

NUESTRA COSA

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P. Ruiz

COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVE MEDIA

Economics

Losing race for poor

It's good to hear the government is working hard to head inflation off at the pass through its tight money policies. With prices increasing 13 to 15 percent annually, we as Chicanos, along with other less affluent people, tend to especially feel the brunt. Food and fuel prices are outpacing our earning capacity; and housing? Well, most of us are having to forget about such things for now.

So maybe inflation will finally come to a slowdown. Unfortunately, slowing down the economy will probably come at the expense of our jobs! Then we won't be able to buy adequate housing and other necessities of life anyway. (You'll be comforted to know that a recession shouldn't last too long—whether it cuts inflation is not certain though, and prices are expected to take off again with another predicted building surge and soaring home prices by 1982.)

Either way you look at it, things are always tight for our communities. In relative numbers, including the influx of Mexicans, we seem to be actually regressing on the economic ladder of well being.

And that's another thing—economics that is. We're just not getting enough information in our communities to carefully consider our position as a predominantly 'lower-tiered' worker oriented group. Where and on what levels are we mainly employed? What type of housing and resultant education does this dictate? And what are some of the problems resulting from the areas in which we live? Where is it that we predominantly reside; and is it true that Chicanos and other minorities are being systematically excluded from more affluent areas through suburban government policies, hence denied amenities like better jobs, education and housing?

Our status does seem vague, and even where issues are being confronted by concerned community members, their efforts never seem to reach us through traditional media sources. Perhaps that's where a newspaper like NUESTRA COSA comes in. We'll be considering many of the issues confronting Chicanos today; we'll also be looking at what some Chicano communities are doing about them.

Chicanos and foreign policy

"What goes around, comes around"—it's a common phrase generalizing certain Asian religious ideas, yet it lies as a basis for Western man's own moralizing. The notion that one must eventually make amends for past wrongs or forever be condemned to suffer is implicit in our religious doctrines; but how is it that such a profound "leveler" of man could have escaped the Christian nation's own foreign policy toward underdeveloped peoples of the world?

The common reply is that foreign policy is above morals. Avarice and usury are encouraged, murder and exploitation condoned, all for the sake of national interests. But in the end, even nations must eventually "pay for their sins."

This was essentially the message delivered to the industrial powers of the world recently when chairman of the non-aligned nations, Fidel Castro, addressed the U.N.—fail to rectify past exploitation, and your own systems and standards of living will eventually suffer; its that simple.

Yet the U.S. is already beginning to feel the effects of a malicious past. Oil bearing nations have replaced the U.S.-European "O.P.E.C." for one of their own, and now we reel under the consequences. U.S. bases for economic gain and stability have begun to crumble—twenty years ago in Cuba, then Vietnam, Iran, Nicaragua and now El Salvador.

And a distant rumbling can again be heard from the Antilles, this time from the people of Puerto Rico, occupied lands since 1900. A people valued by the U.S. for their ready supply of cheap labor is questioning the validity of a state of affairs where they exist as second-class citizens in their own land. A bitter youth is growing up in the barrios increasingly motivated by those demanding and working toward greater means of social and economic determination for their own people. Theirs shall be the struggle of the new decade we enter.

But what then of us? What are the implications of recognizing past social and economic injustices and demanding implementing—what is due one as a people? A people essentially created through the aggressive imperial policy of which we speak; a people which at best has also existed as second-class citizens because of this, hence never recognized as a legitimate part of the society we helped develop, nor enjoy its fruit.

The 'Chicano question' is becoming an utmost concern in this land, simply because of our sheer multiplying numbers having been kept from becoming an integral part of this society. Fundamental questions concerning the existent political and economic institutions have arisen and will one day challenge their actual validity as in the case of exploited peoples elsewhere.

What 'went around' does indeed influence what's coming around.



'Letter of Tears'

Against the oppression in Latin America a recent "Open Letter to North American Christians" stands out with special significance. It was sent by 13 noted church leaders in Latin America; the names of five were kept secret in order to protect them. The letter reads in part:

Our Brothers and Sisters:

Today we Latin Americans are discovering that apart from our own weaknesses and sins, not a few of our misfortunes flow from and are perpetuated within a system that produces benefits for your country, but which goes on swallowing us more and more—in oppression, in impotence, in death. In a few words: your precious 'American way of life,' the opulence of your magnates, and your economic and military dominion, feeds on the blood which gushes from the open veins of Latin America.

It is no longer sufficient to keep the large mass of indigenous peoples and workers of our nations margined and exploited. Now it is necessary to subject to systematic persecution and scientifically perfected torture union leaders, political and student leaders, priests and pastors, intellectuals and artists, journalists and other professionals—all who attempt to denounce the injustice and the falsehood or who are in solidarity with the poor and the oppressed. Now it is necessary to commit silent genocide, killing with hunger, malnutrition, and tuberculosis the children of working families without resources: unemployment also is being used as a political weapon.

All this, our brothers and sisters, is carried out in the name of "democracy," in the name of "Western Christian civilization," on the backs of our people, and

with the benediction and the support of yours. Without the backing of your government, of your armed forces, our dictators power for long.

Friends and fellow Christians, it is time that you realize that our continent is becoming one gigantic prison, and in some regions, one vast cemetery. The gospel, the ground of human rights, is becoming a dead letter. This letter seeks to be an anguished, fervent call to your conscience and to your responsibility as Christians.

If in the past you felt it to be your apostolic duty to send us missionaries and economic resources, today let the frontier of your witness and Christian solidarity be within your own country. The conscious, intelligent, and responsible use of your vote; the appeal to your representatives in the Congress

and the application of pressure on your authorities can direct our governments toward greater justice and brotherhood or confirm a colonialist, oppressive policy over our peoples.

Between tears and groans we are interceding for you, in order that you may respond with faithfulness to the historic responsibility which, as citizens of one of the great contemporary powers and as disciples of Jesus Christ, it falls on you to assume. May the true piety about which the prophet Isaiah spreads to us in the name of God, ...to loose the fetters of injustice, to untie the knots of the yoke, to snap every yoke and set free those who have been crushed, ...and never evading a duty to your brother. (58:6,7)

become reality in your lives and in the lives of your churches.

Second Bi-annual Chicano Workshop staged Dec. 1-2

The Second Bi-annual Chicano Newspaper Workshop will be held on Dec. 1-2 at UC Riverside. The purpose of this conference will be to share journalistic expertise and views on alternative media with people interested in starting a newspaper or improving one already in existence. A "joint issue" will be published as a product of the conference by all groups present.

Anyone interested in participating is welcome to attend. The organizers hope to provide a practical learning experience geared towards improving alternative publications.

According to Lisa Duran, one of the organizers of the conference, "the two day conference will help to strengthen the network of communications already building throughout the state between alternative newspapers."

The workshop will emphasize developing skills in the areas of newswriting, newspaper composition, typesetting and paste-up.

The first Chicano Newspaper Workshop took place during the summer. The participants were from four different newspapers: *El Popo* of Cal. State Northridge; *El Otro Vaquero*, Glendale Community College; *El Tecolote*, Citrus Community College; and *Si Se Puede*, from the Santa Barbara and Ventura county communities.

The organizers are asking those newspapers interested in participating to send their logos to Arnulfo Casillas for inclusion into the layout of the collective newspaper to be produced. In addition, ideas on the concept and use of alternative media will be needed in the writing of an article to appear in this joint issue.

Interested parties should contact the conference organizers in advance, as soon as possible.

To assist in preparing housing accommodations, please contact Lisa Duran at UC Riverside (714) 787-4673; and if you have ideas on alternative media or wish to mail in your logo, contact:

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Nuestra Cosa

The opinions expressed in Nuestra Cosa do not necessarily reflect the views of the University of California.

