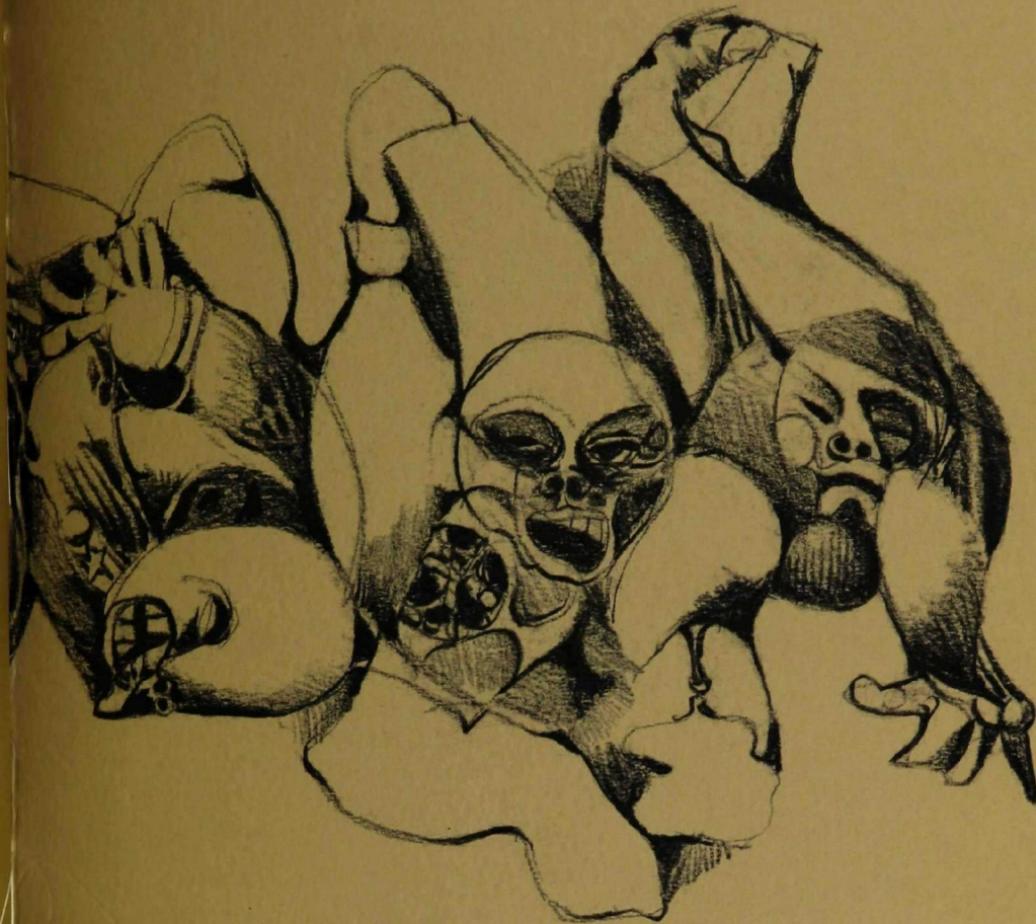


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El Grito

A JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY MEXICAN-AMERICAN THOUGHT
spring 1968 one dollar

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A JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY MEXICAN-AMERICAN THOUGHT

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COVER DESIGN BY ESTEBAN VILLA



This issue of

EL GRITO

is dedicated to

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Editorial

All Mexican-Americans have definite ideas about what kind of society they would like around them. They also have ideas about the responsibilities that delegated and elected officials should have toward them. I am no exception. For example, it seems to me that the day is long past when bilingual teaching of Spanish-speaking students utilizing native-speakers as primary teachers should have been standard, enlightened, and humanistic educational policy. Instead, what do we have? We have the city of New York currently boasting in the national press about its own very first, experimental, pilot, trial effort at bilingual teaching.

The day is long past also when an adequate and complete history of Mexican-Americans should have been standard educational procedure, one that is devoid of ideological biases and gross prostitutions of history. Specifically, when Mexican-American children are taught about the Alamo in their classrooms, it should be standard procedure to mention that the Alamo was followed by over 100 years of rigid segregation and severe exploitation of Chicanos in Texas. In absolutely no sense of the word, therefore, does the word "Alamo" symbolize freedom for Mexican-Americans.

But all this is only symptomatic of the broader problems of the society in which we live. And these problems make one think about the kind of society one would like to live in. I, for one, would like to live in a society in which commercial advertising does not take precedence over human suffering, human efforts, human struggles and aspirations. Therefore, I would like to live in a society in which television and radio news broadcasts are presented as a *public service*, totally devoid of unwelcome interruptions for the peddling of soap, razors, brilliatine, automobiles, cigarettes, and other merchandise. When a people have to wait for news of the world, for news of their country, and even of their own community, while mascara is peddled, then that people have lost the right to be called civilized.

I would also like to live in a society in which the elected officials no longer hold endless hearings on social problems. It seems absurd, as we do today, to elect a man to office in Washington only to have him return in order to find out what problems exist. In such a system it appears obvious that people are electing representatives who

do not know what is going on, and who then, at taxpayers expense, must return in order to find out.

