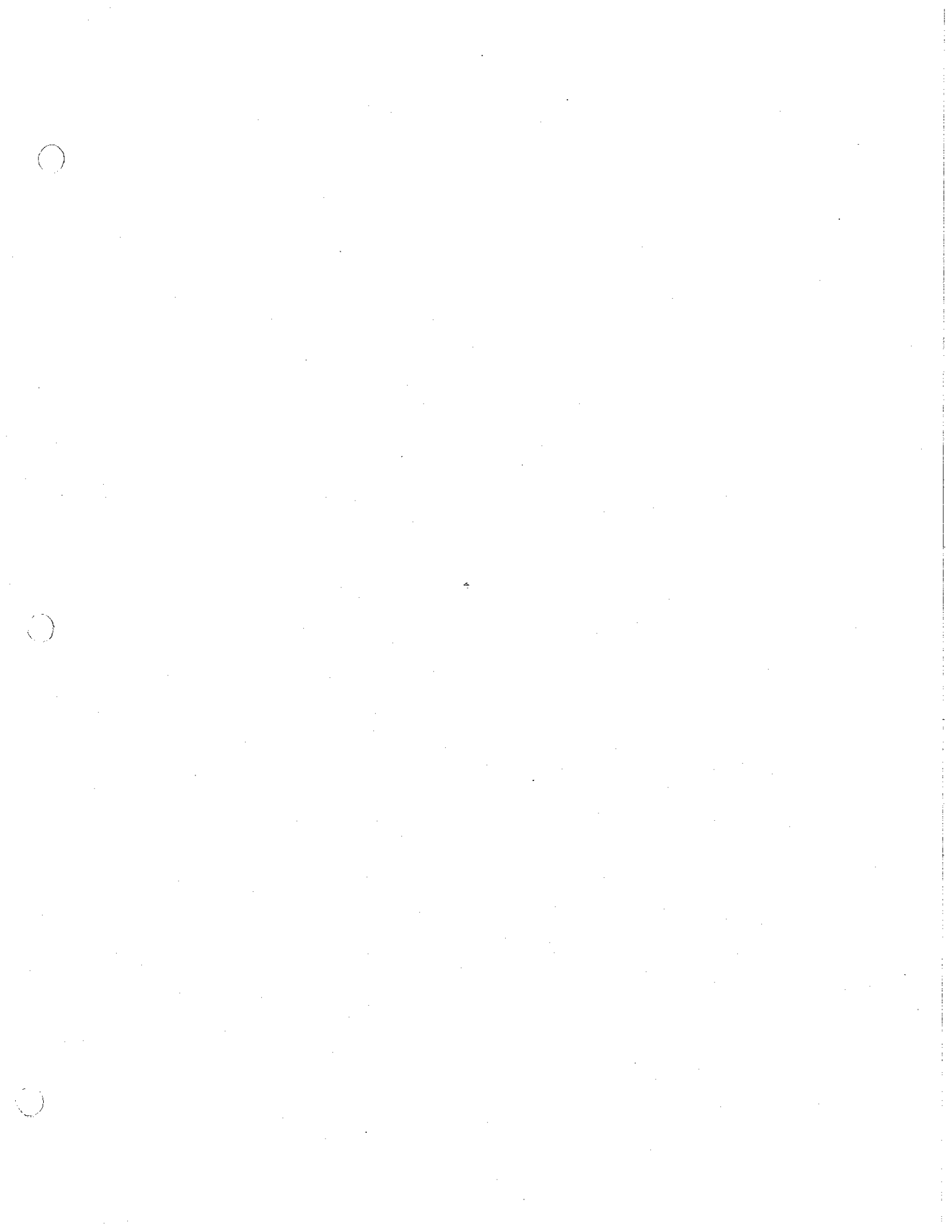
Fraternally yours,

Lucille

[letter from Lucille Norman, adopted
daughter of Ricardo Flores Magón]

*Los Angeles





paper was only three cents, but he'd say, "Keep the change, boy." He'd smile that secret smile I loved. I would watch him as he walked away in that princely way of his.

Later, when I'd sell all my papers, I'd rush across the street to the bakery and buy some dessert for the family, but really it was only for my father. He never let me down. He'd take a spoonful of the cake or pie and roll his eyes toward heaven. He'd pretend he was in ecstasy.

"Nellie," he'd say to my mother, "this is the *greatest* pie I've ever tasted in my life."

He'd offer me a piece. I'd refuse, saying I wasn't hungry. Watching him eat *my gift* was greater than any sweet in the world. But on that particular day, I saw him get off the streetcar. I waited for him to approach me as he'd always done. I held the paper out for him to read the headlines.

"Paper, mister."

He looked over my head as if he was searching for someone. Then he walked away without once looking at me. He stood on the corner for a second, then disappeared down the street. Hadn't he seen me? Was he sick?

I couldn't wait to finish selling my last batch of newspapers to get home and find out. I called Carlos Ramirez and asked him to take over my corner. I ran to the grocery store to buy the dessert. A beautiful bunch of grapes caught my eye. They were the first of the season—twenty-seven cents a pound. I blew my whole day's earnings and bought two pounds.

When I got home my father was already seated at the table. My mother and grandmother hovered over him, setting plates of meat, beans and tortillas in front of him. My sister was sitting beside him. When I entered, he barely glanced at me.

I went over to the kitchen sink, washed the grapes, and put them on a plate. I set them in the center of

Then I thought about that time with the grapes.

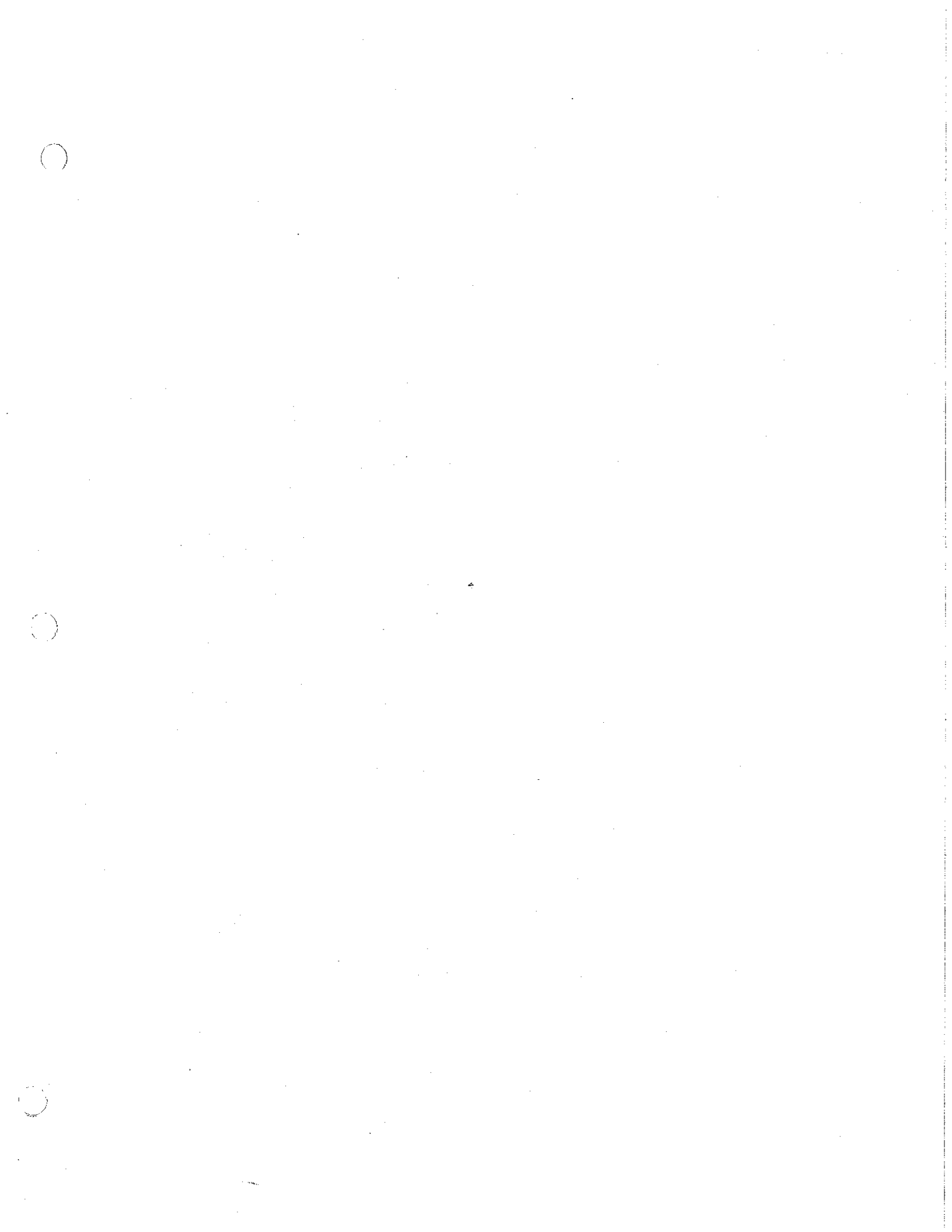
"Extra, extra, mister—read all about it."

The passengers were getting off the streetcar. My father was not among them.

I looked over at the clock above the lumberyard. It was a few minutes to six o'clock. He would surely be on the next one, due in about ten minutes.

I went back to pitching pennies with the other newsboys. For some reason I can't remember, I got into a fight with one of them. We scuffled on the ground and tore into each other. After a while I heard the streetcar clanging. The fight broke up about then. I ran back to my pile of papers.

Every afternoon I looked forward to the ritual of selling a newspaper to my father. I loved the easy way he jumped down from the streetcar. I admired the hugeness of him. He towered over everyone. He'd walk over to me, look at the headlines. He'd put his hand in his pocket and pull out a five-cent piece. The



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the table. He ignored the whole action and began making a fuss over my sister, whom he called Princess. My grandmother and my mother were aware that something was wrong between my father and me. My grandmother took me aside.

"Go wash up and then change your clothes," she said.

I went to wash and comb my hair. She handed me a clean shirt. When I went to the table, my father looked up. He smiled.

"Hey, Elephaut, where have you been? I looked all over for you when I got off the streetcar. I didn't see you."

"But, Papa, you walked right by me. I went up to you and you acted like you didn't know me."

"I didn't see you. I saw some dirty little Mexican kid who asked me if I wanted a paper. He looked a little like you, but he wasn't my son. My son might be poor but he is never dirty. No matter what he does he stands proud and always looks like a prince."

He looked at the grapes as if for the first time.

"What's this? Grapes!"

He took one and savored it.

"These are the finest grapes I've ever tasted, Nellie."

Now, as I told the doctor about it, I wept. I couldn't hold back the choked feeling I'd felt long ago.

How I'd hated my father when he called me a dirty little Mexican. How I hated him when he said that that boy was not his son.

"Papa, you stupid sonofabitch, does your loving me depend on the way I look, on how I behave? Don't you love me for me, for myself? My mother makes no demands on me. She doesn't care if I am filthy dirty. She doesn't mind if I stink of shit. But you will only accept me if I behave like a prince. I am no prince. I am me with all the fears, the shame, the cowardice,

the frailties and stench of a growing kid. Can't you love me as I am? Must I always bring my offerings to you, the great Jehovah? What lambs must I sacrifice at your altar? I am from your loins. You made me in your own image. Who in the fuck are you to expect more from me than you yourself can deliver?"

I was weeping. I was back there as a child waiting to beat the shit out of my father for hurting me, for having denied me.

I would surpass the sonofabitch one day. Who in the fuck was he, giving himself airs, when he was just a lousy wetback like the rest of us? I had seen him sweat in the sun driving rail spikes. I had seen him work as a common, ordinary fruit-picker. Who the hell was he? What the hell was his own mother but a Mexican? Did his two spoonfuls of Irish blood make him so superior to the rest of us?

"I got news for you, Papa. You're no better than the rest of us."

The doctor watched me in silence as I tried to destroy my father. He let me cry myself out.

"Strange, Tony, most of the stories about your father are painful stories and yet I feel that you loved him a great deal."

"Yes, you're right. I guess they do make him sound peculiar. In retrospect, I feel maybe he knew he would die soon and he was in a hurry to get it all in before he left. I think he was in a hurry for me to become a man. I felt he just stayed with my mother because of me. There was some mystery about his stay in Pennsylvania. Mother always claimed he had found another woman there. I don't know, but when he came back to El Paso, Mother feels it was because of me. Yes, his lessons were harsh, but I understood, somehow. I knew they were done with love. I felt he didn't belong in that atmosphere. I felt he was atrophying, being with us. I sincerely felt aware of the sacrifice he'd made because of me. For

instance, just after we'd come back from the fields up north in San Jose and Santa Paula, where we'd followed the different crops—walnuts, apricots, peaches, tomatoes, lettuce, stringbeans—even though I was four or five years old, I felt sorry for my father picking fruit like the rest of us."

"You felt he was too good to do ordinary labor?"

"Doc, picking fruit is not ordinary labor. Not only is it backbreaking work but it's considered less than menial. It's humiliating. White men have always used minorities—Filipinos, Chinese, Negroes and Mexicans—to do it for them. The pay is poor and the living conditions subnormal. To spend all day on your knees is demeaning, and damnit, I hated to see my father do it."

"You felt it was all right for your mother and grandmother, but not right for your father?"

"Don't try to catch me, Doc. Nobody should have to earn a living on his knees."

I told him another story.

When we were living on Daly Street, one of the family rituals was that my father would take me out on Saturday nights. We would go down to Main Street, by the Plaza, and he would wander around looking for friends whom he had known in Mexico during the revolution.

The Plaza was surrounded by little green stands where they used to have small stoves, and inside each stand a woman or man would stand cooking "carne asada." For ten cents you could get a huge plate of meat with fried beans and rice. My father and I would go over and sit on the benches and get a shoe-shine. I used to watch the boy who was shining our shoes to make sure he was doing it right, because I was a very good shoe-shine boy myself. Sometimes I would give the boy some advice on how to do it.

One Saturday we were walking around the park and he stopped and talked to a couple of fellows.

Then he said, "All right, Elephant, now we will go and eat."

On the way over to the stand he reached for the money in his pocket. As he pulled his hand out, a coin dropped and clinked down the sidewalk into a gutter. I ran to get it. My father took me by the arm.

"Don't bend."

"But Papa, the fifty cents—you've got to pick it up."

"Come on."

I was starving. I could smell the frying steaks and the beans and rice. My father started walking away as if he had just had a great meal. I followed him, looking back to see if anyone was picking up the 50 cents. A couple of men were watching my father as if he were crazy, and I knew that the minute we turned the corner they would pick up the money.

"But Papa, why?"

"Son, no money is worth bending for."

The doctor sat up straighter in his chair, but I launched swiftly into another story.

One time when my sister Stella was six years old and I was nine, I saw a man taking her into a small tunnel near our house where the creek passed by under the street. As I crept up to see what was happening, I saw him playing with my sister; he was touching her between her legs.

I ran into the house and got an ax. I sneaked behind the man and hit him on the head with the flat side of the ax, and kept on hitting him and hitting him.

My sister started screaming when she saw the blood. Some people came and stopped me and took the man off to the hospital. He was half dead.

That night, when my father came home, my mother told him what had happened. The police had been there, and my mother and I had explained to them

that the man had been molesting my sister and nobody bothered me. My father came up to me and said, "Let's you and me go outside." He put his arms around me and said, "I'm very proud of you; you were very courageous. It was wonderful that you saved your sister, but I'm going to whip you." He took off his belt. "The first time you hit the man was for what he was doing to your sister. That was right. The second time you hit him was in anger, and that might have been all right, too; but the third and the fourth time was because you're a potential murderer, and I'm going to whip you so that you'll never lose your temper to where you can kill someone."

I took my whipping like a man.

"You know, Tony, your father was a patriarch. But as you've taught me yourself, the Mexican is in constant struggle between a patriarchal and a patriarchal society. Even in his religion he is much closer to the Virgin Mary than to Christ. Here in America we all tend to romanticize our mothers. I mean, a boy can say he hates his 'old man' and be forgiven—but God help him if he calls his mother a cunt. And let's face it, I'm sure many men have mothers who deserve being called that.

"Historically the world's societies have had this struggle. The Jewish religion—the Old Testament is devoted to a patriarchal concept. But momism has been making inroads for centuries.

"A patriarchal society is romantic and sentimental. It makes little demands on us. As with our mothers, we have unconditional love by just being. We have to do very little to deserve mother love.

"The patriarch demands more from us. We have to deserve God's love. The God of the Old Testament is a demanding one. He wants obedience—He demands perfection on all levels.

"Gird up thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee and answer thou me."

"Then God goes on to list all that he can do. He asks Job if he himself is prepared to challenge God.

"Hast thou given the horse strength? Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?"

The doctor put down the Bible from which he'd been quoting.

"He's a pretty tough guy, this God. He says, 'Okay, son, if you want to challenge me you're going to have a hell of a fight on your hands. But, boy, you'd better gird up your loins like a man.'

"Well, I think the moment has come. The 'unforeseen complication' is that you're looking for the unconditional love of the mother. Of course, she loves you even if you are full of shit. But your father doesn't accept that. He says, 'Boy, if you want my love, you're going to have to deserve it. You're going to have to fight for it. Gird up your loins like a man.'

I knew what the doctor was talking about. When I'd started working with the "Holy Rollers" I'd read Job. That God of vengeance had scared the hell out of me. He made you feel so insignificant. Sure He could shake mountains and shut up the sea with doors, when it breaks forth. He could bind the sweet influence of the Pleiades, and loose the bands of Orion. But He was God. He had a hell of a head start. And who was *His* father? Whom did *He* have to beat?

"As you know, Tony, it isn't my practice to pre-
scribe, but tonight, if you'll forgive me, I'm not your doctor. I'm your friend and I'm treading on dangerous ground. You have made your father your God. He demands perfection from you. Now what do we do? Do we take him on?"

The United States, Octavio decided, was the place where he would build a house for his own family. Mexico retreated into fading images in his memory, and life in Simons and in Los Angeles became more exciting every day. He worked hard during the day and in the evenings went out to gamble with his uncle Ignacio Sandoval, one year his senior. At first he just observed, but soon he calculated the feel of the luck of the cards. He developed a sense of when to enter and exit a game, when to bluff, when to raise or pass, and he studied the reactions of men when they won and most important, when they lost.

Within months Octavio had men betting on whether he would win or lose, and more often the bets were made on how much he would win. Several financial backings were offered, but Octavio refused, preferring to remain independent and not share his winnings or compound his losses. His calculative genius gained him constant money in his pocket, credit from anyone and respect from the men of Simons. He never asked for money, but he was always willing to lend to responsible fellow workers. He was considered an intelligent man with a special gift.

Octavio gambled in Los Angeles, East Los Angeles, Belvedere, Whittier. Monday through Thursday he played poker, cunquillian or malilla at his home table at Simons. When his father entered the room where the game simmered, Octavio became uncomfortable, and after a hand or two, winning or losing, he would fold and walk away from the game. Damian would then buy in, taking Octavio's place. With a look, Damian would indicate to his son to leave and Octavio always obeyed. To Gonzalo, who played often, beating Octavio became an obsession. When Octavio would get up to leave, Gonzalo, noticeably angered, would throw his cards down.

"Stay, man!" Gonzalo would yell as Octavio pushed away from the financial meal.

"There will be another night for revenge," Octavio would reply, acknowledging Damian, who to Gonzalo's irritation, sat next to him.

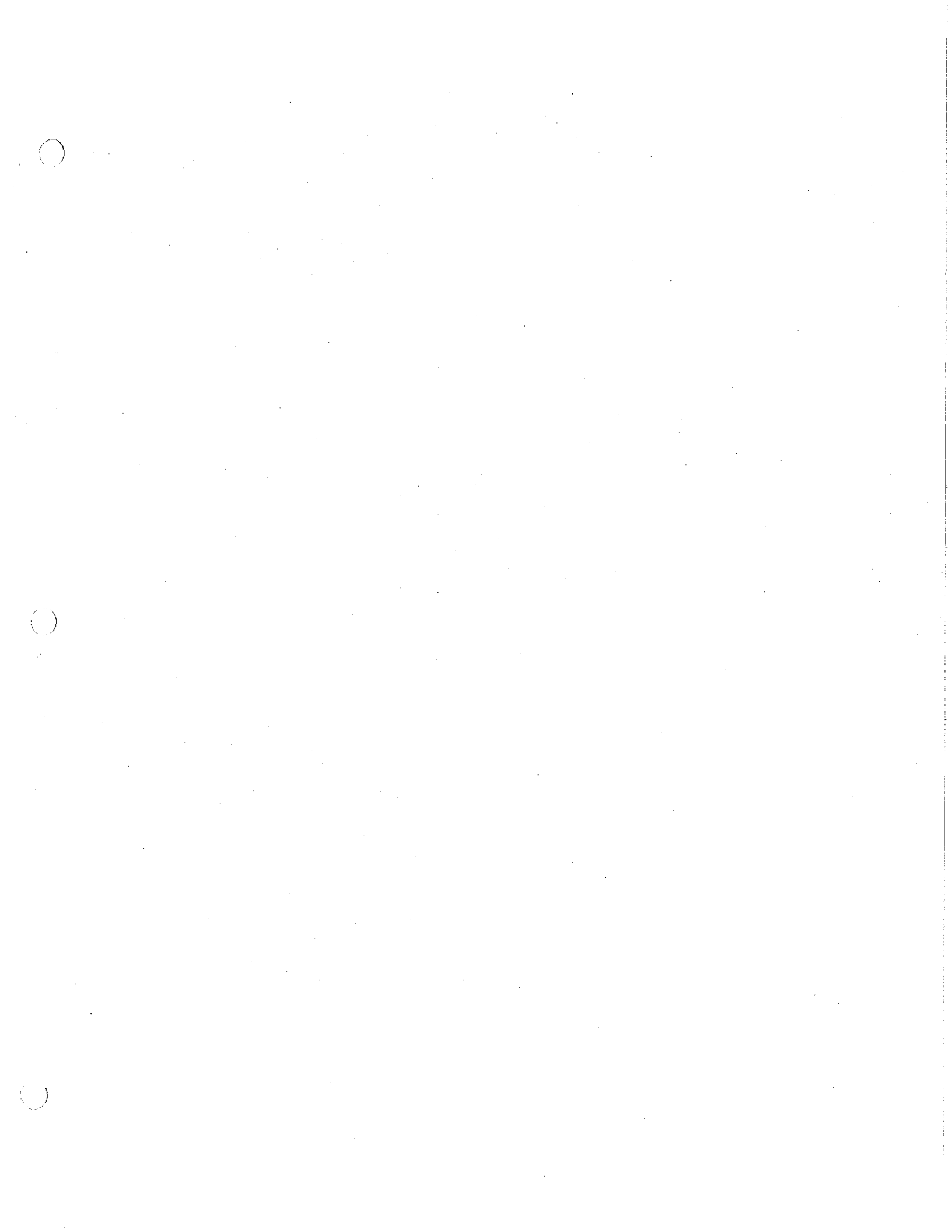
Gonzalo respected both men, but he had paid a high price for the great admiration he had for Octavio ... Some day your luck will run out and I'll beat you, thought Gonzalo as the door closed behind Octavio.

Although Prohibition had been imposed, Octavio and Ignacio, his constant companion and fellow gambling traveler, found good Mexican whiskey easy to get in La Calle de los Negros, located at the plaza de Los Angeles in the Mexican section of Los Ange-

les. The closed bars were transformed into restaurants, facades for the infamous speakeasies where whiskey, wine, and beer were as available as before Prohibition.

Liquor was never difficult to purchase for Octavio, the Simons workers and the general population. At first there was a scarcity of alcohol, but soon after the implementation of the law, bootleggers produced enough whiskey, wine and beer to supply most of Los Angeles. Certain parts of the city became known for producing the best wine, whiskey or beer. Spirit production went underground and became a bigger business than before the dry law. For some winemakers going underground meant the survival of a family tradition, a way of life and meeting an economic need.

In his gambling adventures, Octavio had met several alcohol producers who gladly gave him the liquor he needed. In Simons, several families fermented wine or had whiskey or beer distilleries. Simons never lacked for alcoholic beverages. For home bootleggers and gamblers and a number of Los Angeles gamblers and prostitutes, Simons was a safe enclave from law enforcement agencies, including the federal and Montebello police.



From at least the fall of 1927, perhaps earlier, representatives of Mexican civic, mutualist, and cultural organizations, through a previously organized assembly on the federation of Mexican organizations, held meetings to discuss the need to protect and advance the interests of Mexican workers.²⁸ On November 10 they adopted a resolution to pursue specific steps to encourage union organizing.

The resolution referred to the "deplorable condition of abandonment and isolation" in which Mexicans lived in the United States, "deprived of food, cooperation and mutual help." The resolution argued that, given the conditions of Mexican workers, which forced low salaries upon them to the detriment of their social conditions, organizing was crucial for them.

In accordance with the actions called for in the resolution, Mexican individuals and groups, including workers' associations, held a series of meetings in Los Angeles and other southern California communities. From these some twenty workers' groups, *uniones*, were recognized or

The Call

started. These in turn met and formed a *central* for common action. Several committees were formed. During December of 1927, the Confederation of Mexican Labor Unions (Confederacion de Uniones Obreras Mexicanas; CUOM) consolidated. On January 9, 1928, the Central Committee of the Confederation of Mexican Labor Unions issued a manifesto stating the guiding principles of the Confederation; Mexicans in agreement were invited to attend the first convention of the Confederation.

MANIFESTO

From the Active Group of the Federation of Mexican Laborers' Union in the United States

Fellow Countrymen:

In view of the difficult situation which confronts approximately a million Mexican laborers residing in the United States, the active group which directs the work of the Federation of Mexican Laborers' Unions

Los Angeles, has decided to publish this Manifesto in order to make known its fundamental principles and the point of view it has taken toward a successful accomplishment of the work it has initiated. It is undisputable that the numerous Mexican Colonies in the United States are composed almost in their whole of working men

Social unity is indispensable for the prosperity of the laboring classes, promoting their defense, stimulating remunerative salaries and the constant betterment of the proletarian.

This added to the conditions which prevail among Mexican labor that has come into the United States to lend its work and effort, along with the fact that he is a foreigner, which deprives him of the full protection that is given to the natives and in the present circumstances is compelled to

work at a minimum wage which is not only harmful to himself, but also to the organized American workman. All this at the present makes necessary an organization capable of uniting as a whole the Mexican laboring classes in the United States. On the other hand it must be understood this movement aim is not to agitate, nor to spread or instigate disloyal ideas. All that is desired is to equalize Mexican labor to American labor and to obtain for them what the Law justly allows them. The active group recognizes that the laboring Mexican has not come to this country to legislate, and considers absurd propagation of disloyal doctrines which only lead to the ruin of the worker, much more since he is a foreigner. For the carrying out of these ideas and to form a general plan of activities, a convention will be held in the city of Los Angeles to which all the Mexican Societies established in the United States no matter what their principles and also the unorganized labor are invited to attend, that they may join this movement for their own welfare conscious that the effort that they put on this work shall transform the present concept of the Mexican laborer in the United States. And so that it will not be supposed that the movement in question is harmful, the Active Group makes known its fundamental principles.

PRINCIPLES THAT THE FEDERATION OF MEXICAN LABORERS WILL UPHOLD

1. To organize all Mexican worker in the U.S. in Unions according to Syndicalist principles.
2. To establish a solid pact with the American and the Mexican working men that any difficulty in the future may be solved mutually.

Besides the effort for the realization of these principles, the Federation of Mexican Labor Unions will do all within its power toward the improvement and good reputation of the Mexican colonies in U.S., having as a point of view the following principles:

1. Animate by all possible ways the conservation of our cultural and patriotic principles.
2. To promote a strong cultural campaign giving preference to the education of our children, for which we shall build schools and libraries as is possible.

The authors of this call sought to galvanize and inform; they wanted participants and support and to reassure those who might see them as suspect. They also undercut their claims to equities by emphasizing Mexican labor's immigrant status, and they betray a naivete in citing existing workers' rights, union ethos, and organization.

On March 23, 1928, the Committee on Laws of the Confederation agreed on a draft constitution. The language and proposed format were modeled on those of CROM. The Declaration of Principles embodied in the constitution went beyond those of the January manifesto:

1. That the exploited class, the greater part of which is made up of manual labor, is right in establishing a class and moral betterment of its conditions, and at last its complete freedom from capitalistic tyranny.
2. That in order to be able to oppose the organization, each day more complete and intelligent, of the exploiters, the exploited class must organize as such, the base of its organization being the union of resistance, in accord with the rights which the laws of this country concede to native and foreign workers.
3. That the corporations, possessors of

3. To establish likewise solid relations with the organized Labor of Mexico (Confederacion Regional Obrera Mexicana) and to try to stop the immigration of unorganized Labor into the U.S. which is harmful to the working men of both Countries.
4. To do away with the exploitation of Mexican victims in the so called employment agencies, and to get the unions to constitute their own employment department in which supply and demand can be carried on without a fee so that the working-man's economical interests may not suffer.
5. To constitute prevision offices with the exclusive object of illustrating to Mexican laborers who for the first time come to the U.S., as well as to those who already reside here, all that is relevant to working systems, job revenues, contract, forms, interpretations/translations from English to Spanish or vice-versa working man's insurance indemnizations etc.
6. To keep Mexican laborers from being exploited in the so called commissary stores that still exist in some regions of the U.S., by substituting in their place cooperative stores in which the working man can get all his needs at just prices.
7. To study and resolve in accord with the Mexican government the best system of repatriation so that those wishing to go back will form agricultural cooperative and receive the best guarantees.
8. Negotiate with the Mexican Government] so that the immigration of Mexican Labor into the U.S. may be regulated.

part agricultural; nevertheless its influence continued to be felt among industrial and service workers. Although railroad workers were extensively organized in Mexico, the CUOM could not affect that major area of U.S. employment for Mexicans.

the natural and social wealth, being integral parts of the international association of industry, commerce and banking, the disinherited class must also integrate by means of its federations and confederation into a single union of all the labor of the world.

For the issues of these documents, certain questions were of special importance. Organizational coherence and endurance were prime concerns, as was internal democracy. To facilitate democracy a convention was deemed the ultimate authority. The constitution provided for organizational effectiveness through a central committee composed of two delegates from each of the federated unions; this committee would be the body that dealt with domestic and international relations. The central committee would function for the confederation between conventions and would be authorized and instructed by the constitution to arrange external matters related to solidarity agreements with labor organizations, domestic and foreign, as appropriate. It could not, however, weaken in any manner the autonomy of the confederation and its components or alter their membership. Article 18 of the constitution specifically provided that the Central Committee be charged with the responsibility for relations with the Mexican government, particularly those related to Mexican immigration and repatriation.

Clearly the CUOM effort was influenced structurally and programmatically, as well as ideologically, by the Confederacion Regional Obrera Mexicana, and also by the actions of the AFL. From January 1928 the central committee of the CUOM took steps toward the unity of workers and a struggle for improved pay and conditions. General convention resolutions were ratified by twenty-one unions representing both agricultural and industrial workers. Emilio Mujica, the fraternal representative from the CUOM, based in Los Angeles, contributed actively to the organizing of Mexican unions in that city. Through 1933 the confederation had at least ten locals, for the most

CONDITIONS OF MEXICANS IN CALIFORNIA

Mounting concern over expanding Mexican immigration characterized the 1920's. Recognizing the economic implications of increasing numbers of Mexican workers, state and federal agencies began to study what they considered a serious problem. In October 1930, an important report dealing with Mexicans in California was published by Governor Clement C. Young's Fact-Finding Committee. A review of this lengthy report follows.

It is conservatively estimated that between 1900 and 1920 approximately 200,000 Mexicans came into the United States illegally. The rush of Mexican immigration commenced during the period of the world war, doubtless as a result of the shortage of labor at that time.

Under the existing Quota Act, more than 40 percent of all alien immigrants declaring California as their intended permanent residence are Mexicans. In brief, the principal immigrant race now coming to California is the Mexican. Neither Mexico's official statistics on emigration nor the United States's figures concerning Mexican immigration are complete. Beyond a doubt, there are now more than 1 million Mexicans in the United States, and under existing immigration legislation, the committee declares, unlimited numbers can continue to come in. More than 80 percent of the Mexicans residing in this country in 1920 were living in three states—Arizona, California, and Texas. The proportion residing in California rose from 7.8 percent of the total in the country in 1900 to 15.2 percent in 1910 and to 18.2 percent in 1920.

In California manufacturing industries there are about eleven

From "Labor and Social Conditions of Mexicans in California," Monthly Labor Review (January 1931).

Mexicans in every one hundred wage earners. In factories where there are both Mexicans and other workers, the Mexicans constitute 17 percent of all the employees. The proportion of Mexicans in a number of industries ranges from 2.4 to 66.3 percent. Over 50 percent of all Mexicans in the industries in California are employed in establishments in Los Angeles County and only 10 percent in establishments in San Francisco County. There are probably about 28,000 Mexicans in the manufacturing industries of the state, and at the time of the enumeration there were 2,700 Mexicans in fruit and vegetable canneries.

Based on reports from 159 building and construction companies employing 20,650 workers on June 15, 1928, the proportion of Mexicans in all classes of construction is 16.4 percent. In May 1928, there were 10,706 Mexican laborers on the payrolls of six large interstate and interurban railroads in California. In brief, the report states, Mexicans have secured a strong foothold in the industries of the state and are certainly displacing other immigrant races and the native-born.

In building and construction, Mexicans are employed mostly as common laborers, at pick-and-shovel work, at digging trenches, and in cesspool work; also at grading. Reports from representative building and construction concerns indicate that the hourly rates of Mexicans in the industry run from 40 to 50 cents, and daily wage rates from \$3.50 to \$5, the prevailing rates appearing to be 50 cents per hour and \$4 per day. On railroads, Mexicans are used as "section and extra gang" laborers, their average rates being 38 cents per hour and \$3.06 per day.

The majority of Mexican alien immigrants who come to this country are "laborers," not "farmers and farm laborers."

Mexicans constitute the largest group of unskilled, low-paid labor in California, and they have come into the state willing to occupy the same economic level as in their own country. They have had little or no schooling and are unfamiliar with English. Before they came to this country, they lived on a meager diet, paying little attention to sanitation and hygiene. Their infant mortality rate is high, as is also the rate for tuberculosis and other communicable diseases. They have had a feudal relation toward authority, making it difficult for them to adjust themselves to

American traditions. Furthermore, the committee reports, there is a racial prejudice against them, especially against those of non-European stock who are not white and whose customs and habits are so different from the American standard.

Mexicans in California have a tendency to live in colonies both in urban and rural districts, and this retards their assimilation with the native population. The housing facilities available to most of the Mexicans are often poor and do not conform to proper sanitation standards. Sales agreements frequently prohibit these aliens from buying property in any but Mexican districts. The existing ground-rent system in certain sections results in overcrowding and unhygienic conditions. . . . According to the Los Angeles Health Department, the rate of communicable-diseases cases among the Mexicans is above that of the general population. . . .

There is one Mexican among every ten children receiving state aid in California. In 1928 the proportion of Mexican children in the orphanages of the state was 7.8 percent, and in Los Angeles County over 16 percent of all the children in institutions were of the race in question. Five sixths of the Los Angeles (Community Chest) agencies give no assistance to Mexicans. Those organizations which do serve these people give them a great part of their service. . . .

A house-to-house investigation of Mexican families in Southern California disclosed the fact that the majority of the males included in the survey were unskilled laborers in agricultural pursuits. Many semiskilled and skilled workers, such as blacksmiths, carpenters, electricians, and mechanics, were, however, found among these immigrants.

Of 789 Mexican families covered by the investigation, 40.4 percent had three children or fewer; 54.7 percent, four children or fewer; and 45.3 percent, five children or more. The average number of children per family canvassed was 4.3.

Of the 701 Mexican families for which reports on average monthly income were obtained, 69.2 percent averaged less than \$100 per month; 20.5 percent, \$100 but under \$150; 5.9 percent, \$150 but under \$200; and only 4.4 percent, \$200 or over. According to a study of the total incomes for twelve consecu-

tive months of 435 families, 47.1 percent had yearly incomes of less than \$1,000; 31.5 percent, \$1,000 but under \$1,500; and 21.4 percent, \$1,500 or over. The average yearly income of these 435 families was \$1,156.15. Of the 403 families with children for whom data were secured in yearly incomes, 142 (35.2 percent) reported 250 children on full-time or part-time work, but mostly on part time.

recipients of Mexican origin back to Mexico, irrespective of citizenship or desire. Los Angeles's rationale for "repatriating the Mexican" is described by Carey McWilliams.

In 1930 a fact-finding committee reported to the governor of California that, as a result of the passage of the immigration acts of 1921 and 1924, Mexicans were being used on a large scale in the Southwest to replace the supply of cheap labor that had been formerly recruited in southeastern Europe. The report revealed a concentration of this new immigration in Texas, Arizona, and California, with an ever-increasing number of Mexicans giving California as the state of their "intended future permanent residence." It was also discovered that, within the state, this new population was concentrated in ten southern counties.

For a long time Mexicans had regarded Southern California, more particularly Los Angeles, with favor, and during the decade from 1919 to 1929, the facts justified this view. At that time there was a scarcity of cheap labor in the region and Mexicans were made welcome. When cautious observers pointed out some of the consequences that might reasonably be expected to follow from a rash encouragement of this immigration, they were shouted down by the wise men of the Chamber of Commerce. Mexican labor was enlogized as cheap, plentiful, and docile. Even so late as 1930, little effort had been made to unionize it. The Los Angeles shopkeepers joined with the industrialists in denouncing, as a union-labor conspiracy, the agitation to place Mexican immigration on a quota basis. Dr. Paul S. Taylor quotes this typical utterance from a merchant:

Mexican business is for cash. They don't criticize prices. You can sell them higher priced articles than they intended to purchase when they came in. They spend every cent they make. Nothing is too good for a Mexican if he has the money. They spend their entire paycheck. If they come into your store first, you get it. If they go to the other fellow's store first, he gets it.