Unsigned editorials represent a consensus view of the staff, who also comprise the Editorial Board.

Interested persons are urged to submit artwork, poetry, letters or articles. Lengthy articles may be edited to accommodate available space.

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Rubidoux High School

Police abuse youth

by Russell Jauregui

Recently, three Rubidoux High School Mechistas--Steve Valdez Vincent Valdez and Wally Aguilera were the victims of such abuse by the Pomona Police Department. After stopping, the young men were ordered out of Steve's car, whereupon an officer searched the car.

After checking Steven's license and registration, the officer remarked, "You're from Riverside, well you're in my territory now." Steven answered, "I don't want any trouble. I just want to go home." When Steven's brother asked why they were pulled over, the officers replied that their car was too low.

The officer then pulled Steve over to the side and said, "What are you doing out of your area? This is Pomona. You can't be messing around over here." Steven then repeated that he just wanted to go home, and was not seeking to cause trouble.

Vincent again asked, "Why did you pull us over?" The officer told Vincent "You got a big mouth," and pushed him against his brother's car. This resulted in a cut over Vincent's left eyebrow.

Steven told the officer, "Hey, that's not right, and the officer told Steve that he had a "big mouth

too," and he pushed Steve against the car and bent his arm back behind his back.

Steven and Vincent were handcuffed by both officers and pushed into the police car. One officer took a nickel from Steven's pant pocket and gave it to Wally, saying, "Go make a phone call." Steven and Vincent were taken to the Pomona Police station. Steve's car was left at the sight unattended.

At approximately 2:45 am, Steve and Vincent arrived at the Pomona Police station. Upon entering the station, Steve complained of Vincent's eye injury to other officers and was told to "shut up."

Steve was subsequently taken to a room and ordered to strip. While naked, he was subject to verbal abuse and finally read his rights. After this, Steve dressed and was left in the room to wait for his brother.

During this time, Vincent was taken to Pomona Valley Hospital by the officers that pulled the young men over. One of the officers called the boys' mother to obtain permission to allow the emergency ward to stitch Vincent's wound. When Vincent's mother asked how Vincent obtained his injury, the officer responded, "he slipped against a wall." Later, the

Valdez's family doctor verified that Vincent's eye injury could not have been caused by a "slip against a wall," and was the result of a blow or push. After his eye was cared for, Vincent was returned to the police station by the two officers.

After returning to the station, Vincent was ordered to strip. He was not read his rights. At approximately 4 am, Steve and Vincent were placed in a cell.

At approximately 4:30 am, the Valdez's mother arrived at the station to pick up her two sons. They were not released to her until 6:30 am. Asked why they had to wait so long to be released, the officers at the station replied, "for no reason at all."

Just before he left, Steven was informed that his car had been vandalized. When the Valdez's arrived at his car, they found his tires stolen and his windows smashed. Steve paid a towing service to return his car to Rubidoux.

The injustices suffered by the Valdez brothers, their mother, and Wally Aguilera are nothing new to the Chicano community. Discriminatory treatment of Chicanos by law enforcement officials has historical roots and is still occurring today.



Aug. 29th remembered

by Lisa Duran

On September 1, 1979, Chicanos from all over Aztlan came together to show unity and strength at the commemoration march of the August 29, 1970 Chicano Moratorium on the Vietnam War. The march was considered a "warm up" for next year's 10th anniversary march.

This year as in the first march, demands were made to the establishment to end oppressive action in Aztlan and curb cutbacks on gains previously won.

The August 29 Moratorium Commemoration Coalition demands that local governments stop escalating police abuse throughout the Southwest and that the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service put an end to the harassment of all immigrant workers. In addition, it demands that state and local governments stop all cutbacks in the areas pushed for by Chicanos in the sixties, such as Chicano Studies, and continue expanding the programs.

Following the route of the first moratorium, the March went from Atlantic Park on Atlantic Blvd. down Whittier Blvd. to Salazar Park. On the way, the marchers paused for a moment of silence in front of the Silver Dollar Cafe, where Ruben Salazar was murdered by a policeman on August 29, nine years ago.

On that day in 1970, more than 70,000 Chicanos from all over the country joined in a peaceful march to protest the Vietnam War, oppression and discrimination faced by Chicanos in their own barrios.

The people gathered at Salazar Park (then called Laguna Park) for a rally. Reacting to an isolated disturbance over 2,000 riot police

converged on the park, panicking the men, women, and children in attendance. When the police began using riot weapons, the people fought back with their bare hands

By the end of the day, three persons had been killed, one of whom was Chicano journalist Ruben Salazar. While standing inside the Silver Dollar Cafe, he had been shot in the head with a tear gas projectile. The policeman firing the gun used the kind of projectile generally shot through 4 inch walls. He fired it through an open door into the bar which contained people who had been previously forced into it.

Chicanos now look back on that day remembering the unity of the huge march and honoring Ruben Salazar, now considered a martyr.

There is a call for Chicanos to unite in the struggle against barrio warfare and to support the union which fights for Chicano workers, the United Farm Workers. Most importantly, Chicanos are called upon to work toward political and economic control of Aztlan.

There was resistance to the march from supervisor Pete Schabarum, who said there was no need for a march since "the Chicano movement is dead." Mr. Schabarum is mistaken. The movement is not dead, it is growing. The September 1 march is one proof of that.

Next year's march will be a greater proof.

Fed by the daily influence of Mexicanos the culture will never "go away." La Raza must unite to become a viable political force. Chicanos are beginning to recognize in themselves the power to control Aztlan.

House offers services

by Magdalena Nunez

The Community Settlement House located at 4366 Bermuda St., Riverside, serves the residents of the Eastside since 1959.

Jess Ybarra, director, informed Nuestra Cosa staff that the Community Settlement House services the Community by providing information regarding the various service agencies located downtown (Social Security, legal aid, welfare, etc.). The House also provides transportation and interpreters to those community members who might need them in dealing with the above mentioned agencies.

The Community Settlement House acts as a referral agency, referring community members to whatever service needed.

candidates who are running for office or re-election are speaking at the Baggers meetings.

IMAGE (Mexican-American Government Employees) meets every month to improve the status of Chicanos in government employment. IMAGE is sponsoring voter registration drives to make sure that all residents of the Eastside and Riverside in general are registered to vote in November.

Classes for the young and senior citizens are offered. English as a Second Language, crafts, modeling and sewing are offered. Tutors are available to help students with their homework, etc.

The House encourages UCR students in the Social Sciences to serve their internships through the Community Settlement House; students can gain exposure to the community and become more sensitive to the needs of the

community that immediately surrounds the campus.

Mr. Ybarra also informed Nuestra Cosa that the House has been funded half million dollars for a multi-purpose building to house the various agencies, which presently are located downtown, and sometimes inaccessible to many members of our community.

Construction will be on the same lot where the house now stands, bringing much needed services to the community.

The multi-purpose structure is in the planning stages and the community is invited to attend planning meetings held on Monday evenings. Mr. Ybarra stressed that this is a community project and that community input is welcome.

For further information please contact Barbara Loya or Jess Ybarra at 686-6266. Student support is needed at the House and you are always welcome.

Update on boycotts

by Jesse Valenzuela

What is the focus of the UFW Boycott?

The day after the Salinas March, Sunday, August 12, Meyers Tomatoes, one of 28 vegetable growers, broke ranks with other growers and signed a contract with UFW. A week later a second tomato grower, Gonzales Packing Co., followed suit. On August 26, West Coast Farms became the first lettuce grower to announce an agreement with the United Farm Workers of America. Sun Harvest, the largest lettuce grower in the world, also reached a contract agreement with the UFW on August 31, 1979.