I would like to live in a society in which once again the fundamental concept of the Roman Tribune has become an integral part of the legal system. Basically, the Roman Tribune was charged with the defense of the individual plebian citizen from the arbitrary action of the patrician magistrates. In modern society, the function of a Tribune would be to *halt* legal proceedings whenever the poor of society receive an inadequate defense in the courts. The low rate of appeals stemming from the offices of public defenders is reason enough for the need of a Tribunal office.

I would like to live in a society that has a graduated draft system, like the graduated income tax, in which time served in the military increases with relative income. To depend upon a volunteer army, lured by higher pay, would only result in a mercenary army, a medieval anachronism. Such a higher paid army of volunteers would only result in the poor of society flocking to the service in order to eat and receive a better salary. If that were the case, we would be back to where we are today, the poor of society dying in vastly disproportionate numbers during wartime. Graduated military service based on economic means is the only way to prevent this injustice.

In the same manner, I would like to live in a society in which war industries, as well as people, are drafted in time of war and possibly in time of peace. In such a system, workers and management would be paid the same wages as are soldiers. Since there is no significant shortage of patriots in the land, this plan should pose no serious problem.

I would like to live in a society in which the youth who are sent to die in battle are given the right to vote.

Finally, I would like to live in a society in which the peoples who make up its composition write their own history. All too often this basic function has been usurped by others, and the Mexican-American is an excellent case in point. Any enlightened modern nation should bestow upon, and subsidize, its citizens this one, basic human right: the right to record their own history.

“El Grito”

B. G. FIGUERO, S.D.B.

Para sacar sus ideas al sol y darle permanencia al aliento de su voz el hombre recurre a la palabra escrita. Por su medio las teorías se esclarecen; se denuncian abusos; se excita a la acción y aun la rebelión; la autoridad se promueve o se ataca.

En el Mundo moderno, la palabra escrita se une a la imagen llevada por la televisión y la onda radiodifusora para crear la opinión pública. Hoy en día por ejemplo, el hombre común y corriente se halla dudoso ante el problema de Vietnam. Ya no sabe si la guerra es moral y justa o inmoral y por tanto, algo que debe rechazarse.

Cosa parecida pasa con el México-americano que no ha estudiado su historia, el origen de su cultura y al desarrollo de la sociedad estadounidense; cree, porque se lo han dicho y repetido, aunque se rebelde al sambenito, que es un retardado, que su cultura no sirve, que pertenece a una raza inferior . . .

En este agobiante miasma, llega — refrescante y vivificadora como un ráfaga de aire puro — la voz articulada, joven y rebelde que se llama “El Grito.”

Como bisturí de hábil cirujano, los editoriales de “El Grito” abren la carne complaciente de nuestra sociedad actual, descubren el tumor, sajan la bolsa de pus y le dan oportunidad de recuperar la salud perdida.

Al leer las páginas impresas, toma cuerpo la figura del pueblo de ascendencia mexicana, el peón maltratado y explotado en Texas y California, el minero de Arizona, el trabajador migrante perseguido por la policía porque osa pedir un salario decente.

La luz, en este caso, viene del Occidente, de California, para alumbrar a todo el Suroeste y Medio Oeste donde sudan, puján, maldicen y luchan los México-americanos. Una luz que guía y alumbrá. Una voz que encarna todo lo que siente la raza y no sabía definir; o aquello que siente y sabe definir pero no se atrevía a condenar; o que siente, define y condena pero callaba. Aquí la condena se hace pública, la protesta — clamorosa e imperativa — se consigna a la prensa y al mundo.

La acogida que ha tenido esta revista de ensayos ha sido favorable y halagadora. Sus lectores van desde el profesional y político

hasta el estudiante de secundaria y el ama de casa. 25 bibliotecas públicas están suscritas a ella. Tiráronse 2000 ejemplares en Octubre del año pasado. Para el siguiente número contaba ya con 600 suscripciones sin que realmente hubiese habido un concertado esfuerzo de propaganda.

La tesis que sostiene "El Grito" desbarata la hipótesis machacada por sociólogos intersados que pretenden ocultar la opresión y la explotación a que ha sido sometido el hispanoamericano en esta nación achacando su atraso a algo inherente al mismo: su rústica simplicidad, su limitada mentalidad, el apego a su "cultura tradicional" que es — en su concepto — inferior y astrasada.

"Pero esta estructuración retórica es un fraude enorme, una desvergonzada mentira, mentira que debe ser despojada de su vestidura esotérica y santificada para que muestre su carácter vicioso e intelectualmente espurio a plena luz" (así el editorial del primer número).

La corrección de esta teoría, solo podrá provenir del mismo méxico-americano. Se ha fundado este periódico precisamente para proveerle de un foro para su pensamiento. Si se siente torero, que clave la banderilla donde cuenta; si se siente profeta o víctima que cristalice su angustia o su rabia en la palabra vertida en prosa o en verso, en inglés o en español; y si habla por imágenes, si el lápiz o la acuarela es su medio de expresión, que dibuje o pinte para "El Grito." Unica condición: que tenga su mensaje calidad y relieve.