During this period, academic circles in Southern California exuded a wondrous solicitude for the Mexican immigrant. Teachers of sociology, social-service workers, and other subsidized

GETTING RID OF THE MEXICAN

No one knows how many Mexicans were "repatriated" during the 1930's. Many city, county, and state agencies instituted programs to send twofare

From "Getting Rid of the Mexican," by Carey McWilliams. The American Mercury, 28 (March 1933). Copyright © 1933. The American Mercury, Inc., P.O. Box 1306, Torrance, California 90505. Reprinted by permission.

sympathizers were deeply concerned about his welfare. Was he capable of assimilating American idealism? What antisocial traits did he possess? Wasn't he made morose by his native diet? What could be done to make him relish spinach and Brussels sprouts? What was the percentage of this and that disease, or this and that crime, in the Mexican population of Los Angeles? How many Mexican mothers fed their youngsters according to the diet schedules promulgated by manufacturers of American infant foods? In short, the do-gooders subjected the Mexican population to a relentless barrage of surveys, investigations, and clinical conferences.

But a marked change has occurred since 1930. When it became apparent last year that the program for the relief of the unemployed would assume huge proportions in the Mexican quarter, the community swung to a determination to oust the Mexican. Thanks to the rapacity of his overlords, he had not been able to accumulate any savings. He was in default in his rent. He was a burden to the taxpayer. At this juncture, an ingenious social worker suggested the desirability of a wholesale deportation. But when the federal authorities were consulted, they could promise but slight assistance, since many of the younger Mexicans in Southern California were American citizens, being the American-born children of immigrants. Moreover, the federal officials insisted on, in cases of illegal entry, a public hearing and a formal order of deportation. This procedure involved delay and expense, and, moreover, it could not be used to advantage in ousting any large number.

A better scheme was soon devised. Social workers reported that many of the Mexicans who were receiving charity had signified their "willingness" to return to Mexico. Negotiations were at once opened with the social-minded officials of the Southern Pacific Railroad. It was discovered that, in wholesale lots, the Mexicans could be shipped to Mexico City for \$14.70 *per capita*. This sum represented less than the cost of a week's board and lodging. And so, about February 1931, the first trainload was dispatched, and shipments at the rate of about one a month have continued ever since. A shipment consisting of three special trains left Los Angeles on December 8. The loading commenced at about six

o'clock in the morning and continued for hours. More than twenty-five such special trains had left the Southern Pacific station before last April.

No one seems to know precisely how many Mexicans have been "repatriated" in this manner to date. The Los Angeles *Times* of November 18 gave an estimate of eleven thousand for the year 1932. The monthly shipments of late have ranged from thirteen hundred to six thousand. The *Times* reported last April that altogether more than 200,000 *repatriados* had left the United States in the twelve months immediately preceding, of which it estimated that from fifty to seventy-five thousand were from California, and over thirty-five thousand from Los Angeles County. Of those from Los Angeles County, a large number were charity deportations.

The repatriation program is regarded locally as a piece of consummate statescraft. The average per family cost of executing it is \$71.14, including food and transportation. It cost Los Angeles County \$77,249.29 to repatriate one shipment of 6,024. It would have cost \$424,933.70 to provide this number with such charitable assistance as they would have been entitled to had they remained—a saving of \$347,684.41.

One wonders what has happened to all the Americanization programs of yesteryear. The Chamber of Commerce has been forced to issue a statement assuring the Mexican authorities that the community is in no sense unfriendly to Mexican labor and that repatriation is a policy designed solely for the relief of the destitute—even, presumably, in cases where invalids are removed from the County Hospital in Los Angeles and carted across the line. But those who once agitated for Mexican exclusion are no longer regarded as the puppets of union labor.

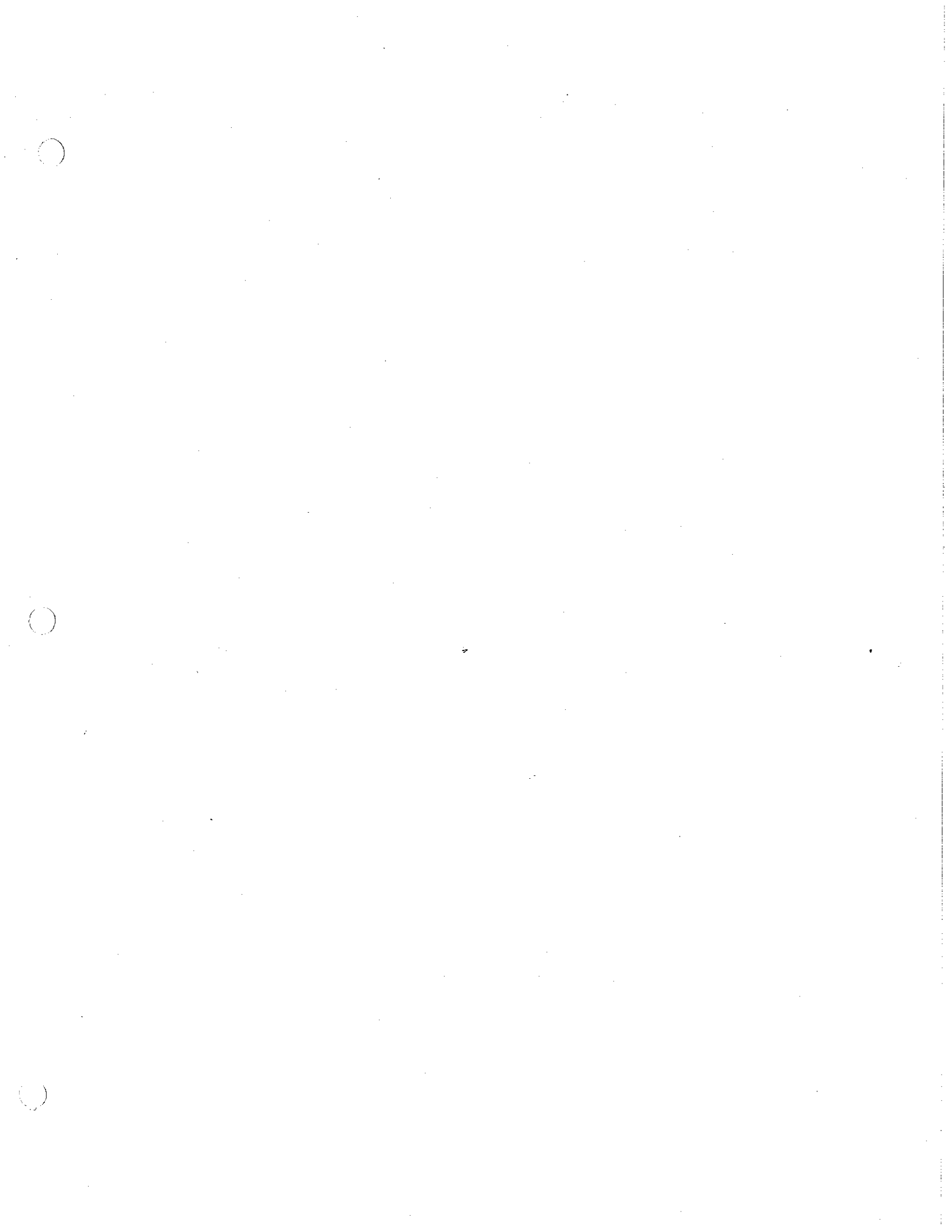
"The problems of education among the Mexican people are really vital. Our struggle for more Mexican teachers in schools where there is a high percentage of Mexican children. Fight against segregation and inferior schools for our children. A real fight for "bi-lingual" classes for our children up to the eighth [sic] grade so that they may not remain illiterate, and be able to learn both languages. Standardized schools for migratory workers. Adult education by Mexican teachers or Spanish-speaking teachers"

...

"WHERAS: The strongest unity of purpose for all workers is imperative in a world faced with slavery and concentration camps of fascism, and WHERAS: The division that now exists in the American Labor Movement weakens the position of the workers whether organized or unorganized, and WHERAS: A unified Labor Movement can best protect the interests of all American, Mexican and Spanish-speaking workers, and WHERAS: The Trade Union Movement provides the most basic agency through which the Mexican and Spanish-speaking people become organized and receive the necessary education that will promote a unity of thought action and purpose, therefore BE IT RESOLVED: That the First Congress of the Mexican and Spanish-speaking People of the United States recommends to all Spanish-speaking peoples working in industry or agriculture to take immediate steps to affiliate with the union in their special field."

...

"The conditions under which the Spanish-speaking people in the Southwest live are completely at variance with American standards--discrimination in the right of employment, differentials in wage payments, discrimination in relief, lack of cultural opportunities, lack of civil and political rights in many sections--in brief a condition under which in effect the Spanish-speaking people are denied the right of "liberty and the pursuit of happiness"



3. PLOTTING A RIOT

If one spreads out the span of one's right hand and puts the palm down on the center of a map of Los Angeles County with the thumb pointing north, at the tip of each finger will be found a community where the population is predominantly Mexican. In each of these neighborhoods, moreover, a majority of the juveniles living in the area will be found to be first-generation Mexican-Americans, sons and daughters of the Mexican immigrants who came to Southern California during the 1920's.

Now, if one believes that Mexicans have an inherent desire to commit crimes of violence, the logical first step, in a crime prevention program, is to arrest all the people living in these areas. Unfortunately for the practice of this cosy little theory, there are well over a hundred thousand people living in these areas who are of Mexican descent. The maximum capacity of the Los Angeles jails being somewhat under this figure, it therefore becomes necessary to proceed on a more selective basis. If one group of Mexicans, say, the young people, could be selected for token treatment, and if sufficient arrests could be made from this group, perhaps this would serve as an example to all Mexicans to restrain their inborn criminal desires. . . .

If this sounds a bit fantastic, consider the following letter which Captain Joseph Reed sent to his superior on August 12, 1942:

C. B. Horrall,
Chief of Police.

Sir:
The Los Angeles Police Department in conjunction with the Sheriff, California Highway Patrol, the Monterey, Montebllo, and Allambra

Police Departments, conducted a drive on Mexican gangs throughout Los Angeles County on the nights of August 10th and 11th. All persons suspected of gang activities were stopped. Approximately 600 persons were brought in. There were approximately 175 arrested for having knives, guns, chains, dirks, daggers, or any other implement that might have been used in assault cases. . . .

Present plans call for drastic action. . . .

Respectfully,

JOSEPH F. REED

Administrative Assistant

(Emphasis added.)

On the nights in question, August 10 and 11, 1942, the police selected the neighborhoods which lay at our fingertips on the maps and then blockaded the main streets running through these neighborhoods. All cars containing Mexican occupants, entering or leaving the neighborhoods, were stopped. The occupants were then ordered to the sidewalks where they were searched. With the occupants removed, other officers searched the cars for weapons or other illicit goods.

On the face of it, the great raid was successful, for six hundred people were arrested. The charges? Suspicion of assault, suspicion of robbery, suspicion of auto thefts, suspicion of this, suspicion of that. Of the six hundred taken into custody, about 175 were held on various charges, principally for the possession of "knives, guns, chains, dirks, daggers, or any other implement that might have been used in assault cases." This is a broad statement, indeed, but it is thoroughly in keeping with the rest of this deadly serious farce. For these "other" implements consisted, of course, of hammers, tire irons, jack handles, wrenches, and other tools found in the cars. In fact, the arrests seem to have been predicated on the assumption that all law-abiding citizens belong to one or another of the various automobile clubs and, therefore, do not need to carry their own tools and accessories.

As for those arrested, taking the names in order, we have, among those first listed, Tovar, Marquez, Perez, Villegas, Tovar, Querrero, Holguin, Rochas, Aguilera, Ornelas, Atliano, Estrella, Saldana, and so on. Every name on the long list was obviously either Mexican or Spanish and therefore, according to the Ayres Report, the name of a potential criminal. The whole procedure, in fact, was entirely logical and consistent once the assumptions in the report were taken as true.

Harry Braverman, a member of the Grand Jury who had opposed returning the indictment in the Sleepy Lagoon case, was greatly disturbed by these mass dragnet raids and by the manner in which the Grand Jury was being used as a sounding board to air the curious views of Captain Ayres. Accordingly, he arranged for an open Grand Jury hearing on October 8, 1942, at which some of the damage caused by the Ayres Report might, if possible, be corrected. At this hearing, Dr. Harry Hoijer of the University of California; Guy T. Nunn of the War Manpower Commission (who later wrote, on his return from a German prison camp, a fine novel about Mexican-Americans called *White Shadows*); Manuel Aguilar of the Mexican consulate; Oscar R. Fuss of the CIO; Walter H. Laves of the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs and myself all endeavored to create in the minds of the Grand Jurors at least a doubt that everything that Captain Ayres had said was true. To appreciate the incomparable irony of this situation, suffice it to say that here we were having to defend "the biological character" of the Mexican people months after Mexico had declared war on Germany, Italy, and Japan on May 22, 1942; after the first shipment of 1,500 Mexican workers—the vanguard of an army of 100,000 workers that Mexico sent to this country during the war—had arrived in California on September 29, 1942; and after Henry Wallace, then vice-president of the United States, had declared to a great Sixteenth of September celebration in Los Angeles that "California has become a fusion ground for the two cultures of the Americas. . . ."

On the occasion of this hearing, representatives of the coordinator of Inter-American Affairs made the rounds of the newspapers, calling attention to the serious harm being done the war effort and the Good Neighbor Policy by the newspaper campaign against resident Mexicans. In the interest of winning the war, these officials had suggested, there might well be some abatement in this campaign: we were fighting the Germans and the Japanese, not the Mexicans. With stated reluctance, and obvious misgivings, the newspapers promised to behave and, from October to December, 1942, the great hue and cry either disappeared from the press or was conducted *sotto voce*. That the campaign had seriously interfered with the war effort, there can be no doubt. When the Sleepy Lagoon defendants were convicted, for example, the Axis radio beamed the following message in Spanish to the people of Latin America:

In Los Angeles, California, the so-called City of the Angels, twelve Mexican boys were found guilty today of a single murder and five others were convicted of assault growing out of the same case. The 360,000 Mexicans of Los Angeles are reported up in arms over this Yankee persecution. The concentration camps of Los Angeles are said to be overflowing with members of this persecuted minority. This is justice for you, as practiced by the "Good Neighbor," Uncle Sam, a justice that demands seventeen victims for one crime. (Axis broadcast, January 13, 1943).

The representatives of the Coordinator's Office urged the newspapers in particular to cease featuring the word "Mexican" in stories of crime. The press agreed, but, true to form, quickly devised a still better technique for baiting Mexicans. "Zoot-suit" and "Pachuco" began to appear in the newspapers with such regularity that, within a few months, they had completely replaced the word "Mexican." Any doubts the public may have harbored concerning the meaning and application of these terms were removed after January 13, 1943, for they were consistently applied, and only applied, to Mexicans. Every Mexican youngster arrested, no matter how trivial the offense and regardless of his ultimate guilt or innocence, was photographed with some such caption as "Pachuco Gangster" or "Zoot-suit Hoodlum." At the Grand Jury hearing on October 8, 1942, some of us had warned the community that, if this press campaign continued, it would ultimately lead to mass violence. But these warnings were ignored. After the jury had returned its verdict in the Sleepy Lagoon case and Mr. Rockefeller's emissaries had left Los Angeles, the campaign, once again, began to be stepped up.

On the eve of the zoot-suit riots in Los Angeles, therefore, the following elements were involved: first, the much-publicized "gangs," composed of youths of Mexican descent, rarely over eighteen years of age; second, the police, overwhelmingly non-Mexican in descent, acting in reliance on the theories of Captain Ayres; third, the newspapers, caught in a dull period when there was only a major war going on, hell-bent to find a local scapegoat, "an internal enemy," on which the accumulated frustrations of a population in wartime could be vented; fourth, the people of Los Angeles, Mexican and non-Mexican, largely unaware that they were sponsoring, by their credulity and indifference, a private war; and, fifth, the men of the armed services stationed in or about the city, strangers to Los Angeles, bored, getting the attitudes of the city from its flamboyant press. They entered the plot, however, only at the

climax. Knowing already of the attitude of the police and of the press, let's examine the Mexican "gang."

4. THE ORIGIN OF *Pachuguis* mo

In Los Angeles, in 1942, if a boy wished to become known as a "gangster" he had a choice of two methods. The first, and by far the more difficult, was to commit a crime and be convicted. The second method was easier, although it was largely restricted to a particular group. If you were born of Mexican parents financially unable to move out of certain specific slum areas, you could be a gangster from birth without having to go to all the trouble of committing a crime. For Los Angeles had revised the old saying that "boys will be boys" to read "boys, if Mexican, will be gangsters." The only reservation to be noted, of course, consists in the definition of a "gang."

Adolescent boys in the United States are among the most gregarious groups in our society. American boys traditionally "hang out with the gang." Their association is based, of course, on common interests. The boys in the "gang" may go to the same school, live in the same neighborhood or have the same hobbies. There is, however, a difference in the degree to which the members of various "gangs" feel a sense of solidarity. A boy who belongs to a club for those who make model airplanes may have little loyalty toward the club. It serves a particular interest and beyond this interest he must have other associations. But a "gang" of Mexican boys in Los Angeles is held together by a set of associations so strong that they outweigh, or often outweigh, such influences as the home, the school, and the church.

The various teen-age clubs in the better parts of Los Angeles often get together and spend an evening dancing in Hollywood. But the respectable places of entertainment will often refuse to admit Mexicans. The boys and girls who belong to the "Y" often make up theater parties. But the "best" theaters in Los Angeles have been known to refuse admission to Mexicans. Many youngsters like to go rollerskating or ice skating; but the skating rink is likely to have a sign reading "Wednesdays reserved for Negroes and Mexicans." Wherever the Mexicans go, outside their own districts, there are signs, prohibitions, taboos, restrictions. Learning of this "iron curtain" is part of the education of every Mexican-American

boy in Los Angeles. Naturally it hits them hardest at the time when they are trying to cope with the already tremendous problems of normal adolescence. The first chapters are learned almost on the day they enter school, and, as time passes and the world enlarges, they learn other chapters in this bitter and peremptory lesson.

Most of the boys are born and grow up in neighborhoods which are almost entirely Mexican in composition and so it is not until they reach school age that they become aware of the social status of Mexicans. Prior to entering school, they are aware, to a limited extent, of differences in background. They know that there are other groups who speak English and that they will some day have to learn it, too. But it is at school that they first learn the differences in social rank and discover that they are at the bottom of the scale. Teachers in the "Mexican" schools are often unhappy about their personal situation. They would much rather be teaching in the sacrosanct halls of some Beverly Hills or Hollywood school. Assignment to a school in a Mexican district is commonly regarded, in Los Angeles, as the equivalent of exile. Plagued by teachers who present "personality problems," school administrators have been known to "solve" the problem by assigning the teacher to "Siberia." Neither in personnel nor equipment are these schools what they should be, although a definite attempt to improve them is now under way.

Discovering that his status approximates the second-rate school has the effect of instilling in the Mexican boy a resentment directed against the school, and all it stands for. At the same time, it robs him of a desire to turn back to his home. For the home which he knew prior to entering school no longer exists. All of the attitudes he has learned at school now poison his attitude toward the home. Turning away from home and school, the Mexican boy has only one place where he can find security and status. This is the gang made up of boys exactly like himself, who live in the same neighborhood, and who are going through precisely the same distressing process at precisely the same time.

Such is the origin of the juvenile gangs about which the police and the press of Los Angeles were so frenetically concerned. Gangs of this character are familiar phenomena in any large city. In Los Angeles, twenty years ago, similar gangs were made up of the sons of Russian Molokan immigrants. They have existed in Los Angeles since the city really began to grow, around 1900, and they will continue to exist as long

as society creates them. Thus "the genesis of pachuquismo," as Dr. George Sanchez has pointed out, "is an open book to those who care to look into the situations facing Spanish-speaking people" in the Southwest. In fact, they were pointed out over a decade ago in an article which Dr. Sanchez wrote for the *Journal of Applied Psychology* (1).

The *pachuco* gang differs from some other city gangs only in the degree to which it constitutes a more tightly knit group. There is more to the *pachuco* gang than just having a good time together. The *pachucos* suffer discrimination together and nothing makes for cohesiveness more effectively than a commonly shared hostility. Knowing that both as individuals and as a group they are not welcome in many parts of the city, they create their own world and try to make it as self-sufficient as possible.

While the fancier "palladiums" have been known to refuse them, even when they have had the price of admission, there are other dance halls, not nearly so fancy, that make a business of catering to their needs. It should be noted, however, that Mexican boys have never willingly accepted these inferior accommodations and the inferior status they connote. Before they have visited the "joints" on Skid Row, they have first tried to pass through the palatial foyers on Sunset Boulevard. When they finally give up, they have few illusions left about their native land.

It should also be remembered that *pachuquismo* followed a decade of important social change for Mexicans in Los Angeles. During the depression years, thousands of Mexicans had been repatriated and those remaining began to adjust to a new mode of existence. The residence of those who had been migratory workers tended to become stabilized, for residence was a condition to obtaining relief. Thousands of Mexicans were replaced, during these same years, by so-called Okies and Arkies in the migratory labor movement. A greater stability of residence implied more regular schooling, better opportunities to explore the intricacies of urban life, and, above all, it created a situation in which the Mexican communities began to impinge on the larger Anglo-American community.

During the depression years, one could watch the gradual encroachment of Mexicans upon downtown Los Angeles. Stores and shops catering to Mexican trade crossed First Street, moving out from the old Plaza district and gradually infiltrated as far south as Third or Fourth

streets. The motion picture theaters in this neighborhood, by far the oldest in the city, began to "go Mexican" as did the ten-cent stores, the shops, and the small retail stores. Nowadays the old Mason Opera House, in this district, has become a Mexican theater. Being strangers to an urban environment, the first generation had tended to respect the boundaries of the Mexican communities. But the second generation was lured far beyond these boundaries into the downtown shopping districts, to the beaches, and above all, to the "glamor" of Hollywood. It was this generation of Mexicans, the *pachuco* generation, that first came to the general notice and attention of the Anglo-American population.

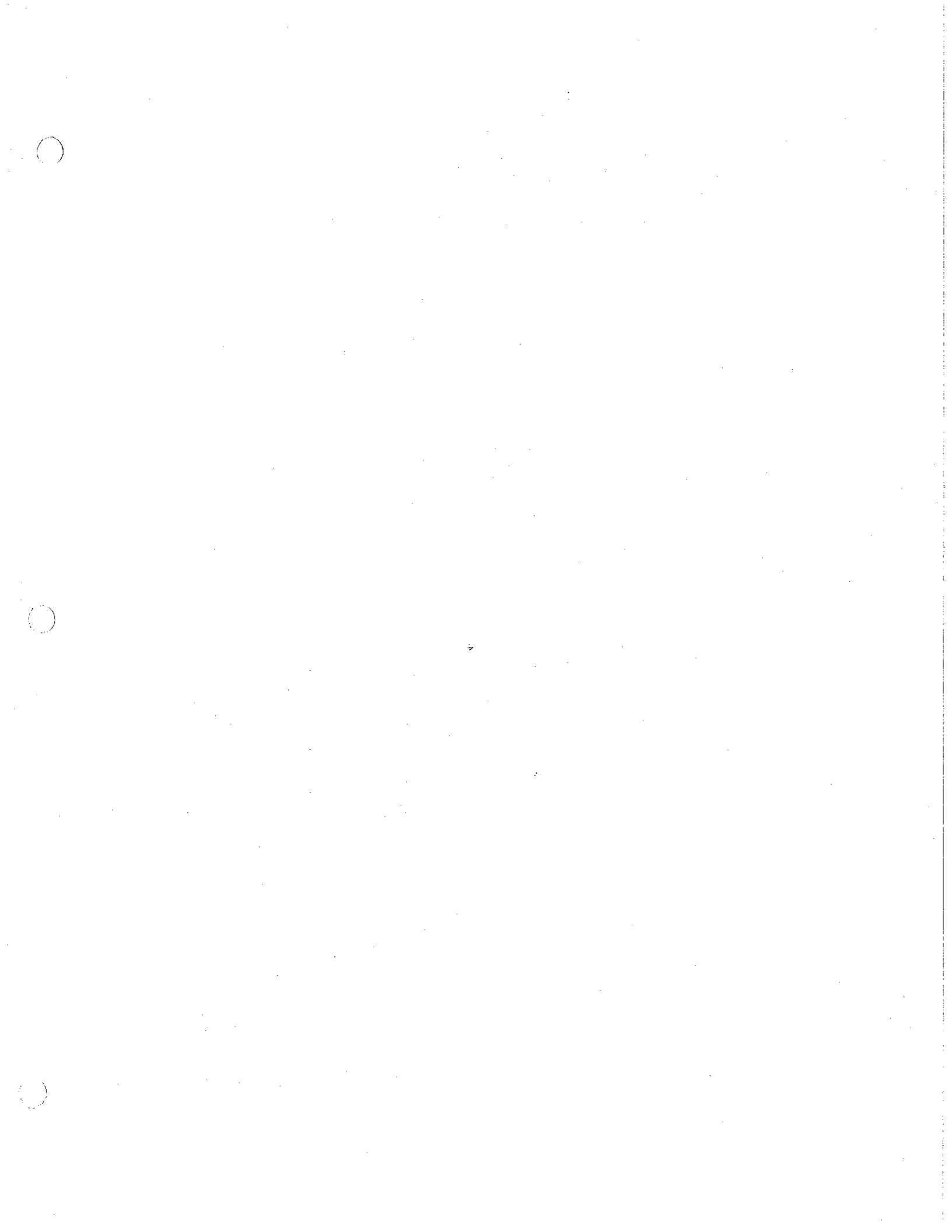
Thus concurrently with the growth of the gangs there developed a new stereotype of the Mexican as the "*pachuco* gangster" the "zoot-suiter." Many theories have been advanced and reams of paper wasted in an attempt to define the origin of the word "*pachuco*." Some say that the expression originally came from Mexico and denoted resemblance to the gaily costumed people living in a town of this name; others have said that it was first applied to border bandits in the vicinity of El Paso. Regardless of the origin of the word, the *pachuco* stereotype was born in Los Angeles. It was essentially an easy task to fix this stereotype on Mexican youngsters. Their skin was enough darker to set them apart from the average *Angeleno*. Basically bilingual, they spoke both Spanish and English with an accent that could be mimicked by either or both groups. Also there was an age-old heritage of ill-will to be exploited and a social atmosphere in which Mexicans, as Mexicans, had long been stereotyped. The *pachuco* also had a uniform—the zoot-suit—which served to make him conspicuous.

Mexican-American boys never use the term "zoot-suit," preferring the word "drapes" in speaking of their clothes. "Drapes" began to appear in the late thirties and early forties. In general appearance, "drapes" resemble the zoot-suits worn by Negro youngsters in Harlem, although the initiated point out differences in detail and design. Called "drapes" or "zoot-suit," the costume is certainly one of the most functional ever designed. It is worn by boys who engage in a specific type of activity, namely, a style of dancing which means disaster to the average suit. The trouser cuffs are tight around the ankles in order not to catch on the heels of the boy's quickly moving feet. The shoulders of the coat are wide, giving plenty of room for strenuous arm movements; and the shoes are heavy, serving to anchor the boy to the dance floor as he

spins his partner around. There is nothing esoteric about these "sharp" sartorial get-ups in underprivileged groups, quite apart from their functional aspect. They are often used as a badge of defiance by the rejected against the outside world and, at the same time, as a symbol of belonging to the inner group. It is at once a sign of rebellion and a mark of belonging. It carries prestige (2).

For the boys, peg-topped pants with pleats, high waists up under the armpits, the long loose-backed coat, thick-soled bluchers, and the duck-tailed haircut; for the girls, black huaraches, short black skirt, long black stockings, sweater, and high pompadour. Many of the boys saved their money for months to buy one of these get-ups. The length of the coat and the width of the shoulders became as much a mark of prestige as the merit badges of the Boy Scout. But, it should be noted, that the zoot-suit was not universal among Mexican boys. Some never adopted it, while others never adopted it completely. There were all varieties of acceptance. The newspapers, of course, promptly seized upon the zoot-suit as "a badge of crime." But as one zoot-suited boy said to me, with infallible logic, "If I were a gangster, would I wear a zoot-suit so that everyone would know I was a gangster? No, I'd maybe dress like a priest or like everyone else; but no zoot-suit."

With the backdrops all in place, the curtain now rolls up on an interesting tableau in Our City the Queen of the Angels which was founded in the year 1781 by Mexican *pobladores* under the direction of Spanish officers who wore costumes far more outlandish than those worn by the most flamboyant *pachucos*.



Blood on the Pavements

On Thursday evening, June 3, 1943, the Alpine Club—made up of youngsters of Mexican descent—held a meeting in a police substation in Los Angeles. Usually these meetings were held in a nearby public school but, since the school was closed, the boys had accepted the invitation of a police captain to meet in the substation. The principal business of the meeting, conducted in the presence of the police captain, consisted in a discussion of how gang-strife could best be avoided in the neighborhood. After the meeting had adjourned, the boys were taken in squad cars to the street corner nearest the neighborhood in which most of them lived. The squad cars were scarcely out of sight, when the boys were assaulted, not by a rival "gang" or "club," but by hoodlum elements in the neighborhood. Of one thing the boys were sure: their assailants were not of Mexican descent.

Earlier the same evening a group of eleven sailors, on leave from their station in Los Angeles, were walking along the 1700 block on North Main Street in the center of one of the city's worst slum areas. The surrounding neighborhood is predominantly Mexican. On one side of the street the dirty brick front of a large brewery hides from view a collection of ramshackle Mexican homes. The other side of the street consists of a series of small bars, boarded-up store fronts, and small shops. The area is well off the beaten paths and few servicemen found their way this far north on Main Street. As they were walking along the street, so they later stated, the sailors were set upon by a gang of Mexican boys. One of the sailors was badly hurt; the others suffered minor cuts and bruises. According to their story, the sailors were outnumbered about three to one.

When the attack was reported to the nearest substation, the police adopted a curious attitude. Instead of attempting to find and arrest the assailants, fourteen policemen remained at the station after their

regular duty was over for the night. Then, under the command of a detective lieutenant, the "Vengeance Squad," as they called themselves, set out "to clean up" the gang that had attacked the sailors. But—miracle of miracle!—when they arrived at the scene of the attack they could find no one to arrest—not a single Mexican—on their favorite charge of "suspicion of assault." In itself this curious inability to find anyone to arrest—so strikingly at variance with what usually happened on raids of this sort—raises an inference that a larger strategy was involved. For the raid accomplished nothing except to get the names of the raiding officers in the newspapers and to whip up the anger of the community against the Mexican population, which may, perhaps, have been the reason for the raid. . . .

Thus began the so-called "Zoot-Suit Race Riots" which were to last, in one form or another, for a week in Los Angeles.

I. THE TAXICAB BRIGADE

Taking the police raid as an official cue—a signal for action,—about two hundred sailors decided to take the law into their own hands on the following night. Coming down into the center of Los Angeles from the Naval Armory in Chavez Ravine (near the "Chinatown" area), they hired a fleet of twenty taxicabs. Once assembled, the "task force" proceeded to cruise straight through the center of town en route to the east side of Los Angeles where the bulk of the Mexicans reside. Soon the sailors in the lead-car sighted a Mexican boy in a zoot-suit walking along the street. The "task force" immediately stopped and, in a few moments, the boy was lying on the pavement, badly beaten and bleeding. The sailors then piled back into the cabs and the caravan resumed its way until the next zoot-suit was sighted, whereupon the same procedure was repeated. In these attacks, of course, the odds were pretty uneven: two hundred sailors to one Mexican boy. Four times this same treatment was meted out and four "gangsters"—two seventeen-year-old youngsters, one nineteen, and one twenty-three,—were left lying on the pavements for the ambulances to pick up.

It is indeed curious that in a city like Los Angeles, which boasts that it has more police cars equipped with two-way radio than any other city in the world (Los Angeles *Times*, September 2, 1947), the police were

apparently unable to intercept a caravan of twenty taxicabs, loaded with two hundred uniformed, yelling, bawdy sailors, as it cruised through the downtown and east-side sections of the city. At one point the police did happen to cross the trail of the caravan and the officers were apparently somewhat embarrassed over the meeting. For only nine of the sailors were taken into custody and the rest were permitted to continue on their merry way. No charges, however, were ever preferred against the nine.

Their evening's entertainment over, the sailors returned to the foot of Chavez Ravine. There they were met by the police and the Shore Patrol. The Shore Patrol took seventeen of the sailors into custody and sent the rest up to the ravine to the Naval Armory. The petty officer who had led the expedition, and who was not among those arrested, gave the police a frank statement of things to come. "We're out to do what the police have failed to do," he said; "we're going to clean up this situation. . . . Tonight [by then it was the morning of June fifth] the sailors may have the marines along" (1).

The next day the Los Angeles press pushed the war news from the front page as it proceeded to play up the pavement war in Los Angeles in screaming headlines. "Wild Night in L.A.—Sailor Zooter Clash" was the headline in the *Daily News*. "Sailor Task Force Hits L.A. Zooters" bellowed the *Herald-Express*. A suburban newspaper gleefully reported that "zoot-suited roughnecks fled to cover before a task force of twenty taxicabs." None of these stories, however, reported the slightest resistance, up to this point, on the part of the Mexicans.

True to their promise, the sailors were joined that night, June fifth, by scores of soldiers and marines. Squads of servicemen, arms linked, paraded through downtown Los Angeles four abreast, stopping anyone wearing zoot-suits and ordering these individuals to put away their "drapes" by the following night or suffer the consequences. Aside from a few half-hearted admonitions, the police made no effort whatever to interfere with these heralds of disorder. However, twenty-seven Mexican boys, gathered on a street corner, were arrested and jailed that evening. While these boys were being booked "on suspicion" of various offenses, a mob of several hundred servicemen roamed the downtown section of a great city threatening members of the Mexican minority without hindrance or interference from the police, the Shore Patrol, or the Military Police.

On this same evening, a squad of sailors invaded a bar on the east side and carefully examined the clothes of the patrons. Two zoot-suit custom-ers, drinking beer at a table, were preemptorily ordered to remove their clothes. One of them was beaten and his clothes were torn from his back when he refused to comply with the order. The other—they were both Mexicans—doffed his "drapes" which were promptly ripped to shreds. Similar occurrences in several parts of the city that evening were sufficiently alarming to have warranted some precautionary measures or to have justified an "out-of-bounds" order. All that the police officials did, however, was to call up some additional reserves and announce that any Mexicans involved in the rioting would be promptly arrested. That there had been no counterattacks by the Mexicans up to this point apparently did not enter into the police officers' appraisal of the situation. One thing must be said for the Los Angeles police: it is above all consistent. When it is wrong, it is consistently wrong; when it makes a mistake, it will be repeated.

By the night of June sixth the police had worked out a simple formula for action. Knowing that wherever the sailors went there would be trouble, the police simply followed the sailors at a conveniently spaced interval. Six carloads of sailors cruised down Brooklyn Avenue that evening. At Ramona Boulevard, they stopped and beat up eight teenage Mexicans. Failing to find any Mexican zoot-suiters in a bar on Indiana Street, they were so annoyed that they proceeded to wreck the establishment. In due course, the police made a leisurely appearance at the scene of the wreckage but could find no one to arrest. Carefully following the sailors, the police arrested eleven boys who had been beaten up on Carmelita Street; six more victims were arrested a few blocks further on, seven at Ford Boulevard, six at Gifford Street—and so on straight through the Mexican east-side settlements. Behind them came the police, stopping at the same street corners "to mop up" by arresting the injured victims of the mob. By morning, some forty-four Mexican boys, all severely beaten, were under arrest.

2. OPERATION "DIXIE"

The stage was now set for the really serious rioting of June seventh and eighth. Having featured the preliminary rioting as an offensive

launched by sailors, soldiers, and marines, the press now whipped public opinion into a frenzy by dire warnings that Mexican zoot-suiters planned mass retaliations. To insure a riot, the precise street corners were named at which retaliatory action was expected and the time of the anticipated action was carefully specified. In effect these stories announced a riot and invited public participation. "Zooters Planning to Attack More Servicemen," headlined the *Daily News*; "Would Job Broken Bottle-necks in the Faces of their Victims. . . . Beating sailors' brains out with hammers also on the program." Concerned for the safety of the Army, the Navy, and the Marine Corps, the *Herald-Express* warned that "Zooters . . . would mass 500 strong."

By way of explaining the action of the police throughout the subsequent rioting, it should be pointed out that, in June, 1943, the police were on a bad spot. A man by the name of Beche, arrested on a drunk charge, had been kicked to death in the Central Jail by police officers. Through the excellent work of an alert police commissioner, the case had finally been broken and, at the time of the riots, a police officer by the name of Compton Dixon was on trial in the courts. While charges of police brutality had been bandied about for years, this was the first time that a seemingly airtight case had been prepared. Shortly after the riots, a Hollywood police captain told a motion picture director that the police had touched off the riots "in order to give Dixie (Dixon) a break." By staging a fake demonstration of the alleged necessity for harsh police methods, it was hoped that the jury would acquit Dixon. As a matter of fact, the jury did disagree and on July 2, 1943, the charges against Dixon were dismissed.

On Monday evening, June seventh, thousands of *Angelinos*, in response to twelve hours' advance notice in the press, turned out for a mass lynching. Marching through the streets of downtown Los Angeles, a mob of several thousand soldiers, sailors, and civilians, proceeded to beat up every zoot-suiter they could find. Pushing its way into the important motion picture theaters, the mob ordered the management to turn on the house lights and then ranged up and down the aisles dragging Mexicans out of their seats. Street cars were halted while Mexicans, and some Filipinos and Negroes, were jerked out of their seats, pushed into the streets, and beaten with sadistic frenzy. If the victims wore zoot-suits, they were stripped of their clothing and left naked or half-naked on the streets, bleeding and bruised. Proceeding down Main Street from

First to Twelfth, the mob stopped on the edge of the Negro district. Learning that the Negroes planned a warm reception for them, the mobsters turned back and marched through the Mexican east side spreading panic and terror.

Here is one of numerous eye-witness accounts written by Al Waxman, editor of *The Eastside Journal*:

At Twelfth and Central I came upon a scene that will long live in my memory. Police were swinging clubs and servicemen were fighting with civilians. Wholesale arrests were being made by the officers.

Four boys came out of a pool hall. They were wearing the zoot-suits that have become the symbol of a fighting flag. Police ordered them into arrest cars. One refused. He asked: "Why am I being arrested?" The police officer answered with three swift blows of the night-stick across the boy's head and he went down. As he sprawled, he was kicked in the face. Police had difficulty loading his body into the vehicle because he was one-legged and wore a wooden limb. Maybe the officer didn't know he was attacking a cripple.

At the next corner a Mexican mother cried out, "Don't take my boy, he did nothing. He's only fifteen years old. Don't take him." She was struck across the jaw with a night-stick and almost dropped the two and a half year old baby that was clinging in her arms. . . .