All non-union iceberg (head) lettuce and especially the "Red Coach" label of the Bruce Church Co. is wrapped in cellophane with

the label visible and can be easily identified by individual customers.

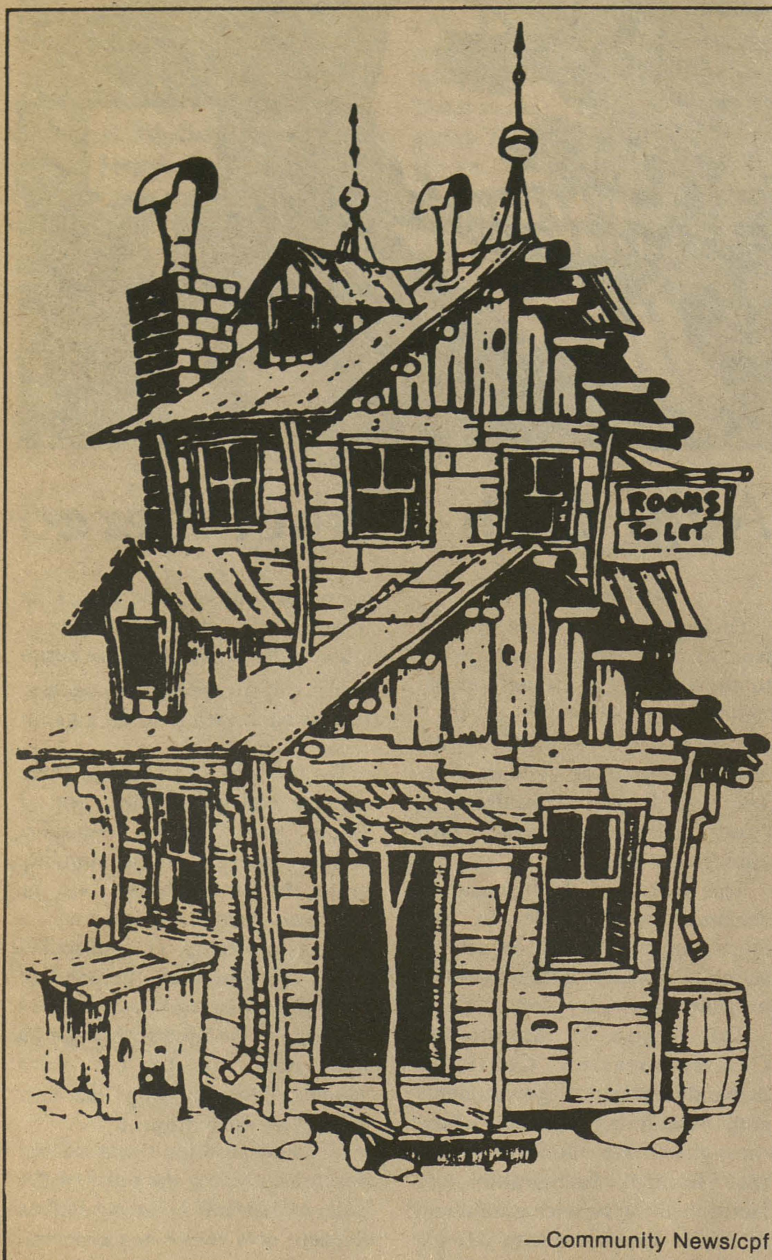
Why the special emphasis on the "Red Coach" label? Bruce Church ("Red Coach") is the third largest lettuce grower in the world and has a long history of fighting the union through legal and illegal means. More than any other company, Bruce Church wants to maintain some of the language of the old teamster contracts, including no hiring hall and a weak grievance procedure.

What happened to the Chiquita Banana Boycott? It is over. Sun Harvest (a subsidiary of United Brands) has renegotiated an excellent contract with the farm workers. It is now okay to buy Chiquita bananas, A&W Root Beer and John Morrell meats.



United Neighborhood Organization

Community group takes on housing issue



—Community News/cpf

by Tomás Ursua

Rampant inflation, unemployment, deteriorating housing, poor education, and little political leverage: these are problems confronting Chicano families throughout. We know about them, we see them, but what can be done to alleviate them?

This is precisely what concerned community members in the East Los Angeles area (the largest Chicano barrio in the Southwest) began asking in 1975 when the United Neighborhood Organization was founded. Initiated through a process of hundreds of

personal interviews with community residents, UNO's prime focus became, and remains, protecting the values of the family.

"We can envision the family as the center of a spoked wheel being pulled apart by external socio-economic forces," according to one UNO organizer, Omar Vega. "With an ever deteriorating standard of living, both parents must now usually work," causing additional aggravation to family cohesiveness, such as youth problems of drug abuse, or violence, cites Vega.

If external forces were

threatening the Chicano family, then UNO was determined to confront them. One of the main issues arising in UNO's interview process was exorbitant insurance rates; for various reasons, Chicanos in the area were paying disproportional fees compared to other areas.

INSURANCE BATTLE

UNO first gained notoriety by challenging the insurance companies' right to arbitrarily create geographical territories dictating rates.

The East L.A. area had been 'lumped' with Beverly Hills and Hollywood-affluent communities using more expensive cars and having a higher tendency to sue—creating a situation where, according to County Supervisor Ken Hahn, East L.A. resident's rates were actually subsidizing richer areas. There were also accusations of blatant 'redlining'—denying insurance because of area location.

Under Father Luis Olivares, UNO initiated an investigation of insurance company practices in the area which has precipitated a nationwide study. At the height of the controversy, UNO won a summit meeting with Governor Brown, Insurance Commissioner Kinder and representatives from the ten largest companies doing business in the area. The result was a new formula for rate basing, not according to regions, but particular zip codes of a neighborhood.

The results? According to one UNO worker, Rebecca Salinas, "in one area alone, St. Alfonso's Parish, thirty-eight families have obtained insurance who previously couldn't afford it." There are claims that insurance rates have decreased by up to thirty-five percent for some policy holders.

HOUSING

Deteriorating and inadequate housing is a serious issue in most communities; it is where much of UNO's energies are concentrated today. Through compiled statistics, UNO has found that East L.A. contains some of the highest incidence of overcrowding in the city, leading to the deterioration of neighborhoods.

Yet according to UNO reports, Boyle Heights, the area's largest barrio and one of the most blighted in the city, has received no federal

monies for housing. The City of L.A. receives 53 million dollars earmarked for such housing each year.

"It is a simple case of politicians and departments making decisions which are in their own self-interests, and are, therefore, in conflict with the vision residents have for their own neighborhoods," reads a recent UNO statement.

But it is clear that UNO doesn't see federal money as a salvation. One reason is that money dispensed through the Community Redevelopment Agency has focused on 'removal and renewal vs. rehabilitation and revitalization', having little credibility with the community.

Rather, what UNO is attempting to institute is an alternative program where "the politicians will be forced to concentrate on renovation, respecting the wishes of the people."

"We don't want to see another Chavez Ravine or Bunker Hill where residents are evicted from their communities," cited Mr. Vega, alluding to a situation where promised low and middle-income housing was overruled by Dodger Stadium and high rise buildings.

UNO has instituted an innovative program by which the community gains access to its own redevelopment funds. The Home Loan Lending Program was instituted through pressure of Patricia Harris, then Secretary of HUD. Through it, home improvement loans with some private institutions are now guaranteed by the Federal Government.

Prior to this, banks often refused to lend money in barrios for home improvement even though government studies show Hispanics have a default rate of below 2 percent. Banks tended to label these areas blighted, adding to deteriorating communities and creating a prime opportunity for speculators to capitalize on the problem.