* * *

FATHER FIGUEROA is the editor of the Spanish language section of the *Catholic Voice*, the newspaper for the Oakland Archdiocese. "EL GRITO" is reprinted here from the February 14, 1968 issue with the author's permission. Since February, when Father Figueroa wrote this review, the circulation of *EL GRITO* has risen from 600 to over 900, is now circulated in 24 states in the U.S., and in three foreign countries.

Tierra Amarilla is Dying

TONY REY

The highways that criss-cross the town are lined with the decaying remnants of a once bustling farming community. Closed restaurants, a dilapidated motel, a gutted movie theater and a couple of general stores long ago out of business emanate silence. Tierra Amarilla is like a dozen other towns in northern New Mexico. Its citizens, like its scattered buildings, are quiet and somber.

For the second time in six months the town of Tierra Amarilla is being recognized throughout the country. In June of last year it was identified as the place of the courthouse raid. Today Sierra Amarilla is being heard from again, and again the news stories talk about violence here. The reporters are saying that the silence, the detached air of its citizens is the aftermath of murder. They are wrong. Tierra Amarilla is dying.

What the sophisticated gringo reporters interpret as fear is not caused by the June raid or the murder of Eulogio Salazar, a county deputy sheriff, here January 3. What the police and state officials describe as blatant disregard for the law and terrorism are but the spasms of a community refusing to die.

To prevent the death of Tierra Amarilla and several other towns like it in northern New Mexico, some of the residents of the area are desperately jumping into the political arena. The vehicle has been the Alianza Federal de Mercedes. Slowly more and more of the residents of northern New Mexico have come to see the Alianza as the only hope for survival. The Alianza's impact in northern New Mexico is profound. The impetus of the movement is felt throughout the state. The legitimacy of the Alianza is recognized by political activists throughout the country.

The Alianza has given hope to the Spanish-Americans of northern New Mexico. Moreover, it has given them pride in their Hispanic past. It has begun to erase the inferiority that has been engendered by the gringo in the minds and hearts of these people.

The established politicians of New Mexico long ago recognized the threat of the militant, grassroots political movement. At first they ignored Reies Tijerina and the Alianza. Then came the accusations of "charlatan" and "opportunist." These were followed by the labels of "Castroite" and "Communist." The reaction culminated with the accusations of "insurrectionist" and "traitor."

The actions and reactions of establishment politicians fitted their degenerating changes in attitude. At first they tolerated the demonstrations and marches. Then they criticized the rallies and confer-

ences. Then they began outlawing the meetings. This was followed by an investigation of the organization. Then came the wholesale arrests of the Alianza leadership and wild, criminal charges, blatant violations of civil rights and disregard of human rights.

The investigations and prosecutions continued; Alianza and other militant Mexican-American activists began to accept this as a way of life. Then came the murder of Eulogio Salazar.

The reaction of the state was totally unexpected and, by any standard, unwarranted. At the suggestion of Gov. David F. Cargo, the bail of the Alianza members charged in the June incident was revoked. No cause was given. No connection between the Alianza and the tragic death was demonstrated. Cristobal Tijerina and Alianza public relations director Felix Martinez were arrested, charged and arraigned on what the Albuquerque papers called "murder (accessories)." The governor, the press and the politicians lunged at the opportunity of destroying the Alianza and with it the political-ization of the Spanish-American in New Mexico.

A day after the screaming headlines and the official accusations, it became increasingly evident that Cristobal Tijerina and Felix Martinez were not involved. A reporter for the Santa Fe New Mexican wrote an article placing the two men in his presence in Santa Fe at the time the murder took place. The state did not drop the charges. Reies Tijerina and others of those who were placed in the State Penitentiary for "safe keeping" were in Albuquerque at the crucial time. The state refuses to reinstate the bail.

The crude apparently illegal behavior of the governor, the State Police and the judge demonstrate the threat felt by them. The threat is political in terms they don't really understand because it represents an indigenous Chicano political movement.

They don't know how to control such a movement. They know they must destroy it. Undoubtedly their efforts will continue. They will continue to try to break the political back of the residents of Tierra Amarilla and other towns in northern New Mexico that are trying hard to survive. When the movement has been destroyed, Tierra Amarilla will be dead.

TONY REY is a Mexican-American, born and raised in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He has worked on *EL PAPEL*, a monthly newspaper published in Albuquerque. "Tierra Amarilla is Dying" first appeared in the February 3, 1968 issue of the National Guardian and is here reprinted with permission of the author. (At press time, *EL GRITO* has learned that the Alianza leadership has been arrested once again, a couple of hours before they were to leave to participate in the Poor Peoples' March in Washington.—*Editor*)

The Coming of Zamora

a story

PHILIP D. ORTEGO

Alarcon has been sitting on the ground, haunched, his back flat against the adobe wall of the building, scratching strange marks upon the earth between his feet. He is not conscious of what he is doing although the marks seem to form some kind of deliberately mysterious design, perhaps drawn up from somewhere deep in the consciousness of his race. Mute and silent like the stones he pecks away once in a while with the tip of his stick, he has been sitting there for several hours, waiting and watching the entrance of the heavy beamed adobe courthouse where the trial of Zamora has been going on for a week.