Rushing back to the east side to make sure that things were quiet here, I came upon a band of servicemen making a systematic tour of East First Street. They had just come out of a cocktail bar where four men were nursing bruises. Three autos loaded with Los Angeles policemen were on the scene but the soldiers were not molested. Farther down the street the men stopped a streetcar, forcing the motorman to open the door and proceeded to inspect the clothing of the male passengers. "We're looking for zoot-suits to burn," they shouted. Again the police did not interfere. . . . Half a block away . . . I pleaded with the men of the local police station to put a stop to these activities. "It is a matter for the military police," they said.

Throughout the night the Mexican communities were in the wildest possible turmoil. Scores of Mexican mothers were trying to locate their youngsters and several hundred Mexican milled around each of the police substations and the Central Jail trying to get word of missing members of their families. Boys came into the police stations saying: "Charge me with vagrancy or anything, but don't send me out there!" pointing to the streets where other boys, as young as twelve and thirteen

years of age, were being beaten and stripped of their clothes. From affidavits which I helped prepare at the time, I should say that not more than half of the victims were actually wearing zoot-suits. A Negro defense worker, wearing a defense-plant identification badge on his workclothes, was taken from a street car and one of his eyes was gouged out with a knife. Huge half-page photographs, showing Mexican boys stripped of their clothes, cowering on the pavements, often bleeding profusely, surrounded by jeering mobs of men and women, appeared in all the Los Angeles newspapers. As Al Waxman most truthfully reported, blood had been "spilled on the streets of the city."

At midnight on June seventh, the military authorities decided that the local police were completely unable or unwilling to handle the situation, despite the fact that a thousand reserve officers had been called up. The entire downtown area of Los Angeles was then declared "out of bounds" for military personnel. This order immediately slowed down the pace of the rioting. The moment the Military Police and Shore Patrol went into action, the rioting quieted down. On June eighth the city officials brought their heads up out of the sand, took a look around, and began issuing statements. The district attorney, Fred N. Howser, announced that the "situation is getting entirely out of hand," while Mayor Fletcher Bowron thought that "sooner or later it will blow over." The chief of police, taking a count of the Mexicans in jail, cheerfully proclaimed that "the situation has now cleared up." All agreed, however, that it was quite "a situation."

Unfortunately "the situation" had not cleared up; nor did it blow over. It began to spread to the suburbs where the rioting continued for two more days. When it finally stopped, the *Eagle Rock Advertiser* mournfully editorialized: "It is too bad the servicemen were called off before they were able to complete the job. . . . Most of the citizens of the city have been delighted with what has been going on." County Supervisor Roger Jessup told the newsmen: "All that is needed to end lawlessness is more of the same action as is being exercised by the servicemen!" While the district attorney of Ventura, an outlying county, jumped on the bandwagon with a statement to the effect that "zoot suits are an open indication of subversive character." This was also the opinion of the Los Angeles City Council which adopted a resolution making the wearing of zoot-suits a misdemeanor! On June eleventh, hundreds of handbills were distributed to students and posted on bulletin boards in a high school at-

tended by many Negroes and Mexicans which read: "Big Sale. Second-Hand Zoot Suits. Slightly Damaged. Apply at Nearest U.S. Naval Station. While they last we have your Size."

3. WHEN THE DEVIL IS SICK . . .

Edging on the mob to attack Mexicans in the most indiscriminate manner, the press developed a fine technique in reporting the riots. "44 Zooters Jailed in Attacks on Sailors" was the chief headline in the *Daily News* of June seventh; "Zoot Suit Chiefs Girding for War on Navy" was the headline in the same paper on the following day. The moralistic tone of this reporting is illustrated by a smug headline in the *Los Angeles Times* of June seventh: "Zoot Suiters Learn Lesson in Fight with Servicemen." The riots, according to the same paper, were having "a cleansing effect." An editorial in the *Herald-Express* said that the riots "promise to rid the community of . . . those zoot-suited miscreants." While Mr. Manchester Boddy, in a signed editorial in the *Daily News* of June ninth excitedly announced that "the time for temporizing is past. . . . The time has come to serve notice that the City of Los Angeles will no longer be terrorized by a relatively small handful of morons parading as zoot suit hoodlums. To delay action *now* means to court disaster later on." As though there had been any "temporizing," in this sense, for the prior two years!

But once the Navy had declared the downtown section of Los Angeles "out of bounds," once the Mexican ambassador in Washington had addressed a formal inquiry to Secretary of State Hull, and once official Washington began to advise the local minions of the press of the utterly disastrous international effects of the riots, in short when the local press realized the consequences of its own lawless action, a great thunderous cry for "unity," and "peace," and "order" went forth. One after the other, the editors began to disclaim all responsibility for the riots which, two days before, had been hailed for their "salutary" and "cleansing" effect.

Thus on June eleventh the *Los Angeles Times*, in a pious mood, wrote that,

at the outset, zoot-suiters were limited to no specific race; they were Anglo-Saxon, Latin and Negro. The fact that later on their numbers seemed to be predominantly Latin was in itself no indictment of that race

at all. No responsible person at any time condemned Latin-Americans as such.

Feeling a twinge of conscience, Mr. Boddy wrote that "only a ridiculously small percentage of the local Mexican population is involved in the so-called gang demonstrations. Every true Californian has an affection for his fellow citizens of Mexican ancestry that is as deep rooted as the Mexican culture that influences our way of living, our architecture, our music, our language, and even our food." This belated discovery of the Spanish-Mexican cultural heritage of California was, needless to say, rather ironic in view of the fact that the ink was not yet dry on Mr. Boddy's earlier editorial in which he had castigated the Mexican minority as "morons." To appreciate the ironic aspects of "the situation," the same newspapers that had been baiting Mexicans for nearly two years now began to extol them (2).

As might have been expected, this post-mortem mood of penitence and contrition survived just long enough for some of the international repercussions of the riots to quiet down. Within a year, the press and the police were back in the same old groove. On July 16, 1944, the Los Angeles *Times* gave front-page prominence to a curious story under the heading: "Youthful Gang Secrets Exposed." Indicating no source, identifying no spokesman, the story went on to say that "authorities of the Superior Court" had unearthed a dreadful "situation" among juvenile delinquents. Juveniles were using narcotics, marijuana, and smoking "reefers." Compelled to accept drug addiction, "unwilling neophytes" were dragged into committing robberies and other crimes. Young girls were tattooed with various "secret cabalistic symbols" of gang membership. The high pompadours affected by the *cholitas*, it was said, were used to conceal knives and other "weapons." Two theories were advanced in the story by way of "explaining" the existence of these dangerous gangs: first, that "subversive groups" in Los Angeles had organized them; and, second, that "the gangs are the result of mollycoddling of racial groups." In view of the record, one is moved to inquire, what mollycoddling? by the police? by the juvenile authorities? by the courts? Backing up the news story, an editorial appeared in the *Times* on July eighteenth entitled: "It's Not a Nice Job But It Has To Be Done." Lashing out at "any maudlin and misguided sympathy for the 'poor juveniles,'" the editorial went on to say that "stern punishment is what is needed; stern and sure punishment. The police and the Sheriff's men

should be given every encouragement to go after these young gangsters" (emphasis mine).

Coincident with the appearance of the foregoing news story and editorial, the Juvenile Court of Los Angeles entered a most remarkable order in its minutes on July 31, 1944. The order outlined a plan by which Mexican wards of the Juvenile Court, over sixteen years of age, might be turned over to the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad for a type of contract-employment. A form of contract, between the parents of the youngsters and the railroad, was attached to the order. The contract provided that the ward was to work "as a track laborer" at 58½¢ per hour; that \$1.03 per day was to be deducted for board, \$2.50 per month for dues in a hospital association, and 10¢ a day for laundry. It was also provided that one-half of the pay was to be turned over to the probation officers to be held in trust for the ward. That this order was specifically aimed at Mexican juveniles is clearly shown by the circumstance that the court, prior to approving the arrangement, had first secured its approval by a committee of "representative" leaders of the Mexican-American community.

4. THE STRANGE CASE OF THE SILK PANTIES

All of this, one will say,—the Sleepy Lagoon case, the riots, etc,—belongs to the past. But does it? On the morning of July 21, 1946, a thirteen-year-old Mexican boy, Eugene Chavez Montenegro, Jr., was shot and killed by a deputy sheriff in Montebello Park on the east side of Los Angeles. The deputy sheriff later testified that he had been called to the area by reports of a prowler. On arriving at the scene, he had stationed himself near a window of the house in question and had played his flashlight on the window. A little later, he testified, "a man" lifted the screen on the window, crawled out, and ran past him. When the "man" failed to halt on order, he had shot him in the back. At the coroner's inquest, the same deputy also testified that he had seen another officer remove a pair of "silk panties" from the dead boy's pocket and that the boy was armed with "a Boy Scout's knife."

While incidents of this kind have been common occurrences in Los Angeles for twenty years, in this case the officers had shot the wrong boy. For it turned out that young Montenegro was an honor student at St.

Alphonsus parochial school; that his parents were a highly respectable middle-class couple; and that the neighbors, Anglo-Americans as well as Mexicans, all testified that the boy had an excellent reputation. Accepting the officers' version of the facts, it was still difficult to explain why they had made no effort to halt the boy, who was five feet three inches tall, when he ran directly past them within arms' reach. Before the hearings were over, the "silk panties" story was exposed as a complete fake. Despite a gallant fight waged by Mr. and Mrs. Montenegro to vindicate the reputation of their son, nothing came of the investigation. "Raging Mother Attacks Deputy Who Slew Son" was the *Daily News* headline on the story of the investigation.

... On January 23, 1947 the attorney general of California ordered the removal of two police officers for the brutal beating of four Mexican nationals who, with eight hundred of their countrymen, had been brought to Oxnard to harvest the crops. . . . On March 30, 1946, a private detective killed Tiofilo Pelagio, a Mexican national, in a café argument. . . . On the same day affidavits were presented to the authorities that confessions from four Mexican boys, all minors, had been obtained by force and violence. . . . Esther Armenta, sixteen years of age, complained to her mother that she was being mistreated by Anglo-American classmates in a Los Angeles junior high school. "They would spit on her," said Mrs. Catalina Armenta, the mother, "and call her a 'dirty Mex.' Esther would come home in tears and beg me to get her transferred." A few weeks later the girl was in juvenile court charged with the use of "bad language." She was then sent to the Ventura School for Girls, a so-called "correctional" institution. When Mrs. Armenta finally got permission to visit her daughter, in the presence of a matron, the girl had "black and blue marks on her arm" and complained that she had been whipped by one of the matrons. . . . On April 10, 1946, Mrs. Michael Gonzales complained to the Federation of Spanish-American Voters that her daughter had been placed in the Ventura School without her knowledge or consent and that when she had protested this action she had been threatened with deportation by an official of the juvenile court. . . . On the basis of a stack of affidavits, the San Fernando Valley Council on Race Relations charged on May 16, 1947 that the police had broken into Mexican homes without search warrants; that they had beaten, threatened, and intimidated Mexican juveniles; and that they were in the habit of making "wholesale roundups and arrests of Mexican-American boys

without previous inquiry as to the arrested boys' connection—if any—with the crime in question." . . . In 1946 a prominent official of the Los Angeles schools told me that she had been horrified to discover that, in the Belvedere district, Mexican-American girls, stripped of their clothing, were forced to parade back and forth, in the presence of other girls in the "gym," as a disciplinary measure. . . .*

* For a detailed account of still another "incident," see *Justice for Salcido* by Guy Endore, published by the Civil Rights Congress of Los Angeles, July, 1948.

Alice Greenfield,
Executive secretary.

Under separate cover your copy of SLEEPY LAGOON MYSTERY has gone forward. By the way, you neglected to enclose the 1st. The enclosed bulletin is the first one which we put out, that is, for general consumption. The bulletin began originally as a newsletter to the defendants in the case. The other material enclosed you may find of interest. Ayres' report is commented on at length in SLEEPY LAGOON MYSTERY. We hope you will find the MYSTERY interesting and that you will want to distribute copies to your friends. Please note the re-order form at the end of the book when it arrives. Thank you for your interest and cooperation. Sincerely yours,

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SLEEPY LAGOON DEFENSE COMMITTEE

EXHIBIT No. 1

- | | | |
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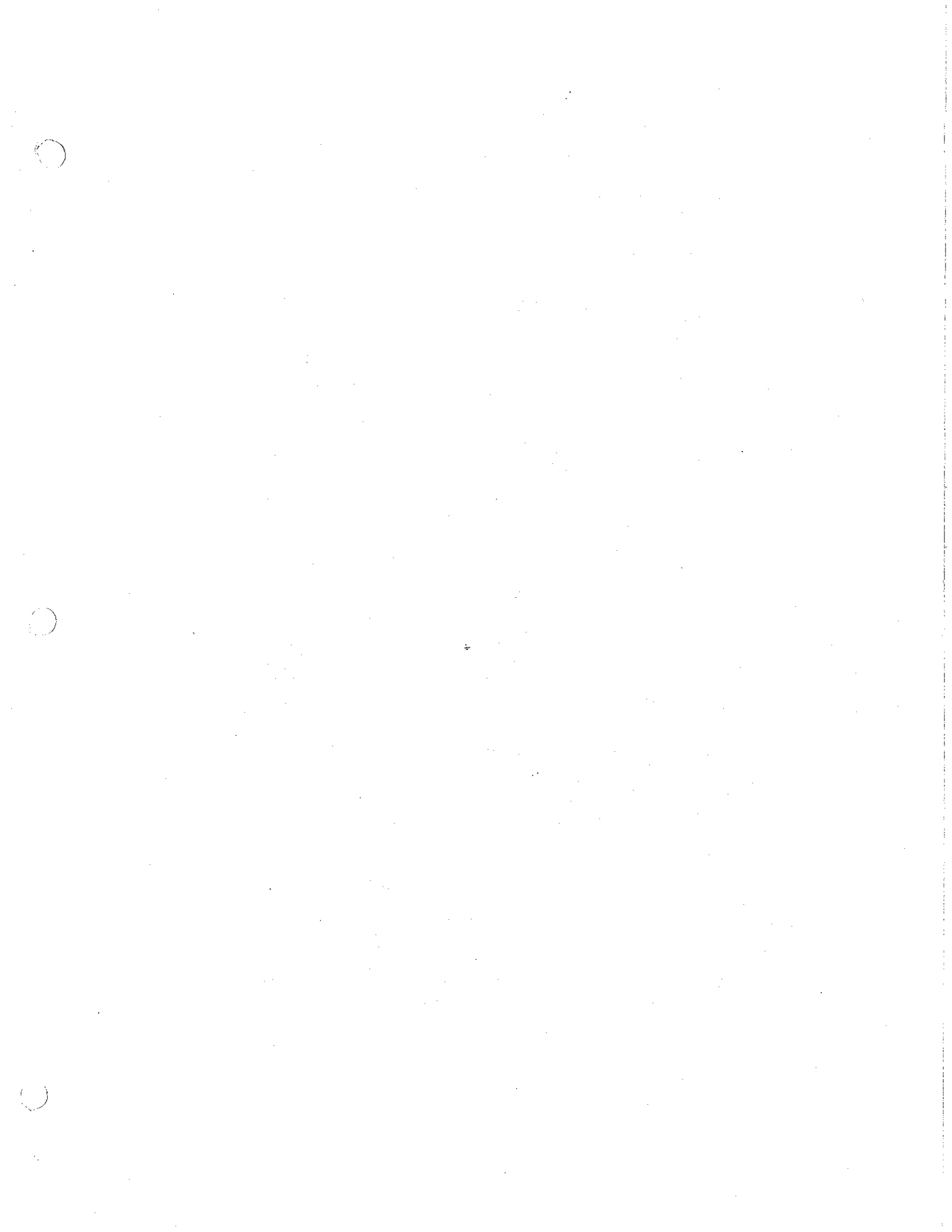
On the inside back cover of the pamphlet entitled "The Sleepy Lagoon Case," the following persons are named as sponsors:

The Report of the Joint Fact-Finding Committee on Un-American Activities in California submitted to the 5th session of the California Legislature (1943) devoted a section to the Citizens' Committee for the Defense of Mexican-American Youth (pp. 216-217), now known as the Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee. That Report declared, in part, as follows:

Mrs. La Rue McCormick's Citizens' Committee is still operating, even though 17 of the Mexican boys have been convicted in the Superior Court of Los Angeles on the charge of murder. . . . The Citizens' Committee for the Defense of Mexican-American Youth, regardless of any other consideration, is a typical Communist front organization. The most recent activity of this group is to expand its activity into churches, unions, fraternal and civic organizations.

Canada Lee, Cary McWilliams, and Orson Welles, members of the National Citizens Political Action Committee, formerly known as the Citizens' Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee, are affiliated with the Committee for the Defense of Mexican-American Youth. According to an official pamphlet of the organization, all three of the foregoing are sponsors. Orson Welles also wrote the foreword of a pamphlet entitled "The Sleepy Lagoon Case," published by the Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee.

SLEEPY LAGOON DEFENSE COMMITTEE



we always caught colds)
 I hated it,
 (our bathroom was outside,
 I went out to go to the bathroom
 One night,
 screams at night,
 of infant-like
 We could never rid ourselves
 through the front steps.
 They got in
 Cats were always in the bottom of the house.

A fast ball that got away from my brother.
 It was patched up with cardboard
 to keep the cold air
 out of my sister's bedroom.
 They were always in the bottom of the house.

In front of
 my house
 we had a chain link fence
 which protected
 our lawn of dirt
 and my mom's
 flower bed.
 One of the front windows
 was broken —
 A fast ball that got away from my brother.
 It was patched up with cardboard
 to keep the cold air
 out of my sister's bedroom.
 They were always in the bottom of the house.

I remember
 my turquoise painted house.
 It was located in
 "El Hoyo Mara"
 one of the many barrios of
 East Los.
 El Hoyo means
 the hole.
 I guess in a way
 it was a hole,
 like the kind where you get buried in.
 It was a typical barrio —
 with little children
 tugging the flowered dresses of
 fat brown ladies;
 where old decayed couples
 help each other cross the street,
 hand in hand
 like two neglected prunes;
 wins in an alley,
 incoherent conversation,
 sharing a pint of Tokay
 and companionship;
 a foxy bronze man,
 waiting for the bus,
 while we three middle-aged men
 make comments

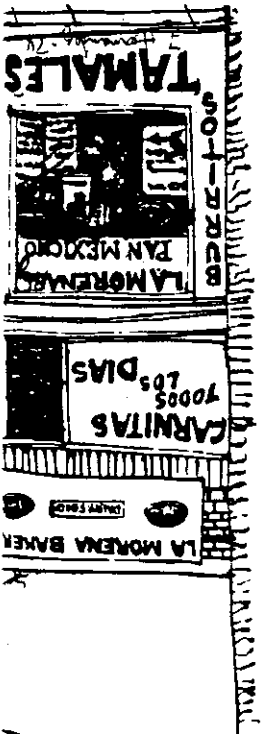
EL HOYO
 Art Godinez

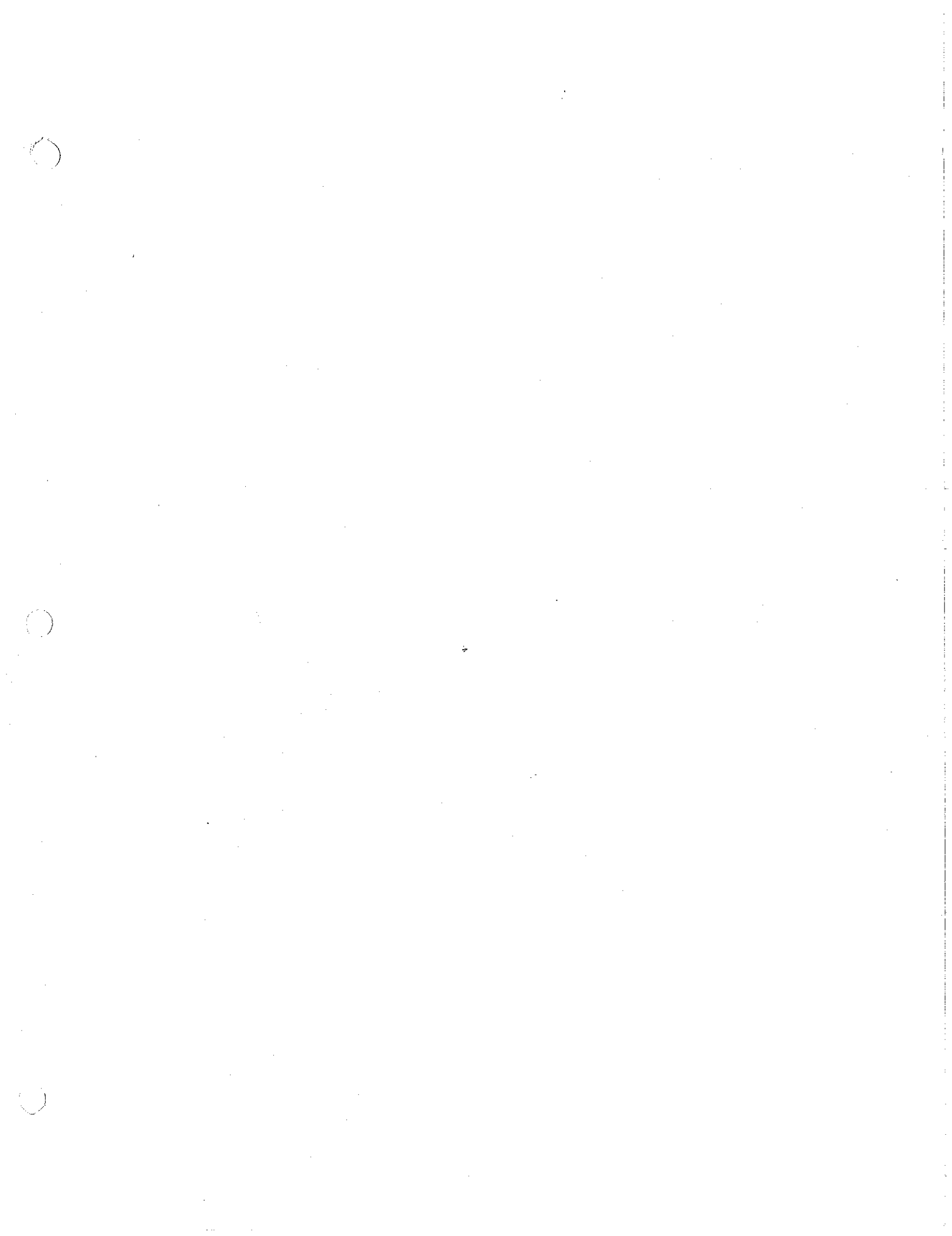
and horny men,
 foxy women,
 wins,
 old couples,
 future fat ladies,
 Now they were
 to bizarre.
 The scene progressed
 thrice their size.
 they were
 Soon,
 at them.
 and stared
 I froze
 like usual.
 and didn't scatter
 they were immobile
 Except this time
 saw before me
 the wall to wall cockroaches.

and as usual,
 I turned the kitchen light on,
 I went for a drink of water,
 woke me up,
 after a mousetrap
 One night
 that the neighbors had heard.

and swear
 I'd awake
 would rush into the night.
 the crack of a mousetrap
 At least once a night
 and mice.
 termites.
 the cockroaches,
 Though she couldn't help
 My mother always kept it clean.
 to a family of ten,
 which gave sleep
 Our house had three bedrooms
 I found myself in.
 the situation
 But rather,
 her newborn
 the cat and
 Not because of
 I almost threw up.
 by her side,
 seven newly born
 lay a cat,
 by the toilet seat
 and there
 I turned the light on

I almost threw up.
 by her side,
 seven newly born
 lay a cat,
 by the toilet seat
 and there
 I turned the light on





Pizza Parlor. Freddy was munching on a huge piece of Mexican sweet bread shaped like a pretzel. He was by himself, which was kind of a surprise. For over a month now he and Big Hugo had been hanging around together like a couple of Siamese twins. The reason being that Freddy had been jumped by a gang from the Eastside while walking his girl Vera home from a dance. Beat the shit out of him. Vera ran screaming for the law. But by the time they got to him he had needed fourteen stitches on his head and a cast for his left arm.

Freddy still wore the cast, and as yet his hair hadn't grown completely out from where the stitches had been. You could still see the red, smeared iodine on his scalp. The scar beneath the bald patch looked nasty. It humped over like a grafted worm on his head. As Gato approached him, Freddy greeted him with his goofy smile that allowed one to see the gold caps on his front teeth.

"What's happening," Gato said.

"Nothing much," Freddy said. "Just standing around."

By now his cast was signed by just about everyone that knew him, and by many more who wouldn't remember what he looked like if he were standing on the line up. He had fallen into the habit of asking everyone he met to put their mark on his plaster, and for this purpose he carried a pencil behind his ear for anyone who might care to register their name on his arm. The cast served as a novelty for him; and it was apparent that the cast had inflated his ego to some extent. He displayed it as if it were a symbol of his savageness, even though he hadn't been much of a savage when he earned it. Still, Freddy waved the cast around like a medal.

Shortly after he got jumped he sort of picked up Hugo to walk around with him. A bodyguard wasn't a bad thing to call Hugo—in Freddy's situation, anyway. Freddy latched onto Hugo and managed to keep him at his side by treating him to cokes and things when they were on the street. Today, though, Hugo wasn't with him.

"What happened to Hugo?" Gato asked.

Gato suddenly got the feeling that he had put Freddy on a bumper. His goofy smile vanished and on came this

WHAT-THE-FUCK'S-THE-MATTER-WITH-YOU

type look.

"I don't know," he said. "I ain't seen him around."

Gato thought he detected a hint of anger in his voice.

"How's your arm?"

"It's okay."

"That's good, man. Hope you get over it soon."

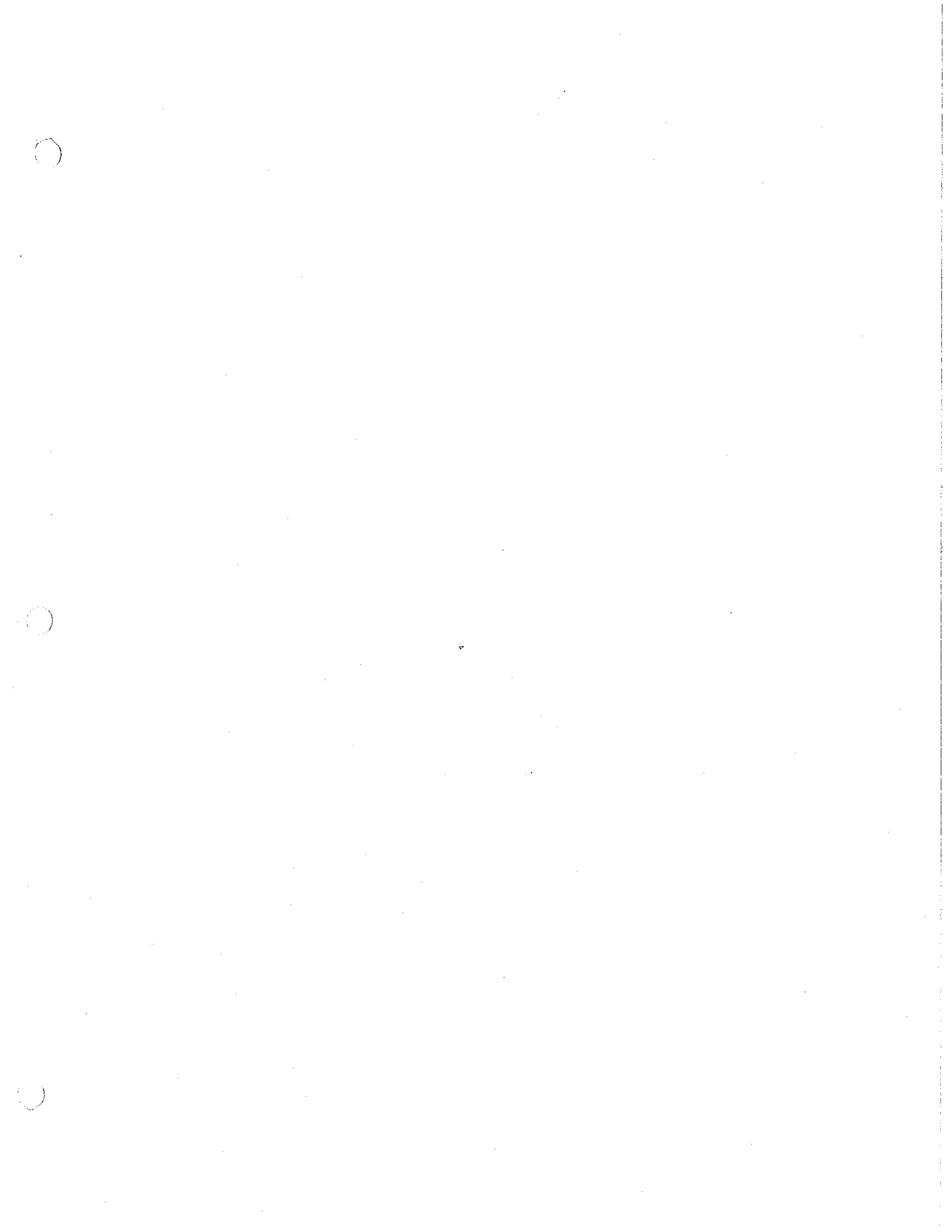
"Yeah." He had that sound in his voice that suggested not wanting to continue the subject. Then he said, "Have you signed it yet?"

"A long time ago. When you first had it put on."

Exhibit 23

4

Summer time. Sunday morning. The sun glowed hot and threw a blinding glare over the neighborhood streets. Gato was walking down Eastern Avenue, heading toward Wilson High, when he saw Freddy coming out of the Mexican bakery just next door to Mama Gloria's



My time had come. Everybody had their eyes on me. I was the Main Event.

"You're fourteen years today," my father said. "And old enough to be my right hand. Now for once don't mess up. And be sure you catch all the blood." He slapped the chicken-killer knife into my hand. I gripped it tight.

"Con permiso?" I asked.

"Pass," they told me in a chorus.

My new boots marched me like an army round the corner of the house, along the side fence and up the back steps to the kitchen. My mother with her swollen belly stood leaning on the stove. Her braids hung tired and heavy down her back and she didn't notice when I came in. Since last month she'd been like half-asleep with her eyes turned inside out to watch the baby grow inside her.

"Hey, where's the pan at?" I asked her.

"What pan?" she wanted to know.

"The one for the blood naturally," I told her and flashed my knife. She looked at it and looked at me.

"You?" she said.

"Why not?" I told her.

My mother groaned when she bended down to ratle the pan out from under the sink. What if she should die? Flashed through my head. What if this giant baby killed her while my father and his friends sat drinking on the front porch?

"See you don't cut yourself," she said and tuned me out.

Our backest yard was where the chickens lived. We had nopales solid along the fence reaching up their prickly paws higher than your shoulders. Our tumble-down shed took up one corner. I stood by the gate, knife in hand and watched the stupid chickens peck-peck-pecking through the gravel and complaining about the hard life they had. It was our old red hen I wanted. She used to be a steady layer but now only gave eggs when in the mood.

"Hey Junior, you gonna kill the chickie?"

"Make a circus like your daddy, Junior, huh?"

It was those pesty little kids from next door. I ignored them.

My plan was to imitate my father exactly. I opened the gate and started clowning but those dumb kids never laughed even one time. So then I got disgusted and went after that old hen for real, but she turned track star on me. Twice I missed her and fell against the nopale cactuses and tore my shirt.

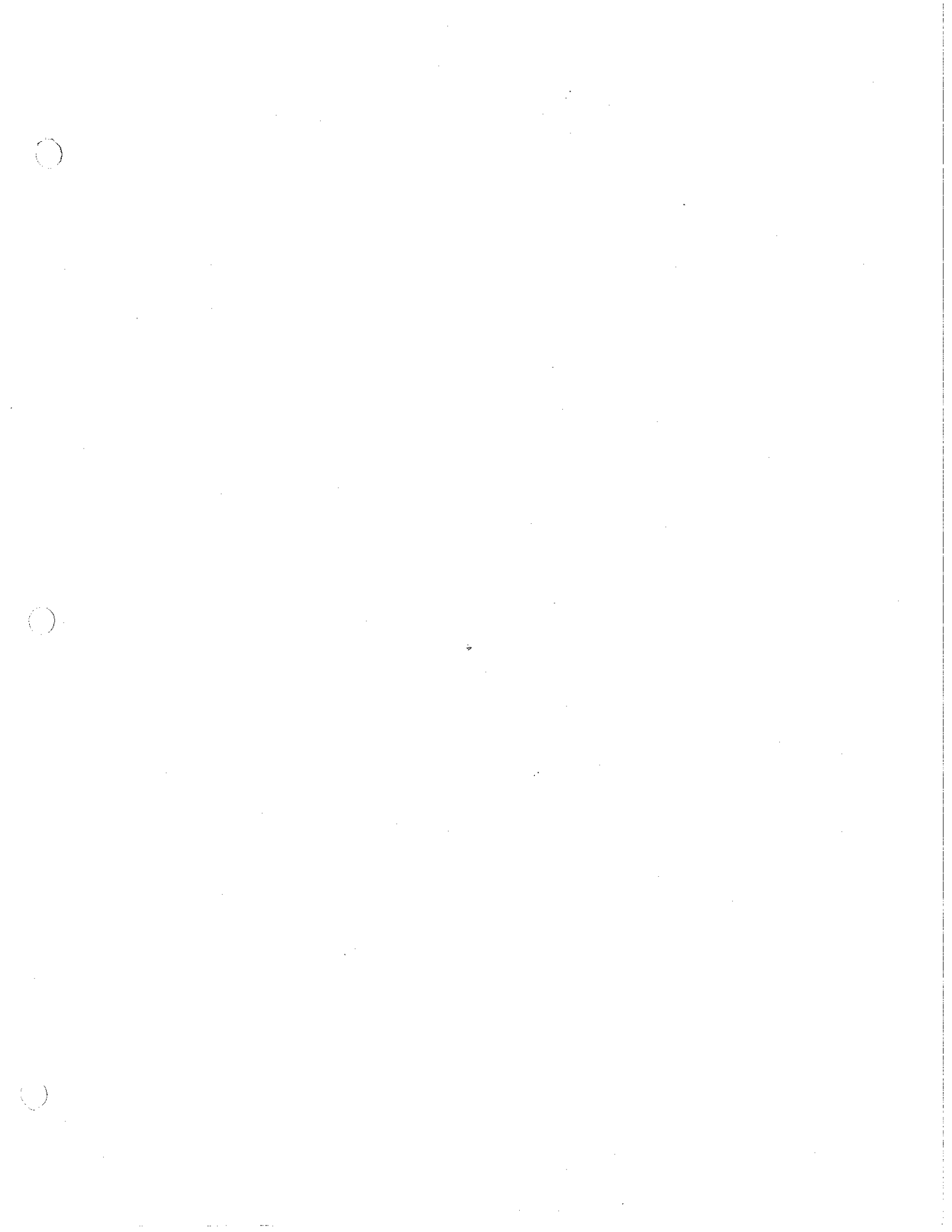
"Should I call your daddy, Junior?"

Junior this and Junior that. "Shut up," I told those snotnose kids. Maybe I even threw my knife at them, I don't remember, anyway they left there running. Then I really grabbed that chicken and hit her a good one too, to learn her a lesson. The rope kept tangling. It took three tries to get her legs tied up. Next, I hung her upside down where my father always did and put the blood pan under. With my left hand I stretched her neck out long for the knife, but it felt very funny to me, like something I had possibly felt before, only with feathers on it.

I creped the knife in till it just barely touched skin. Only one inch more, a half-inch even. But my muscles froze on me. My hand started in to shake. Out front the men were waiting. Out front my father trusted me. He had generously put his own special knife into my hand. There was no way in all this world I could possibly go back to the front porch with that chicken still alive.

We hung there, me and that old red hen, how long—who knows? Till suddenly it came to me: What's so great about my father's crazy Mexican way of chicken killing? Why not try something new for a change, something more up-to-date? In his closet, in a shoe box, my father had a revolver which he kept loaded just in case. It was another one of those Shamrock Street bargains and he paid \$10 for it. For years my father always warned me, "Don't you ever touch that thing," but today I was fourteen years old which was a man, so I went for it.

God was good to me. My mother didn't notice when I sneaked through the kitchen with the .45 under my T-shirt. It seemed heavier than I remembered, and wanted to wave around when I took aim. So I steadied the barrel on the trash



can just 6 inches away from that old chicken's throat. It was quite important not to miss. I might be criticized.

"SSAAAAHHHHSSSS!"

It turned out to be the Shot Heard Round The World.

On Shamrock people can tell pistols from firecrackers any day, having heard plenty of both from time to time. No doubt they asked each other, "Did she finally shoot him? Or him her?" There were several well-known trouble spots. So they all came running to see the corpse. But of course it was my father that got to me first.

"Here's your chicken," I told him and held it up.

Nothing in this world was ever deader than that old red hen. It was a perfect shot, just one tiny thread of neck left and the head hanging down. I expected my father to be quite pleased with me. Instead he yelled. He grabbed the pistol. He slammed the chicken in the dirt. He slapped for my face but I ducked under.

"Hey," I told him, "what's wrong with you?"

"You wait!" he shouted and slung me into the shed and banged the door.

"What happened?" somebody outside asked. "Who's dead?"

"Medina's kid just shot a chicken."

"With a GUN?"

Then somebody hollered, "Yaay, chicken-shooter!" It sounded like Pelon that used to be my friend. Others took it up. I heard that ugly word race up and down the block like a fire engine. But I ask you, "What's the difference how you kill a chicken as long as that chicken gets dead?" Possibly I was the first in history to use a gun. But that's people for you, try anything new and different and they're sure to criticize, my father especially. You had to do every least thing exactly his way or he blamed you for it.

I laid there in the dirt. The sun was shooting blades of light between the boards. There was a big new hole where the .45 blasted through. My hands were all over dirt and blood. My hands were bloody too. Who cared? Let it rot there. From

outside I heard my father chasing people from the yard. I heard Chuchu arguing with him till my father ordered him out too. It got quite quiet. I heard the noise leather makes when you slap it on a wall. And then my father pulled the shed door open. His well-known belt squirmed in his hands like a snake.

Let him kill me. I'll never make a sound.