The situation has been aggravated by a slow reversal of the 'white-flight' urban areas experienced in the past. Today's energy crisis has necessitated many non-minorities to move back to the cities they once abandoned. Los Angeles is also planning for the 1984 Olympics, and Chicano barrios are now finding themselves

in the path of progress.

According to Mr. Vega, "We're some of the only communities left in this path. Many people hope our areas deteriorate to such an extent that the communities will be able to be bought out inexpensively."

UNO's program hopes to allow residents the final determining factor in how their communities will evolve.

OTHER PROGRAMS

UNO is actually a federation currently made up of twenty local church parishes. Outside of major issues like insurance and housing affecting an entire area, each parish confronts individual issues particular to its own locality.

Lourdes parish is a prime example. With only one major supermarket in the area, Safeway, residents were angered with its filthy conditions and poor quality food. They felt it was unfair that Safeway provided less personnel to service the store when there was more business for the company per area than in other communities.

After considerable efforts bringing leading parish residents to the Merrill Lynch Corporation, owners of Safeway, the management has committed themselves to rebuilding the store. They have also promised to address the problem of insufficient employees and low quality food at the store.

UNO is also working within the school districts to improve education. They have challenged the policies by which inexperienced teachers use barrio schools as a training ground and often depart with the first opportunity.

Bi-lingual teachers are also insufficient in an area where many children still speak little English. The effort is based around the idea that stabilizing the environment in which a child learns will directly aid learning in general.

UNO is growing and by last count claims to represent 93,000 families in the East L.A. area. As it grows UNO plans to encompass wider areas and issues such as the exploitation of undocumented workers in the sweat shops and encouraging greater participation of communities in the political process.

All this works toward reversing the tide whereby socio-economic conditions are at the control of Chicano communities and their residents.



Child of the Yoke

From slave flesh was he born,
more humiliated than beautiful
with his neck destined
to be under the yoke.
He starts to live and begins
to die from the first moment
to the last.

And as the yoke moves,
it tears at his mother's soul.

He knows not how to count his
years,
yet already knows that sweat
is a heavy crown
made of salt just for the peasant.

This starving child pains me
like a giant thorn.
And his ashen life
wounds my oak-like soul.

Who will save this child,
small as a grain of wheat?
Whence will come the hammer
to break his chains?

Let it come from the heart
of the laboring man,
who before coming a man,
is and has been a child of the
plow.

Miguel Hernandez
(1910-1942)

East L.A.
Chicano mural whitewashed

by Grace Casarez

At East Los Angeles Community College this September, a mural painted in 1974 by students and staff was white washed before the beginning of the fall semester without consulting the artists. The creators were students and a Chicano Studies faculty member, Roberto Chavez. They considered the mural to have been a symbol of "education being good and bad," and felt it was linked to the East Los Angeles community and college, according to Chavez.

"The fact that students were not consulted before the mural was removed from the Ingalls Auditorium reflects a lack of concern for the students interests" said A.S. president, Marcella Vasquez. She believes that the college exists to serve the students and they should have input into

such decisions that affect the campus.

Several people in the administration were involved in the decision to remove the mural, but none wanted to claim responsibility. There have been various versions about how and by whom the decision was reached that the mural should come down, but the ultimate responsibility will fall on the administrative president, Mr. Arturo D. Avila.

Mr. Avila states that the mural's removal was not the consequence of the work itself but was necessary for the renovation of the auditorium building. The fact is that Chavez, before painting the mural, refinished the entire wall. However, workmen concentrated only on the mural, leaving the rest of the building untouched.

An ELAC student remarked that the front upper portion of the

auditorium where the mural was painted was the best wall of the whole building. At the present, there has been no other renovation being done to the building.

Chavez believes that the removal of the mural is a step to change the image of East Los Angeles College. Administrative officials believe that ELAC is becoming too Chicano which they feel is a negative image they are trying to erase.

In a meeting of the Chicano Faculty Association, the members took up a resolution which they presented to Avila demanding that Chavez be allowed to repaint the mural and that he also be given another wall to paint as a consolation. Avila has stated to Chavez that if another mural was to be painted, he would be given special consideration but did not make any promises.

Latinos:

Explotación económica sin frontera

por Ernesto Franco-Vizcaino

Se podría decir que es una contradicción que nosotros, la comunidad méxicoamericana en los Estados Unidos exista hasta cierto punto en una forma tranquila, sin trastornos económicos ni políticos en contraste a los países al sur del Río Bravo. Todo esto, mientras el hambre y la carencia en general es una realidad cotidiana en el resto del mundo latinoamericano.

Aunque la comunidad méxicoamericana en general no disfruta de la riqueza, es indiscutible que los Estados Unidos es el país más rico del mundo, con un estandar de vida y una estabilidad política y económica mucho más superior a la de nuestros vecinos.

De dónde proviene la riqueza de los Estados Unidos? Viene de la actividad de las compañías angloamericanas que operan en todo el mundo, pero especialmente en Latinoamérica.

La América Latina es una reserva especial para el comercialismo transnacional: sus mercados, sus trabajadores y sus recursos naturales están a la disposición de las grandes compañías internacionales.

Es necesario comprender la situación desde el punto de vista de los intereses comerciales. Es imposible explotar la tierra, es decir, producir comodidades agrícolas, extraer minerales, etc., si existe una población tradicional, extendida a lo largo del país y en control de su modo de vida. Si el mismo pueblo produce lo que come, entonces no existe motivo ninguno para comprar los productos extranjeros ni producirlos.

Por eso, el primer paso del colonialismo fue quitarle la tierra al pueblo para hacerlo dependiente del sistema económico dominante. Al mismo tiempo, se concentra el pueblo en las ciudades donde forzosamente tiene que trabajar a sueldos mínimos para comer.

Por eso existen los nuevos latifundios de las corporaciones angloamericanas, donde se producen las comodidades agrícolas que todos disfrutamos aquí sin pensar que cada plátano, cada ajitamate que viene a dar a los Estados Unidos se producen en tierras donde ya no producen comida para los que más la necesitan. Esto se lleva a cabo a base del dominio económico y político que mantiene los Estados Unidos en la América Latina.

Normalmente el control político y económico de los pueblos Latinoamericanos se mantiene por medio de las dictaduras, tal como la que recientemente existía en Nicaragua. El apoyo militar de los Estados Unidos fue el factor más importante en el mantenimiento de la dictadura de la familia Somoza. Se lee en los periódicos que estas dictaduras son en realidad "democracias", pero cuando se ha visto una democracia donde una sola familia mantenga el poder por más de cuarenta años?

Tradicionalmente, cuando el control político y económico no se mantiene de otra forma, el uso descarado de la fuerza militar norteamericana se concretiza. La invasión de la República Dominicana por una división de la marina norteamericana en 1967 y el desastre de 1962 en la Bahía de los Cochinos, en Cuba, son ejemplos del militarismo norteamericano.

La muerte del Presidente Allende en Chile en 1973 a manos de fuerzas reclutadas por la Agencia Central de Inteligencia (CIA), fue otro ejemplo de las maniobras de los intereses norteamericanos.

Después de la muerte de Allende el Presidente Ford dijo que lo que había hecho los Estados Unidos en Chile fue, "en los mejores intereses del pueblo chileno." Si los Chilenos asesinaran al Presidente norteamericano se pudiera decir que lo había hecho en los mejores intereses del pueblo norteamericano?

No, amigos, lo que se está llevando a cabo en todo Latinoamérica, incluyendo las comunidades

Mexicoamericanas de los Estados Unidos, es una lucha de los ricos contra los pobres.

Es aparente que los ricos van perdiendo esta guerra, porque la opresión cada día se empeora

indicando la desesperación de los dictadores al ver que el pueblo ya no más los aguanta.