He is simply waiting there like some dark Olympian runner, waiting for the pronouncement of the inevitable news. There is something almost prehistoric in his face. It is gaunt, and the cut of his jaw gives him an inhospitable, almost hostile, look. He knows it is too soon for the news, and so he waits, recollecting in his mind's eye the events that precipitated the trial. Remembering, he can see the great smiling face of Zamora as he spoke to them the first time.

¡Amigos! The time has come! We have waited and waited, and now we can wait no longer!

But Alarcon remembers that the people were fearful, for the truth of the matter was that they had been betrayed many times, even by their own kind. Nevertheless, they listened to Zamora, for there was something imperative in his gaze and in his speech.

Alarcon nods slightly as he remembers that Zamora is not a tall man as one measures men physically, but his presence creates the impression of strength and height. And out of that impression, Alarcon recalls, grew the alliance that was to forge the people into a unified political body. He concedes that there were those who scoffed at first and those who have been waiting silently as though listening for the footfalls of some approaching catastrophe. But the people, the forgotten people, came once more from the fields as they had before to listen to Zamora and his message of hope.

Alarcon's eyes are closed now; the lines on his dark and furrowed Indian face seem to have been etched there by inconsolable years of anxiety. He is not yet old, but here and there are strands of gray in his hair which is still very black and lissic like the other Indian members of his race. The edges of his lips appear sunken, sagging from the high cheekbones that give his face a primitive air. He knows that he comes from a proud and illustrious race, but the decades of conflict and subjugation have dampened his pride and aspirations.

It is true, he recalls, that there is something in Zamora's words that seems to straighten the spines of the forgotten people who listen to him. That day when he told them once more of their long and arduous struggle to regain their lands which were to have been guaranteed under the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, when he told them what they already knew about the gringo, his politics, his culture, his arrogance . . . that day they walked home with heads held high instead of bowed, for there was something in the way he spoke that gave them hope, a hope that in this man they would not be deceived.

Yes, it was true what Zamora told them, but the thought disturbs Alarcon. They have indeed become strangers in their own land. *They*, who had been here with the land, were now regarded as the foreigners, the immigrants.

Remembering, Alarcon purses his lips angrily. His forebears did not ask to become citizens, he mutters to himself. Nevertheless, he *is* a citizen as his parents before him and their parents before them. That should count for something! But he knows that it counts for naught. The gringo law is based upon possession. The government is the possessor; and the government is the law. How does one fight the law and the government? Through the Veterans Administration, people said after the war. You're a veteran! The government will help you! But he found out that the government is a gringo government; and it helps only gringos or those who look enough like gringos. But for those of us like me, Alarcon thinks, brown-skinned and indio, unable to pass for either gringo or spanish, no one helps.

¡Hijos de la chingada! He curses silently. They! They are the foreigners! the gringos! the poachers! But Zamora will show them!

He will show them how to get back their land, Zomora explained that day. What the hell does the country want with so much national forest anyway?

The earth is not yellow. The thought intrudes insistently into Alarcon's mind. *La tierra no es amarilla*. The earth is dark and rich

and brown. It is rather like the color of many of the people who have scratched upon its surface for a score of generations. Alarcon regards the back of his sinuous hand as he thinks about the land. What *has* happened to the land grants? he wonders.

He goes over the explanation by rote, for it is an old story. He begins: La Raza came to this land over three-hundred years ago. They tilled the soil, and it bore fruit. This was our way of life for over two-hundred years. And then the gringos came. We fought them valiantly but were defeated. Our land was annexed, but guaranteed. Hah! Then for sixty-three years the gringos robbed and cheated us out of our birthright. Then the government came, and our lands dwindled to even less. False claims processed in gringo courts dispossessed us. Exorbitant taxes devoured our land as delinquent. And now we walk the earth as aliens in the land of our fathers.

Alarcon nods, assuring himself that Zamora had not told them what they did not already know. But it was more than this that drew the dispossessed to him. He had a plan! A plan no less significant than Zapata's plan of Ayala. There was a way, he told us, to regain the land. The law could be challenged. The government was not above the law. And though there was fear among the people, there was also newfound hope.

The alliance was struck! Remembering the episode once more, Alarcon begins to feel like a revolutionary again. No! Not the stereotype of the revolutionary with machete and mauser, but a revolutionary filled with the spirit of progress. This was how he felt that July 4th weekend when they walked to the capitol of the state to protest the injustice of the government. The walk had been beneficial in many ways. It gave them all a sense of purpose and accomplishment. They were really doing something now after all the years of waiting, and doing nothing.

Then there was the fracas at the park. Alarcon sighs, remembering the incident. Everything was going along fine until the rangers became aggressive. It may have been a foolish act to arrest them for trespassing, but the news of the incident catapulted their cause into the national limelight. They were no longer the forgotten people. Alarcon is a philosopher; *he* sees the justice of his cause and he wonders why others don't. But Alarcon is a victim of the romantic fallacy: he believes that good eventually triumphs over evil. If he did not believe this, then he would not have joined so quixotic a cause. But he does not mistake a windmill for an adversary. No. He recognizes his adversaries well enough. He clenches his jaw, for he

cannot help but feel betrayed, considering the outcome of the venture. He knows that many people have regarded it simply as an *adventure*, headed by an upstart outsider. But he knows better, and so he suppresses his agitation.