But behind him, through the door I saw my mother. She came waddling down the back steps. If she argued with him it would only make things worse. She didn't. Instead, she grabbed her belly and screamed a scream like no scream I ever heard before. My father dropped his belt and ran to catch her. I ran too, but it turned out to be a false alarm. The baby took two more days in coming. And I could almost swear I saw my mother wink at me while my father carried her inside.

books

On the freeway, the engine hummed in tune as Lorraine, Carmen, and I joined Diana Ross singing, "*Baby love. oh, baby love, oh, how I miss you so.*"

"Where we going?" Corky asked.

"I have an idea," Esther said. "Why don't we go try on wedding dresses?"

"That sounds dumb," Corky said.

"I'd rather hang out in the sun," Lorraine said, reaching for the wine.

Carmen handed her the bottle. "Just one drink, *esa.*"

Lorraine took a long slug.

"I think I wanna try on wedding dresses anyway," Esther said.

"Oh, no," Corky hissed.

"It's her brother's car, so she gets to call the shots," Lorraine said.

"OK, let's do it," I said.

"Alright," Carmen said.

"You guys are weird," Corky moaned.

We got off the freeway and cruised through the L.A. traffic, past the business district, into the garment district, and found a place and parked, then walked the couple of blocks to "Ida's Wedding Parties and Accessories."

"OK," Carmen said, "you guys gotta act like you got some class."

"Look who's talking!" Lorraine snorted.

"Take a picture, it'll last longer," Carmen said, glaring at Lorraine.

"Ay, *cayate*," Corky shrielled.

"I'm gonna tell you somethin'," Carmen said with her hand on her hip. "We're gonna have to be cool. We'll say that Esther here is getting married and we're gonna be her bridesmaids." Esther smiled wanly.

Carmen led us in, adjusting her winged rhinestone glasses.

Maravilla

A saleslady, dressed in a discreet black dress and smelling of Estee Lauder, glided over.

"May I help you?"

"Yes," Carmen said. "We'd like to see some wedding and bridesmaids' dresses."

"Which one of you girls is the bride?"

"She is," Carmen said, pointing to Esther.

"Come over here. I'll show you what we have."

We followed her to a rack of fancy looking dresses.

"Would you like something lacy, full, with a train?"

"I'd like something with a lotta lace," Esther said.

The saleslady pulled out a stiff lacy dress. In unison we chanted, "Wow! Ooh, ah!"

"Would you like to try it on?"

"I guess so," Esther blushed.

The saleslady unhooked the dress and led Esther to the dressing room, calling back over her shoulder, "Stella, can you help these young ladies? They're looking for bridesmaids' dresses."

Stella, in a discreet beige suit and a waft of Tabu trailing behind her, guided us to a rack of different colors and brusquely pulled out several long gowns. Another chorus of "oohs" and ahhs" followed.

"Why don't you girls pick out one you like?"

"I'll take this one," I picked out the coral taffeta with matching bow and elbow length gloves. Carmen selected the smallest since she was the skinniest. It was lime green with a matching pillbox hat and short gloves. Corky grabbed the bright yellow with matching beanie and long gloves, leaving the large, hot pink one for Lorraine.

"Hey, man, I don't think I'm gonna be in the wedding after all," Lorraine said, sulking.

"Aw, go on," I prodded her.

"Anyways, it ain't gonna be for five..."

"Shh!" Carmen hissed.

"I'll show you girls to the dressing room," Stella said.

As we were departing, Esther glided out, smiling like a toothpaste ad, decked out in a white, lacy dress with a high neckline and long tight sleeves. The skirt hung in a bowl around her feet, and a train with layers of stiff material

Maravilla

trailed behind her. A veil topped with a crown of little, plastic white flowers sat on her head.

"Wow! Groovie, Esther!" We all flocked around her hooped skirt, except for Lorraine who hung back scowling.

"You look fabulous, girl," Corky said. Lorraine snorted.

Carmen glared at her.

"Since you're not gonna be in the wedding, why don't you go wait in the car?"

Lorraine snapped her gum. "Louie's a jerk. I hope she doesn't marry the creep."

"We better try these on," I said, shoving past Lorraine to follow the saleslady.

I took the dress and hung it on a hook on the wall. Stripping off my sweater, being careful not to mess my hair, I peeled down my half-slip and pantyhose, unhooked my bra, removed my shoes. I unzipped the stiff, shiny dress and pulled it over my head.

Halfway up my back, the zipper stuck. I felt hot and sticky perspiration roll down my sides and under my arms. Then, presto, unruffled in the hundred-degree heat and smelling as if she had bathed in a quart of perfume, Stella appeared. With an air of efficiency, she zipped me up and began assisting me with the bow.

"Thank you," I said as she led me out to a full length mirror. I knew immediately that there had been a mistake. My head looked lopsided and coral was definitely not my color. Maybe it was the lighting, but I appeared to have a layer of gray powder on my skin.

Carmen loped out of the dressing room, frowning and looking like a scarecrow with her pillbox hat askew. She pointed at me rudely and began giggling. Next Corky marched out with her chin set like concrete. Carmen and I looked at each other, then quickly glanced away. I could see Carmen's back heaving up and down as the saleslady tried to adjust Corky's yellow beanie and pull the gloves neatly up to her elbows. The three of us stood looking at ourselves in the mirror.

"You look like a guy in a dress," Corky said to Carmen.

"You look like my fat *tia*, Dora," Carmen said.

Lorraine stood behind us, biting her fingernails and staring sullenly.

Maravilla

Meanwhile, Esther had tried on another wedding dress. We all stood around looking at each other, giggling and trying to be tactful, then flocked over to the display case and asked to try on different hats and veils, exchanging bows and gloves, helping Esther adjust her lacy dress and rhinestone tiara.

After trying on most of the accessories, I went back to the dressing room and changed.

We fled out of the shop with Carmen waving at the door. "Thank you. We'll be back soon."

Stella sailed over, offering her card.

"If you come back, ask for me."

"OK," Carmen said, adjusting her glasses.

"You guys are too much," Lorraine chortled on the way

out. "Let's hit another store," I said. "This time, I'll be the

bride."

"No way," Lorraine grunted.

"Let's flip a coin," I said.

"OK," said Esther. "Tails."

"Heads," I said, flipping it. I won.

"Come on," I said, leading them down the street to the

Bride Shoppe.

This time I coaxed Lorraine into trying on a yellow bridesmaid's dress. I selected a full-length, lacey white dress, white gloves, and shiny, white, pointy high heels. A saleslady helped me to dress. With the long train gathered in my arms, I teetered out of the dressing room, over to the display case, and picked out a tiara with a full-face veil. As I was adjusting my crown, Lorraine lumbered over with a panicked look.

"Help, Cece." Her zipper was stuck, of course. I tried forcing it down and the seam began to tear.

"Quick, go back and take it off."

"I can't!" she said, glaring at me and tugging at the bodice. "OK, be quiet." I shielded her as we both slunk back to the dressing room. "Take a big breath and hold in your stomach," I whispered, trying to force the zipper up and down in a seesaw motion. My scalp felt sweaty and itchy, and the crown

was beginning to fell like little needles stuck in my head.

The zipper wouldn't budge, so we forced it down over her gargantuan hips, ripping out the seams, and she kicked it away.

Maravilla

She dressed and I handed it to her.

"Sneak it back and don't let anyone see you," I said, thrusting my head out to see if the coast was clear. "OK, go on!"

On my way back to my dressing room I noticed that a saleslady was going through the rack where Lorraine had slashed the torn dress.

I motioned to Carmen. "Help me outa this thing!" She began unbuttoning the forty or fifty tiny buttons that trailed down my back.

"Hurry up!" I groaned. It felt like bugs were crawling up my spine. She finally unbuttoned me and we tried pulling it down over my hips, but the waist was too narrow. So we tried pulling it up over my head. I was bent over, my arms dangling with the dress pinning them straight up against my temples.

"Shit, get this thing off before I tear it off!"

"OK, OK, calm down. Don't get twittered out. It was your idea, wasn't it?" Carmen said, tugging at the thing as the saleslady entered. The three of us pushed and pulled this way and that until it came off, making my hair stand on end. Carmen put her hand over her mouth, stifling a giggle as the grim-faced saleslady stiffly draped the dress over her arm and left.

"Ga, girl you look fried!"

"I know. Let's cut out."

The girls were back in their street clothes, standing around looking bored.

"It's about time," Lorraine said as we scurried out.

Outside, the light was a flat gray, and carbon monoxide fumes permeated the air. We walked back to the car through the crowds and traffic and ate our lunch.

Afterwards, we went to a movie at the Old Broadway, a theatre built in Hollywood's heyday. The plush, red carpets were faded and dirty. Tiny dim lights glittered from the art deco ceiling.

We bought popcorn, Cokes, and Mister Goodbars, then walked up a long, narrow corridor, past the lounge and bath-rooms to a rickety staircase on which the antique, gold paint was chipped and peeling, then wound our way up into the balcony.

Poverty is a parasite. It feeds on the soul, on the *suenos*—on all the things that make life bearable. Poverty takes all energy, inspiration and *esperanza*. It leaves boredom, a feeling of no escape, and bitterness.

We lived in three different houses in the Watts area. The last house was on 111th Street. It was a two-story house situated in an older part of South Central Los Angeles and later got torn down to build Locke High School. It was the *chante* of my sister Seni, her husband and their two daughters. My sister Ana and I slept in the attic among the cobwebs and cockroaches. Every morning we greeted the sun as it swept through the little attic window. I would look onto the street. There would be *genie* cleaning their yards, getting ready to leave for work or taking their children to school. I would get dressed and run down the creaky stairs. Across the steps was an old chair put there by my sister Seni to keep the "cucut" (bogy man) away.

I would go in the street to play. Poverty, when one is young, is a playground. Your fun is made up of junked cars, trash, broken glass, and holes in the wall. There is the stale odor of dead cats, the continual yelling of desperate mothers, the shrieking, piercing cries of a hungry baby, the dirt roads, and the wooden shacks—the sights and sounds of a barrio child's playground.

Poverty is going to school without a meal in your stomach or the *jando* to buy lunch with. When school is over you spend time with your *camaradas* at the dump or the sewer

POBREZA

by Luis Rodriguez

Illustration by Frank Hernandez



You play football in an alley with wads of newspapers, under the unsteady gaze of *tecalos* (junkies) and under the symbols and writings on the walls—*con safos*.

Our little family would grow with our *abuelita* Catita (Mama Piri) staying with us, and other relatives like Tio Tomas, Tia Chucha, or my cousins from Juarez like Pancho, Kafas, Lilo and Bune. They joined the swelling ranks of the Rodriguez family. We became cramped together and there were many arguments. As children we learned to create out of the tensions.

We created nicknames. My brother was known as "Rano," (Frog). My sister Ana was called "La Pata" (Duck), my niece Ana Seni was called "Pimpos" (a name that has no real meaning) or sometimes "Beanhead" (by my brother). My other niece, Aide, was known as "La Banana" and my youngest sister Gloria was "La Cucaracha" (Cockroach). As for me, I was known as "Grillo" (Cricket) or "Jarabe." Many times it was "Grillo Felon" (Bald Cricket) because my mama would practically shave my head when I was a young boy. Those names stood by us. We were uprooted children, halfway between two worlds. Our real names were usually distorted; often forgotten. We would create new ones and why not? Who could confine us?

There is pain in poverty. Pain of taking baths in cold water during the winter time because the gas is shut off. The pain of not celebrating a birthday, or when we did, giving everybody a little toy so we could share in it. The pain of eviction. Of flushing mice down the toilet or finding cockroaches in your bread. The pain of corn flakes for dinner, tortillas and butter for lunch, and non-fat powdered milk for breakfast. And the pain of the family quarrels, the silent sobs at night.

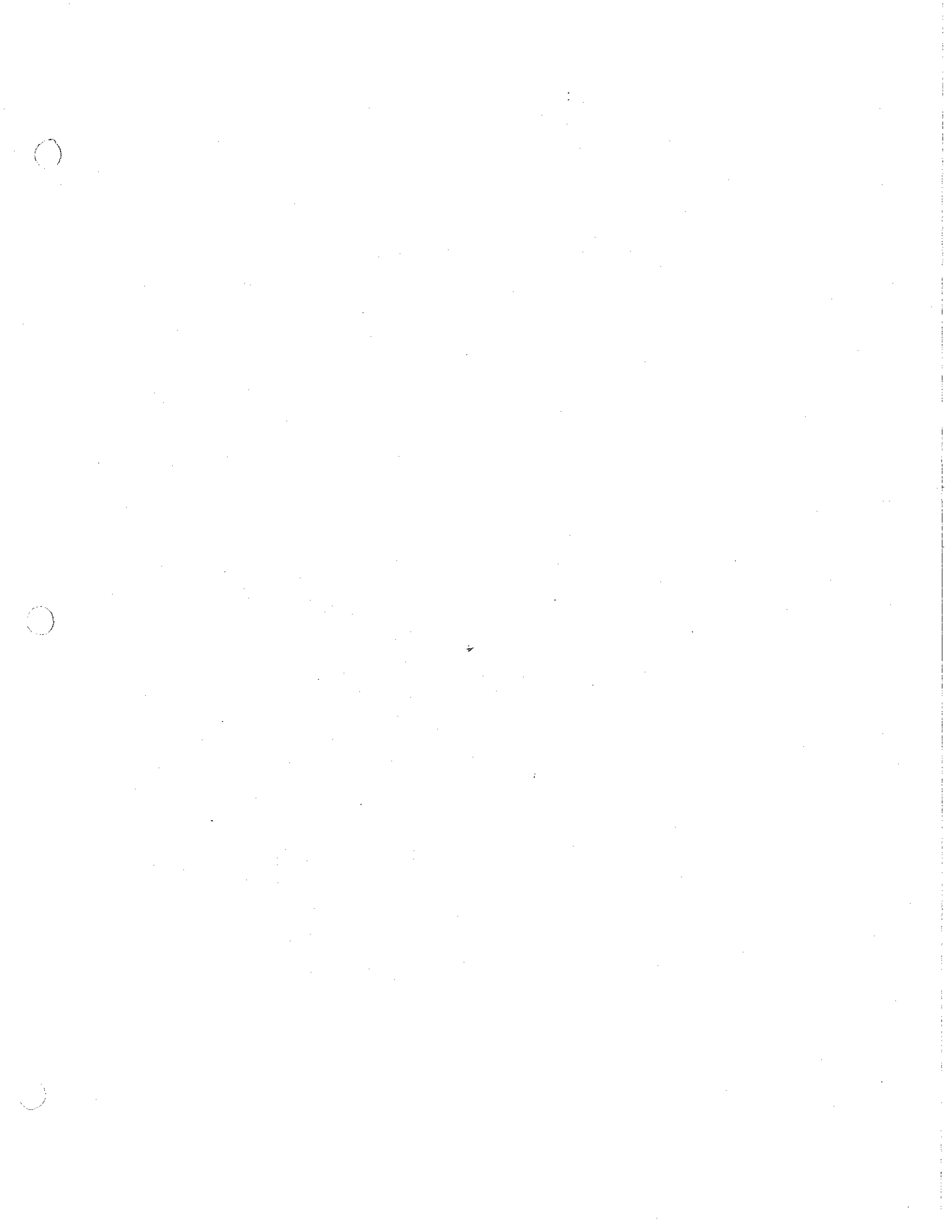
As we grew older, we played between boxcars among the green moss of the LA River bed and beneath the industrial waste of the "Alameda Belt." You shoot up and get loaded in the same place that served as a playground in your younger days. You write your *placa* on the wall where years before you raced in a game of hide-and-seek.

At that time my *jeffito* was landing jobs teaching at the local high schools in East and South Central LA such as Jordan High, Roosevelt High and Lincoln High. These jobs came after years of going from *jale to jale*. Even though he had gone to universities in Mexico and in the United States, even though he had written books and had been well known in his native land, in Watts he had to start from scratch. Because he did not speak good English, because he was a recent immigrant, because he lived in Watts, his employers degraded him. They made him start from the bottom, working in small plants, construction, and selling insurance. But he would not give up. He knew he was worthy of much more. Teaching at those high schools, some of the worst in the city, was not exactly what he was capable of, but it was a job.

Then something happened. He got a job teaching in a more affluent, mostly Jewish neighborhood. When I was about eight years old we moved out of Watts.

We moved to the San Fernando Valley. We found a large house with a real yard. We had new furniture and a real Christmas, with a tree, toys and good food. We had good neighbors. There were hassles too. My brother did all right because he was from Watts and could fight better than anybody. But as for me, I had to run home from school often, throwing blows with dudes who wanted to pounce on a "spic."

It was like a dream world, one in which we shared but for a brief moment in our lives. After a year, my *jeffito* lost his job teaching Spanish to the Jewish kids. We lost the furniture, the bunk beds, the swing set, and along with it, the house. It was like what happens when you give a hungry kid a box of cookies. He'll eat them til he gets sick. We ate our affluence up, til we could do nothing but vomit it out. We had nowhere to go so we moved in with Seni again...cuddling up close to our old companion, *pobreza*.



by Marisela Norte

EACH STREET/EACH STORY

Once it was like seeing the night for the first time. Only someone dangled black ice cubes in front of my eyes. Each street/each story melted on a page.

An upholstery shop opened passed midnight. In the back a fading light bulb persists overhead as the men gather to drink. They talk about women. Women at bus stops with slits in their secretarial skirts. Catholic girls with too much lipstick—New Wave Santitas cuddling school books, teddy bears and suddenly religious boys.

MUCHACHAS BAILANDO EN BIKINI!!! I pass these joints and I must look. Possibly I am searching for those who search for the anonymous body in the pink bathing suit. I hear the trampling of their feet. Men knocking doors down to get a good look at a pair of fishnet stockings. And for every man laying out the family bills on the bar there is another one pale and miserable who simply wishes he wasn't there. And the juke box still plays "YO QUIERO UNA MUCHACHA COMO TU."

Laundromats are crowded with bored children who must wait for what seems to be an endless rinse cycle. Babies drink red Kool-Aid out of plastic bottles/they chew on nipples that never collapse. A woman on a bus bench rests against a smiling Credit Dentist as the RTD exhausts her with Nicotine Shock. Dr. X continues to offer E-Z payments and a thousand pink receipts.

At the Jack in the Box the orange vinyl is polished to perfection by a neighborhood kid afraid to lose his first job. There are no customers tonight. I tried to imagine bullet holes in the clean glass.

Women still walk the Boulevard swinging those blue bags from Lerner's. Cinnamon nylon/legs like Josie Rubio. Radios blast each other on the streets de Boss Angeles con SALSA PICANTE, SABADO SALSA Y SALSA EL PATO tambien. Musica con ambiente y una cuba libre. And in another corner of the city some chavalito sneaks out the screen door to play in the garage. He crawls into an old washing machine, sings himself to sleep only he never wakes up.

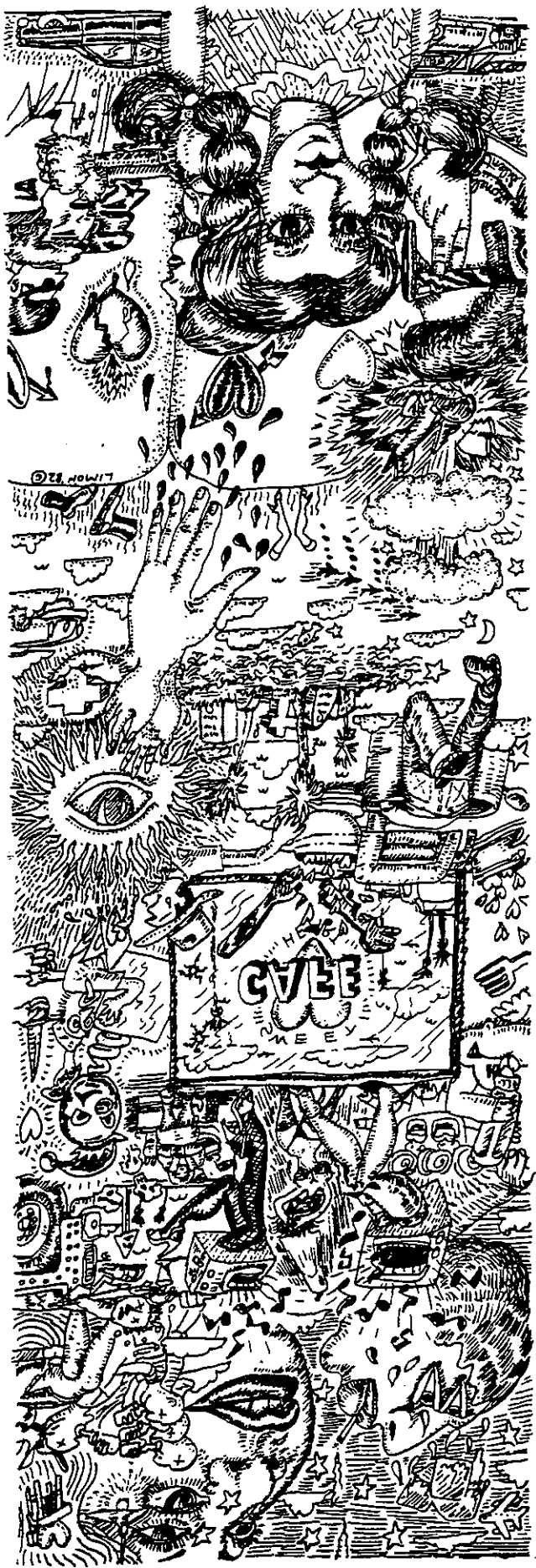
The Cavalry Cemetery pretends to be an island too far from my reach. Still, I go with my pile of love letters to read. "Always a bridesmaid never a bride." Inscriptions written by friends and enemies. Too old to be a poet/too young to be martyr.

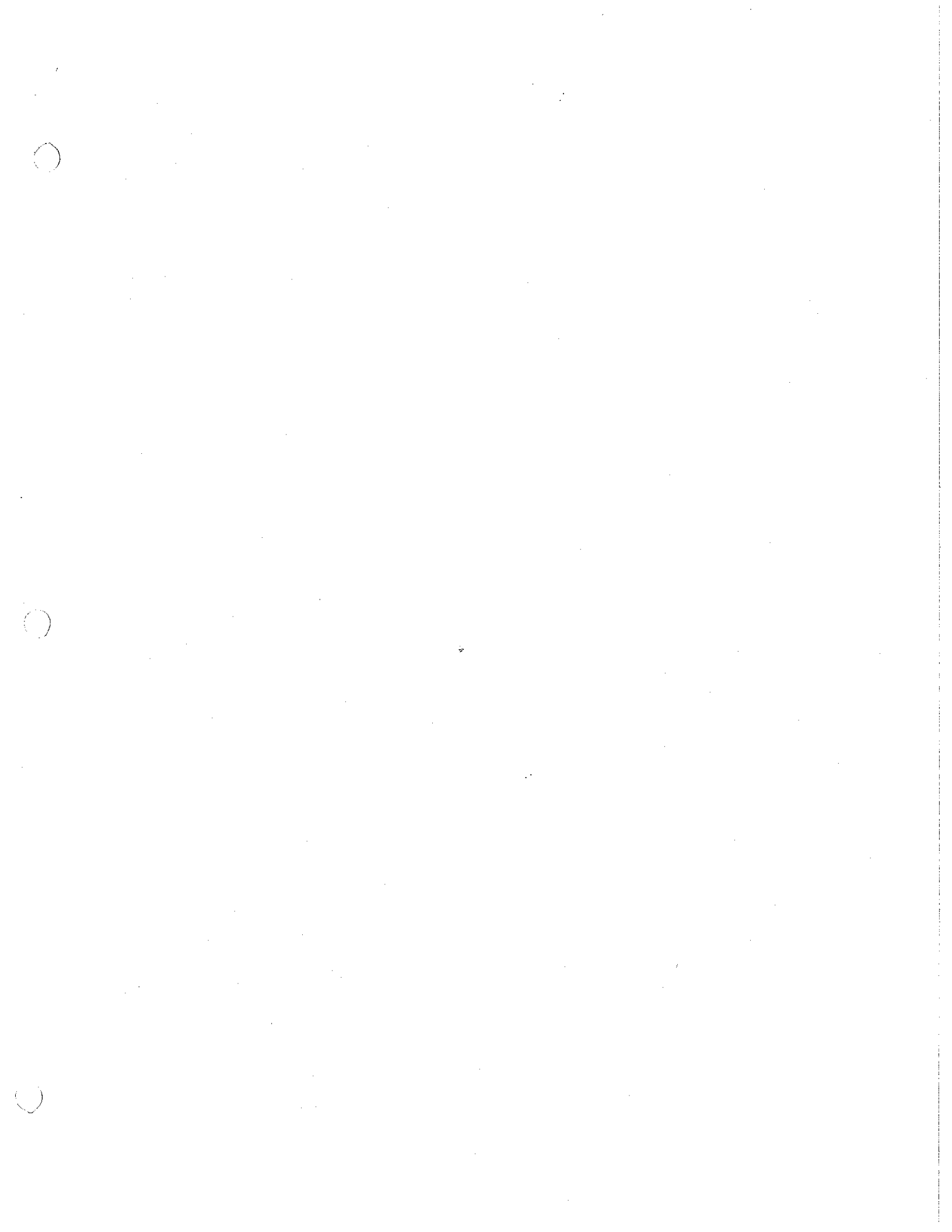
The Latin Lover, The Secret, The Sweetheart Cafe: Bars. A melange of sorrow and mixed primal excitement lined up against a wall. Tight, gaunt men with grey chins and skimpy suits. They flex and converge inside their tired skin. Ashen entities too far from the planets and twice removed from any immediate family.

I feel myself spilling through my fingers breaking into little pearls of Mercury, praying for rain to soothe the hot pavement, our souls, some dying lawn in a Sub-Urban post card. The heart breaks, it breaks like an old woman's arm, it breaks like Mother's china crashing like a hopeless silver jet hitting the ground like Hiroshima.

Sir Lonely puts his shades on. His Imperials pierce the moon. So a page from the Puppet Zone falls over the blue night. Baby Loca carries 45's and checks out all the guys. Impalas slide around the corner in dangerous love as three stars hang heavy over the East.

□





of girls and women of all ages poured forth.

Of course, Ralph Guzman and his five *gringos* were there, although the five students had to stand outside the fence—they didn't get there on time to get seats inside. Even the staunch supporter of Adlai Stevenson and the prophet who felt Nixon had won, way back on convention day, were now convinced Kennedy partisans. Nothing remained but the hard work on Monday and on election day to make sure that as many Mexican-Americans as possible got to the polls.

Election Day: "Do you have your election stub?"

The main problems of getting out the vote on election day are well known. For working men and women, there are only a few hours in which they may get to the polls. Housewives and the elderly often find it difficult to reach the polls during voting hours. In California the polls are open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.³ and are usually located in small sized neighborhood precincts. Although most people live near their polling places, many people who have put in a hard day as a janitor, stevedore, laborer, house-cleaner, cook, or gardener have little volition to rush to the polls directly from work. Yet, if gently reminded, they will try to do so. Telephone campaigns and door-to-door canvassing are often most effective. In *Maravilla*, these jobs were mainly done by Ralph Guzman's Spanish-speaking personnel. The *gringos* were assigned to go from polling place to polling place to check rumors of illegal interference with voting rights.

In a few precincts, some Mexican-American voters were being challenged before they even reached the polls. Typically they were asked, "Do you have your registration stub?" (This is a small slip of

³ Except in the City and County of San Francisco where the polls stay open until 8 p.m.

The culmination of John F. Kennedy's personal connection with Viva Kennedy came in a campaign speech at 8:30 that night. Advance publicity had stressed that this was to be Kennedy's last major speech before returning to Hyannis Port and rest-ing. The speech was to be given on the campus of East Los Angeles Junior College at a moderately sized football stadium which seats 22,500. Since this stadium is on the edge of *Maravilla*, the speech was a natural attraction for Mexican-Americans. By the time Senator Kennedy arrived some 35,000 persons were in and around the stadium, with thousands more milling around outside the stadium fence. The President-to-be gave one of his prepared, standard speeches, emphasizing equality of opportunity, jobs, economic growth, and the like. The meeting was well attended by the elite of the entertainment world, including Sammy Davis, Jr. and Frank Sinatra. Senator Kennedy received several minutes of sustained applause and as he left, the female shrieks of thousands

In downtown Los Angeles there is an area known as Olvera Street. This area presumably was the civic center of Los Angeles when it was a Spanish pueblo and later when it was under Mexican rule. Olvera Street includes several shops and restaurants, among them an old adobe, which are maintained in the style of Mexican California. On November 2, the last Wednesday before the election, Kennedy had lunch in the restaurant now located in the old adobe. After a brief meeting with Roybal and others, he walked around the quaint street and shops, shaking hands with many of the hundreds of persons who had come to see him. Viva Kennedy buttons were in style that day. After the luncheon, attended by most of the Mexican-American leaders from the Los Angeles area, he pushed westward to the Shrine Auditorium to give a major address to downtown businessmen and community leaders.

paper given to the voter by the registrar at the time of registration.) "You know that you can't vote if you don't have it, don't you?" Or, "Can you read English? You can't vote if you can't read." Or, "Can you prove you are a citizen? You must have proof to vote."

All of these challenges are illegal acts in California. The only requirement for being able to obtain a ballot at the polling place is to have your name on the precinct list, which is posted in plain sight on the door of the polling place. A registered voter's name is invariably on the precinct list in his neighborhood.

After voting in West Los Angeles in the morning, the five *gringos* rushed to *Maravilla* and spent the day walking from polling place to polling place, looking for persons who were being turned away and trying to convince them they were qualified to vote. In addition, they strongly suggested to those persons disseminating erroneous information that it might be nice if they went elsewhere. Also, Guzman had arranged for his Spanish-speaking "get out the vote" teams to tell each person they saw to pass the word about the untruthfulness of the challenges and to stress that if one was registered, one could vote.

While little publicity was given these acts in the mass media and little empirical data is available on the effect of these illegal challenges, there is no doubt that considerable numbers of eligible voters were turned away. On the other hand, once the story got around, there was a strong reaction among the residents of *Maravilla*: "Why should these *Anglos* try to keep us from our rights. Let's show them we can fight fire with fire." Perhaps this attempt to intimidate voters actually pushed the turnout up.

In any event, about 82 percent of the registered voters of *Maravilla* voted on November 8, 1960. In comparison with predominantly Negro areas and comparative white areas of Los Angeles, this was very high. It was also high in comparison to past elections for *Maravilla*. Of those Mexican-Americans who voted in *Maravilla* that day, approximately 80 per cent voted for Kennedy. This ranked among the highest bloc votes Kennedy received in California and in the nation. In all, President Kennedy received about 59,000 Mexican-American votes in Los Angeles. The Viva Kennedy clubs were obviously a major success in the 1960 election.

The success of the Viva Kennedy clubs and the strong support Kennedy received in *Maravilla*, however, were not enough to carry the state for the Senator. Kennedy carried Los Angeles County by about 21,000 votes, but lost the state by about 35,000 votes. Despite this, the Viva Kennedy movement suggested that the Mexican-Americans of *Maravilla* could become a vital force in Democratic politics in California.

Postscript

Since 1960, the organizational strength of Viva Kennedy and MAPA has melted away. The Mexican-Americans, as a political bloc, are again a "paper fighting bull". Part of the reason stems from the death of John Kennedy and the factional nature of the Mexican-American community and its politics; but another reason is that *Maravilla* itself is changing. The southern and western portions are becoming part of the central Los Angeles Negro ghetto, and competition between the two groups is sharp. When Edward Roybal was elected to Congress in 1962, a Negro rather than a Mexican-American was appointed to his seat on the City Council. Yet, even in 1962, there was enough Mexican-American solidarity to elect two "native sons" of the community, John Moreno and Phillip Soto to the State Assembly in the 50th and 51st Districts of *Maravilla*. In 1964, however, Moreno was defeated while running for reelection.

MINORITIES

Pocho's Progress

Americans are reminded almost daily of the Negro's checkered progress toward equality. Seldom, by contrast, are they apprised of the social and economic lag that afflicts the nation's second largest disadvantaged minority: the 4,677,000 Mexican-Americans of the U.S. Southwest—proud, poor and increasingly protest-minded. From the bleak barrios of East Los Angeles and the tar-paper *colonias* of the San Joaquin Valley, the Mexican minority is struggling to articulate its anger. Vague and inchoate, it is directed toward at least three targets: the "Anglo" for his cavalier indifference to contributions to Southwest history and culture; the Negro, for having won and attention by moving in city while the Mexican-American kept cool in his own ghetto; and his people, for their self-defeating and insistence on remaining alone.

TIME, APRIL 22, 1968

who has adapted to Anglo styles) dashes inconspicuously with the weary, tired look of the *cholo* (newly arrived, often webback Mexican laborer). To the barrio dwellers, the rest of the world is *Gringolandia*. Few venture forth except to attend the fights at Olympic Auditorium, where their ebullient *oles* and accurately hurled wine bottles give much needed support to Mexican club fighters with more guts than science.

Artec-Modern. The same lack of science in the political arena is largely responsible for the Mexican-Americans' lack of collective clout. Though the *pochos* are 90% Democratic by registration and traditionally vote the straight party line, they have received little in the way of socioeconomic remuneration for their loyalty. Politically, they fare even worse: only one Mexican-American, Democratic Congressman Edward Roybal, 51, has made it to the House of Representatives, and he, as many *pochos* point out, is a New Mexican-born aristocrat who pays little attention to the problems of the barrios.

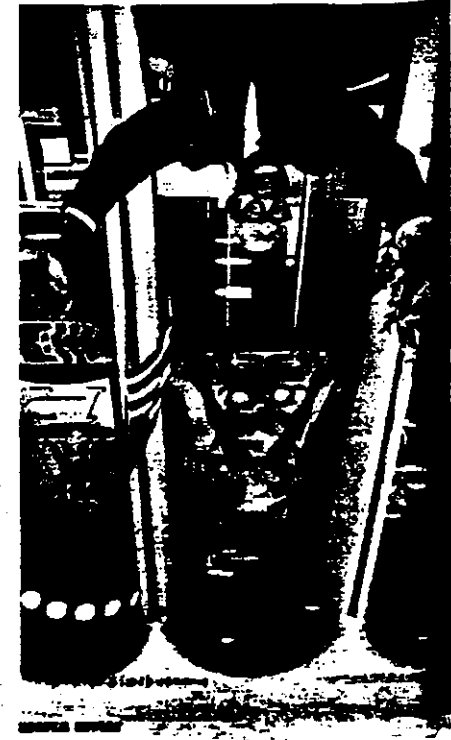
One Latin leader who has recognized the corridors of power is Dr. Francisco Bravo, patriarch and prime mover of the *pochos* in East Los Angeles. A bald, bull-necked surgeon who worked his way up from the vineyards and orchards of Ventura county to become a real estate millionaire, Bravo, 57, established the first free clinic for Mexican-Americans in Los Angeles (opened in 1941, after Bravo won his medical degree from Stanford), founded a scholarship fund that has dispensed more than \$100,000 to brainy *pochos*, and owns an Aztec-modern bank, with assets of \$4,000,000, in East Los Angeles.

Though Mayor Yorty has installed a Spanish-speaking complaint bureau in city hall, Los Angeles' government is still overwhelmingly Anglo in makeup. Last week, Bravo and one of his Angelo proteges, Valley State College Historian Julian Nava, 39, were making the first major effort to alter that situation. Running with Bravo's backing for the nonpartisan school board, Nava—the son of an indigent harp maker and winner of a Bravo scholarship loan to study at the University of California—was courting the city in his green Volkswagen in a catalytic campaign against incumbent Charles Reed Smoot, who has alienated the city's minorities by publicly opposing textbooks with added chapters on minority groups' contributions to America.

If Nava defeats Smoot in the May 3 runoff, he will become the first Mexican-American ever to sit on the city school board. That, for the *pochos*, would be a major step from self-pity toward self-representation.

Merewick & Mechemo, Bravo visited the "Viva Kennedy" drive in 1960, which helped win the state for the Democrats against Native Son Richard Nixon. And in 1966, it was Bravo who led the defection from Democrat Pat Brown's camp: Ronald Reagan drew 24% of Los Angeles' Mexican-American vote, thus tripling the usual G.O.P. total. Republican Senator Thomas Kuchel does even better in Latin neighborhoods, thanks to his excellent command of Spanish. But the man who wins Mexican-American backing most consistently and heartily is Democrat Sam Yorty, whose maverick manner as mayor of Los Angeles appeals to the Latin sense of *machismo* (masculine independence).

Out to alter the Anglo makeup.



MAYO IN FRONT OF EAST LOS ANGELES BANK

Out to alter the Anglo makeup.

But ancestral homeland. The Mexican-American, after all, is predicated in the Southwest by only the buffalo and the Plains Indian; he has never put his archeological signature to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ceded the Southwest to the U.S. after the Mexican War of 1846.

Bottles & Oles. Throughout the Southwest's "setback belt," Mexican-Americans are feeling strapped. Federal poverty projects in the Negro neighborhoods of Los Angeles outnumber by 3 to 1 those for Mexican-Americans. From 1950 to 1966, the Mexican-American high school dropout rate held steady at 53%, while the Negro was making significant strides forward in education. More than a third of the nation's Mexican-American families (most of them in Texas) live below the poverty line \$3,000 a year, while their birth rate, maintained by Catholic-inspired resistance to contraception, is soaring far higher than that of any other group. Though 95% of all Mexican-Americans are *pochos*—native-born citizens of the U.S.—many speak only Spanish or just enough English to deal with cops and employers.

Nowhere is the *pochos*' plight—or potential power—more evident than in East Los Angeles, where 600,000 Mexican-Americans live. At the core of the swooping freeways, the barrio begins in lawdry taco joints and rolicking cantinas, the reek of cap sweet wine competes with the notes of trying tortillas. The machine-patter of slang Spanish is countered by the bellow of lurid hot-rod men by tattooed *pochos*. The occasional appearance of a neatly turned *Agringado* (a Mexican-American

who has adapted to Anglo styles) dashes inconspicuously with the weary, tired look of the *cholo* (newly arrived, often webback Mexican laborer). To the barrio dwellers, the rest of the world is *Gringolandia*. Few venture forth except to attend the fights at Olympic Auditorium, where their ebullient *oles* and accurately hurled wine bottles give much needed support to Mexican club fighters with more guts than science.

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MEXICAN-AMERICAN PICKETS IN RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA. Proud, poor and increasingly protest-minded.