Si es una guerra de los ricos contra los pobres. En que campo está usted? Si es usted ciudadano norteamericano, empadronese,

organízese y ayude en la lucha con su voto. Si no lo es, acuda usted a las organizaciones mexico-americanas y preste su ayuda. Su familia y las familias de muchos compañeros latinos se lo agradecerán.



Libro: historia chicana

El libro, *450 Años De La Historia Chicana*, se puede conseguir otra vez. El libro contiene más que 250 dibujos y fotos con textos breves en inglés y español.

Algunos de los acontecimientos principales demostrados en el libro son la colonización del Suroeste por España, la conquista del Suroeste por los Estados Unidos, la Revolución Mexicana, la contribución chicana al desarrollo industrial, la lucha de trabajadores en los 1920's y 1930's y como ha sobrevivido la cultura chicana.

450 Años De La Historia Chicana se puede ordenar de Florencia Publications, P.O. Box 1326, Florencia (Loving), New Mexico, Aztlán, 88256. El precio por copia individual, \$8.

A MIS HIJOS

Queridos Hildita, Adeidita, Camilo, Celia y Ernesto:

Si alguna vez tienen que leer esta carta, será porque yo no este entre Uds.

Casi no se acordaran de mi y los mas chiquitos no recordaran nada.

Su padre ha sido un hombre que actua como piensa y seguro ha sido leal a sus convicciones.

Creczan como buenos revolucionarios. Estúdien mucho para poder dominar la tecnica que permite dominar la naturaleza. Acuerdense que la revolucion es lo importante y que cada uno de nosotros, solo, no vale nada.

Sobre todo, sean siempre capaces de sentir en lo mas hondo cualquier injusticia cometida contra cualquiera en cualquier parte del mundo. Es la cualidad mas linda de un revolucionario.

Hasta siempre hijitos, espero verlos todavia. Un beso grandote y un gran abrazo de,

—PAPÁ

(Ernesto "Che" Guevara)

Carta abierta a Tomás Rivera

Como estudiantes de la Universidad de Riverside nos da orgullo que a Ud. lo hayan señalado como canciller de esta institución.

Por lo tanto, queremos que sepa que MEChA le apoya en la realización de sus metas por llevar la universidad adelante.

Entendemos que el hecho de ver

un chicano en el puesto de canciller es signficante y muestra que hemos avanzado.

En nuestra sociedad creciente implica este hecho un reconocimiento de nuestra capacidad de cumplir con el papel de líder en todo el sentido de la palabra.

Como mechistas, también creemos que nuestros líderes—ya sean políticos, burócratas, administradores o estudiantes—deben guiarse por las palabras de uno de nuestros grandes humanistas, el Dr. Martin Luther King:

"Nuestros líderes de ahora, deben ser seres que no amen al dinero, pero que amen a la humanidad. Deben ser seres que no amen la publicidad, pero que amen la justicia. Deben ser seres que quieran usar su egoismo para la importancia de la causa."

Con esto...le damos la bien venida.

--MEChA

ALIENACION

Estudio inglés, aprendo vocabulario y el libro dice:

"Colony: país o región desarrollada por gente de otro país y total o parcialmente controlada desde el país madre".

¿Donde, America, donde?

Maternales tu sol, tus bosques, tus ríos impetuosos, tu medula de piedra, tu corteza de aroma.

¿Dónde entonces la matriz, la raza primigenia, la fibra secular?

Antes vinieron unos y otros de regiones ignotas, y ahora se extendieron con su nueva estirpe.

Buscan trocar por palabra y moneda tu placenta nutricia, nuestra razón de parto.

—Arcadio Bosques

Se solicitan alimentos

por Rebecca Elizarraraz

La Casa Ramona, que es una organización al servicio de la comunidad localizada en San Bernardino esta pidiendo una contribucion de alimentos enlatados.

A la vez, se preparan canastas de navidad y se compran pavos con las donaciones económicas de varias agencias para ayudar a 125 familias necesitadas en el área de San Bernardino.

Qualquier interesado en hacer alguna donación puede entregar

sus latas de comida en: Casa Ramona, ubicada en el 1524 West de la Calle Séptima en San Bernardino en el Depto. de Servicios Humanos (Human Services Dept.) o bien puede entregarlos en el centro cultural Chicano (Chicano Cultural Center), cuarto No. 2301, Library South, UC Riverside. Para información adicional ponerse en contacto con Amparo Holguín al tel. 889-0018 en San Bernardino.

Por favor, ayude a los que necesitan.

Estimado lector,

Tomamos esta oportunidad para invitarlo a participar en *Nuestra Cosa*.

Le solicitamos cartas, articulos, poemas, dibujos, etc., que gustaria ver publicados en nuestras paginas.

Favor de enviarlos a:

Nuestra Cosa
2301 Library South
Univ. of Cal.
Riverside, CA 92507
(714) 787-4673

Atentamente,
El Personal de *Nuestra Cosa*.

Latinos

Exploitation without borders

by Ernesto Franco-Vizcaino

The "Letter of Tears" reproduced in this issue brings us to an important point. It is a contradiction that we, the Mexican-American community exists without the daily reality of hunger and political-economic upheaval so common in the rest of the Latin world.

Although the Mexican-American community in the U.S. does not generally enjoy great wealth, it is indisputable that the U.S. is the richest country in the world. It has a standard of living and a political and economic stability far superior to that of our neighbors.

Where does the wealth of the U.S. come from? A very large part

of it comes from the activities of American companies operating throughout the world, including in Latin America. Latin America is a special preserve for North American commercialism: its markets, labor pools and natural resources are at the disposal of the large international companies.

It is necessary to understand the situation from the point of view of the commercial interests. It is impossible to produce agriculture commodities, extract minerals, etc., if there exists a traditional population spread out over the whole country and in control of its way of life. If the people produce their own food there is very little motivation to buy commercial products or to produce them.

That is why the first step of neo-colonialism is to dispossess the people from the land through economic pitfalls, in order to make the people dependent on the dominant economic system. At the same time they become concentrated in the cities where they are forced to work at a minimum wage in order to eat.

Large estates of the American corporations exist to produce the agricultural commodities which we take for granted. We should realize that every banana, every tomato, which comes to the U.S. has been produced on land that is not producing food for the starving. This is due to the political and economic domination of Latin America by the U.S.

Normally, political and economic control over Latin America is maintained through dictatorships like that which until recently existed in Nicaragua. The military support afforded by the U.S. was the most important factor in maintaining the dictatorship of the Somoza family. The newspapers say that these dictatorships are actually "democracies," but when has a single family maintained political power for more than forty years in a democracy?

Traditionally, when political and economic control cannot be maintained in any other way, the brazen use of U.S. military power becomes apparent. The invasion of the Dominican Republic by a Marine division in 1967, and the Bay of Pigs fiasco in 1962 are examples of such militarism.

The death of Chilean President Allende in 1973 at the hands of forces recruited by the CIA was an example of the formation of a

Latin American dictatorship for the protection of American interests. After the death of Allende, the then President Ford claimed that the actions of the U.S. in Chile were "in the best interests of the Chilean people." How can foreign interference this extreme be said to be in the best interests of the people?

What is happening in all of Latin America, including the Mexican-American communities in the U.S., is a struggle between the rich and the poor. Every day the repression becomes worse, indicating the desperation of the dictators realizing that their people will no longer bear them.

It is a war between the rich and the poor. Which side are you on? If you are a U.S. citizen, register to vote and help with your vote, or join a Mexican-American organization and lend your help. Your family and the families of many Latinos will appreciate it.