Instead he focuses his gaze upon a mongrel dog that has cast itself upon the ground in the shade of an adjacent building. Alarcon knows that it will do no good to become angry, especially now. They have all become marked men, but Zamora is bearing the crushing weight of retaliation. If the governor had only heeded their plea, Alarcon thinks. Why did he fail to keep that appointment with them? Alarcon is cloaked in the garment of belief, and so he cannot understand the failings of others.

The dog is sleeping, but occasionally it opens one eye to survey the world. By some act of transmutation, Alarcon regards himself as Zamora's eye. All morning he has sat and waited, watching. He cannot define the nature of his devotion, except to say that he has committed himself to a course of action. But there has been a transformation of other sorts that he is only now aware of. According to the gringos, he has become an agitator, an advocate of violence, even a Communist.

The act of fury came at noon two days following a raid of one of their meetings. Alarcon remembers it vividly. The police swooped down upon them like a sinister and avenging bird of prey. In return, Zamora attempted a citizen's arrest of one of the officials, but the situation turned into an affray with shooting and hostages. They fled to the hills to escape the wrath of the government that had sent out the militia with armored tanks, for the government officials called it a state of siege.

For the next five days, Alarcon recalls, they lived like hunted animals, burdened by fear and frustration. There were few places to go. The people were afraid to give them refuge. Five days later they had all been rounded up, including Zamora.

Alarcon scratches his beard and meditates. The government kept Zamora in jail for two weeks before releasing him on bond. The charges were fantastic. But the law had been challenged. And soon they would know if the government was above the law.

Alarcon knows now that the law, like God, works in mysterious ways. It is an alchemy of signs and symbols and rituals which Alarcon mistrusts. A sharp glint comes into his metallic eyes as he thinks about the law.

In the shade, the dog yawns as if tired of the human spectacle. Some other time, Alarcon would have whistled for the mongrel. He

would have scratched its head, sending it home with a pointed finger. But today he is dispassionate and his will dulled by the inexorable pain in his heart. He has kept his vigil like a spider waiting patiently in the center of its web, waiting for the slightest vibration from without.

For two days Alarcon has slept only off and on, but he has not succumbed to the sleep that is gnawing at the edges of his consciousness. He has grown accustomed to the sleeplessness of conflict. Zamora warned them there would be trying days. No more trying than the deprivations of war, Alarcon thinks. For he has come to look upon this conflict for the repossession of the land as a war, no less serious or intense than the war for the Pacific in which he fought. He shakes his head even before he asks himself the question. No. There is no gratitude. A plastron of medals is a meager compensation for the blood of one's own kind. Alarcon suddenly feels torpid and perplexed. The hope inside of him is turning to emptiness. He is numb now from sitting so long in one position. But he simply shifts his body as the mongrel watches him with a curious sense of tolerance and amusement. Alarcon picks up one of the pebbles near his feet and flings it at the dog who rises suddenly from the path of the projectile. It stands for a moment, looking puzzled at Alarcon who shoos it away with a quick nod of his head.

¡Vete! Go! he grunts at the animal, who seems undecided about the meaning of Alarcon's words. The dog finally trots away, and Alarcon resumes his watch.

When he looks at the clock in front of the bank, he notes that it is almost noon. The jury has been out for almost two hours now, deliberating the fate of Zamora and his accomplices. Alarcon tries to subdue a twinge of guilt, but he cannot, for he feels he is as culpable as the rest. Zamora is not the guilty one! he wants to scream. The government is at fault! That faceless and amorphous institution that exacts its pound of flesh at the expense of its victim. Alarcon wants to shout, for he feels as if the world is pressing in on him. Here! Take the rest of my blood and body! But he suppresses the panic ticking in his brain.

The nervous rush of people toward the entrance of the courthouse signals the return of the jury. Alarcon rests his head upon his knees as if in prayer, but he is simply fortifying himself for the announcement that will come as no surprise to anyone.

Right now Alarcon needs to feel the soft ground of his *tierra amarilla*. He needs to walk its gashed furrows, inhaling its fragrance.

Though it is no longer his, the land it still there. And remembering this, his anger mounts, though he promised Zamora that he would be calm.

Into the bright sunlit day Zamora strides, and the forgotten people search his face for a sign. The news has preceded him. The government has found him guilty. But Zamora is appealing to a higher court.

Alarcon struggles to restrain his emotion. He looks at Zamora, questioningly, puzzled. Zamora smiles at the forgotten people. They cheer triumphantly. And Zamora tells them that they have not lost. This is but the first step in challenging the law. For the moment, the government has won. But it cannot win every battle. Every Goliath meets his David, he tells them.

¡Vayanse a sus casas! Zamora tells them. Go home! And he raises his hands in a Christian gesture of pacification. But the people know the meaning of the sign.

Alarcon turns and walks away slowly. Turning into the street where he had kept his vigil, he notices the mongrel sitting in the middle of the road as if waiting for him. He whistles, and the dog lopes toward him, wagging its tail and panting. Alarcon reaches down and scratches its head.

Que vago eres, he says to the dog, who looks up at him as if understanding the words.