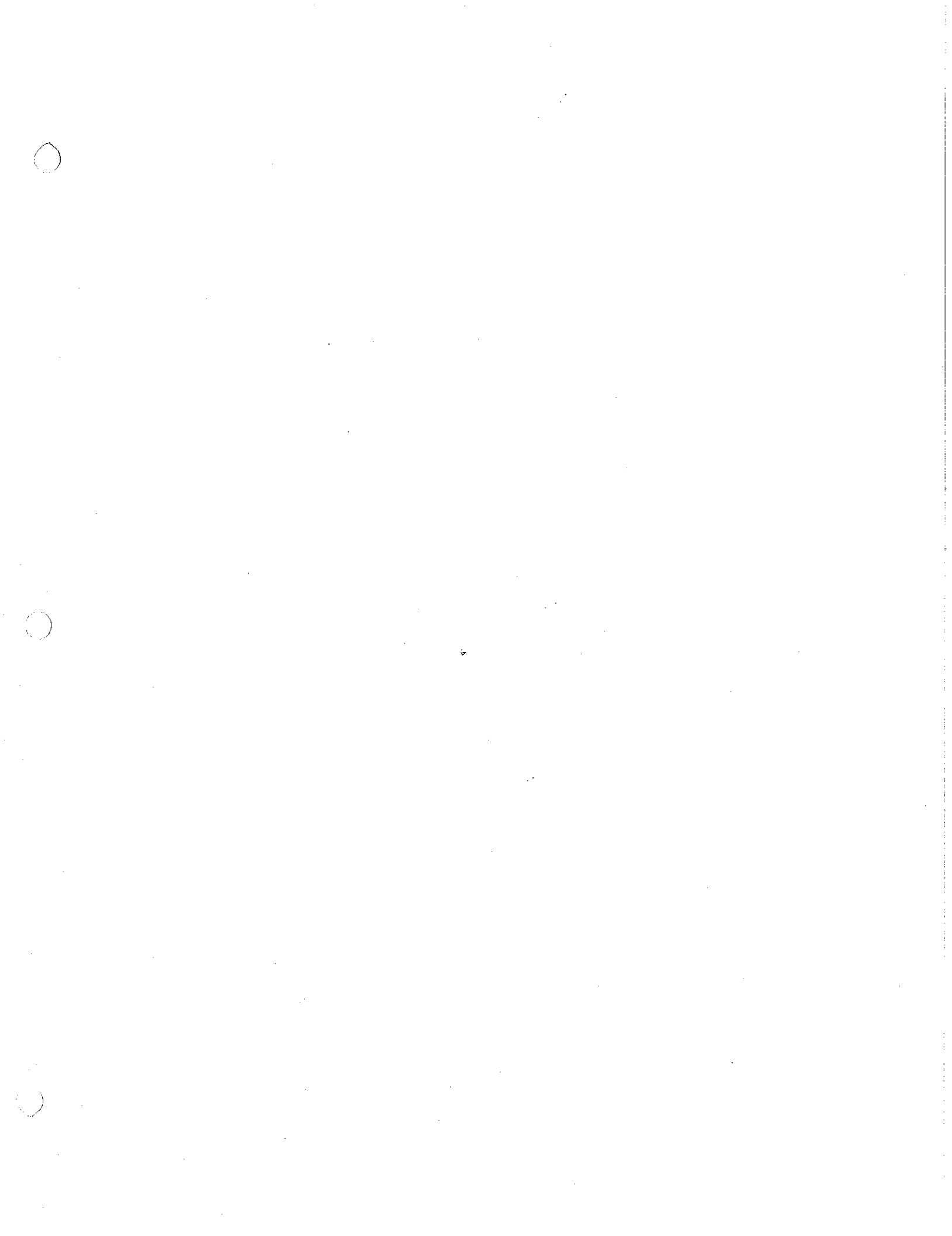


PHOTO BY DENNIS TAYLOR—RIVERSIDE PRESS ENTERPRISE

CHAPTER II. Recuerdos

Ben Luna
From Los Angeles

*The summer nights
Are pleasant here
On Hammel Street
Where I was born.
The people dream in Spanish
And live as best they can.*



taught me that you must respect someone else's religion and that's what I am trying to say.

The time came when World War II started. And World War II, as disastrous as it was, it was the beginning of a new era for the Mexican Americans. Because in the participation of the war, you are equal. Equal only when you were on the battlefield, but not equal when it came to the draft issue. In Boyle Heights, we used to leave from the YMCA on Whittier Blvd., it is still there. And toward the time when I went, they were scraping the bottom of the barrel. I had two children at this time. But I noticed they were drafting mostly Mexican-Americans. They took a busload every Tuesday. There were other ethnic groups living in Boyle Heights they hadn't drafted because of their defense jobs. When I got to Basic Training, I was in charge of the platoon there and we heard Mrs. Roosevelt that evening, talking about the fact that it was the policy of the United States that men with children would not be drafted. So I asked the fellows who were there, "Are there any here who have children?" They all raised their hand. I only had two, but some had four. Well, the policy of the United States was not applied fairly.

We were being trained for the Battle of the Bulge. We were paying, at that time, very little attention to the other part of the war, the Japanese. Now those who were drafted with me, the only ones that came back were the few that were wounded. All the others were killed. I went through that Basic Training and then I stayed back in Basic Training to help train others. Then after the 12 weeks, they gave me my orders. There we were in this long train, and we were all going overseas. So they called the name of eight people. I was one of the eight. We each got our order to take the train as far as Los Angeles and from there we would receive other orders. When we got here to Los Angeles, we got another envelope and were ordered to proceed to Fort McArthur. It so happened that seven of the eight were Certified Public Accountants. I was the only one that was not a Certified Public Accountant. So I was in charge of the accounting section. And our job was to go through all the files of those men that were killed to be sure the widows got everything that was coming to them. And I won the war behind a desk. So it didn't turn out that bad. But the truth of the matter is that, even in times of war, there was discrimination.

After the war, there was very little acknowledgement of the fact that the contribution made by American soldiers of Mexican descent was tremendous! The same was true after the Korean and Viet Nam War. A kid next door to me went to Korea and was killed. He got the Congressional Medal of Honor, but very little was done about that. During the time I ran for [L.A. County] Supervisor, one of my programs was that I was going to set up a park with his name. Today it is the Eugene Obregon Park in East L.A.

Today discrimination is more subtle. They'll do it with a smile, whereas before they just did it. Now, it is so subtle that you have to watch your back every minute.

Today, you also have to be prepared to cope with it. This is why education for our youngsters is so important. And this is why the preservation of the culture is so important. And that has to be done no matter what we deal with. Transportation is part of our everyday life and I think that the historical backgrounds of the communities can be reflected in the way the system is constructed.

MTA:

What was it like when they built the freeways on the Eastside?

Roybal:

On the City Council, the only freeway I didn't fight was the Pasadena [Freeway], because that was built before I got there. But I fought every other freeway, not because I was against the freeway, but I was fighting for the people whose property would be stolen by the law that gave the permission to steal. It is called the law of "eminent domain." And these people actually had their home stolen. And what I was proposing was that there be three appraisers. That the government have its appraiser, the individual homeowner have his appraiser. And then if there was no agreement, there would be a third appraiser and that the government would pay the highest of the three appraisals. Well, they wouldn't go for that. Anyway, it was a big struggle.

The same thing was true with Chavez Ravine. I fought -- many people say -- I fought the Dodgers. I didn't fight the Dodgers. I wanted the Dodgers to come in. But I didn't want O'Malley to steal the property, which he did! O'Malley also promised that he would set aside, of all that acreage -- there were 376 acres -- that he would set aside 40 acres and would build a farm for the training of young boys of this area for baseball. So that could be the place where he could recruit for his Dodger team young boys from East Los Angeles. He promised that within the contract. He never did it.

Again going back to that, the mayor of city at that time, his name was Polson. He made the offer to O'Malley. He also told O'Malley a baseball park called Wrigley Field was for sale. And that we want to sell it to you for \$256,000 and then we will trade 376 acres for it. And to boot, [we will] build all the roads going into the park at taxpayers' expense. O'Malley would have been a damn fool if he hadn't accepted. I fought against that. I didn't think the taxpayers should pay a dime. But everyone was for the Dodgers as indicated by the people's vote. You know where he got the most votes? My district! Of all the city, they got the most votes from East Los Angeles. Right in the same area they wanted baseball. There was no bigger fan than the Hispanic. Well, anyway, again it was not a very popular position. The people who remained and were the last ones to leave, got more money per square foot than those who sold before.

Well, they did the same thing with the freeways. You know the freeways only went through [residential areas]. The freeway that use to be there [near] the freeway in Downtown Los Angeles was not taken. They narrowed the freeway to save the brewery. So that bottleneck existed for many years. Until just a few years ago, they

decided to change the brewery from there to some place else, so they knocked down the building. This is how far they use to go. They would save a brewery, but never a home. They wouldn't protect the family who had children growing up in a home they had already paid for. These people went out and had to buy another house that was a lot more than the money they received from the government. It didn't make sense, it wasn't fair. And that was the struggle of the time.

MTA: Given your public record, what were some of your most significant accomplishments now as you look back over the years.

Royal:

Well, I don't know if they were accomplishments, but I think I brought attention to the fact that there were certain injustices that existed. That someone had to bring to public attention and that's what I did. In Congress I concentrated on funding health and education. In the City Council, I fought injustice. There was one time when I thought that my lone stand would be the end of my career. The Chief of Police of Los Angeles proposed an ordinance that he as the Chief would make the final determination as to who was suspected of being a communist.

What year was this?

MTA:

Oh, it must have been in the early 1950's. Yes it was, because I got elected in 1949, so it was 1950 or 1951. So he proposed a Communist Registration Ordinance that gave him the full authority to determine who was and who was not [a communist]. And it would be based on informants, for an example, turning in your name as a suspect. He would investigate you, and he, the Chief of Police, would make the final determination. I thought that was wrong. I thought that it was unconstitutional. Well, when the ordinance came before the City Council, I voted "no" the first time, and it went out over to the following week. So for a whole week, I had people saying to me, "You are going to ruin your reputation, your political career. What for? Everybody's for it, except you." I said, "It's unconstitutional."

Anyway, I was the only one who voted against it. And I thought it was the end of my career too. Well, I was dreading going into a luncheon meeting at the Billmore. It was a luncheon meeting and I got there just as they were sitting down. And when I walked in, they started to applaud. First one started, and then the others. And pretty soon even those who didn't agree joined in.

Well, all these things are documented in my papers at UCLA. And my papers for Congress are here at Cal State L.A. and I have some stuff, not here, but at my other office. I'm working now in trying to get these together and maybe do what you are doing now, record it, and maybe someday someone will write it.

I think an accomplishment on the City Council was that discrimination in employment ended. They use to give examinations, but the Hispanics, regardless of grades were always flunking the oral. We also changed the fact that people who

were reviewing or examining that individual also changed. They were not the same people who served for the whole year. Now that changed the system to the point where more and more Mexican-Americans started to get employment at City Hall. They no longer discriminated in the oral. And so that's one of the things I did that I thought was important. The other was, I think -- whether the Police Department agrees or not -- I think I had a lot to do with their pension.

MTA: You must have been tempted to vote against it because of getting a ticket that time...

Royal: No, no I wasn't, because I understood that the fellow who gave me the ticket was brand new and was doing his duty. I use to kid him about it later. He became a lieutenant and retired. I don't know if he is still living or not. But we became friends.

MTA: It seems that a real key to your success is always maintaining your relationships.

Royal: Well, it is good to maintain relationships. It's good to be critical, like I am being critical about some of the things that are being done. But that doesn't mean I can't shake hands with someone, complement them for the good things they do and support them when they need help.

MTA: What have been some of your disappointments?

Royal: Well, my biggest disappointment has been the fact that there have been misunderstandings on part of the general public with regard to some of the things I did which I think are positive. For example, I am the author of the Bilingual Public Education Act. Well, that came about one time when we were going to Mexico City to the inauguration of the president of Mexico with Lyndon Johnson on Air Force One. Senator Yarborough and I were sitting at a table, the president came in to talk to us and he told us about the fact that he was -- when he graduated from college -- he was a teacher. And he was teaching the 2nd and 3rd grades in a local Texas school. So he noticed that after the first year that his children were not doing as well compared to other 2nd and 3rd grade teachers' children. And he concluded that the reason was that he was not able to communicate with them. So he started to -- besides cussing in Spanish, according to him -- learning a little bit more. And he did. And then he also noticed a change [in his students]. So he said to Yarborough and me, "Why don't you fellas, when you get back to Washington, draft a law that would make it possible for the system to use the language in the home as a vehicle for the learning of English?"

Anyway, when we got back to Washington, Yarborough and I drafted our bills. He did his version, I did mine. In his version, he had "Spanish." I had "the language of the home." Finally, it came to the time, when we were in agreement. We drafted the same thing, and we each went to the Education Committee. Powell was the

chairman of the Education Committee. A very powerful individual. He did more for education than anyone in the history of the country with the exception of Gus Hawkins of California. Well, anyway, it went to his committee. But he frankly told me that he would not accept it.

So I went to Gus Hawkins, chairman of the Sub-Committee, and he agreed to put the whole thing under Title VII of the Education Act. Hearings were held all over the country and we passed it as Title VII of the Education Act without the strong opposition of Chairman Powell.

Well, the truth of the matter is that even in our own community, there are people against that. But I challenge them to learn Yiddish or Hebrew by immersing themselves, in a conversational sense, with people who speak only Yiddish, Hebrew, German or whatever it is. If you use the language of the home, they learn faster. Many believe that that's not so. The people who are mostly against bilingual education are the monolingual educators. They only have one language and they don't speak that one language well either. So they are against bilingualism. So the politics of the whole thing is that those monolingual experts have ganged up against the bilingual teachers with a great deal of jealousy. I think a lot of progress has been made, but has not really been recognized by some as progress at all.

There's a school right here in Chinatown that uses the bilingual system. You see students there that speak English, Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Japanese and by the time they get to high school, they'll have at least some knowledge of the fact that there is a different language besides English. We are the only country in the world that sends diplomats to various countries that don't know the language of that country. Then there is the "English Only" concept that makes it very pro-America if you want English only. There is nothing wrong with knowing English and many other languages.

MTA:

What is your hope now for the Eastside and its future, having seen all the changes and the growth.

Roybal:

Well, my hope is based on education. I don't think that the educational opportunities are made available on an equal basis. I think that even the scholarship programs favor those with very high IQs. I was not an "A" student in school. So the scholarship that I give from the money that I had left over from my Campaign Committee - almost \$500,000 - I put in a trust fund and out of the interest from the account, I provide scholarships for youngsters to come to [Cal State L.A.] to the School of Health and Human Services. The scholarship is four years and paid for by the Edward R. Roybal Foundation. I have eight going now. I look at the grades and put that aside. Then I go back to their financial statement. First of all, they must qualify for admission to this university. You can come to this university and you don't have to have a 3.5 [grade point average]. I think the lowest you can have is a 2.9 or 3.0. I give that scholarship to the poorest of the applicants. They come first.

The poorer they are, the more chances they have of getting that scholarship. And not a single one of those that I have given scholarships to have left the university. They have not all graduated as yet. But not a single drop-out so far.

So I say educational opportunities should not be made available to just those who are very bright. Those who have certain capabilities and do college work, even though they may not get "A's," but a "B" and "C," they can become successful. They can develop people here. When I have been with a group of educators, I've asked them, "Were you all straight "A" students in college?" They weren't and they made it.

I think we should do more, first of all, with the church, regardless of religion -- Protestant or Catholic -- the moral issue is most important. A good home and a family that starts talking about college when that kid is two years old. My sister wanted to go to college, but my dad said, "Y para que?" ("And what for?"). You don't need a college degree to have babies. My sister said, "Well, I am not even thinking about having babies!" After a long discussion with my mother leading the way, he was convinced that she should go to college. We have to do more with the families now. Families must start teaching that "high school is not enough." And start teaching at an early age the evils of gangs, drugs, etc.

The reason for the high drop-out [rate] is the lack of incentive for the individual, with no incentive being created by the so-called "power structure" in the school. There is little effort on the part of some teachers to encourage individuals. Then when he gets home, the parents don't care if they drop-out. There has to be a process where the family works with the educators to provide more equal opportunities to an education and to educate not only the straight "A" students, but educate those who are capable of doing college work.

MTA:

How well do you think we are doing in Boyle Heights [and the Eastside]?

Royal:

As an example, one of the young fellas that I appointed to Westpoint had a rough time at Westpoint. But today is a successful engineer. Our young people are better educated and better prepared than we were. The difference is better educational opportunities. That's what we need! And that is the philosophy that needs to be instilled in the community, particularly the parents. Because the home, I think, is the foundation. Everything else is secondary. But the home is first.

Anyway, a continuous problem there seems to be no way of solving. But there is a way of bettering the situation, and that is involve the community, involve the people. Saul Linsky would say it is possible. He did it with the Back of the Yards Movement, we did it with the CSO, others have done it in Texas and New Mexico. New Mexico had its first [Hispanic] representative to the Congress of the United States in 1912. And then finally we had Dennis Chavez who was there for 35 years. And with his experience, he made a lot of opportunities for many as he helped fund education, and other social programs.

You find in New Mexico that they speak a little bit different Spanish than others do. You ask anyone born in New Mexico, "Que eres tu?" "Soy Mexicano." (What are you. I am Mexican.) Ask them in English, and they say, "I am of Spanish background." That makes them a little bit better than the other Mexicans there. I criticize that as being a New Mexico trait.

MTA:

Well, thank you for this interview. This is exactly what we were looking for. We want this project to be more than just an engineering project, we want to acknowledge the contributions that people have made. This has been very good, very helpful.

Royal:

Well, I am not sure how helpful it is going to be. The thing is that we talk about the truthful reality. And I think that there is a problem. And that it is not one that cannot be solved. And it is something that can be improved in the Eastside. And that improvement will result in the betterment of areas that will be served. And some bureaucrats have to realize that total community involvement is the key to a public project.

MTA:

Thank you for your time. We took up all your lunch hour.

Royal:

That doesn't bother me. What bothers me is the fact that we really don't have enough time to develop a real program. I'd like to see of MTA the finalization of a complete program. Because I don't see how you can plan in pieces.

Well, when I was elected to the City Council, I was told that a big building here on the corner of Beverly and Atlantic had a great big sign there: "GI Homes for Sale." But they did not sell to GIs of Mexican descent.

Monday morning I presented to the agent my discharge papers, \$250 deposit for the purchase of a home. He said, "I'm sorry, but I just can't sell to you." I said, "Why not? I'm a GI. I have an honorable discharge." "Oh, there's nothing wrong with your papers," he said. "If I had my way about it, of course, would sell to you, but I can't, because my orders are not to sell to Mexicans." I went back to my car and I was getting ready to leave, when he comes to my door. I can sell to you because you are different." All of sudden I was different.

Well, anyway, I went to City Council, got unanimous consent to address the Council for 10 minutes and told them the story that I just told you. There wasn't a major newspaper in the whole country, I don't think, that didn't have the headline: "GI Refused Federal Housing" or something like that. What we did was set a picket line that evening. We started a picket line for 24 hours. By the third day, they called me and wanted to negotiate, and we did. That was a good example of a community working together. A united community can win.

One final thing, the final acceptance program of the East Side Extension project should be awarded on merit, firsthand knowledge of the area, and strict compliance to the original guidelines. I am afraid that this is not being done. It would be a tragic mistake if contracts are awarded on political considerations. Community activists continue to call me concerned about the fact that the only qualified firm with offices in the area, who know its people and the area best, made it all the way to the top, but washed out on the oral interview. They were not recommended for a contract. Was it because it was a Latino firm they ask? They should realize, they told me, that there is no community help to be expected when there is no pride in having something built for us by a firm that doesn't know or care about us, particularly when our own Latino firm is not permitted to finish the job it was found qualified to do in the first place. We believe, they said, that there is something wrong here. I agree with them and think they have a point.

Note: The final paragraph was added by Congressman Roybal during final edit of the interview transcript.

TIO TACOS ARE PEOPLE TOO

by Frank Sifuentes

When I read that El Heraldo de La Raza, a Chicano paper run by comrades, called me a Tio Taco simply because I had said that if the people of East Los Angeles did not keep their parks clean they did not deserve them, I was stunned. They also blamed me because I had supported the move to trade a park in East L.A. for valuable land on the West Side. Those commie bums didn't even know what a good deal it was. But I held my temper pretty good until they started calling me Tio Chueco also, which really was dirty since I had been wounded in the leg during World War II and had won the Bronze Star. Imagine...I had fought in Germany to keep the Germans from making mince-meat of the Reds, and now they were calling me Tio Taco and Tio Chueco. And like I said, I was furious...so furious that I wanted to go to Chief Rodden's office to talk him into giving me a dozen of his best headed police officers to lead an attack on El Heraldo's headquarters and murder those foul-mouthed commies.

But I held back knowing they wouldn't let me. And besides some funny things started to happen, things I never would have thought of. First I learned that the anger would destroy me if I didn't control it. I learned that after the Bill of Rights even the dirty radicals and communists had to be allowed to print what they felt, and that it was good to know what they were saying. While I didn't mention it to anyone, I began to feel a newly found sense of importance; I was no longer just a successful American of Mexican descent...no, the charges of being a Tio Taco, a sell-out, a vendido, actually gave me a newly found prestige. The heads of other departments began to invite me to their functions and I was invited to become a police commissioner which appealed to me more than Parks and Recreation Commissioner. I even became less self-conscious of my limp, which, up to this point, had been nothing but a curse, even when I made people believe I had gotten it in the war when in fact I had gotten it because I had polio at an early age. Yes, I began to stop being just a cripple and was no longer terrified to speak a few words in behalf of the Mexican community during the mayor's banquets. The truth is that for the first time I really felt like one of the good guys.

My real estate business began to flourish and occasionally I could even go to the City Planner's office to get invaluable information that gave me a better idea of what lots and homes to invest in. Best of all, my credit at the banks improved. I could borrow almost twice as much as before even though my profit and loss statements had not grown that much better. In fact, it was only a year from the time that the communists came into the barrios that I was able to buy a five bedroom house in Azusa which made my wife happy for the first time in a long time that I could really recall. Before she was so unhappy having to bring up our two daughters in the barrios where narcotics were more plentiful than water and tortillas.

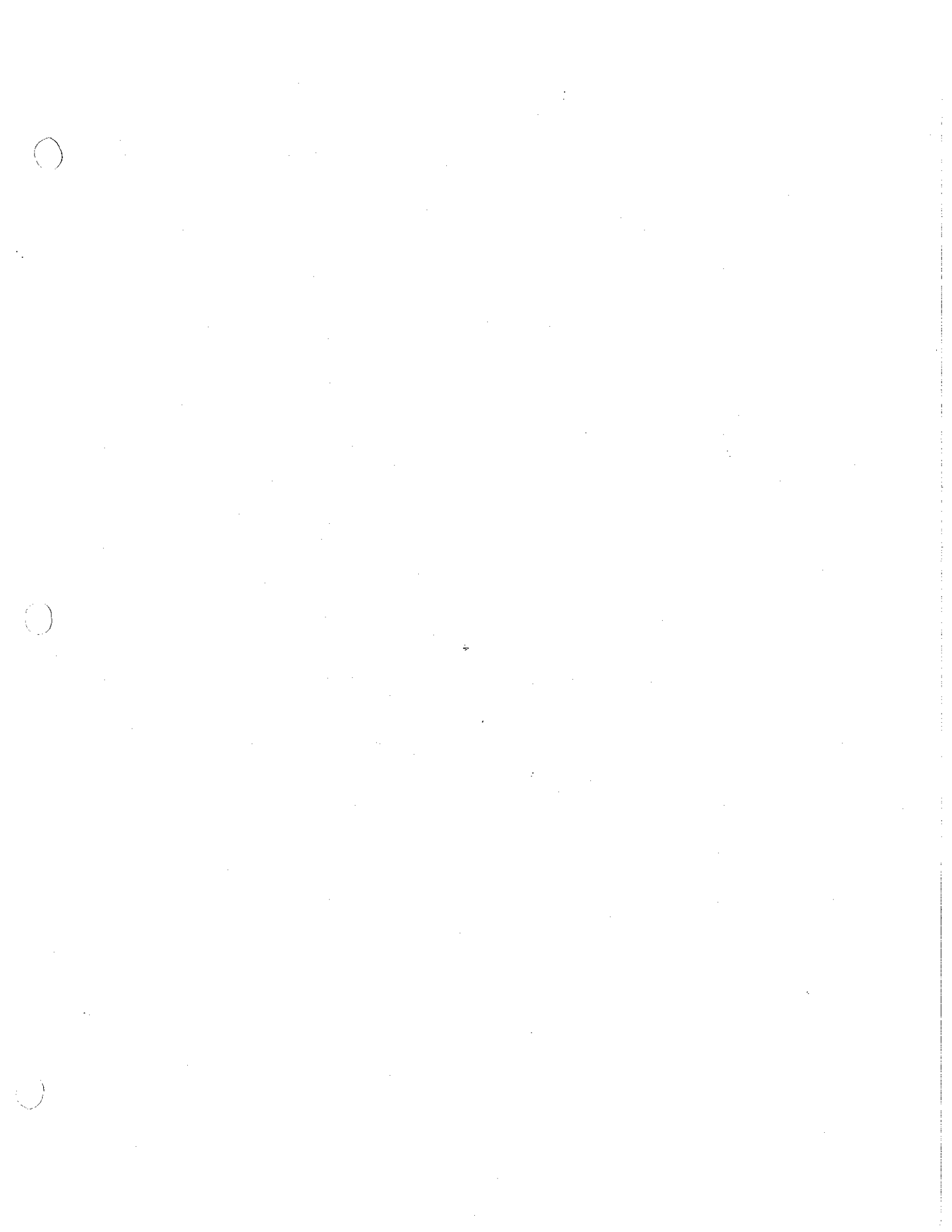
One day, while I was in the middle of transacting a minor sale of property for twice the amount I had invested, I got a call from the District Attorney's office. At first I was terrified, afraid they had caught up with some of the deals I had gambled on when I was younger and more desperate. They wouldn't tell me what the D.A. wanted, but assured me that it had something to do with a plan they had that I could help them with. Later, to my great delight, I found out that they were getting ready to move on the communists and that I was being invited to be a part of the intrigue. I even wondered if they would let me choose the kind of weapon I wanted and began to see myself shooting them down and shouting: "Tio Taco, hijos de la chingada!"

The plan called for a raid on the headquarters of El Heraldo de La Raza where they were sure they would find evidence of what they called "a conspiracy to cause insurrection." All they wanted to know from me was whether I thought the community would give the communists support that would prove embarrassing to the police and the D.A.'s Office. I told them that the Mexican Americans would never support commies because they had made so much trouble in Mexico during the so-called revolution. I also told them that I thought they would like it better if they raided the headquarters and got rid of them once and for all. But they admonished me and told me that even to get rid of commies, we had to use the democratic process. I felt embarrassed, for I had been brought up to believe that the good guys had a right to shoot down the bad guys. The D.A., after a while, sensed I had dropped into doubt and depression, and took me aside. He told me that if he could, he would give me a medal for just wanting to shoot it out with the commies and told me that while it would be the quickest way, there would be too much doubt in the minds of the people about who these men really were. Especially difficult, he told me, would be the troubles he would have with the socialists, the young leftists and the relatives of those involved. Besides he said, "This is the best and most thorough way to expose their ugly lies." He assured me that it would all be done very systematically and scientifically.

I left his office still a bit depressed but more than anything confused.

The next day I read the headlines of the Los Angeles papers: "COMMUNIST PLOT UNCOVERED, THIRTEEN ARRESTED FOR CONSPIRACY";..... and the next time I met the D.A., he reminded me that while the arrest went smoothly he was disappointed in me because I had underestimated the kind of response they would get from the community. I tried to tell him that since I had moved to Azusa I was not as close to the people in the barrios anymore, and reminded him that the people have often been known to react against the police.

And to tell the truth, I wanted to tell him that the guys he had arrested didn't really seem to be communist after all, but I didn't say anything because all I wanted to do was leave his office.



**"BROWN POWER" UNITY SEEN
BEHIND SCHOOL DISORDERS***

DIAL TORGERSON

"We want to walk out," a group of students at Lincoln High School told teacher Sal Castro last September. "Help us."

The students, like Castro, were Mexican-Americans — at a mostly Mexican-American school deep in the belt of east-of-downtown districts which together comprise the United States' most populous Mexican-American community.

"Don't walk out," Castro told them. "Organize."

And — as has now been seen — they did.

What resulted was a week-and-a-half of walkouts, speeches, sporadic lawbreaking, arrests, demands, picketing, sympathy demonstrations, sit-ins, police tactical alerts and emergency sessions of the school board.

It was, some say, the beginning of a revolution — the Mexican-American revolution of 1968.

In the midst of massive walkouts and police alerts, Dr. Julian Nava, only Mexican-American on the Los Angeles Board of Education, turned to Supr. of Schools Jack Crowther.

"Jack," said Nava, "This is BC and AD. The schools will not be the same hereafter."

"Yes," said Crowther, "I know."

First Mass Militancy

And, in the vast Mexican-American districts of the city and county of Los Angeles — the "barrios" (neighborhoods) where 800,000 people with Spanish names make their homes — leaders of a movement to unite what they call "La Raza" swear the barrios will never be the same, either.

Since World War II the Mexican-American community has had leaders calling for unity, change, better education, civil rights, eco-

*Los Angeles Times, March 17, 1968, page 1, Section C.

economic opportunity and an end to what they called second-class citizenship.

But the community never backed them up. Except for a few instances of picketing, nothing happened.

Then came the school walkouts, the first act of mass militancy by Mexican-Americans in Southern California. "Viva la Revolution," the youngsters' signs read. "Viva la Raza." (Raza translates "race" but is used in a sense of "our people.")

And, surprisingly to some, stunningly to others, the community backed them up.

The men and women of the once-conservative older generation jammed school board and civic meetings, shouting their approval of what their children had done. Parents of students arrested during demonstrations even staged a sit-in in the Hall of Justice.

"The people are with us, now," one young leader says.

Observers within the community say it heralds the entry of a powerful new force on the American scene: a newly united Mexican-American movement drawing a nationalistic, brown-power fervor from 4.5 million people in five Southwestern states.

With underground newspapers, cooperation with Negro groups, plans for political action and economic boycotts, leaders say they will show the country a new type of Mexican-American: one proud of his language, his culture, his raza, ready to take his share of U.S. prosperity.

Some experts, less swept along in the spirit of the movement, say they'll wait a while before they'll believe a few thousand school children can lead the typically divided, splintered Mexican-American millions into becoming a unified power.

But there's no doubt at the grassroots levels, where earlier pleas for unity never reached before in the minds of the younger men and women on the streets of the barrios, from East Los Angeles to Pico Rivera, from the fringes of Watts north deep into the San Gabriel Valley.

Listen to the voices there of La Raza and the message observers say these voices bring to the Anglo world:

The scene is a rainy sidewalk outside East Los Angeles Junior College. A white panel truck hauls and four young men in brown berets and mixed, cast-off Army fatigues and boots jump out, craning their heads left and right to see if they are pursued, and then file into the campus for a meeting.

They are members of the Brown Berets, the most militant of East Los Angeles Mexican-American groups. They have been accused of inciting high school students to riots, using narcotics, being Communists. There are several hundred of them here and in the Fresno area, their leaders say.

Frankly Admiring Students

"The deputies and the cops have really been harassing us," said David Sanchez, a college student who dropped out to be chairman of the Berets. "Sixty-five Brown Berets have been arrested in the past month. There are warrants out now for five of us because of the school walkouts."

The four sit on a concrete bench and speak in quiet voices to a newsman, glancing at times down the wet, windswept walkway toward the street, nodding in reply to greetings from frankly admiring students with the slightly superior air of young men slightly past 20, slightly revolutionary, and slightly wanted.

"Communism? That's a white thing," said Carlos Montes, mustachioed minister of public relations for the Berets. "It's their trip, not ours," said husky Ralph Ramirez, minister of discipline. Added Montes:

"It's pretty hard to mix Communists and Mexican-Americans. Che (Che Guevara, the late Cuban revolutionary some Berets seem to seek to resemble) doesn't mean a thing to the guy in the street. He's got his own problems."

Despite their vaguely ominous look, the Berets claim wide community support. "A lot of mothers' clubs help us with contributions," said Sanchez. "Men's clubs, too. They're happy to see there is finally a militant effort in the community. And they like what we're doing with the gangs."

In each barrio there are kids' gangs (The Avenues, the Clovers, the White French, Dog Town, Happy Valley) which have long shot up each other, and whole neighborhoods, and senseless warfare.

"Gang fights are going out," said Montes. "We're getting kids from all the different gangs into the Brown Berets. It's going to be one big barrio, one big gang. We try to teach our people not to fight with each other, and not to fight with our blood brothers to the south."

Police say the Berets were among the "outside agitators" who helped cause the student disturbances. "The Chicano students were the main

action group," said Sanchez. (Chicano is a term for Mexican-Americans which members of the community use in describing themselves.)

"We were at the walkouts to protect our younger people. When they (law officers) started hitting with sticks, we went in, did our business, and got out." What's "our business?" "We put ourselves between the police and the kids, and took the beating," Sanchez said.

Significance Explored

What significance lies behind the militant movement?

"They've given these people a real revolutionary experience," said Dr. Ralph Guzman, a professor of political science at Cal State Los Angeles. "No Marxist could do better. They're making rebels. When they see police clubbing them, it's the final evidence that society is against them — that existing within the system won't work."

"I don't know what's going to happen. I'm worried. I think there will be violence. I'm not predicting it. But from what I've seen — I saw riots in South America and India when I was with the Peace Corps — I think we all have a potential for violence."

The scene is Cleland House, a community meeting hall in East Los Angeles. Two hundred people, most of them adults, jam the hall, facing representatives of police and the sheriff's and district attorney's office invited there by a civic group.

Student Gives Version

"We were at the alley, just breaking out, when the cops charged at us," said Robert Sanchez, 17, a student at Roosevelt High. "If I could be allowed to express myself with dignity, I'd do so. But if they're grabbing me, or hitting me, and there's a rock or a brick there, I'd throw it."

"The only reported injury," said Police Inspector Jack Collins, head of the patrol division, calmly, "was a police officer hit in the eye with a bottle."

"Parents got beat up, too!" yelled a man's voice.

"Now try to get out of that one!" shouted Sanchez.

In an office, later, Lincoln High teacher Castro explained the walkouts:

Teacher Tells His Story

"It started with the kids from Lincoln," said Castro. 34 a social studies and government teacher who himself grew up in the East Los Angeles barrios. "They wanted things changed at the school. They wanted to hold what they call a 'blowout' — a walkout.

"I stopped them. I said, 'Blow out now and everyone will think it's because you want short skirts and long hair. Organize. What do you need?'"

"They said they needed some help in making signs, printing up demands, things like that. We got them help from college kids — mostly from the United Mexican-American Students at the different colleges. A blowout committee was established at each of the four East L.A. schools. And there was one committee with kids from each school.

Original Plan

"The original plan was to go before the Board of Education and propose a set of changes, without walking out — to hold that back to get what they wanted. Then, at Wilson High Friday (March 1), the principal canceled a play they were going to do ("Barefoot in the Park") as unfit, and the Wilson kids blew out. It was spontaneous.

"Then Roosevelt and Lincoln wanted to blow, too. Garfield, too. Later on (March 8) Belmont, which was never in on the original plan, came in, too.

"These blowouts in the other schools, like Venice and Jefferson, weren't connected with the Chicano blowouts, but they may have been in sympathy. Some of the kids from schools uptown asked us to send representatives to tell them how to organize.

"What do you think of that! The Anglo schools asking the Chicano kids to help them organize. They should've told them 'Ask your dads how they organized to oppress us all these years.'"

Significance Weighed

And what significance lies behind the sudden surge of student activism?

"These things weren't thought up by the kids," said Philip Moniez, western program director for the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

"Eight years ago the Council on Mexican-American Affairs was asking for bilingual education, one of the things the youngsters want now.

"But all attempts to move the community were abortive. Movements would start and peter out. We could never get a commitment. We were dealing with older people, conservative, with livings to make, kids to raise.

"Up 'til now the Mexican-American community hasn't had the sophistication for organization or movement. But things are different now.

"The kids are close to being anglicized and middle class ... which is apparently what it takes to bring them closer to being able to work a system. That's why they're the leaders.

Identity Seeking

"First in with it is an identity-seeking process. These kids say proudly: 'I'm a Mexican, and I want to learn about my culture.' It used to be, when I was a kid, we'd play it pretty cool about that Mexican thing. Someone would say, 'Are you a Mexican?' and you'd say, 'Well, y'know ...' and change the subject, or make a joke.

"But the society has changed, too. Always, before in the Mexican-American community there was a faith and belief in the Democratic society; that through good graces you'd achieve success. Be conservative, family-oriented. Know God is on our side.

"But they don't believe it any longer. There's a higher level of sophistication. They don't want to sit around and wait. They see they've got to make it work. That you've got to grease the wheels of democracy.

"That's what the kids were doing when they walked out -- and it caught the imagination of the adults. Now, for the first time, the community is behind them. And the adults are asking: 'Why did the kids have to show us why we make mistakes?'"

The scene is Belmont High School, on the other side of the Civic Center from the East Los Angeles barrios. Only one-third of the students there have Spanish names, as compared with 90% of some Eastside schools. Yet Belmont, too, joined the demonstrations.

"I was arrested," said Frances Spector, 16, an A12 at Belmont who was charged with disturbing the peace. She has light brown hair and blue eyes, but feels strongly about the demonstrations ... and what

happened to her. "I was told to go home by a school official, and police stopped me on the street and put me in the police car. They said they were taking me home. But we went to the police station."

(Ten of the 15 persons arrested during the demonstrations were picked up during the Belmont walkout, in which police say outsiders played a large role: of the 10 arrested, 9 were nonstudents.)

View on Demands

How does she feel about the student demands?

"At Belmont," said Frances, "you look at the industrial arts classes, and it's all Chicano and black. You look at the college preparatory classes, and it's all Anglos and Asians.

"That can't be the way they really fit! They can't be getting the right counseling. They're just putting people where they think they belong because of what color they are."

Is there any significance to students' complaints that Mexican-Americans are being pushed into shop courses, and discouraged from taking academic courses?

"I was graduated from Roosevelt High in 1945," said Dr. Nava, now 40, who got his Ph.D. from Harvard in history. "I was told to take auto shop. And I did. I did as I was told. Then I went into the Navy -- and I wasn't a Mexican anymore, I was just Julian. It opened my eyes.