U.S. visit

Pope stirs controversy

by Lisa Duran

During Pope John Paul II's recent tour to the United States, emotions ran from anticipation to profound discouragement. Once again, the Church has taken a stand that perpetuates the unjust stratification and sexism already manifested in the social structure of the United States today.

The Pope's position is imperative to the Chicano community since the overwhelming majority of Chicanos are Catholics. In the U.S., approximately 25 percent of the Church is Chicano/Latino. In the U.S., Chicanos account for over 65 percent of the Church.

This demonstrates how Chicanos are one of the strongest forces in the Church, conversely, the Church has a strong effect on the Chicano community. Over four hundred years of church colonization have been ingrained into our souls.

This institution should be responsible to our needs, whether they are political, economic or social. It is almost absurd to think that it would fail us.

Unfortunately, this seems to be the norm, rather than the exception. Look at the incredibly low numbers of Chicano priests and especially bishops. There are 3 Chicano bishops out of 350 in the United States. Last summer the hierarchy refused to appoint a

Chicano bishop to the San Bernardino-Riverside diocese, a predominantly Chicano community.

An insensitive orientation has been strengthened in recent comments by its leader, John Paul. He has taken a stand against homosexuality, birth control, dispensation to lay status of priests, and the ordination of women as priests. That he should take such prejudiced and sexist stands in this day and age show a man reverting toward the past—not the present or the future.

The Pope has stated that his principal aim is "to challenge the world to pursue the goal of social justice," and that his "path to peace is the guarantee of Human Rights."

Yet every day he is responsible for the "intense suffering and pain" which is part of the lives of many women who feel a sacred call to the duties of the priesthood.

The Pope feels that humanity's "deepest hunger lies in the human soul." Why then can he not accept the validity of the hunger women feel when they are excluded from the priesthood for mere shadows of reasons?

Forty-five percent of U.S. Catholics favor the ordination of women as priests. The Women's Ordination Committee has the full support of organizations such as the National Association of Religious Brothers and even

lawyers for the Church itself.

Chicanos and Chicanas should realize what is entailed in the stands taken by John Paul II.

He excludes women from the priesthood, yet allows them to work for the church as much as possible. This essentially holds us back from attaining full advancement within the Church. It extends the sexist discrimination Chicanas are already faced with in their own barrios. The Church has become a stronghold of sexist exploitation. It is a living deviation from its own teachings.

According to John Paul, the Church "has convictions about this particular dimension of the gift of the priesthood by which God has chosen to shepherd his flock." He states that through the Bible, God issued a call "to the men he himself decided on." This is his only reason for our exclusion.

Many people feel that there is no substance to this argument. If candidates for the priesthood were to come only from the type of men who were called to the apostleship in Biblical times, only Jewish fishermen and tax collectors would be allowed in the priesthood.

The Pope himself has defended this position only in terms of Church traditions, because he is of course aware that there is no theological basis for them. In the context of our society today, is this not empty tradition?

The Church should be a leading force in our lives. How can it be, when its leaders lag decades behind the times.

The majority of active U.S. Catholics use birth control methods. Many are not against divorce, and about 45 percent favor the ordination of women as priests. The majority of priests and bishops within the U.S. structure discreetly ignore the Vatican's stands on these issues.

As early as 1969, 80 percent of priests forgave Catholics for the use of birth control (Los Angeles Times, Sept. 30, 1979). In order to work with their communities, priests must take an open view of the lives of their parishioners lead. Ninety five percent of American Catholics agree with the use of birth control (Los Angeles Times, Sept. 30, 1979).

This has led to a "compartmentalization" of our religious and practical lives. The doctrine we listen to on Sundays becomes irrelevant during the week. We

have our religious compartment and our practical compartment—and the two rarely join.

Mass attendance dropped sharply in 1968, when the Papal Encyclical banned the use of birth control.

Any organized religion is made up of its people. If they leave their leadership behind, what does that say about its viability?

To make Catholicism a consistent religion, the leaders and the main body must be on similar levels. The people can't be demanded to regress their mentality to the fifties and achieve this end. The clergy must catch up. The Church is becoming a shell, a farce, with its members paying lip service to it and consistently leaving it out of any practical aspects of their lives.

Either the Church must change completely from within, or a better alternative must be found to this institution. It is in too many ways unresponsive to our needs in this changing society.

Latin American Perspectives

by Roberto Alaniz

Latin American Perspectives is an academic journal concerned with the social, political and economic issues regarding the Latin American community. However, at this time the journal's status in Riverside is precarious.

Even though the Latin American Studies Association continues to support the journal, the Chairman of the Political Science Department at the University of California, Riverside, Dr. Frank Way, has decided to withdraw complete support.

This means that no longer will there be office space for research and publication for the journal. The donors account has also been eliminated, which was used primarily to hire and teach students how to edit, research and construct a scholarly journal.

This action not only cuts out the fiscal aspects of managing the publication, but it directly caused the exclusion of aspiring

journalists and scholars on the campus. Additionally, the University's donation of \$750 to the Political Science Department, to defray costs, has been withdrawn. All of these acts were perpetrated despite the journal's contributions.

For example, the journal has dealt with the dependency theory, topics on women, and third world minorities within the continental U.S. The last concept helps to develop the consciousness that the Southwestern United States is the northernmost extension of the Latin American continent.

Furthermore, *Latin American Perspectives* is one of the few journals outside of *Aztlán* and the *Journal of Black Political Economy*, that is attempting to consciously solicit and publish materials from scholars and journalists from throughout the Third World. This exhibits the willingness to accept the analysis of the people at the other end of the

microscope, which is in contrast to the nature of Anglo-American social science.

Also, with the large geographic and population size of the American continents, there has been no attempt by traditional publications to provide such a wide scope of interpretation on issues in Latin America. It is interesting to note that this wide coverage has only been attempted since the inception of *Latin American Perspectives*.

The journal has also contributed to the University of California system through its exchange program. *Latin American Perspectives* is sent, upon requests, to groups in other countries, which in turn send their journals here and are placed in the library for everyone to use.

In spite of the vast support by the academic community, the over 100 letters of support from the international community, the future of *Latin American Perspectives* remains in question.



The United Nations passed a resolution declaring 1979 the International Year of the Child. The declaration professes that all children grow in an environment of basic human rights, and that all children have access to adequate nutrition and education.

Chicano muralist interviewed

by Carlos Tovar

The following is an interview of Mr. Robert Chavez concerning the white-washing of the mural which he painted on the outside front wall of the campus auditorium at East Los Angeles College.

Q. Were you aware that they were going to remove the mural?

A. No. It was done at a time when only administrative staff was here—about a week before classes started. If I had known, I could have gotten a restraining order from a judge.

Q. Why do you think it was white-washed?

A. Well, I think first of all because the administration is stupid, frankly. They have no idea of the role of art in education or the tradition of murals. Also, they didn't know, apparently, or they didn't try to find out anything about why that was there or how it got there. They saw it, I'm quite sure, as an undesirable element in the sense that they don't like the Chicano image on campus. They think of it as a negative thing.

There's been talk about changing the name of the college to John F. Kennedy, or something like that, because they feel that the identification with the Chicano community is too strong. They'd like to make it a nice clean white college even though the vast majority of the students are Chicanos and are right here in the heart of a huge population of Spanish-speaking people. The whole city is changing in that direction, but they're resisting.

Q. Did they give any reasons for what they did?

A. After the fact (that it was

done) they did. When I started, I told him I wanted to know why he had done it, and he said, "Well, it was in bad shape. It was peeling so we painted it over."

I asked him how he determined that was the thing to do, and he has never adequately answered that. In the newspaper he was quoted as saying that the paint was peeling and the mural wasn't supposed to last anyway, which is untrue. I meant it to stay there.