Alarcon sighs and continues up the street with the dog trailing at his heels. The dog is oblivious of the fact that Alarcon is going home to await the coming of Zamora.



PHILIP D. ORTEGO is a second generation Chicago-born Mexican-American. He has studied at the University of Pittsburgh, the University of Texas at El Paso, and the University of New Mexico where he is presently a doctoral candidate. He is a cultural linguist and teaches the English language and literature at New Mexico State. He has published in a variety of "little" and national magazines like the Nation, The New Republic, The Texas Observer, The Educational Forum, et al. He has received numerous awards for both fiction and poetry and at present is completing a novel of the Mexican Revolution of 1913 for Houghton Mifflin.

Viet Nam Veteran

BOB BARRON

(VIETNAM VETERAN is a conversation that took place recently in San Jose, California which was recorded by Mr. Barron—Editor.)

A youth with one leg missing hops on crutches toward a group of men and they begin to talk:

NACHO: Hey, Johnny, long time no see. Where have you been?

JOHNNY: Vietnam.

NACHO: Hey, I didn't know. That explains your leg?

JOHNNY: My lack of a leg.

NACHO: Yeah. Marines? Army?

JOHNNY: Army.

NACHO: But didn't you just go in? How long you been in?

JOHNNY: Yeah, man, I got drafted. Took sixteen weeks training, leave, shipped to Vietnam, and I got hit three months after I got there.

NACHO: Bullet?

JOHNNY: No. Mortars. A round landed right in the middle of five of us. Killed three of my buddies.

NACHO: Got you by surprise, or what?

JOHNNY: Yeah, right in the rice paddies. They were up on some hills real close by. They were North Vietnamese with uniforms and all. Just as good as us. They got us right in the open. They killed everybody in my company except five of us. All the survivors were wounded.

NACHO AND OTHER MEN IN THE GROUP: ¡Hijo! ¡Puto, mano! Jesus!

NACHO: Were there other Chicanos?

JOHNNY: Yeah, plenty. About sixteen.

NACHO: All dead now?

JOHNNY: Yeah.

TRINI: How many in the company?

JOHNNY: Oh, about a hundred.

NACHO: Why do you ask that, Trini?

TRINI: Oh, some Chicanos were passing out leaflets around here that said where Chicanos were 9% of the population in California and that 21% of the Vietnam dead were Chicanos. 1967, I think.

NACHO: Who was passing out those leaflets? Hippies?

TRINI: No. Chicanos were passing them out.

(ANOTHER MAN): They were decent people.

NACHO: Oh? Decent?

(OTHER MAN): Yes. They were respectable people like you and me.

NACHO: Yeah?

JOHNNY: I'm against the war in Vietnam, too.

NACHO: Yeah? I'll be. I guess its true what the hippies are saying.

JOHNNY: (to TRINI) You're pissed off about the 21%. You are pissed off, you don't like it do you, about Chicanos dying in Vietnam, I mean.

TRINI: I don't like it. Of course I don't like it.

JOHNNY: Well, that ain't nothing. There were about twenty-five Negroes in that company I was in. All dead, except one. There were some Puerto Riqueños too, about four or five. About half of the company was Negroes and Latins.

TRINI: ¡Que gachol

NACHO: Man alivell

OTHERS: ¡Hijole! Jesus! Wow, man!

✓ ✓ ✓

BOB BARRON is from San Jose, California. Johnny, the Vietnam war veteran, is in his early twenties. He was wounded and lost his leg in January, 1968 just prior to the Tet Offensive.

En Defensa de los Tacos

PACO SOL

Pasé por la casa de un viejo amigo hace algunas semanas, un mexicano de “sangre azteca pura,” y aprovechando la ocasión de vernos después de un largo tiempo, nos fuimos a comer unos tacos y echarnos unos cuantos tequilas encima.

Por preferir mantener a mi amigo en la oscuridad, me abstengo de hacerlo público nombrándolo. El es uno de esos “tipos” que valen demasiado como para que la atrevida voz de las masas se lo lleve por encima. Bueno, de todas maneras, entre trago y trago, no pasándonos del límite de la buena conducta, me dijo en tono muy serio: “Mano, si ESOS gringos de m. se dejaran de pelear en Viet Nam y se vinieran a comerse unos cuantos tacos, ¡qué lindo sería vivir!” “Pero,” dije yo, “¿qué te incumbe éso a tí?” “Es que uno de ESOS gringos es mi hijo.”

Eso de que la guerra en Viet Nam es sólo de los “gringos” no me convence a mí. El caso de mi amigo es uno de muchos. La guerra está llena de mexicanos, negros, filipinos, y blancos también, luchando por no se qué cosa. Pensando en esas cosas, a mí se me pasaron los tequilas como los segundos en un reloj. Mi amigo prefirió llorar.

Seguro que por ahí va a haber un sabiondo que me va a acusar de ser muy trágico, muy “estilo María Félix.” Hay individuos que nunca entienden el significado trágico de toda guerra, y el significado trágico de ESTA guerra. No me importa gran cosa que se burlen así de mí, me consuelo que uno de estos días el Tío Sam los va a llamar . . . y entonces, ¡a ver si se ríen de mí!