Served in Navy

"But, then, in the Navy I was an auto mechanic -- so I can't say that the advice was all bad. A lot of those decisions were based on what the high school counselors considered 'a realistic assessment of the chances of success.' They realized the chances, then, of a Mexican-American getting through college.

"I'm just worried for fear they're still making those 'realistic assessments.' I just wonder how many other Julians have ended up in an auto shop, somewhere. And stayed there.

"They had me believing my oldest kid, Hector, wasn't too bright," said Charles Fricksen, whose wife came from Mexico and whose children went to East Los Angeles schools before he became a public relations man in Sacramento. "All he could get were Cs.

"The counselor told me it's were fine, all we could expect. They said he had no leadership potential. He never had any homework. Then we moved to Sacramento, and he went into a school where he's the only Mexican American. They call him 'Taco.' And he gets all As and Bs and is president of his class."

"It's wrong when people say, 'We have a terrible school system.'" said Dr. Guzman. "All in all, it has an excellent reputation in our country. But it may not be effective in certain corners of society. The policy is established downtown for all the areas and all the schools."

"But, in some areas, such as the Mexican-American areas, they find that somehow these rules don't apply. Their tests don't work. And they wonder why. You know why? They don't understand our people. They're not trying to."

Scene at UCLA

The scene is UCLA, where, late last month, hundreds of delegates from 25 different Mexican-American groups gathered at a symposium sponsored by the Associated Students of UCLA and the United Mexican American students.

"Integration is an empty bag," said Rudolfo (Corky) Gonzales, of Denver, head of the Crusade for Justice, a Colorado civil rights group he says numbers 1,800. "It's like getting up out of the small end of the funnel. One may make it, but the rest of the people stay at the bottom."

"Our young people reject politics. All the new leaders we developed a year ago are now working for the poverty program. They were bought out. They are not provoking a revolution. They're putting water on fire. Young leaders! Don't spend your time trying to educate a racist majority. Teach your own people. Tell them to be proud of their names, their values and their culture."

Filling to Die?

"Ask them if they're willing to fight for their rights and dignity. And ask them: are they willing to die for it?"

"The violence in New Mexico was the moment of awakening for La Raza," said another speaker, Reyes Tijerina. "El Tigre," the Tiger, leader of the militant Alianza (Alliance) of Indo-Spanish peoples of northern New Mexico. (Because their ancestors date to Spanish

conquistador days, before there was a Mexico, Tijerina's followers prefer Indo-Spanish to Mexican-American. Often, in Colorado, New Mexico and Texas the term "Spanish-American" is used.)

Tijerina came to the symposium while free on appeal bond for his conviction on charges of aiding and abetting an assault on two federal officers -- forest rangers held by Alianza members when they invaded a national forest in October, 1966. Last June raiders shot up the courthouse at Tierra Amarilla, N.M. and Tijerina is charged with numerous counts on which trial is still pending.

"Since Tierra Amarilla," said Tijerina in Los Angeles "there has been a closer association. People realize the need for closer cooperation in different parts of the Southwest. As we get closer to danger, the brotherhood tightens in closer."

"I myself am not a violent man. I don't believe in outright violence. But in dealing with our government, we find it urgent and natural to make our demands in a different way from 30 to 40 years ago."

Bert Corona, head of the Mexican-American Political Association, urged the Mexican-American community to fight for power politically -- but the militancy of the meeting, which primed much of the young Chicano leadership for the demonstrations of March was best illustrated by Luis Valdez:

"We're in the belly of the shark," said young Valdez. "In occupied California."

He worked for a time helping efforts of Cesar Chavez, leader of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, in Delano. Chavez achieved notable success in unionizing Mexican-American farm workers in the San Joaquin Valley -- and then, disturbed by threats of violence by some Mexican-Americans he said were "seeking a short-cut to victory," went on a highly publicized 25-day fast to dramatize his nonviolent approach.

He had been scheduled to speak at the UCLA symposium, but couldn't because of his fast. That same week Tijerina was making numerous appearances in the Los Angeles area, flanked by Brown Beret bodyguards, embracing and praising Black Nationalist leaders, and stirring young militants with hints at violence and calls for valor and a willingness to die, if need be, for La Causa -- the cause.

Valdez, wearing a Che Guevara type costume, attacked the "baguettes" -- a Mexican-American term for Anglos -- and showed a militancy more characteristic of Tijerina than Chavez:

"It's time for a new Mexican revolution," he said. "And which Chicanos are going to lead the next revolution? The ones in the belly of the shark! Nosotros! We're going to lead that revolution!"

Denounces 'Lousy' System

"We've got to stand up and talk straight to the gabachos -- say, hell, no. I won't go, to their whole lousy system. I won't go to your suburban barrio. I won't talk your language. I won't eat your food!"

Amid cheers, he added: "Support Tijerina! And Viva la Raza!"

Has this revolution, as some say, already started? Were the New Mexico raids and the San Joaquin Valley strikes a prelude to the beginning of a real grass-roots movement in Los Angeles?

"These things sometimes appear in a flash," said Dr. Leo Grebler, an economist who is chairman of the committee for the Mexican-American Study now underway at UCLA. "And, then, they disappear in a flash."

'Hard to Tell'

"Since it is so new, it's hard to tell. I don't know of any criteria to predict if it will be a permanent force. In the past, attempts to unite, to draw in other Spanish-speaking people, have been flashes. I maintain an attitude of skepticism. I have to think in my terms, and my terms are skeptical, based on past performances."

"But, then, the Mexican-American population is younger than the rest of us (50% of the community is under 20), and youth feels the social issues more severely than the older leaders."

"Numerically, the importance of the young will stay with us for at least this generation. The young are here, and they'll stay with us. What they'll do with their power we'll have to wait and see. I'd like to take a look, say about 1970 or 71, and see what changes occurred."

"But we can't predict it. All we can do is wait, and see, and then record it."

At the end of the week the Brown Power movement had achieved one objective -- the school board had agreed to meet in East Los Angeles. Will it all end there? In the barrios they say no. Next, they predict, will come economic boycotts, political drives, perhaps more demonstrations.

The history Dr. Grebler plans to write is already under way, they say. Because history, say Southern California's young Chicanos, is something which is happening now.

gave up a directorship in the Community Service Organization in Los Angeles to lead the Delano grape strike.

The semiprofessional man, the professional man, the business man attracted to the CSO paid little more than lip service to the needs of the farm worker. Not until he began to organize the National Farm Workers' Union did Chávez find the action he desired. . . .

There is another group that is not concerned with politics or social reform. A large group of citizens of Mexican descent in the medium-income level are apathetic simply because they do not now know discrimination. They have been able to assimilate, yet retain a part of the culture of their fathers. They may live in the middle-class areas of Oakland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego—or in a subdivision in the Santa Clara Valley, or near Norwalk. Many are ex-GIs, or children of ex-GIs. Like their lower-middle-class Anglo neighbors, they may not even be interested in voting, although in traditional American spirit they will be vaguely disturbed about taxation and the size of government. They are usually buying their homes and share with most of their Anglo friends the fear that the Negro may come into their neighborhood and depreciate values. . . .

But they know they are Mexican. And, with a smugness that would never permit them to deny it, call themselves Mexican. Twice a year, on the fifth of May and sixteenth of September, they attend Mexican national patriotic events with a Mexican pride that is formidable, dressing their children (usually two or three, because they have also adopted the middle-class Anglo fear of overpopulation) in the traditional costume of the *charro* or *china poblanita*. . . .

Another group within the framework of Mexican society in California is the professional man: the doctor, lawyer, engineer, the businessman and the educator. And from this group with its academic or economic advantages come the majority of the political activists. . . .

The idea that social and economic reform for the Mexican in California could best be achieved by his participation in local and state government and by the consolidation of a voting bloc stemmed from the disillusion of the veteran of Mexican descent

after World War II. Rightfully proud of the distinguished record those of his ethnic group had compiled in conflict around the world, the Mexican American ex-GI had hopes that many of the old rancors at home had dissipated. He was disillusioned when he attempted to get a GI deal on a home and found that his background barred him from living in specific areas. He was disillusioned again when he tried to find employment, and the final hurt was inflicted when he tried to collect the five years of college the federal government and the state of California guaranteed to him under Public Law 346 and he found that the third-rate schools in his barrio had not prepared him for college. He had no direction. . . .

There is the angry, militant young intellectual, usually a lawyer or educator, driven not only by a zeal to deliver his people but also by personal ambition. Typical is Robert F. Gonzales, a San Francisco attorney, who, while still young, has already made a good run for County Supervisor. . . .

There is also the older, embittered veteran who has fought the hard fight (many times alone), whose ambition has been thwarted by the passage of time, and who sees the newcomers receiving state appointments and otherwise reaping the fruits of his labor. Or he may be an old lawyer with years of service to his community who has also struggled long and has been more than once passed over for a younger man when a judicial vacancy came up. Either of them may feel that it's time for a change.

There is also the other ancient, who has given his time and himself to the cause but has no ambition for either wealth or position. He just wants his world made better. And yet he is not without the qualities of leadership, or the cunning and the wisdom of age. Such a one is Eduardo Quevedo, immediate past state president of MAPA, a *manito* from New Mexico with an authentic Mexican accent, an actor. Although not particularly literate, and not especially articulate in either English or Spanish, he is self-made, self-assured, competent, and astute. He is idolized by many of the younger men, who approach him solicitously because he is aging and ailing and they have been trained to respect age. Although he plays the part of a democratic leader, he is often arbitrary and bulldozing. A Franklin Roosevelt Democrat, he is

Villareal is author of Pocho, an important novel about La Raza set in Santa Clara, California, in the 1930's.

No minority group in California today suffers the same type or degree of social neglect known to the Mexican American of this state. The discrimination directed against him is not so overt as the discrimination the Negro finds, but the depth of the exploitation practiced against him is far greater. The facts are: that 76 percent of the Mexican adult population in California is employed in unskilled occupations, that they are two years behind the Negro in scholastic achievement, and that they are four years behind the non-minority citizens of the state.

Most appalling, the situation is not improving; it is worsening. A recent study at UCLA showed, for example, that the Californian of Mexican descent lives today on a smaller per capita income than any other group in the population, including Negroes. Although *median* family income among Mexican Americans is higher than non-whites, the study showed, the larger average Mexican American family cuts into this advantage measurably. Thus, the average child of such a family is reared on \$1,380 a year, compared with \$1,437 for non-whites and \$2,108 for the total population. . . .

The history of inequities suffered by California's citizens of Mexican descent is long and is still being written. The great mass of Mexicans in California arrived, or were born to those who arrived, during the years from 1910 through 1930. Much of today's prejudice still stems from that period, when the United States was caught up in a wave of fear over the immigrants from southern and eastern Europe that flooded into the East Coast, or the Orientals who were arriving in the West in increasing numbers. Public sentiment pushed through legislation to prohibit Japanese from becoming naturalized citizens. Behind the slogan of "America for Americans," Congress enacted the Johnson Immigration Act, which President Coolidge signed in 1924.

Despite this widespread attitude, the Mexican's position within the framework of the California society is a study in paradoxes.

Although the Mexican in a legal sense is a Caucasian (many Mexicans here and in Mexico come of European stock), it is common practice to use the term "Mexican" to denote race. Even sociologists and educators, as well as sophisticated Anglos who are *simpatco* to the cause and should know better, have been known to make the distinction between "Mexican" and "white." Still, this does not impede the Mexican, if he can pay the price, from enjoying every right his white neighbor enjoys, even though he is continually reminded of the plight faced by most people of his ethnic background. He knows that the Mexican is discriminated against more for his educational and economic shortcomings than for his ancestry. . . .

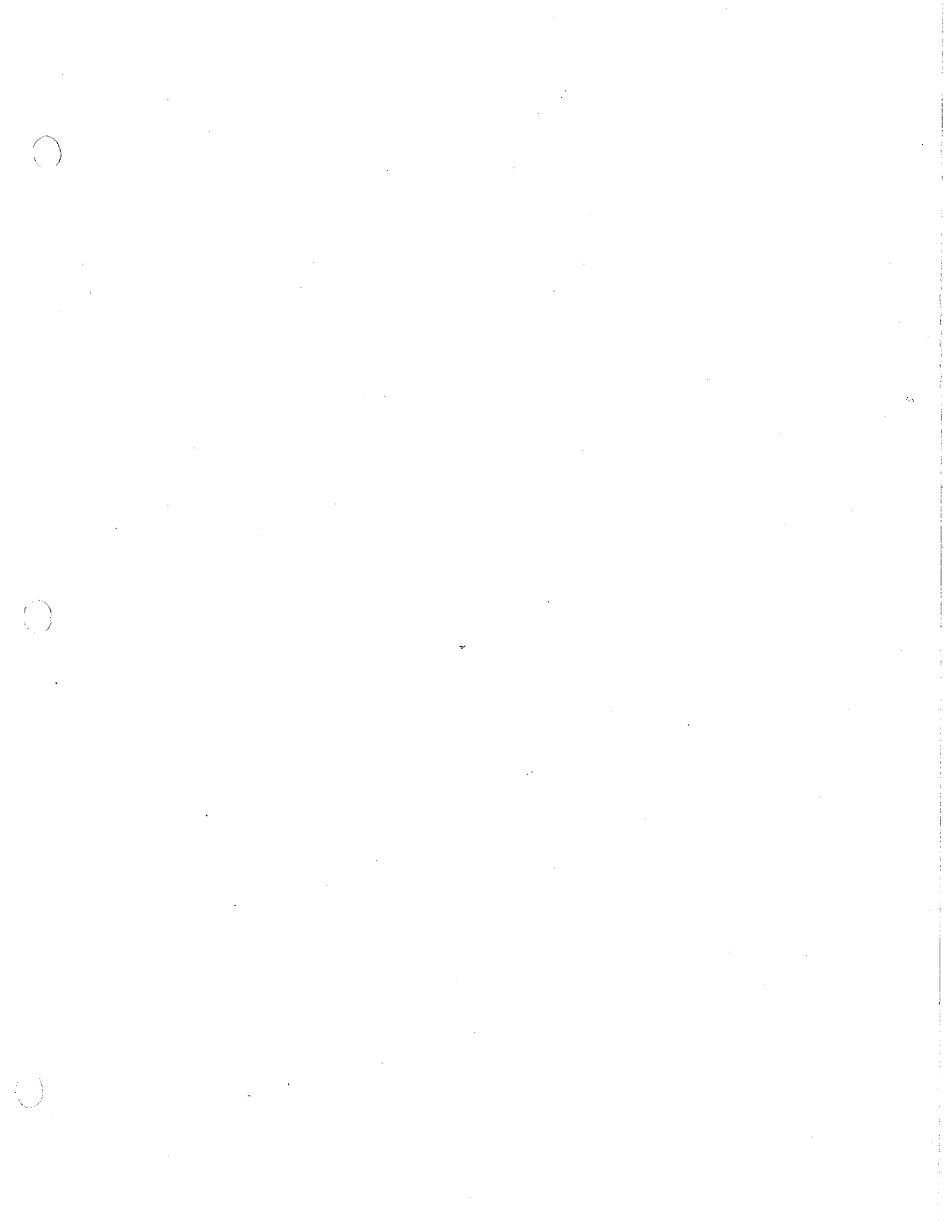
Yet there remain areas in California where ostracism, discrimination, and prejudice are as prevalent as ever. Even the Church—both Catholic and Protestant—sometimes helps to perpetuate the caste system, usually in agricultural areas. Here in farm towns of from one to five thousand people, communication between whites and Mexicans is virtually nonexistent. Here can be found the same social conditions that so many Mexicans knew forty-five years ago: stereotyped attitudes toward the Mexican as an inferior being who is incapable of learning and is going to be a stoop laborer anyway, segregated seating in school and church, and special treatment for the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) students. The teacher rejects the Mexican student, subtly or overtly, carrying him only as long as the law demands it. By the time he reaches the eighth grade, the Mexican child is legally allowed to drop out and join his father in the fields. Unbelievable, but it happens today in the great, progressive state of California. (In the Salinas area last year, Mexican political activists uncovered the fact that school authorities planned to hold segregated classes for the children of migrant laborers in house trailers rather than bus them to WASP schools nearby.)

Ironically, this portion of the Mexican community, although subjected to the worst prejudice and the most overt discrimination, is most neglected by the reformers from their own ethnic group, simply because they are not an important political force. This is essentially why César Chávez, disenchanted by the emphasis placed on the needs of the urban Mexican community,

the force that helps keep MAPA, although expressly a bipartisan organization, also expressly committed to the Democratic party.

There are also crooks, those who are out only for what they can get, quickly but not necessarily honestly. They are not a force in the Mexican American community, any more than they are a force in the Anglo community. They are an irritant to both, but that is all.

Finally, there is the tool, the *Tio Tomis* (Uncle Tom), who, for an appointment to a minor office or responsibility, will betray his people, while professing that he is doing good for them. There is for the politician, after all, a value to having a Spanish surname listed on his staff. And for the Mexican staff member, it is justified as being proof that Mexicans can improve themselves. But to him, this is the limit of the improvement. For he has believed the propaganda that he is an inferior being, that the Mexican has neither the capacity to learn nor the native ability to compete with the Anglo on intellectual or creative terms. A leading official of the city of Los Angeles has such a man on his staff. He is not there to serve as a link between the official and the Mexican community, to provide meaningful expression to the official of this community's needs, but rather to keep alive the idea of a democratic city government which would place even one of Mexican descent in such a position of trust. The man's greatest sense of pride is the fact that no Mexican became a turncoat in Korea and that none has given his community a bad name by becoming a prominent Communist.



Retrato de un Bato Loco

Marcus Duran

"You know, ese, like I gotta have that geeze today. Like I've gotta kick cold turkey at that place called El Proyeccio Del Barrio. I'm hurtin', ese. I'll pay you some other time."

The Horse stood blinking under the morning sun. He was decked out in ragtag khaki pants that had seen better days. He stood there knowing he had to feed a line of bullshit to the Dude for the half gram of stuff, otherwise he'd have to go out of the Barrio and hustle some loot, and that was a drag especially because of the way he was feeling at that precise moment. He was really hurting for a quick fix of junk.

"Orale, ese," he kept on, "come on, man, just this one time. My P. O. tells me either I go over the Proyeccio, ese, and straighten, or like it's back to the joint. And I mean the big house on 'Frisco Bay. An' that ain't what I'm gonna do, ese, so before I split I need one last fix on credit. So how 'bout it, Carnal? Just one. I'll get the bread. I'll pay."

The Dude was one cool Chicano. He was cold, cold when it came to money. He had carga all right—he had it inside his mouth. He was loaded, and as he looked at the Horse his eyes were glazed and dilated. The Dude didn't answer right away. Sitting there in front of his clapboard shack, nodding, he was barely aware of the Horse's voice. He was thinking instead about the boss brown junk he'd brewed just that morning. It had dropped him against his bed when he'd jolted it into his scarred vein. He smiled.

Good junk.

The stuff had come into his possession late last night. It was the kind of Chicano stuff that came in once in a great while, the kind you paid four C-notes for just a piece. The cut with sugar milk went four to one ounce, and it was really the best kind of junk. One ounce procaine made it five ounces. Twelve C-notes of Chicano junk. That was big time money. The Dude was happy. Business was going to pick up all right this week.

He looked up at Horse and squinted. *Yeah. He could afford to go along with the play and help the Horse out. A half gram. Anyhow, even though the Horse was splitting he'd pay sometime. Sometimes a little credit was good for business anyway. Beside, he sorta liked the Bato.*

"Ese, Caballo," the Dude said as he swatted away a fly buzzing around his head, "tell you what. I'm gonna give you a good taste, man. Like I dig the scene you've gotta make." He dropped a small piece into the Horse's trembling hand. "It's solid carga, man, so don't do it all up at once. Now, get outta here, man, you're putting heat on my pad. See you later when everything gets cool with you."

The Horse mumbled something, dropped the carga into his mouth, and ran tumblingly along the path leading to the Barrio street. As he turned the corner of a building he ran headlong into one of the Bato Locos from the Barrio. It was Benny.

"Orale, ese," Benny said, stopping him.

The Horse eyed the Bato and he knew Benny was out to hustle some cotton. His eyes were watery and Horse could tell he was one sick Bato.

"You gonna score from the Dude, ese?" Horse said as he started to pass Benny by, but Benny held onto his arm. "Yeah," Benny said, hanging on. "You get some, ese?" Benny was out to hustle, if he could.

"Yeah," Horse said, releasing Benny's hold gently. I got some from the Dude, ese. But not enough. I mean, I told him I had to split the scene or they're gonna send me to Q. He gave me some, ese, on credit, but not enough."

"The Batos say you gotta dry out, ese. You supposed to be goin' over to the Proyecto." Benny's brown eyes and clear brown skin reminded Horse of the leaves on the Oak tree in the Dude's yard.

"Naw, ese," Horse answered, irritated. "I ain't going on over to that Proyecto. I ain't gonna kick cold turkey for no motherfucker. My P. O. and all them jame putos can go fuck themselves. They ain't gonna get on me. I'm heading home, ese and do me in this carga I got; then I'm splitting." Benny stared at him. "Yeah, ese, fuck it. Well, man, I've got to make the scene. Later, ese, Caballo."

"Later, Benny."

The Horse made it trotting to his pad and tiptoed inside the shabby living room. His grandmother wasn't around and he breathed a sigh of relief. She was always bugging

him about fixing around the house. He quietly opened the door to the bathroom and went inside. His outfit was hidden behind the washbowl. He pulled out the bundle and unrolled the dirty piece of rag. His hand was shaking and the bent spoon fell into the toilet bowl. Sweat was breaking out on his brow, and he could feel the first symptoms of withdrawal. He scooped out the spoon and made the preparations. He knew he was strung out, but it wasn't too bad yet. Anyway, there was no way out. He had to take that last geeze before he split from the Barrio and hid out. He knew he could get some chiva wherever he went. Everybody was hooked. The shit was everywhere, so he wasn't worrying about scoring. He sure as hell wasn't going to no Proyecto and let them cold turkey him, fuck it!

He broke the red balloon and spilled out the brown carga into the match-burn blackened spoon. Then he ripped off five matches from the paperbook that lay on the toilet seat. The needle and eyedropper were ready. He cooked the junk and felt his guts turning inside out, and he was already choking with the puke that came up to his throat. He put all of the carga into one good jolt.

The Horse pressed the nipple of the eyedropper and carefully withdrew the jet-black carga from the spoon. The rag was tight around his upper right arm where the muscle bulged with the pressure. The needle penetrated his flesh into the mainline vein and blood sucked back into the eyedropper. Everything was going right, for sure, that was for sure.

Then the Horse felt what he'd never felt before. It was a blinding flash, and he felt his knees buckling under him. He didn't know, couldn't know, what was happening, but he knew things were sweet, nauseatingly sweet, and his body flew in space, and all that was a part of him was suddenly a part of the darkness that came after the flash, a darkness that disappeared a moment, making him briefly aware of his grandmother's piercing, haunting scream, the darkness wavered, and he gave himself up to the completeness of it.

Catolicos por La Raza

We wish to share with you the feelings which gave rise to Catolicos por La Raza. As Mexican-Americans and as Catholics you have a right to know.

Members of Catolicos por La Raza (CPLR) are Catholics. We have gone to Catholic schools and understand the Catholic tradition. Because of our Catholic training we know that Christ, the founder of Catholicism was a genuinely poor man. We know that he was born in a manger because His compatriots refused Him better housing. We know that He not only washed and kissed the feet of the poor (Mary Magdalen) but did all in His power to feed and educate the poor. We also know that one day He rode through Jerusalem on a jackass and was laughed at, spat upon, and ridiculed. We remember, from our Catholic education, that Christ, our hero, did not have to identify with the poor but chose to do so. We also were taught that one day Christ went to the established church, a church which identified with the rich people, with people who were never ridiculed or laughed at or spat upon, and He took a whip and used it upon the money-changers of His day who, in the name of religion, would dare to gather money from the poor. And, finally, we know, as all Christians know, His love for the poor was so great that He chose to die for poor people.

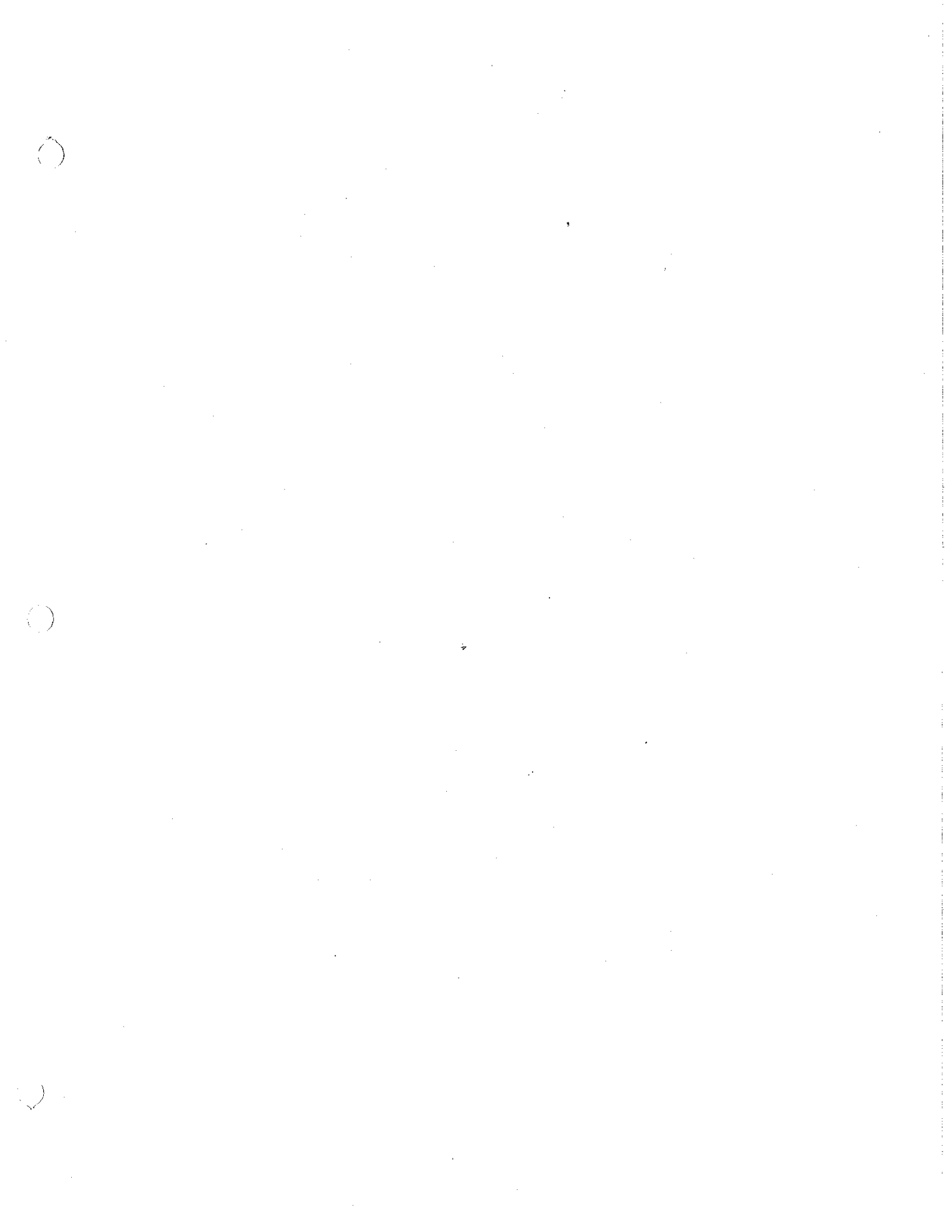
We know these things because our Catholic education has taught us that these were the things Christ did, Christ who founded the Catholic Church. And we know further

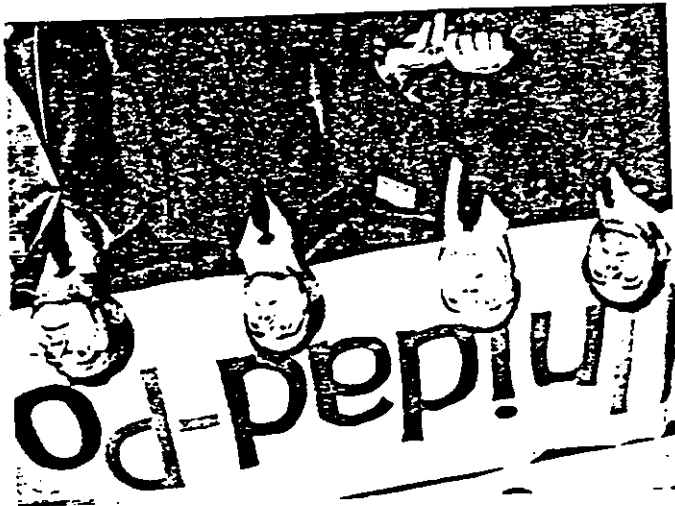
that if you or I claim to be Christian we have the duty to not only love the poor but to be as Christlike as possible.

It is these feelings within us, as members of Catolicos por La Raza, which led us to look at our Catholic Church as it presently exists: a Church which, for example in Los Angeles, would dare to build a \$3,500,000 church on Wilshire Boulevard when you and we know that because of our poverty our average education is 8.6 years and many, too many of our people, live in projects. How many churches, let alone million-dollar churches, did Christ build? We looked further and found that, although as a matter of faith all of us are members of the Catholic Church, nonetheless no Chicanos are able to participate in decisions within the Church, which are not of purely religious nature. Would you have voted for a million-dollar Church?

So many other considerations led to the creation of Catolicos por La Raza. We do not have the time or the money to print them all. But we do ask you to remember, as Mexican-Americans, as Catolicos, as Chicanos, that as members of the Catholic Church, it is our fault if the Catholic Church in the Southwest is no longer a Church of blood, a Church of struggle, a Church of sacrifice. It is our fault because we have not raised our voices as Catholics and as poor people for the love of Christ. We can't love our people without demanding better housing, education, health, and so many other needs we share in common.

In a word, we are demanding that the Catholic Church practice what it preaches. Remember Padre Hidalgo. And remember that the history of our people is the history of the Catholic Church in the Americas. We must return the Church to the poor. OR DID CHRIST DIE IN VAIN?





30th Congressional District

Ed Roybal

29th Congressional District

Ralph Guzman "drafted"

45th Assembly District

Charles Pineda

51st Assembly District

Phil Ortiz

40th Assembly District

James Cruz

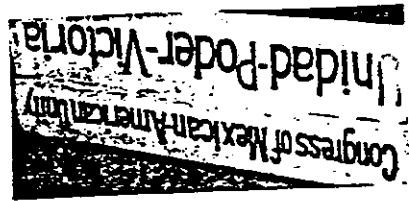
27th State Senatorial District

Richard Calderon

COMMUNITY CANDIDATES

About 550 delegates, representing more than 50 community organizations, participated in the convention of the Congress of Mexican-Americans Unity held at Roosevelt High School last Sunday, February 25th. This Community Congress saw the emergence of "blocks" of organizations which seem to define the new sources of power in the community. The main blocks, in order of strength and voting power were labor, UMAS, UMAS, and the Town Halls, UMAS, and the only "disputed" nomination was the one for the 40th Assembly District between Gonzalo Molina and James Cruz. James Cruz had more committed delegates from the alliance of the labor and Town Hall blocks. The decisive votes were cast by the UMAS block, but only after James Cruz agreed to sign an endorsement of the Complete Platform of the Southern District of the United Mexican American Students (UMAS). Gonzalo Molina withdrew from the race "in the interests of unity and to insure victory," receiving a standing ovation by all the delegates. Alex Garcia, one-time field deputy to Congressman Ed Roybal, refused to submit to the Convention Rules and disqualified himself for community endorsement. Let us now pull together and make victory for the community our only goal.

chicano power



VIVA LA CAUSA,

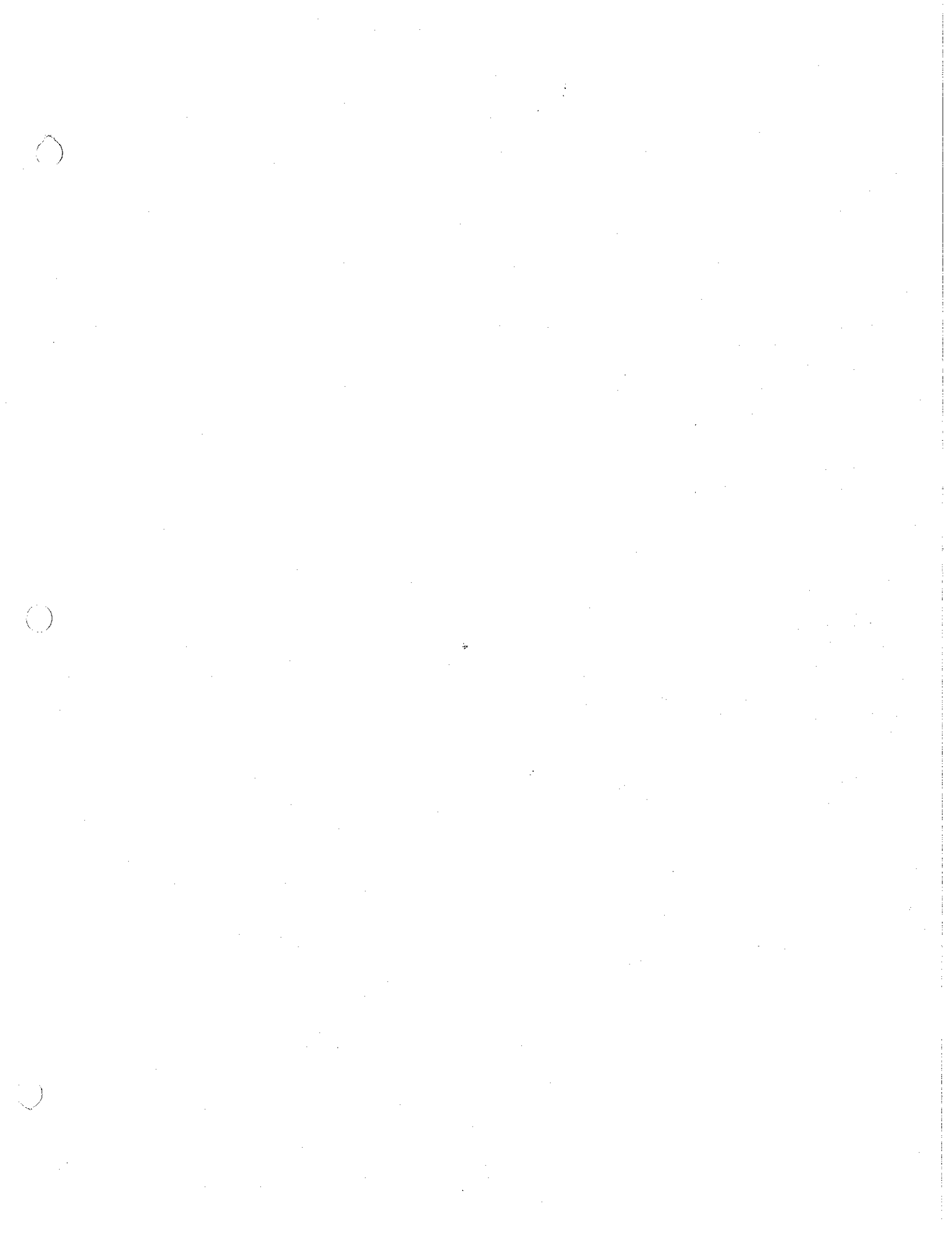


El Barrio Communications Project
2906 ALTURA — 222-4272
LA RAZA
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Vol. I No. 10 March 1, 1968 Los Angeles



LA CAMPANA

DE LOS POBRES

Los pobres de America—millas de ellos—van a demostrar en Washington y en sus comunidades en toda la nacion durante Mayo y Junio, o hasta que el gobierno responda.

Washington es el centro del gobierno, y el gobierno federal tiene el poder y los recursos para acabar con la pobreza y la injusticia. Pero el gobierno no lo ha hecho. Entonces, La Campana de los Pobres va a demandar reformas en el gobierno. Nosotros presentaremos demandas definitivas en empleos, salarios y una vida decente para todos los pobres, para que podamos controlar nuestro destino. Familias enteras estaran en Washington. Transporte, Comida y alojamiento no costaran. Doctores y dentistas cuidaran de nuestra salud, y abogados nos daran consejo legal. Hicbro escuela para jovenes y ninos, y recreacion para todos.

POOR PEOPLES CAMPAIGN

The poor people of America—thousands of them—will demonstrate in Washington and in local communities all over the nation during May and June, or until the government responds.

Washington is the center of government, and the federal government has the power and the resources to end poverty and discrimination. But the government has failed to do this. Therefore the Poor People's Campaign will demand government reforms.

We will present to the government a list of definite demands involving jobs, income, and a decent life for all poor people so that they will control their own destiny.

Whole families will be in Washington. Transportation, food, and lodging will be provided free of cost. Fifty doctors and fifty dentists will take care of their health; fifty lawyers will supervise the legality of all the demonstrations. There will be schooling and training for youth of all ages, and recreation for everybody.

el Poder de los Pobres

Mas de 35 millones de personas son "pobres" en este pais. La gente pobre no tiene buenos trabajos o salarios, educacion adecuada o escuelas decentes, casas o tratamiento medico apropiado, gobernantes o policias decentes. A la gente pobre ni se le respeta como humanos. Mas de 7 millones reciben beneficio publico, los mas son ninos, ancianos, enfermos, y madres que no pueden trabajar. El gobierno malgasta mas dinero en poder militar que en el bienestar publico, mas dinero en un mae en Vietnam que en un uno de la llamads "Guerra Contra la Pobreza."

La gente pobre permanece pobre porque no tienen el poder. Tenemos que crear "El Poder del Pobre."