The auditorium is in bad shape; it's been in bad shape for a long time, but it's interesting to know that they only painted the front surface and the rest of it is still neglected.

Q. If the paint was falling off, why didn't they ask you if you could retouch it?

A. Well, one thing the president said, is that they didn't think it was worth it—that it would be a waste of money. But I also have to tell you that the wall was in the best shape of all the other ones because that one had been prepared before we put on the mural.

Q. Do you feel there was anything offensive or controversial about your mural?

A. Possibly. I state my opinion when I have one. I have strong feelings about a lot of things; political, economic, aesthetic opinions and I respect the rights of others to have their own. I see education as a growing process which involves a certain amount of questioning and criticism of things the way they are in order to grow, in order to develop new and better ways of thinking and relating to people. In my paintings,

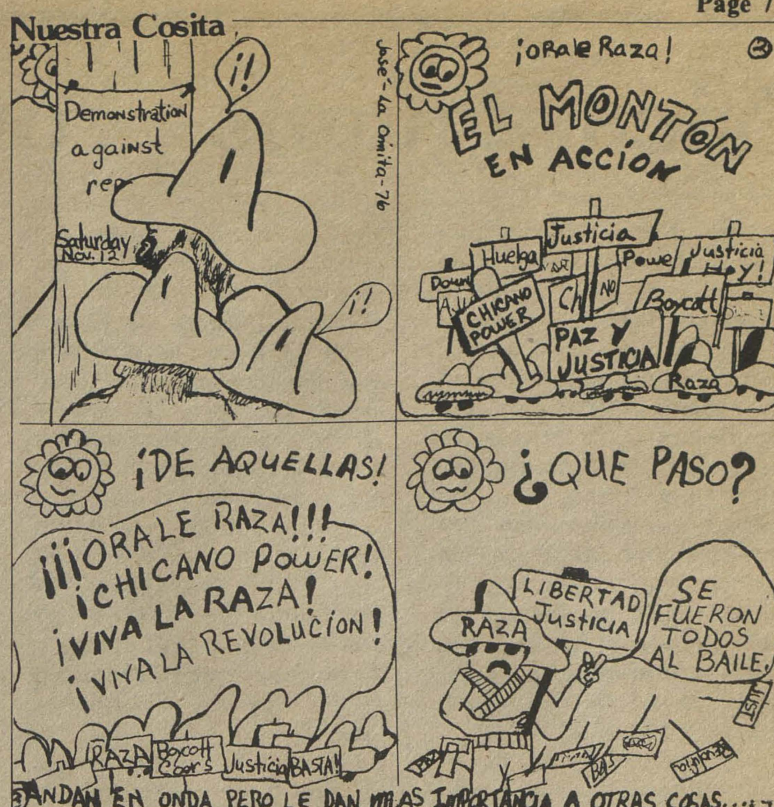
some of those feelings come out. I know not everyone liked the painting. But when I did it, I intended it as part of an educational environment in which the subject matter, the theme expressed, would raise questions in people's minds. Then people could engage in dialogue, people could use it as a tool for learning, as a tool for expressing their own feelings.

Q. Would you then say that your mural was a form of constructive criticism?

A. Yes, I meant it as such. The title as you may know, was The Path to Knowledge and The False University. I wanted people to think about and confront the possibility that the education they were receiving was not real learning; that it was not a tool for their own betterment or for their own progress through life; that it might just be some kind of program or training to make them *manualable*, people who will behave in a prescribed way. That's not what learning is about. Learning is developing the fullest potential of the individual, enabling one to think for himself and to use information to come to correct decisions.

Q. Do you feel the action the administration took upon white-washing the mural was out of defense or out of ignorance?

A. I think both. I think they're defending something. They're afraid. It's a fear of reaction. They don't want to see people think for themselves. I don't think the institutions really want to promote change. I think they're afraid of the implications for society, for education, and for life in general



that the Chicano presence indicates. But their justification is one that comes out of ignorance.

It isn't just as the artist. If it was another artist I would feel the same way because I feel that what they've done is no different than burning the books or destroying films or censoring material that is vital for people to go through the process of learning and questioning for themselves.

Q. Would you say that the mural was also part of the community, and that in destroying it they destroyed part of the community?

A. Yes, I feel so even though some of the community may not understand what I mean by that. But you see, I was one of the first Chicano teachers at this school and to me that was not only my accomplishment, it was an accomplishment of the community. The reason I am here is because some people in the community struggled, sacrificed—they took

their chances. A lot of them were jailed and hassled for creating pressure to the school, to the administration to respond. So, I owe my job here to the community. I grew up in this community. I went to the local schools and my training as an artist reflects that I came from the community. I feel that my work is Chicano.

It is a credit to the community too because the community isn't all violent and gangs, and crime and drugs and all that. It's also people striving, and I didn't do it by myself. So, my work, my presence, is a reflection of the community. So when a Chicano artist gets up there and he paints a wall, he has to do it for them because it's partly theirs and I really meant it for them. I did it for the people and I did it for my students. I did it for myself too, of course, but as a member of this community. So not only have I been insulted and ripped off, so have my students, so has the community.

Coors' influence gets Chicana fired

by Gloria Romero

The twelve-year old boycott of Coors beer maintained by many Chicanos has intensified in recent months due to the dismissal of Patricia Montoya from her cashier-hostess job at the Ramada Inn in Pueblo, Colorado. Ms. Montoya charges she was fired from her position after associates and employees of the Adolph Coors Company, headquartered in Golden, Colorado, applied pressure to Ramada Inn officials because she refused to wear a "Coors—Make it Yours" button.

On August 24, Ms. Montoya was attempting to take breakfast orders from 8 persons who were part of the Coors delegation that had come to Pueblo for the State Fair. A man in the group offered

her the button which she declined. After repeated demands to wear the button Ms. Montoya acknowledged she was boycotting Coors beer at which point the entire group walked out of the dining room refusing to order.

Ms. Montoya's sister, Glenda, also an employee of the Ramada, resigned her position in protest of Patricia's firing. She said she was informed that her sister "would have to be let go" because of the "incident". Bob Autabee, acting manager at the Ramada, explained Ms. Montoya's dismissal was due to "poor work performance" and was in no way linked to the incident with the Coors delegation although she was fired the very next day.

Autabee confirmed that from 18-

25 people representing Adolph Coors, Inc. were lodged at the Ramada Inn for State Fair Week but claimed that this did not influence his decision to dismiss Ms. Montoya. He also denied that Adolph Coors, Inc. had pressured him to fire Ms. Montoya.

Recently, a statewide meeting of the Colorado Labor Council scheduled to be held at the Pueblo Ramada Inn was relocated. The action came about after local and state AFL-CIO officials agreed to support of the alleged influence of Adolph Coors, Inc. "There's no

Announcement

Las Chicanas growth program

by Magdalena Nunez

Las Chicanas is an organization on campus devoted to the improvement of the social, cultural and economic status of all Chicanas, through academic achievement and professional growth.

We seek to serve as a moral support and informational system to university Chicanas. Whether it be information on classes, financial aid, or plain moral support—we are here to help. Your success here at UCR is our goal.

Last year, Las Chicanas laid the foundation for a program involving UCR Chicanas and high school girls from local high schools, which we called the Prima program. Las Primas is the community outreach component of the Chicana organization.

The purpose of the Prima program is to provide successful role models to the Primita (the high school girl), to provide

way we would meet there after the firing of Ms. Montoya," stated Les Sniff, president of the Local 2102. Local 2102 officials have long supported the boycott of Adolph Coors product.

Norm Pledger, president of the Colorado Labor Council, spoke with Autabee about the dismissal. Not satisfied with Autabee's explanation, Pledger then also endorsed the conference relocation move.