Lo peor de esta guerra es que la “otra” guerra, la buena guerra está cada vez peor. Cada centavo que es gastado en Viet Nam significa un centavo menos gastado entre los millones de pobres en E.E.U.U., quienes contribuyen tanto a esta sociedad como cualquier otro grupo.

Es cierto que los problemas políticos de la guerra no son tan simples como esta columna parece tratar de indicar. Pero hay ocasiones en que de poco o nada vale la política, cuando hay que elegir entre poder curar un mal grave en la sociedad nuestra, la pobreza,

y matar por razones que ni el Presidente Johnson parece entender muy bien.

Mi voz de protesta llega algo tarde en relación a los numerosos gritos que han sido puestos por otras personas. Pero no pude resistir la tentación de contribuir con mi grano de arena a esta lucha de todos, por lo menos en defensa de los tacos, y las buenas cosas de la vida.

✓ ✓ ✓

En Defensa de los Tacos originally appeared in *EL INFORMADOR* on March 27, 1968. *EL INFORMADOR* is the Spanish language section of the *Oakland Post*. It is reprinted here with permission of the author.

¡Viet Nam!

Esteban Villa

ESTEBAN VILLA was born in Tulare, California in 1930. He attended public schools in Tulare, Visalia, and Bakersfield, California. He also studied at Bakersfield Junior College and in 1961 he received his B.Ed. at the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland. Currently Mr. Villa teaches arts and crafts at Linden High School in Stockton, California. In the past, he has worked as farm worker, post office clerk, library clerk, and other odd jobs. He has exhibited his works in museums throughout the state, and has received various awards.