Poor People's Power

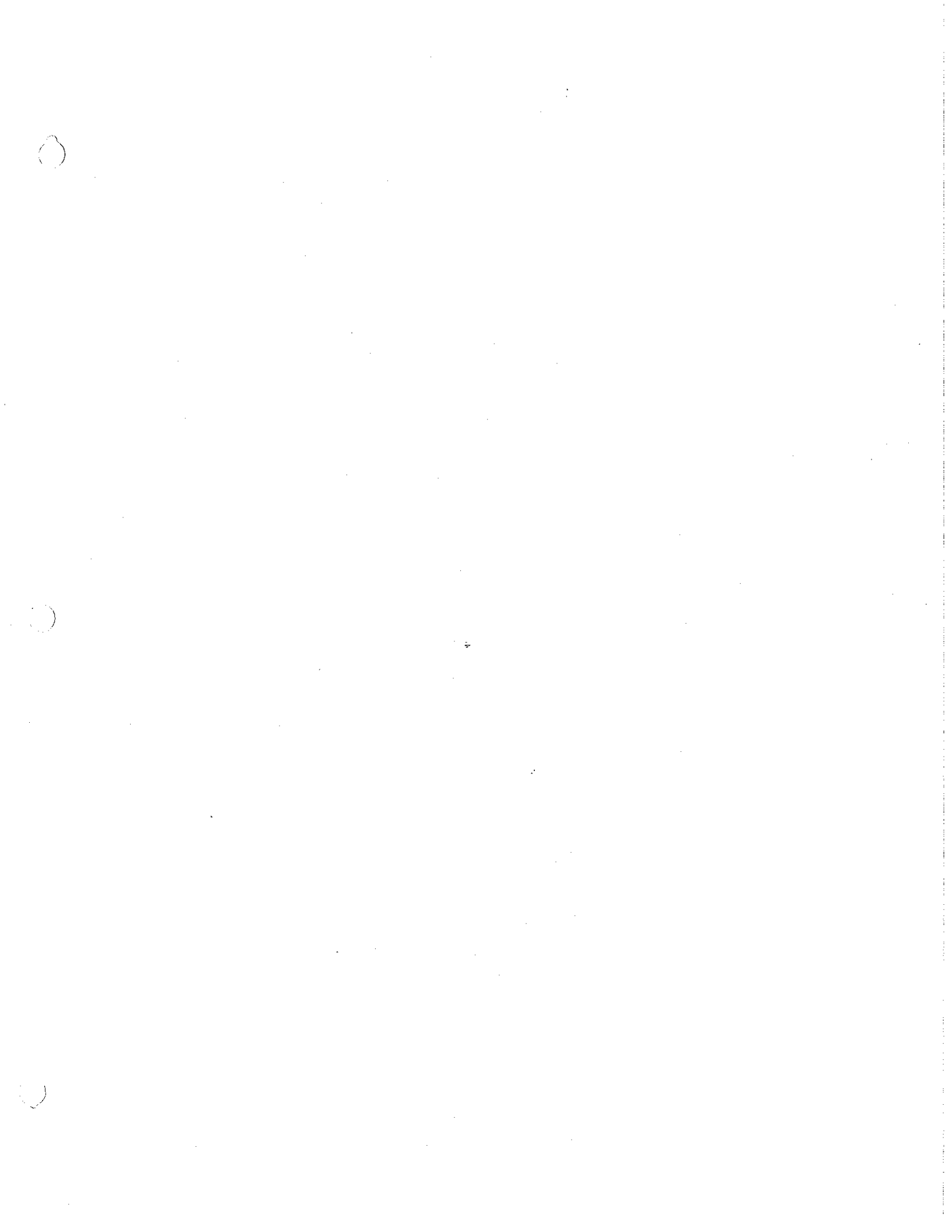
More than 35 million people in America today are "poor." Poor people do not get decent jobs, decent incomes, decent housing, decent schools, decent health care, decent government, decent police. Poor people do not even get respect as human beings. More than 7 million people in America today are on welfare, mostly children, old people, the sick, and mothers unable to work. America spends 10 times as much money on military power as it does on welfare. America spends more money in one month to kill in Vietnam than it spends in a year for the so-called "War on Poverty."

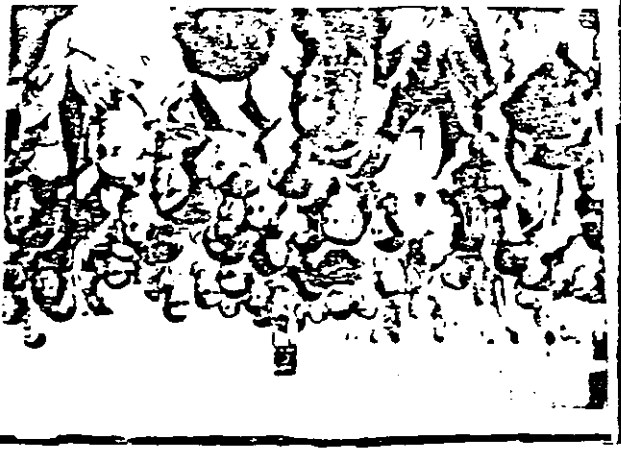
Poor people are kept in poverty because they are kept from power. We must create "Poor People's Power."

LA CAMPANA DE LOS POBRES

FOR INFORMATION:
call LA RAZA 225-5981

FOR REGISTRATION:
call Plaza Community Center 268-1107

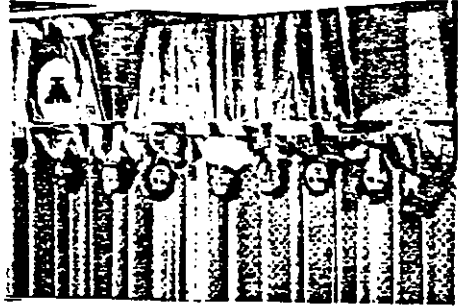




movement

To create a whole

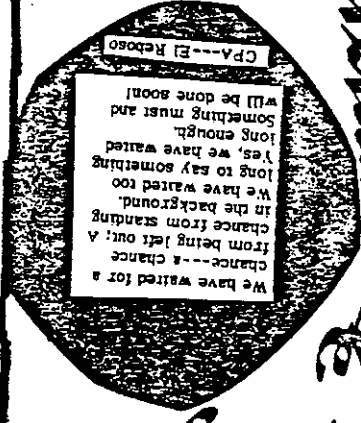
with flow from



works

Praxis

Corazon



We have waited for a chance... a chance from being left out; a change from standing in the background. We have waited too long to say something. Yes, we have waited long enough. Something must and will be done soon!

Chicana Symposium

The "Corazon de Aztlan" symposium at UCLA was announced by NECHA for November 25, and the more worldly Chicana brethren deeply and said, "about time." There were enough despairing remarks too. But the fact that some Chicanas were involved in the creation of the symposium has to mean that perhaps the novelty of women's liberation will soon wear out, and we can get down to business.

That over 1,000 Chicanas and Chicanos participated in the symposium shows that many more Chicanas are seeing themselves as capable of contributing much more creatively than in the past. The degree of her participation, as well as the areas of her activity will be more thoughtfully selected. She will choose more, and cease sitting on the shelf waiting to act as a temporary stop gap, or emergency secretary.

Active Chicanas in the southwest composed the panel. They discussed the activity of their organizations, as well as its ideology. This was not too different from any other rap given by panelists at any other conference. But there was more. Their own particular role as women (first in the context of their own organizations, and then in the greater Chicano Movement) was the thing that directed us back to the topic of liberation. Here the panelists could have come out a little heavier. There was not enough discussion on the reality of where the liberation movement for the Chicana goes from here.

Comments from the panelists on the question of Anglo participation in the Movement ranged from liberal to ultra-nationalistic. Of course, their frame of reference was from their own particular organizations and sections of the country, and no attempt was made by them to impose their positions on anyone. The conclusion was: that to define the Anglo's role in the movement in enough out the entire southwest is simply ridiculous. All in all, the symposium brought about some interesting and vital discussion, and is one more important step toward crushing the notion of the liberation movement as a mere novelty, and then concentrating on it as a necessity.

It is beneath the dignity of the Chicana to quibble about where her place is. She is where she serves the movement. There must be respect for her ability to decide. There is no room for patronizing males. We must be compañeros en la lucha. Mano en mano.

ADELANTE!

All this has made some Chicanos upright. This is not entirely a bad thing. There is no reason for anyone to get upright. The attempt is to bring up the other end of the circle, to create a whole unit---the Chicano Movement. For example, the speakers themselves are very important contributing factors to their organizations.

Again in terms of units composing wholes, the age level of the symposium panelists alone would give us the impression that liberation Chicanas are generally over 30. Yes, the symposium was sponsored by young students, and the majority of those in attendance were young chicks.

The generality that could be drawn from this is that the older Chicanas are living better, while the younger ones are still planning their move toward it. Chicana liberation is on its way, and in order to prevent stagnation, the Chicana from the barrio, the campus, from fifteen years old to fifty years old must direct it together.

The reason for having conferences and symposiums is not to sit around talking about the liberation movement in terms of the Chicana's own particular problems (as in comrades), but rather to discuss the "what" of our practical contribution, or the usual differences in ideology, the Chicana must contend with social problems involving her and the Chicano. One outstanding example is the issue of Anglo chicks and brown dudes. Chicanas have never dug it, and now they are protesting loudly. The dudes have always ranted around it away from any meaningful discussion. E-motions ran extra high at the symposium when this and its related subject of Anglo involvement in the Movement were discussed. Both of these are very heated topics around today.

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ADELANTE!

hermanas, tus ojos must not be closed que veas el sol without clouds

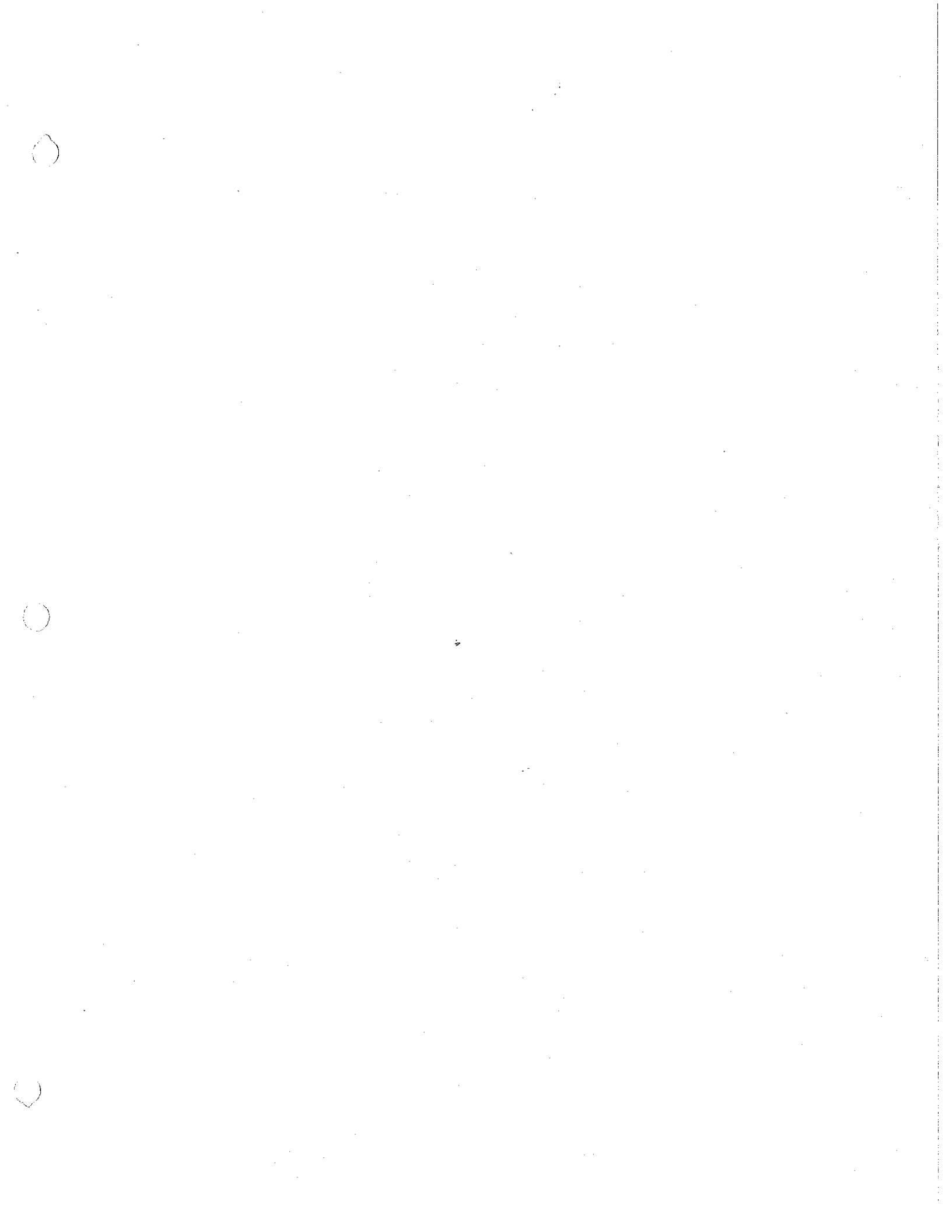
hermanas, mi madre must not loose her ardor, que no le fallen roses and flowers.

hermanas, ¡¡¡¡¡ mi pecho no temblara in your hands may my rifle fall nor stien

PARADIS

GLORIA

AZTLAN



Maravilla

corner and saw squad cars darting by one after another, four cops in each car, armed with high powered rifles, tact helmets pulled down over their faces. I felt the adrenaline rush of fear shoot through me. You could see their black and white cars and eerie, flashing lights blinking all up and down the street. They were moving fast. There must have been over a hundred of them, turning both ways up the street, blocking off exits, stopping traffic.

Instinctively, we rushed forward, pulled by an overwhelming surge of energy. My blood was pumping like crazy. I felt as if we were being swept into some awful swirling vortex. As we approached the Boulevard it looked like the end of the world. The whole place seemed to have burst into flames. And the entire L.A. tact squad and police force had descended like an invading army in some kind of science fiction nightmare. There was a terrible clamor of screaming, shouting and shattering glass, people running down the street, gunshots going off. Fire trucks lined up on the road and firemen were spraying torrents of water from their gigantic hoses onto the smoldering, burning buildings as looters scrambled by. There were pockets of angry people everywhere. I saw a woman in high heels trying to stop a cop from dragging off some guy. She was knocked down and shoved into a squad car. Groups of shouting, jeering people stood in clusters, yelling at the police who were randomly arresting passersby who ignored or defied their orders to disperse. One man ran down the street, tossing a molotov cocktail into a store front whose window had been shattered. It burst into black and orange flames.

We were being jostled and shoved through the crowd toward the sidelines where cops patrolled, ordering, "Move on! Don't loiter!" Shocked and stupefied, we stood watching the horror. Someone ran by saying that Ruben Salazar had been shot down in a bar on the corner. A woman started to cry. We shifted down the street to see if we could get a glimpse of something, but all we saw was the insane melee of firemen and cops swarming the place. A woman who had fallen and hurt her knee bumped into us, asking if anyone could get her out of there. She had her two kids with her, and her car, she said, was blocked off on the street nearby, in flames. We pushed through the throng of people and headed to where Marcos had

Exhibit 39

Right before he left, the three of us, Marcos, Gerry and I decided to go to the show at the Golden Gate on Whittier Boulevard. It was a gross, smoggy day. Hot and muggy and claustrophobic. There was a tension hanging in the air, a tangible feeling of agitation and anxiety. I attributed it to the fact that Marcos was leaving soon. As we walked toward the theater I saw huge clouds of black smoke rising above the buildings. I was thinking that there must be a fire somewhere. Then I heard the sounds of screaming sirens. We turned the

Maravilla

parked, a couple of blocks away. The woman was crying. Her kids were wide-eyed and silent as we drove them home.

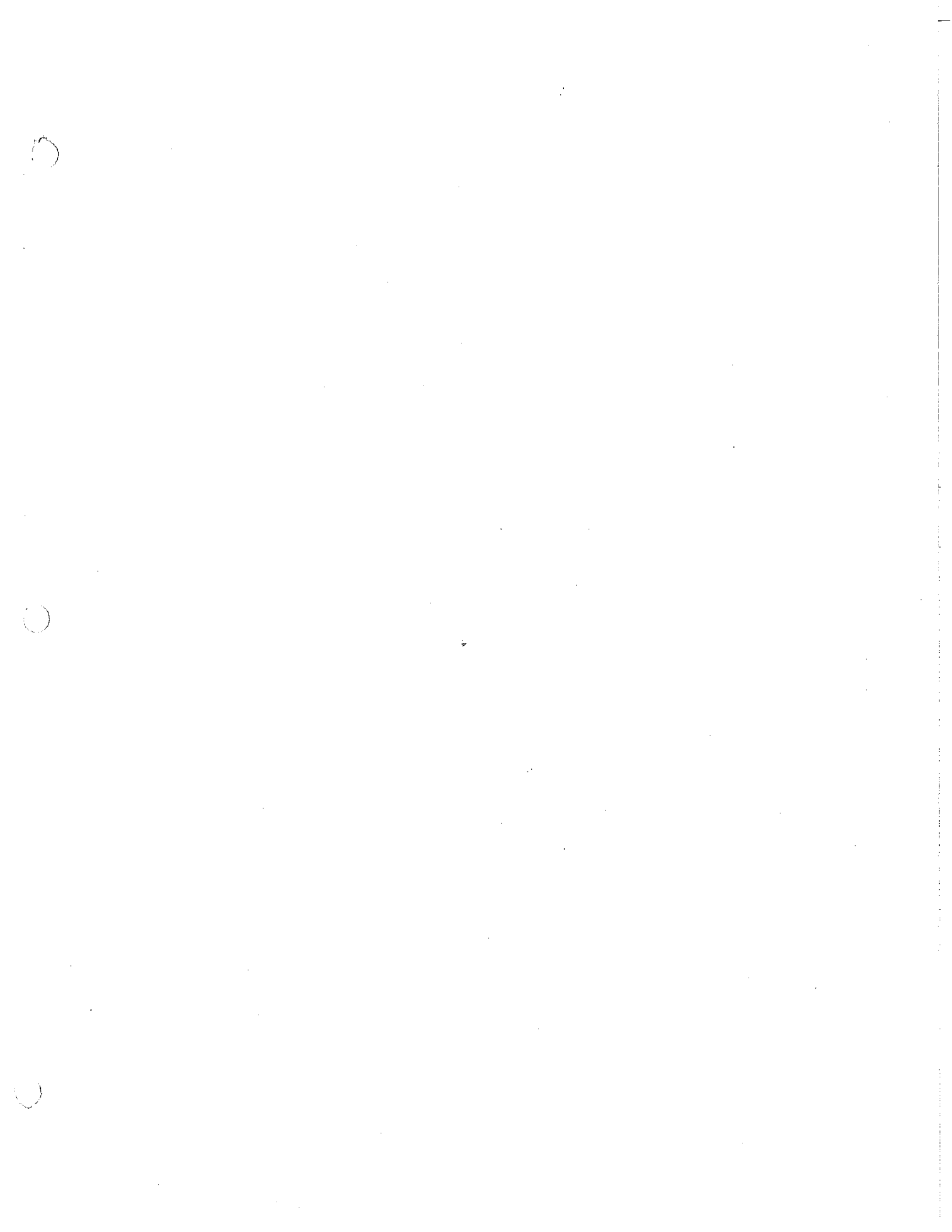
On the news that night we heard that earlier in the day a man had been arrested for a minor offense. Instead of ticketing him, the police tried to take him to jail. His wife had vehemently protested, struggling to wedge herself between her husband and the cops, yelling to passersby about what was going on. The cops handcuffed her and threw her into the squad car in front of their three children. A couple of men took notice and angrily approached them, disputing the arrest. They were ordered to leave and threatened with "disturbing the peace." A few more people quickly gathered around and within moments a hostile, enraged crowd had congregated and surrounded the squad car, demanding the couple's release, rocking it back and forth, threatening to damage it. The cops pulled out their guns. Someone started a fire in the squad car, and before anyone knew what was happening the whole thing had erupted out of control.

Afterwards, people got together to march and protest. Maria and some of her friends were attending a candlelight vigil at City Hall in memory of Ruben Salazar who had died from a gunshot wound the day of the riot, and to protest police brutality. My mother and I joined them. We marched around City Hall in a solemn procession, then over to the civic center carrying placards and lighted votive candles in paper cups, singing and chanting "*No venceremos, no venceremos!* Justice now! Justice now!" Before it ended there was a long silence dedicated to the life and memory of Ruben Salazar. Maria told me that he was a committed Chicano activist who had stood up and fought for his rights and those of his community. Now he was dead. I found it more than odd that one of the most outspoken and radical people in the Chicano community had died accidentally from stray gunshots.

Two days after the march at City Hall Marcos left for boot camp.

August 29, 1970

Removal note



LATINOS:

Building power from the ground up

Reprinted from *California Journal*, January 1987

BY LOUIS FREEDBERG

"If he feels a little lonely now, don't worry. It won't be long before he has company," Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley told the crowd at the city's annual El Grito reception.

He was referring to City Councilman Richard Alatorre, host of last September's event. Alatorre was in high spirits on that warm evening as blue-ribbon guests mingled beneath a floodlit city hall, savoring Mexican food and brassy mariachi music. For the first time in memory, a Latino was hosting the event commemorating El Grito (the cry) — the day in 1810 when Father Miguel Hidalgo shouted "Viva Mexico" and rang his church bells, initiating Mexico's long and bloody war for independence. Later that evening, underneath a huge portrait of Hidalgo, the 43-year-old Alatorre, the first Latino since 1963 to sit on the Los Angeles City Council, rang a bell on city hall steps to coincide with a similar ceremony in Dolores, Mexico.

Ironicly, as Bradley's political fortunes seem to be waning, the future appears bright for Alatorre and his fellow Latinos. From San Diego's barrios to San Francisco's Mission District, a new, locally-based Latino activism is emerging that could reshape California politics.

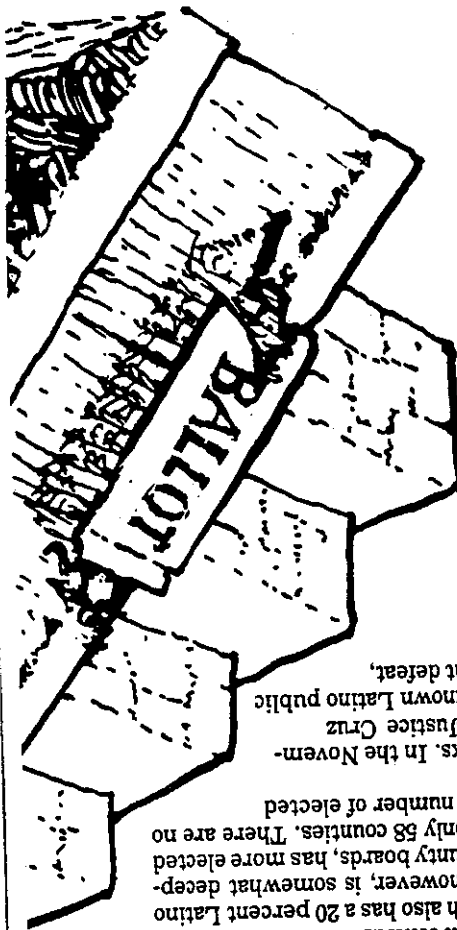
Currently, there are few visible signs that Latinos are coming of age politically. Nationally, the Latino leadership was divided on the immigration bill, one of the most crucial pieces of legislation affecting Latinos in decades. Without clear direction from the 11-member Latino Caucus in Congress, the bill unexpectedly passed both houses. Weakness in national politics is reflected in organizations like the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA) and the American G.I. Forum — weak parallels of Black organizations like the NAACP and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference which gained prominence during civil-rights struggles of the 1950s and '60s.

In California, figures on political representation are also unimpressive: A state with 5.7 million Latinos — officially

Louis Freedberg is an editor at Pacific News Service who has written extensively on Latino politics.

21.6 percent of the population — had only 450 Latino elected officials in September 1986. That contrasts with 1466 Latinos in elective office in Texas, which also has a 20 percent Latino population. (The comparison, however, is somewhat deceptive because Texas, with 254 county boards, has more elected officials than California, with only 58 counties. There are no accurate estimates of the total number of elected officials in either state.)

And there have been setbacks. In the November elections, Supreme Court Justice Cruz Reynoso, probably the best known Latino public figure, went down to significant defeat.

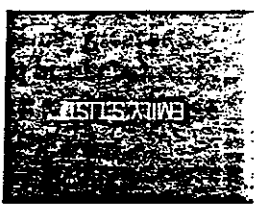


T.M.C. Gee

Exhibit 41

EMILY'S List Recommends

Linda Griego For Mayor of Los Angeles



A POLITICAL NETWORK
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Linda Griego, former deputy mayor for economic development, is running for Mayor of Los Angeles. She is the only viable woman and Latina candidate in a field of 31 candidates vying to replace retiring Mayor Tom Bradley.

Griego has an impressive record as a trailblazer for women's rights and economic opportunity. She grew up in the small town of Tucuman, New Mexico and was the first member of her family to graduate from high school and college. Griego left New Mexico after high school, taking the bus to Washington, DC on a discount fare and arriving with \$50 in her pocket. She got a job working for a congressman, and then later Senator Alan Cranston. Later she moved to California and worked her way through college.

Griego took a job with the telephone company and became one of the first women supervisors of a line crew, climbing telephone poles for a living. In the late 1970s, Griego opened a restaurant, The Chili Stop, on \$5,000 in savings and \$10,000 in loans. The success of that venture enabled her to start another restaurant in downtown Los Angeles that employs 55 people.

Mayor Bradley appointed Griego deputy mayor for economic development in 1991. In the aftermath of the riots, Griego's office successfully helped small businesses acquire disaster loans and cut through red tape from city, state and federal bureaucracies.

The Political Situation

The demographics of Los Angeles are perfect for Griego's candidacy. Women make up 52.6 percent of voters and Latinos comprise 11.9 percent. As the only viable woman and Latina candidate, Griego should have a strong base from these groups.

Of the 31 mayoral candidates who will be on the ballot, four are considered Griego's stiffest competition. City councilmen Michael Woo and Joel Wachs, state Assemblyman Richard Katz and wealthy businessman Richard Riordan will all have more than \$1 million for the primary. Griego

The Issues

As mayor, Griego will have four main priorities. First, she will work to rebuild the city's economy and create jobs. She is now in the process of preparing a detailed economic strategy for Los Angeles which focuses on encouraging small businesses and manufacturing. Griego believes that this type of business growth is the only basis to assure the city's future prosperity. During Griego's administration, she will work for massive changes in city government practices and the bureaucracy. Her goal is "cut red tape and make city government a friend, not the enemy, of economic change," says Griego.



Exhibit 42

Under this proposal, the city and its mayor will become an advocate for business and, in return, business must agree to create jobs locally and to work with public schools to hire youths who stay in school and graduate.

Second, she will work to bring peace to Los Angeles. Griego recognizes that nobody can build prosperity in a war zone. She supports community policing. 'resently, only a small percentage of Los Angeles police officers are on the street at any time. She supports tougher law enforcement against gangs and targeted economic opportunity for youth.

By nature a consensus builder, Griego recognizes that prosperity, crime reduction and reduced racial tensions are inextricably linked. She will work to develop new programs to teach racial tolerance and understanding in the schools, use the Mayor's office as a platform to work for unity, and will create recreational programs to increase peaceful interactions between races.

Griego's efforts to rebuild Los Angeles's economy are grounded in the understanding that economic rivalries exacerbate racial tensions. Her job creation programs will be designed to increase opportunities for all residents of the city. Her proposals to revitalize the city's economy rely heavily on the development and encouragement of small businesses, which provide the majority of new jobs and opportunities in minority communities.

As mayor, Griego will also work for more drug education and tougher drug enforcement in public schools. She will develop a strategy to combat violence and improve race relations in the classrooms. She will work to expand after-school programs to keep kids off the streets.

Third, Griego will be a strong advocate for a woman's right to choose an abortion. As this fight is being won at the national level, the battleground has shifted to the local streets — and Operation Rescue has targeted Los Angeles. As mayor, she will work with the police to protect women from Operation Rescue. And, she will work with private agencies to see that family planning clinics like Planned Parenthood are opened and protected.

Fourth, Griego will bring reform to City Hall. She will propose banning city commissioners from doing business with city agencies. She will fight to take the perks out of City Hall. She will sell the city's half-million dollar yacht and crack down on fiscal abuses, like the recent purchase of a \$35,000 conference table.

Griego will also work to make sure that Los Angeles becomes a leader in innovative child care policy. She hopes to accomplish this by working with businesses and parents to increase the supply of affordable, quality child care.

Griego's environmental priorities will focus on recycling, transportation, and parks and recreation. As deputy mayor, Griego led the effort to seek out new businesses to be markets for the use of recycled waste materials in the city. Griego believes that Los Angeles is too reliant on the automobile. She has pledged to use her appointments on the regional air, transportation and planning boards to pro-

February 1993
To support Griego make your checks payable to:

Griego for Mayor

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1112 16th Street, NW
Suite 750
Washington, DC 20036

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more more efficient use of Los Angeles' existing transportation infrastructure and to ensure that new developments reduce reliance on automobiles.

Griego also supports creating new priorities which favor recreational programs in low income neighborhoods. She will create a network of parks and open space to serve Los Angeles's growing multi-ethnic population.

As an advocate for women's rights, Griego supports a concerted effort to ensure that women are fairly represented on all city commissions. She strongly supports the Freedom of Choice Act, and passage of the Domestic Violence Act, which is presently before Congress. ■

SIDE ONE

LOS ANGELEINOS The East Side Renaissance

"ACHIEVE"

I love the state of Illinois
Chicago smile
The deep club life
Your class - it's a mass
I love the way you stand
Bless noble
Holding your elegance
The fashion sense

Chorus:
I'm able, I'm able
I'm able, I'm able
I'm able, I'm able
I'm able, I'm able
I'm able, I'm able
I'm able, I'm able
I'm able, I'm able
I'm able, I'm able
I'm able, I'm able
I'm able, I'm able

"THE WOLF"

A size spangled Wolf come,
says that
This land was made for all
So hard to grasp the logic
Famining from the Rabbit Car
You see this democracy believes
You see this democracy believes
You see this democracy believes
You see this democracy believes

Chorus:
The Wolf and the Lamb
The Wolf and the Lamb
The Wolf and the Lamb
The Wolf and the Lamb
The Wolf and the Lamb
The Wolf and the Lamb
The Wolf and the Lamb
The Wolf and the Lamb
The Wolf and the Lamb
The Wolf and the Lamb

"DOGS AND GIRLS"

Chorus:
All the girls
All the girls
All the girls
All the girls
All the girls
All the girls
All the girls
All the girls
All the girls
All the girls

Chorus:
All the girls
All the girls
All the girls
All the girls
All the girls
All the girls
All the girls
All the girls
All the girls
All the girls

"HIGH SCHOOL"

Catholic High School, Sister a game
Writing like the one master
Walk around in your white
Looking cute, I'm looking good
Chorus:
High School Dances, Romance,
Evergreen's no happy
Looking cute, and looking fine
Looking for the best

(Repeat first verse and Chorus)

Chorus:
Didn't learn a Goddamn thing
Didn't buy the books, dig
Didn't practice, won't make
Didn't see the point
Didn't see the point
Didn't see the point
Didn't see the point
Didn't see the point
Didn't see the point

"MOVING YOUR MOUTH"

Keeping your mouth from
Writing like the one master
Doing it all for glory
Fighting your mind in time

Chorus:
This is your mouth that
Doing it all for glory
Fighting your mind in time
Fighting your mind in time
Fighting your mind in time
Fighting your mind in time
Fighting your mind in time
Fighting your mind in time
Fighting your mind in time
Fighting your mind in time

"C/S"

L.A.
City of the Angels.
Founded in 1918 by Felipe De Neve
And settled by
Mexican Pobladores.
El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora La
Reina de Los Angeles
de Porciuncula
L.A.
City of the Angels.
We came to seek your help
We made you sick - You paid us
penalty.
We told you nothing over trails
We taught you how to make
Rope your cattle and irrigate
Your land?
C/S

"THE BALLOON OF THE CALIFORNIA CALIFORNIA"

All the way to Mexico it is
And we all know that we
Are all together in the
Same way, the same way,
The same way, the same way,
The same way, the same way,
The same way, the same way,
The same way, the same way,
The same way, the same way,
The same way, the same way,
The same way, the same way

"YOU REALLY DO WANT MY LOVE"

Tear down all your double
lovely lady
And open up the door to
your heart
I let me from up, you really do
Just let it be me and you right
from the start

Chorus:
(Cause you, you really do want
my love
You, you, you, you really do
want my love had been waiting
patiently for someone
Just like you to come along
so I know death, I know what
I'm going through
But when I see you
I'll know you are

"ELECTRIC ME"

I've got this fine burning double
C/G/S of a love I can't let go
I've got this fine burning double
C/G/S of a love I can't let go

Chorus:
I've got this fine burning double
C/G/S of a love I can't let go
I've got this fine burning double
C/G/S of a love I can't let go

"MUSIC OF THE PEOPLE"

This music that we play in the
Sound of everyone
The love was born from the heart
With the rhythm to stifle all
people with this ancient rhythm

Chorus:
This music that we play in the
Sound of everyone
The love was born from the heart
With the rhythm to stifle all
people with this ancient rhythm

"LADY LOVE"

Without you in my life
The only love I ever had
The only love I ever had
The only love I ever had

Chorus:
Without you in my life
The only love I ever had
The only love I ever had
The only love I ever had

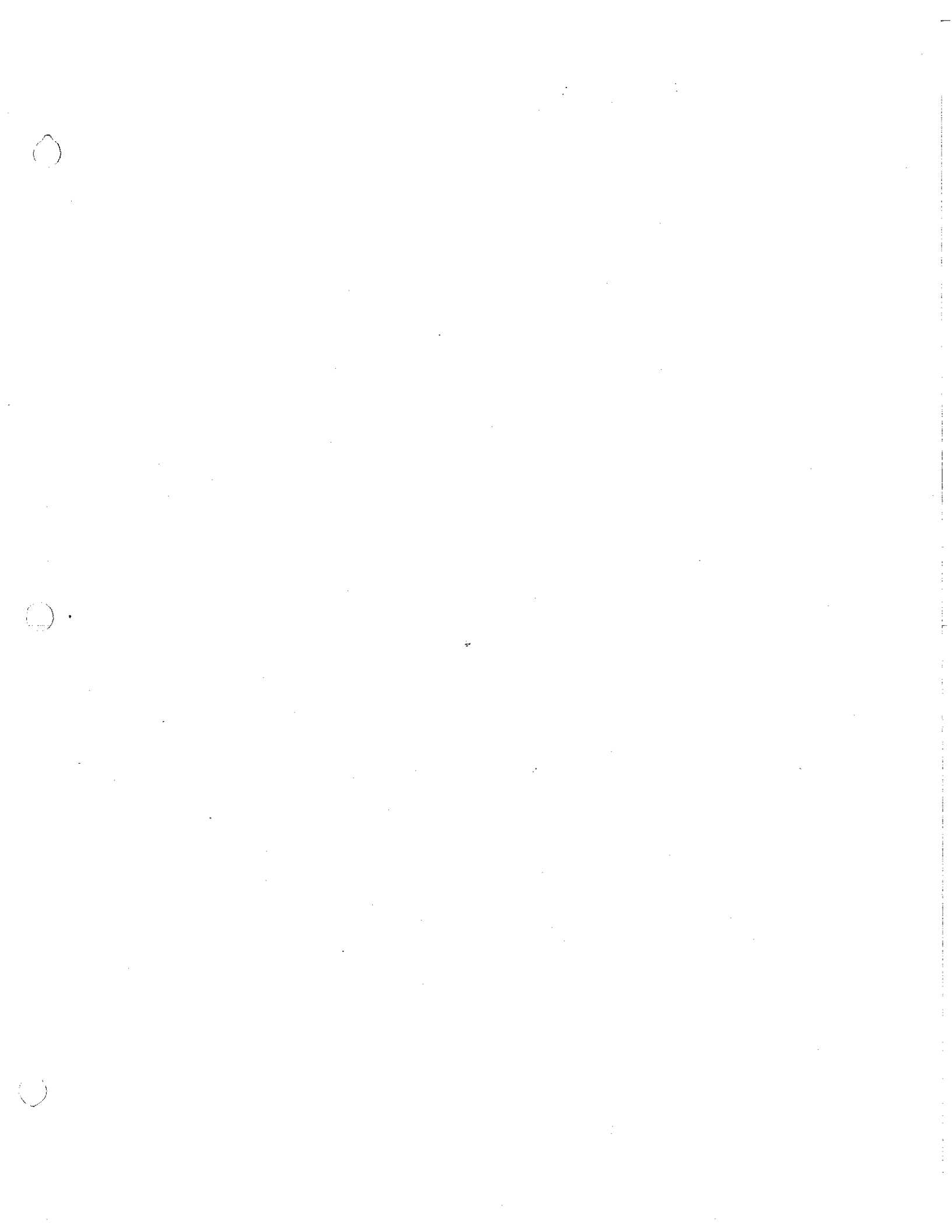
"WHAT AM I DONNA DO"

I've got a message for you girl
This guy is crazy about you
You can't get away from me
I've got my mind made up and I
I'll be here for you

Chorus:
I've got a message for you girl
This guy is crazy about you
You can't get away from me
I've got my mind made up and I
I'll be here for you

"THE BALLOON OF THE CALIFORNIA CALIFORNIA"

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And we all know that we
Are all together in the
Same way, the same way,
The same way, the same way,
The same way, the same way,
The same way, the same way,
The same way, the same way,
The same way, the same way,
The same way, the same way



URBAN EXILE

This article is a transcript of a talk given at a public symposium hosted by the Museum of Contemporary Art and sponsored by the The Social and Public Arts Resource Center and the California Chicano mural Documentation Project. A Spanish-language version has appeared in LA Opinion.

Harry Gamboa, Jr.

The changing identity of Chicano art can be a matter of strict mirrors that reflect fluctuating images of social consciousness and/or personal misadventure. In the City of Los Angeles it is easy to lose one's own innocence or to have one's own naive idealism drown in the shadowy sea of cultural sewage. As a somewhat pointed blow of talented mixed-media artists, Chicano artists of the eighties can appear to us as exploited painters, radical blue-collar, broom maverick, sociopathic capitalists, up-and-coming born-again capitalists who define the welfare state, propagandistic photographers, choice in poster clothing, Olympic totems, rigged-up hangovers, taxi drivers of Aztlan/La Raza Cosmeica, laborious plebeians, zealous pledge-of-allegianceists, those who connect the dots, those who erase the Dondor, those who color by the numbers on their multiple grant checks, and in this primary crowd we will discover works which create anxiety and erotic fantasies of assimilation, or which portray the frontal facade of depreciable survival in the urban environment.