Ms. Montoya plans to file suit for unfair employment practices. Support for her cause is coming

from different organizations and community members.

In explaining the situation before them, Glenda Montoya stated "Patricia is not interested in getting any money (from the lawsuit), she just wants it to be known that in this case, as in many others, freedom did not count for this Chicana."

For further information concerning the case contact:

La Cucaracha
P.O. Box 5034
Pueblo, Colorado 81002



BOYCOTT
COORS

Nicaraguans construct new society

by Paul Titus

With decisive finality this summer a broad coalition of forces in Nicaragua acted to defeat Anastasio Somoza's repressive government which had controlled the country for two generations. The defeat of this regime entailed the defeat of a class dictatorship, supported by the United States, which openly used force and brutality to keep the country open to capitalist interests, foreign and internal.

The regime's downfall was the culmination of a civil war that had existed in some degree for the past twenty years. With the liberation of the country now comes the opportunity to restructure and develop Nicaragua for the benefit of all sectors of society.

This opportunity for self determination follows 42 years of rule by the U.S. backed Somoza family, preceded by 21 years of direct U.S. military occupation. As yet there are no lucrative natural resources to exploit within the country and the economy is based on agriculture (mostly for export—such as coffee and cotton).

Under the Somoza government 50% of the entire population lived in rural areas, earning less than \$150 (US) per year (with many earning less than 1/3 that amount). Nicaragua has also had the lowest spending rate on health services and education in Central America (46% of all children die before the age of 4), but had the highest per capita spending on the military (1978 Statistics, NACLA).

Contrast this to the Somoza family: Anastasio Somoza (Anastasio's father) gained power in government through his position as head of the National Guard. Succeeding to the presidency in 1936, he used the office and the National Guard to build an agricultural and industrial empire inherited and expanded by his family. In 1978 it was estimated

to be worth \$400-500 million dollars, and included 25-30 percent of all land and the 26 largest Nicaraguan companies.

Yet the greed of the Somoza family was to have its costs. Their economic domination alienated natural allies in a class divided society. The upper-classes were not able to develop within Nicaragua due to governmental corruption and monopolistic controls by Somoza. This whole situation intensified following the earthquake of 1972 which demolished the city of Managua, the nation's capital. Large portions of the hundreds of millions in external relief were turned into personal profit for Somoza. In response, traditional opposition parties, such as business people and clergy, united to form a Union for Democratic Liberation (UOEL). Their goal was to challenge Somoza in elections, but when their leader, Pedro Chamorro, was assassinated in 1978, they adopted more aggressive policies such as general strikes.

It was not this opposition however, but the organized revolutionary forces which were to have the major role in destroying the Somoza regime. Organized in the early 1960's, the Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional (FSLN), with a core of workers and peasants carried on the main political and military struggle in Nicaragua. FSLN had been divided at times over ideological differences, but with the intensification of the struggle and the greater participation of the masses (especially after the assassination of Chamorro), unity became the source of its strength and support.

Throughout 1978 there were strikes and armed insurrections. During this time a coalition of groups formed the MPU (United People's Movement). The MPU,



"Que la sangre de nuestros martires y la explotacion de nuestras masas se convierta en fuego de matrala."
—FSLN

"Let the blood of our martyrs and the exploitation of the masses be converted to machinegun fire."
—FSLN

representing the revolutionary forces, put forth a program which set propositions for the restructuring of Nicaraguan society. With this program as a core, the struggle was brought to the cities of Nicaragua. Constant agitation was accented in September of 1978 by a coordinated attack in several cities by FSLN forces. This insurrection was defeated by the National Guard. In their counter attack the guard bombed the occupied cities and murdered thousands of civilians.

Throughout his oppressive regime, Somoza had economic and military support from abroad. Not only were American Companies investing their money in Nicaragua, thus indirectly supporting Somoza, but the U.S. government supplied much of the weapons and training with which the National Guard kept control. Weapons were also sold to Somoza's forces by the governments of Argentina, Israel and Portugal. The neighboring countries of El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala, also dictatorships, supported Somoza. Troops from these countries were killed during the fighting.

Fighting continued in 1979 with the increasing support and participation in the FSLN by the entire population. In June, 1979 a final offensive was launched against the dictatorship. The people's forces, within weeks, took control of most of the large cities, virtually all of the countryside and a portion of the capital. On July

17th Somoza left into exile to Miami, Florida. Within two days the coalition government of the FSLN and MPU was officially in control of Nicaragua.

They brought with them a program of unity and reform around which they propose to restructure the country. Some of the essential platforms of the program include the nationalization of all Somoza's properties as well as the expropriation of all natural resources and of all passenger transport. The economy is to be centrally planned, though private enterprise will be permitted.

Agriculture is expected to be arranged into a system of state co-operatives. A massive effort will be made to end the illiteracy of over 1 million Nicaraguans and medicine will be given a social character, available to all. The coalition government implementing this program allows the participation of all progressive forces. It is committed to raising the country from the stagnation, dependency and underdevelopment imposed by the dictatorship and its allies.

With the MPU program, the FSLN and the coalition have stated goals toward which to act. However, the coalition is made up of groups and individuals with disparate political views—socialist and capitalist—whose unifying cause was the defeat of Somoza. Yet the vital essence for the Nicaraguan people is that they be able to continue their revolution and form a new society independently.

The Nicaraguan government is currently requesting foreign assistance in the form of aid and investment funds with which to start rebuilding. But with this years crops unplanted because of the fighting, the people now lack food. Estimations by Canadian sources show that 300 tons of food a day are needed to feed 1 million people while only 40-80 are arriving.

Financing is needed to restore the economic base of the country. In the past, international investment in Nicaragua has perpetuated unjust social relationships by supporting the exploitation by the few. The patterns of commitment Nicaragua establishes now—either tied to the coercion of foreign capital, or toward independent socialist development, will have fundamental effects in determining the kind of society that will emerge in the coming years.

In the Los Angeles area, supply donations have been collected and sent via relief organizations and the Nicaraguan Consulate. Student groups from UCR recently harvested 500 lbs. of dried beans for shipment. On November 2nd a fund raising dinner accompanied by slides and a speaker who recently returned from Nicaragua was held in Riverside.

For ideas or donations Please call 781-9429 or 682-3209. Join us to fight oppression—Solidarity with Nicaragua.

RIVERSIDE, ANOTHER IMPRESSION

July 4, 1979

Evening live the hips,
White tight and beckoning.
Full firm after looking.
These rocket red glare crackers
Burst on your breast
That we might admire
Their distance and both dimensions.
Like long to lick the pages.

With subtle,
Violence somewhere else
We assure the little sanctity of fences
Softened by driveways, shrubbery.

This park is why we did it.
That we might gather on the lawn, collect voices, speak
Actual art, picture of spark
Watch kids do things we never thought of.

But not to lest unaware.
Oh people—don't we know
Sandinista brothers and nieces
Are struggling to sacrifice the pig
We fattened on their lives.
The living stuff that drives
Our revolution must seem a taste of shit,
A wandered path
To those who want not (yet) cars.
Rather the deep breath
Free of boastable oppression.
The chance to start as people
Work and talk as people can.

—Paul Titus

La Casa Ramona begins food drive

by Rebecca Elizarraraz

A community service organization located in San Bernardino, is asking for donations of canned goods.

Annually, Christmas baskets are made up from these canned goods and turkeys are bought with

money donated by various agencies to help 125 needy families in the San Bernardino area.

Anyone who would like to give, deliver your canned goods to 1524 West 7th Street in San Bernardino, Human Services Department—for

additional information contact Amparo Holguin-tel: 889-0018—or you can deliver them to the Chicano Cultural Center, room #2301, Library South, UC Riverside.

Please help those who do not have.