It is difficult to delineate the changing identity because it is undergoing a reaching schizophrenic turmoil of perceptual flux. What we have is an identity of multiple personalities that speak concurrently in disparate voices. What we have is filtered statements which are only sparingly reproduced by mainstream and quasi-alternative mass media for their artistic/political/cultural/criminal proximity. We have voices that speak to the poor class/lower class/middle class/no class. We have voices that promote the such mentality (that kind of voice that resonates with a self-hating paranoia). We have voices which are pragmatic/dogmatic/automatic. Due in most cases, we have voices which are silent. It is an in-

adious silence that speaks to no one. In this voiceless vacuum we find equality, neglect, denial, disillusionment, an impoverishment of social consciousness, a retraction of social commitment. It is here that we discover a muted/co-opted enthusiasm for social and political change. Maybe it is here, too, that we can locate a disordered sense of survival in a mainstream system where poverty, official malformation, racism, sexism and nihilism are viewed as basic by-products of citizenship, that aspect of the dominant culture which can be hypnotically erased by the promise of popularity, the promise for an attention, the prospect of total acceptance and the promise of skyrocketing sales.

It is within the context of this wide-angle view that I'd like to focus our attention onto the peripheral distortion of the contemporary urban Chicano experience: the contention that Chicano, in general, are passive, violent, passively violent, violently passive, passive, passed out, pissed off, in a matter of racial stereotypic opinion, is an image and idea that this newspapers and television artists, but it is a concept which is unacceptably offensive, counterproductive and qualitatively unresolvable. However, since it is impossible to erase it, an absolutely objective definition of the collective experience of a group of people, it is necessarily important to create subjective versions of the individual's experience with interpretations that express the individual's dual role as participant-observer of that culture.

Artists have traditionally served as the catalysts in abstracting their culture. They have processed those abstractions, analyzed/combined/verified their findings, and have created new forms in a wide variety of media that help to articulate the meaning and meaningfulness of their culture via their experience of it. It is this social and inherently political impact of the artist's work which is ultimately relevant to the culture which is being represented. It has become increasingly difficult to impact on one's own environment without fully utilizing the available support systems which include the mass media, finances, public-political contacts and private sector influence. Those pragmatic considerations

have served to redirect many of the original goals, ideas and images which were set forth by many Chicano artists who have been continuously active in creating work since the 1970s. In some cases, artists who have been active in their development of a viable support system have done so at the cost of losing out: inevitably, personal integrity and artistic quality. The use of art as a form of protest was popular in the seventies. The use of art as a form of acquiescence is now popular in the eighties. Fortunately this is not a vacuum for all instances of contemporary Chicano art.

The compromises which are involved in securing private-for-profit gallery representation, continued corporate grant funding and the good graces of locally established critics makes for good art business. But does it make for good art? Without financial support of the artist's community, the artist is subjected to various pressures which may negatively affect that artist's commitment towards that same community. Art can be bought and so can art. You do not buy the starving artist with bread, but with cash. If the Chicano artist of the eighties expects to succeed in the mainstream art world, the contradictions, distortions and compromises must be swallowed whole along with that cake. But for those artists who prefer the taste of pain dulce, without having to chew on the bitter sherbits of defeat, an alternative approach must be taken which goes beyond the confines of mainstream sanctification.

The Chicano artist who chooses to make statements on the neoconformal quality of bardo life, who decides to express concerns over contemporary racist public/private policies, who comments on the unquiet slaying of America's souring pie, is most certainly going to find it difficult to achieve the rewards which are available to less socially and politically threatening artists. But these are urgent times, when artists and families are allowed to go hungry, when children can be held hostage by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, when the mentally ill are wandering aimlessly on the city streets and in the White House, when nuclear war can ruin your day. These are times when silence is an

empty promise of equality, but this silence echoes a deeper sense of fear and health-ling for oneself and for others.

The fact that contemporary Chicano culture is as multifaceted and is as valid as any other global culture should be reflected in its art. To create works that are concerned with the urban Chicano experience is to be placed onto a desynchronized back that does not blend easily with mainstream concerns or compensations. To quote Grant from a published interview, "Some people think that art is a melting pot but if you ever mix chocolate with vanilla, you don't get vanilla." For the artist to become involved in creating images and concepts that defiantly oppose the false mystification and egalitarianism which has been popularized against Chicano culture, the artist is then effectively participating in a form of self-imposed urban exile. The artist who is exiled is free to question, to denounce, to mispronounce, to bring ugly truths to the surface. These truths can be the psychologically damaged goods which are strewn over a wide area of intercultural conflict, including the loss of self-esteem and the adoption of false identities.

The artist must also be adept at poking holes into the eyes of stereotypes. The elements of humor, ridicule, sarcasm, satire and ironic wit are essential mediums for the development of effective visual and auditory statements. With the artist in exile, how is the work made accessible to the public? It is inevitably the artist's responsibility to promote his or her own work regardless of the total lack of popular support. The support must be generated from among others who feel an affinity to the artist's perceptions of self and society. The artist has access to a loosely knit constituency, a group that is similarly attracted and expelled by the glitter and garbure of urban reality. However, the competition for ideas and images is acute. How does one point out the subtleties of the Chicano experience without being drowned out by the static of racial commercialists, regulated folklore and the phony quaintness of initiation culture?

The Chicano artist must be determined to succeed, must be technically qualified to execute the images and concepts, must be effective in scaling the walls of resistance to the urban Chicano experience. The artist must draw from personal experience, must extract the significance from events, must engage a hyperactive imagination

and, hopefully, create works that will result in meaningful pieces of cultural information. The creative output of the Chicano artist should have a social application that will facilitate the growth of the viewer's understanding of the artist's interpretation of the individual-as-product-of-culture.

There is a social responsibility which the artist is confronted with: it is the responsibility for creating beauty, controversy, real and surreal visions, absurd variations of actual events, symbolic interpretations of his/her environment, and also to express the universality of our culture's uniqueness and our culture's interdependence on cross-cultural understanding.

©1984, Harry Gamboa, Jr.

Harry Gamboa, Jr. is a conceptual performing artist who incorporates writing, photography, video and performance in his work. He is a member of Asco, the East Los Angeles performance group, and has written various articles on Chicano artists for LA Opinion.

OCTOBER 20, 1984

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Continued from Page 1

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...and play down the social aspects and stress the solemnity of the event. Rivera said the suggestions are "Spanish or quinceañera ceremonies." "I decided that I would either find a church that would do it the traditional way, or I'd call off the whole thing."

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■ Cecilia Gonzalez kneels at the altar of Reseda church during her quince años ceremony.

Archdiocese Hit for Guidelines on Quinceañeras

BY JEORDAN LEGON
TIMES STAFF WRITER

The day her daughter turned 15, Cecilia Gonzalez started to plan for the teen-ager's next birthday party. Gonzalez wanted to give her daughter, Cecilia, a traditional coming-of-age quinceañera ceremony on her 15th birthday.

"My daughter deserves it," Gonzalez, 35, said in Spanish. "My parents were poor. Gonzalez said, and she did not have a quinceañera of her own." But I promised that, if I had a daughter, I would give her that pleasure.

Gonzalez needed to take care of an infinite number of details to prepare for the ceremony. But the top priority on her list was finding a Catholic church that would bless Cecilia on her 15th birthday.

"...I had told me that it would be hard to find a church willing to do the Mass, but I never expected so many problems," said Gonzalez, a Canoga Park resident who visited four churches before finding one that would perform a quinceañera Mass exclusively for her daughter and would allow 14 couples to accompany the teen-ager, as is customary.

Gonzalez is among a growing number of Latinos who are frustrated over a set of guidelines published by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles that they say alter the 100-year-old Latino tradition that has been likened to the coming-out parties of debutantes, but one that emphasizes religious renewal at the same time.

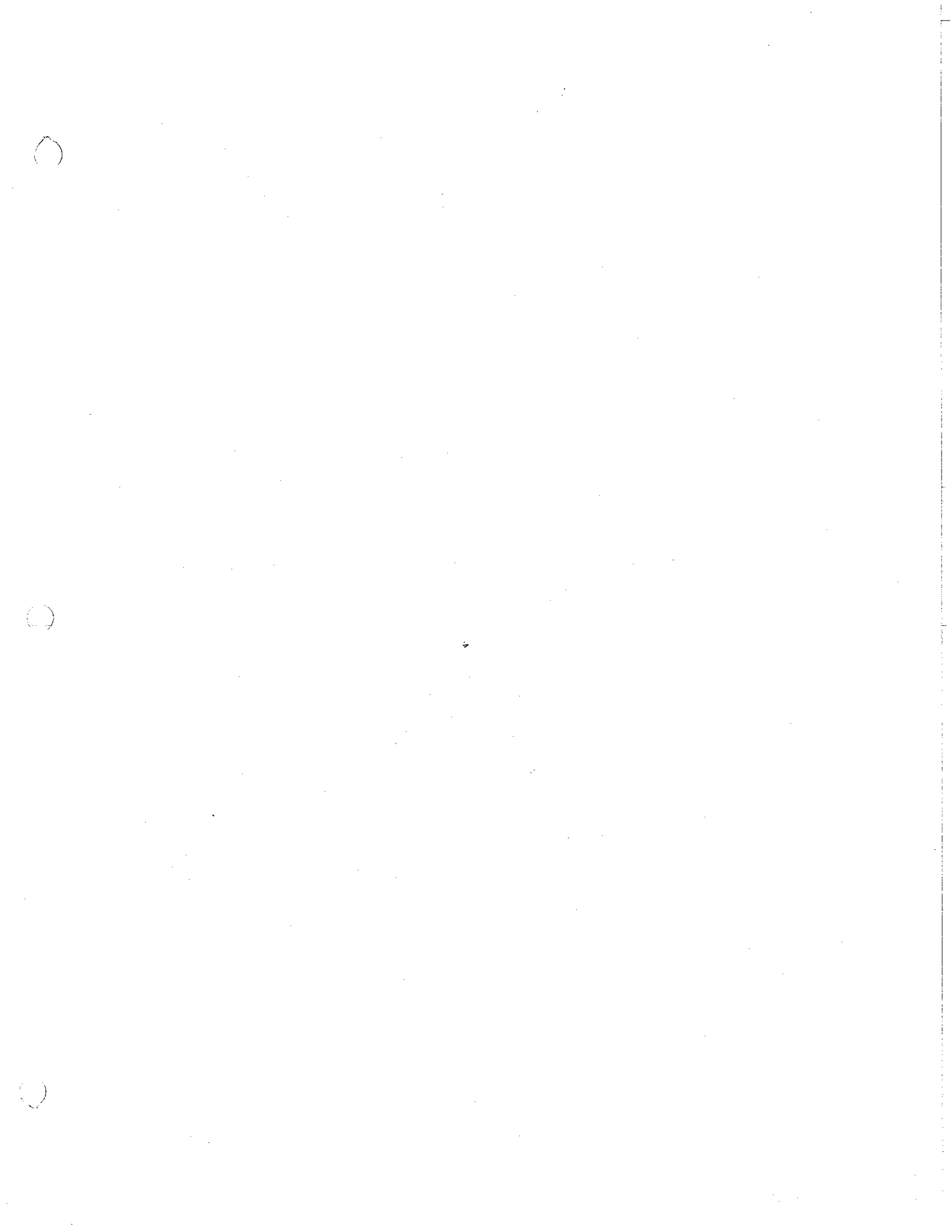
The "Pastoral Guidelines for Preparation and Celebration" of the quince años were distributed to all churches in the Los Angeles Archdiocese in January.

Please see MASS, Page 12

■ Some of Cecilia Gonzalez's 14 attendants at church service.



■ Algunas de las 14 damas de Cecilia Gonzalez durante la misa.



OSAMA BRADAO

ing his nose at the established art world. The L.A. Weekly art critic of the time, Peter Flagens, dismissed Cronk's MOCA installation as "one of the fluffiest pseudo-angry murals ever slapped up on a vertical surface." Other critics responded with mixed reviews. "(Cronk's) huge wall mural proves him a painter of formidable energy and touch," wrote William Wilson in the *Los Angeles Times*. "However, the subject, if there be one, is but trivial light satire about a youth's right of passage into the consumer culture. It looks like street art do-mesticated for Precocious Upscale Professionals Youth (puppies)." Nevertheless, soon after the MOCA appearance, Cronk managed to capture the attention of prominent art dealers and collectors.

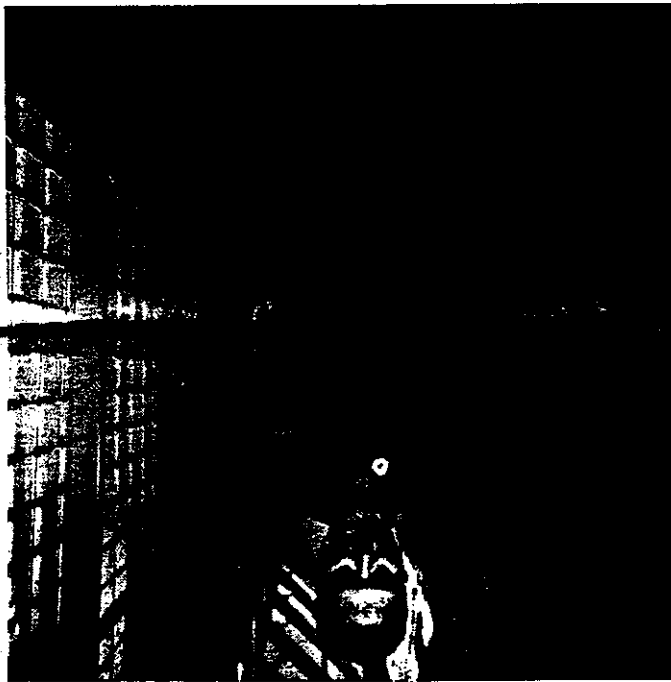
One of the dealers was Daniel Saxon, who planned to open a gallery on the Westside in the spring of 1986, with his partner, Candice Lee. Saxon featured Cronk's paintings to open his gallery. Before the MOCA show, *La Tominta*, perhaps Cronk's most recognized painting, sold for \$250 in a downtown bar. After the Saxon-Lee show, Cronk's works commanded several thousand dollars. In 1994, an original Cronk painting can sell for more than \$20,000.

It has been eight years since the MOCA exhibit and 22 years since Cronk and other members of the performance-art group Asco traveled from East Los Angeles to the Westside and spent the summer with black spray paint onto the entrance of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. That short-lived guerrilla installation, which was whitewashed within 48 hours, came in response to a museum curator who said, according to Cronk's recollection, "Chicanos don't make real art." In those 22 years, Cronk, the performance artist, painter and set designer, has participated in several group exhibitions of Chicano art at LACMA, but "*Cronk! A Living Survey, 1973-1993*," which opens at the County Museum this week, establishes Cronk as the first Chicano artist to have a solo show at the museum.

It's tempting to say that Cronk has come full circle from artistic rebellion to mainstream acceptance. But in fact, Cronk has never fit neatly into either the political Chicano orthodoxy dazzled by visions of Aztlan or fine-art arena that still is amazed of acting, his exaggerated gestures and melodramatic tone of voice have their roots in overwrought *luchadores*, Spanish-language soap operas, and Mexican tabloids such as *Alarma* that feature gaudy photos of death and the supernatural.

These days, Cronk lives in a 2,000-square-foot downtown loft with 7-foot windows that open onto a rooftop patio. A gregarious but intensely private man, Cronk rarely discusses his personal life and laudably in his personality—and his sexual orientation—than in his artwork. "I am what I do," he insists. "I am my art."

Gronk goes to LACMA



(Above) Gronk's digs: "My community went beyond East L.A. And I found myself on a larger stage."

Just Another Painter From East L.A.

During the proceedings, Gronk peeled away strips of paint from his own non-traditional red paint. By creating the impression that his own painting was bleeding, he was responding to the art establishment's blunt and narrow approach to criticism, to a perspective that failed to appreciate the implications of his work.

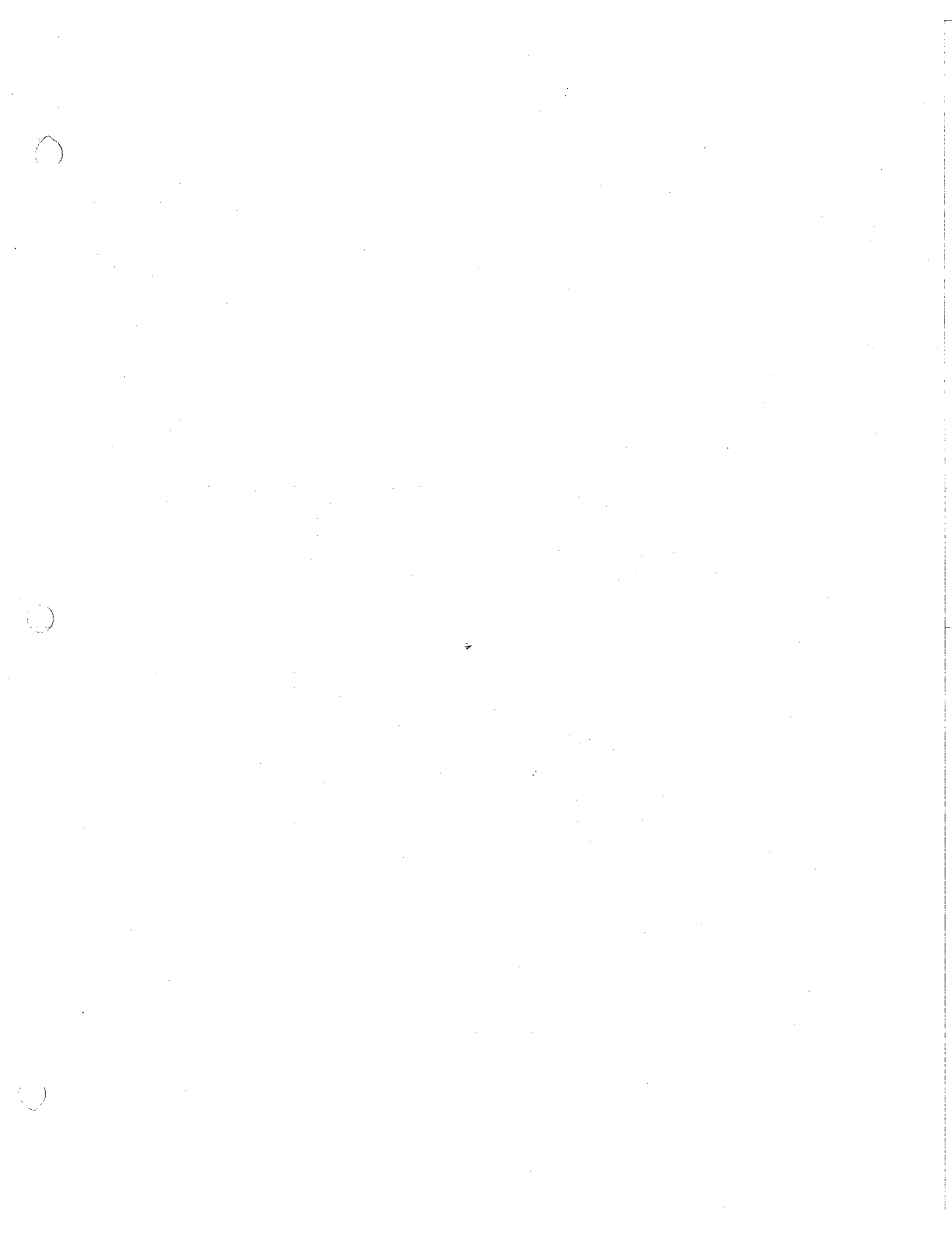
The prosecutor in the mock trial charged that Cronk's "career had been a calculated attempt to undermine seriousness in art," and asked that the witty defendant be sentenced to "a life of hard labor painting ethnic murals in economically depressed urban neighborhoods." This was not hype designed to entertain museum patrons on opening night. Gronk's performance, *Morning Becomes Evening*, was the expression of a Chicano artist torn between aesthetic ideals, political responsibility and commercial success, a man who was just as uncomfortable having his work ghettoized as "folk art" — with derivative code words such as *mural* — as he was with his impending entrance as a token player in the avant-garde art world. During the trial, a familiar character from Cronk's paintings known as "Tominta" had her back turned on the viewers. Perhaps Tominta, some critics

felt that the deacement of revered "masterpieces" — such as *Guernica* and Michelangelo's *Pisa* — could be considered creative acts.

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I n the summer of 1985, Giugio Gronk Nicandro participated in his first major exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art. A Chicano artist from East Los Angeles, Gronk's contribution to MOCA's "Summer 1985" exhibition was to paint a 300-foot installation on a museum wall. He refused to call it a mural. With the giant piece as a backdrop for a courtroom drama, Gronk played the irreverent defendant, taking the stand to testify that the deacement of revered "masterpieces" — such as *Guernica* and Michelangelo's *Pisa* — could be considered creative acts.



METRO

Continued from B1

"Jobs are the best antidote to crime and gang activity in our neighborhood," Boyle told the visitors, who were gathered in a chapel used at night as a shelter for illegal immigrants.

Organizers, who financed the tours through donations, initially hoped to attract some of the hundreds of foreign and out-of-town reporters here to cover World Cup matches in Pasadena. However, those assigned expressly to soccer coverage have expressed little interest, so organizers turned to other journalists and people in the tourism industry.

In coming days, participants are scheduled to take similar alternate tours of the Pico-Union/Los Feliz area, Hollywood and South-Central Los Angeles. For weeks, residents of the poor and working-class neighborhoods have been meeting and devising alternatives designed to highlight their diverse districts, which are rarely part of official promotions of the region's \$8-billion tourist industry.

"I'm glad people have come to see that our community is not as bad as it is painted," said Juanita Beartz Guetter, a mother of nine who is co-founder and president of the Mothers of East Los Angeles, an activist group that helped plan Wednesday's tour.

As the tour bus—on loan from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority—cruised down Whittier Boulevard in East Los Angeles, Jesus Salvador Trevino, a filmmaker who was treated on the Eastside, spoke over the intercom about the infamous events of Aug. 29, 1970, when protesters and police clashed in what is remembered as the largest Chicano demonstration ever.



Journalists on a tour of the city's Eastside visit Self-Help Graphics, where they watch Jose Alpucho do silk-screening.

PHOTO BY VINCE CORADONNE / LOS ANGELES TIMES

Cultural Mystery Tour

■ Visitors: Bus trip to L.A.'s Eastside kicks off a series that will showcase the city's often-overlooked multithematic attractions and counter-negative media images. Koreatown, South-Central are among future destinations.

By PATRICK J. McDONNELL
TIMES STAFF WRITER

As West Coast correspondent for the Cairo daily Al-Ahram, Soraya Abdoul Seoud seldom ventured across the river to Los Angeles, Eastside.

"I was afraid to come to this area," Abdoul said Wednesday as she rode in a bus down bustling Cesar E. Chavez Avenue, one of the neighborhood's main drag. "All you hear about in the media is the negative side."

Abdoul and other foreign journalists were among three dozen participants in a novel bus tour of the district that has long stood as the heart of Los Angeles' Mexican and Mexican American communities. The visit is the first in a series of "Night Tours," designed to coincide with World Cup festivities that will focus on several Los Angeles neighborhoods often viewed from the outside as simmering cauldrons of gang violence and ethnic tension.

"L.A.'s neighborhoods have really been marginalized, but that's not the way we see them," said the nonprofit group sponsoring the tour. "You can experience the cultures of 80 countries in a half-hour drive through L.A.—and we want to show that off."

The idea, organizers said, is to showcase the city's multithematic vitality and give journalists and visitors a touch of Los Angeles distinct from the glibly image prevalent in glossy tourist brochures and promotional videos. Hollywood chic and beach cool this was not. Disneyland wasn't mentioned.

Participants on Wednesday viewed the Eastside's acclaimed murals, learned about the Chicano rights movement and were able to talk with area artists, activists and even gang members.

"We're glad to have a job, that someone gave us a chance," Frank Rangel, a 25-year-old in baggy shorts and high-top sneakers, told the group. "This is an opportunity to make it honestly."

Rangel and other gang members and ex-gang members are employed at Homeboy Bakery, a project of Dolores Mission, the



The World Cup journalists look at the work of Martin Garcia and others in the etching studio at Self-Help Graphics.

Roman Catholic church and social service center in Boyle Heights. One tour participant wanted to know if gang rivalries ever disrupted business.

"When we come past that [bakery] gate," Rangel said, "we're all brothers."

Please see CULTURAL, B4

At Self-Help Graphics, a nonprofit arts center, Margaret Garcia, a neighborhood native, was creating a silk-screen print as the visitors arrived. "There's a lot more going on here than the stereotypes," Garcia explained.

When the tour was over, most seemed to agree that they had learned about a part of town hitherto obscured in news reports of drive-by shootings and other misdeeds. Some, such as Hueli Howser, host of a weekly program on public television in Los Angeles, said the visit would put them to rest.

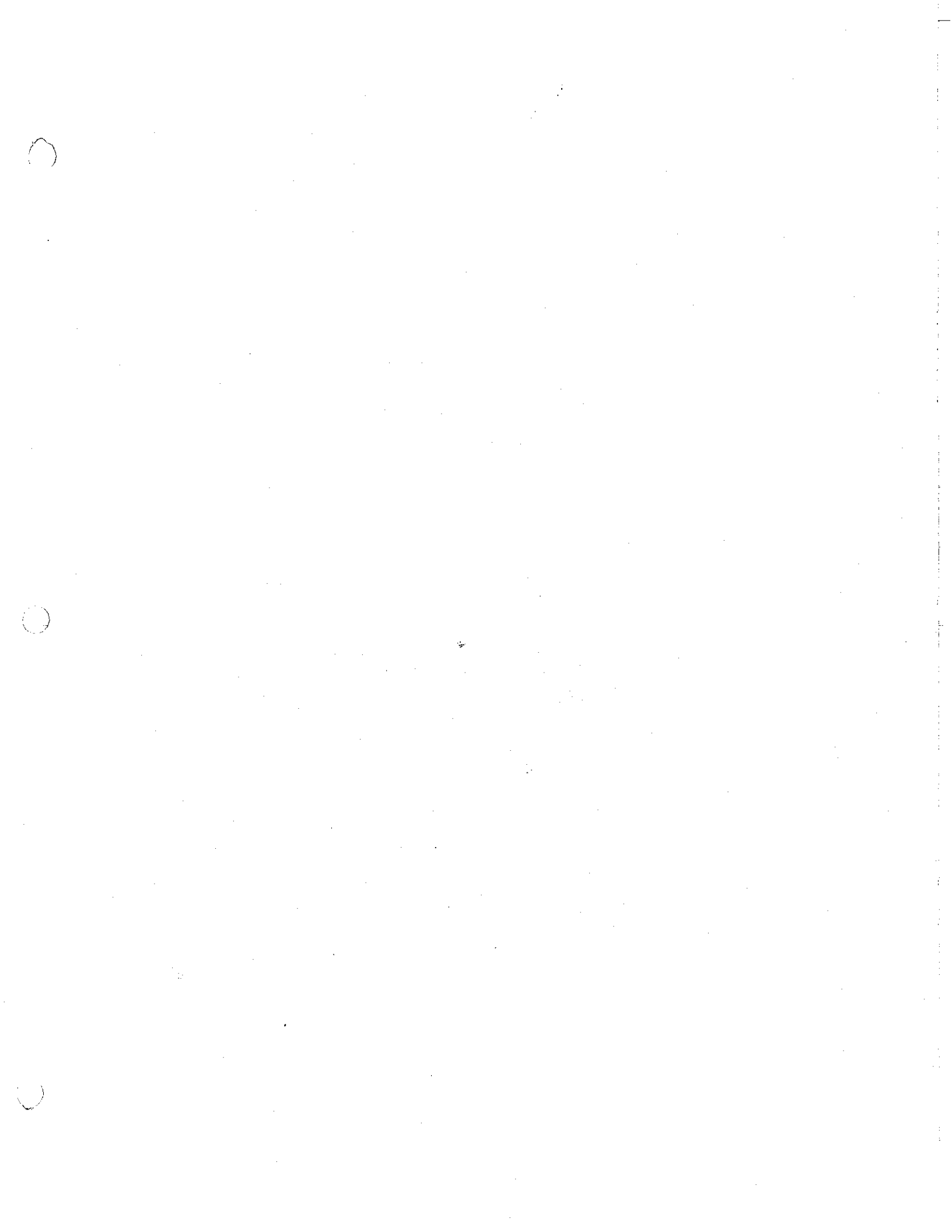
"Anything that encourages Angelenos to visit other parts of their city is commendable, and very much needed," Howser said after Garcia and others munched on Mexican food from La Parrilla restaurant. "I've met people whom I wouldn't have met and seen things I wouldn't have seen if I hadn't been on this trip."

Like others, Bernheim was struck by the volume of people out walking, a rarity in car-crazed Los Angeles. "People, even children, aren't afraid of being on the streets," he noted.

For Daniel Bernheim, who writes from Los Angeles for the Glasgow, Scotland-based Herald, the visit provided a pleasant contrast to his media-shaped preconceptions of the Eastside. "I had a certain image from these sensationalistic headlines," Bernheim said.

Participants in a novel bus tour of the district that has long stood as the heart of Los Angeles' Mexican and Mexican American communities. The visit is the first in a series of "Night Tours," designed to coincide with World Cup festivities that will focus on several Los Angeles neighborhoods often viewed from the outside as simmering cauldrons of gang violence and ethnic tension.

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subiendo por el Rio los Conchos,
Pecos, Bravo
hasta Chaco, Acoma, Yambé
and before we knew it had a name
Paquimé, pochteca merchant city de la Gran Chichimeca
where California mother-of-pearl
was traded for Taos copper bells,
Hohokam pottery and turquoise traded
for obsidian knives,
for gold Texcoco nose plugs,
filigrane pectorals adorned with
emerald and ochre feathers
of Cuacamayos y gualajolotes thriving
in adobe cages
y tenían el juego de pelota
80 miles from the Arizona border,
america's flood control system
in the year 1,000,
y asaban los maguueyes enteros
en grandes hornos de piedra
para hacer el sotol de las fiestas —
Los Mexicanos siguen los mismos caminos
pasando por El Paso
o bajando la Rumberosa a Tecate
en Camión Tres Estrellas
para entrar a Tijuana de madrugada,
ofrecer tus manos en una cocina,
y fregar trastes para un bacado,
porque si no,
gastas la feria que le toca al coyote,
y si no llevas feria,
te pasas por un agujero en la noche
y caminas el desierto hasta Brawley,
o te agarras de un tren
y haberes si te lleva
a los angeles

Definitely not east,
but west from New York,
from a St. Louis wagon stop
and inheriting the stigma
of a dirty cattle town
with dust thrown up in clouds by horses
and wagons scratching out
La calle central,
La calle alameda, la figura
on higher ground between winter rivers,
el arroyo seco de verano
listless,
los oriundos de habla Shoshone
with scars in their eyes —
Los Serranos and their children
began to die when the padres
called them pacificos
And the random
eating of tomas began around Sonora town,
bridges over rivers that flooded
to Maravilla, El Hoyo, El Sereno
now no cienegas or muddy rivers,
instead dead cement
over aluvial paths
This was one stroke across the map,
recent impulse to unfurl a destiny
ocean to ocean
And the older impulse, always presence,
not a frontier for those south
siguiendo a pie las aristas llovidas
de la sierra Cora desde
los esteros de Tecuala,
desde Aztatlan del Rio
subiendo hasta La Quemada, Chalchihuites
de las turquesas
recortando el espinazo de sierra,
siguiendo los que bajaron
entre épocas de hielo, épocas verdes, secas,
abriendo y cerrando la puerta brava,
entrando por el Rio Colorado
de los Yuma, Havasupal, Tusayan,

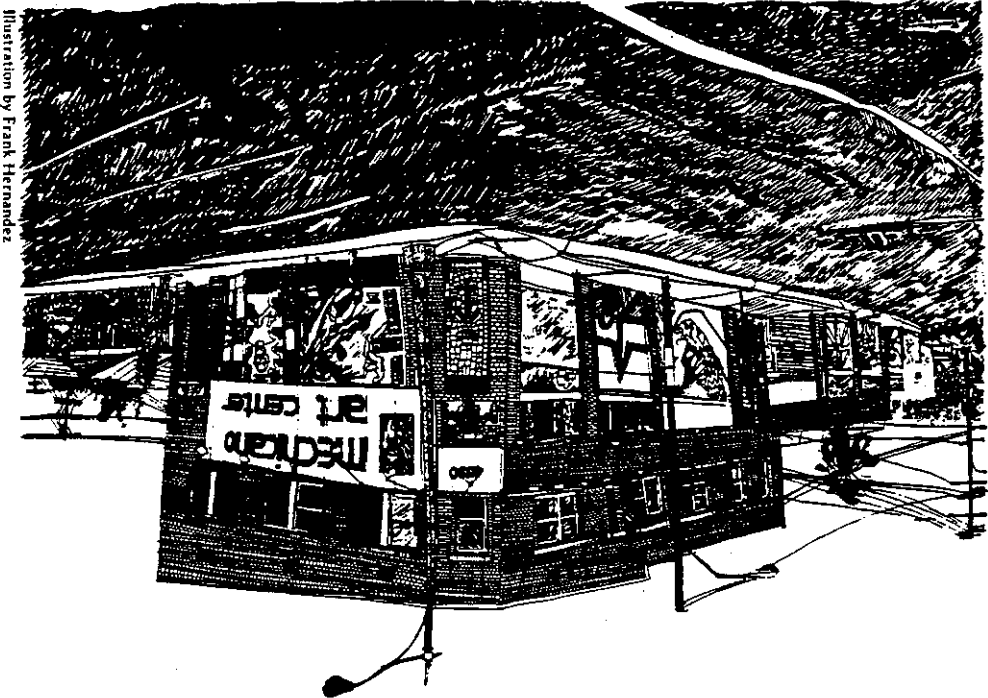
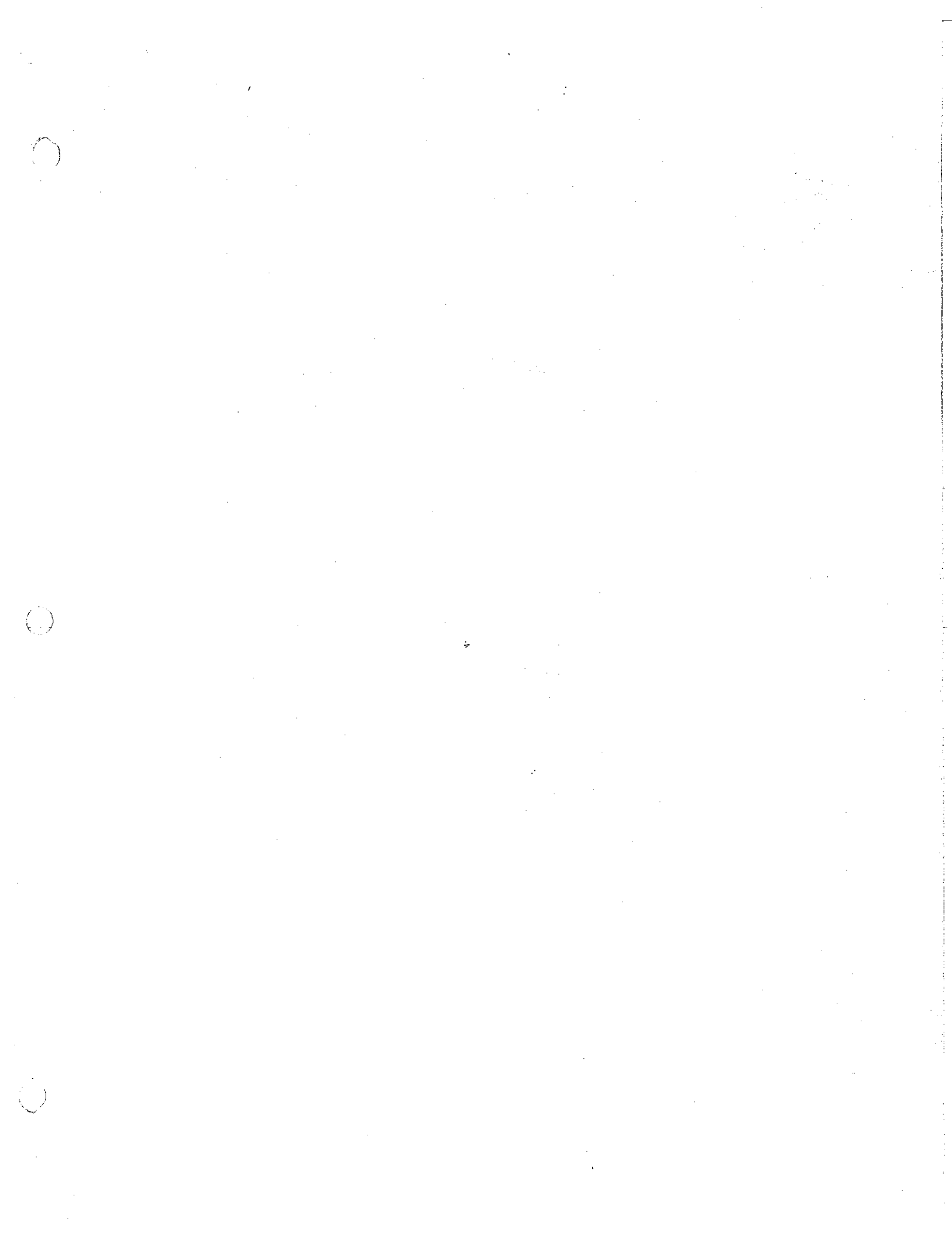


Illustration by Frank Hernandez



Lyndell George is a Times staff writer for the...

Like African-American field... the traditional classroom history... In excavating the community...

Though the music has its roots... (The Beat and Los Illegals) and is... still reflects, and this pays tribute...

Loza explores the music as it is... captured by writer-photographer... scoring the portraits of resisters...

Loza's meticulous study is dense... and culture survival... an unyielding hybrid, the lyrics...

The vibrant tapestry of L.A.'s... Latin music is too often viewed as... mere remnants, a faded mural de-

In Echo Park most Saturday... night, just after afternoon has... solfoned to evening, marachas...

Reviewed by Lyndell George

By Steven Loza

Mexican American Music



The pages of La Opcion for a... town L.A. lit up with a common... to music. Loza, through a down-



The Mithras, godfathers of the East Side Sound, on their 1965 album.

The Music Moves the Streets

ring of Latin inspirations, from... Carlos Gardel's Argentine tangos... A gifted musician and respected...

paragraph-by-paragraph listing of... the newspaper's Mexican profiles... and club advertisements and calendar...

struggle is the ferocious success of... Andy Russell—a Mexican-American... version of Cuba's Des Amas...

Lyndell George is a Times staff writer for the...