Nirva '66



Villas '65



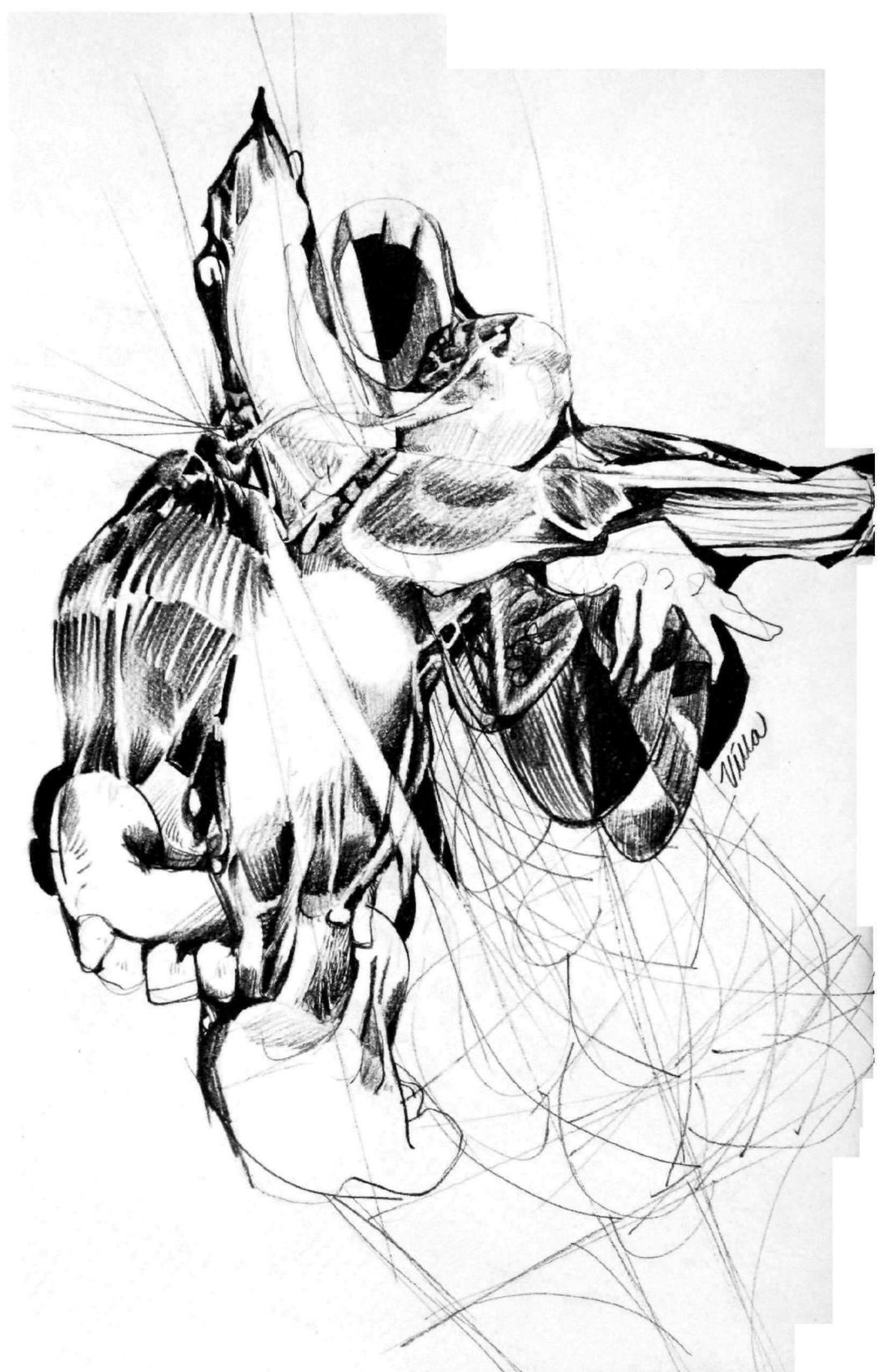
Vilma '66











Vietnam

PHILIP J. JIMENEZ

The scope of the conflict in Southeast Asia reveals the multiplicity and diversity of the interests involved. One recognizes there are few absolute truths, if any, but merely perspectives. The delicately balanced global relationships create the possibility that similar situations might someday arise elsewhere in the future, and an objective consideration of the issues involved is the only way to synthesize a position which will be consonant with the existing framework for the maintenance of peace, and facilitate the resolution of future conflicts of this type.

The United States Department of State, Office of the Legal Advisor, released a document which was printed in the Senate Congressional Record, March 10, 1966, titled "The Legality of the U.S. Participation in the Defense of Vietnam". The adversary nature of the document precluded the degree of objectivity essential for a clear, impartial analysis of the issues. It establishes as a major premise the right of the United States and South Vietnam to engage in collective self-defense. But there are several assumptions in this document that can be questioned.

Under the terms of the Charter of the United Nations, a treaty to which the United States is a party, and which therefore is constitutionally "the supreme law of the land", signatory nations are barred from the exercise of unilateral force, the Security Council of the United Nations possessing sole discretion in the prescription of measures to be taken for the preservation and maintenance of peace. However, Article 51 of the Charter recognizes the right of individual or collective self-defense in the event of armed attack upon a member state. While it has been argued that such right is not available to South Vietnam because of non-membership, this contention can be quickly dealt with. The right of self-defense against armed attack was *not created* by the Charter, but rather its inclusion is merely declaratory of a long recognized rule of international law. Article 51 preserves a right inherent in all states.

A somewhat more difficult issue arises in determining whether South Vietnam *is* a political entity in which such a right inheres. The terms of the Geneva Accords of 1954, "the agreement on the

cessation of hostilities in *Vietnam*”, do not contemplate the creation of two independent states. The 17th parallel was to be a *temporary* military demarcation line providing for the regrouping of the Viet Minh to the north, and the forces of the French Union to the south. Article 6 of the “Final Declaration of the Geneva Conference on the Problem of Restoring Peace to Indochina” states that the line is provisional and “shall not in any way be interpreted as constituting a political or territorial boundary”. This is declaratory of the fact that *Vietnam is one single entity*. Therefore, the action of “North” Vietnam cannot be seen as constituting *foreign* aggression or intervention. Indeed, the United States, although not a party to the Geneva Accords, issued a declaration with respect to the state of affairs in Southeast Asia on July 21, 1954; nowhere in this declaration did it recognize the political partition of the State of Vietnam. Yet, the United States repeatedly ignores this political reality in its own justification of the bombing of “North” Vietnam as necessary defense against a *foreign* aggressor.

The Geneva Accords stipulated that the divided country was to hold a *nation-wide* plebiscite by 1956, *not* to determine who was to govern the north, or the south, *but rather the government of Vietnam*. However, the Diem government in Saigon denied any obligation on its part to participate in such an election. This denial was based on the ground that the joint participation of the Hanoi government meant the election would not be free. As pointed out in a legal memorandum prepared by the “Lawyers Committee on American Policy Toward Vietnam”, printed in the Senate Congressional Record, September 23, 1965, the United States government apparently supported the position taken by the Diem government.¹ The same memorandum suggests a more cogent reason for the Diem government’s refusal to abide by the terms of the Geneva Accords, as expressed by former president Eisenhower in his memoirs:

“I have never talked or corresponded with a person knowledgeable in Indo-Chinese affairs who did not agree that had elections been held at the time of the fighting possibly 80 percent of the population would have voted for the Communist Ho Chi Minh as their leader rather than Chief of State Bao Dai”.²

Thus we see the Geneva Accords in a new perspective, defined as a cease-fire conditioned upon performance of *mutual* obligations. Since the agreement was breached by the *Saigon* government, it would seem that Hanoi would be at least justified in considering

the Geneva agreement terminated, and itself free to resume the *civil war* that it so successfully waged prior to 1954.

Article 51 also requires that a state be under "armed attack". Therefore it must be demonstrated that South Vietnam, even if recognized as an independent political entity, was under armed attack as contemplated by the United Nations Charter, that is, a danger the magnitude and immediacy of which would render futile and suicidal any appeal to the Security Council prior to retaliation. The nature of the "offensive" initiated by the north Vietnamese prior to heavy United States commitment can best be described as subversive; numbers of guerrilla forces infiltrated the south of Vietnam. It should also be noted that the great bulk of these guerrillas were south Vietnamese who went north in 1954, probably to prepare for just such a contingency. It cannot be contended seriously that this course of action may be condoned when the invaders are Cuban (Bay of Pigs), but not condoned when they are Vietnamese, unless the considerable success enjoyed by the latter, renders the action reprehensible.

In any event, it is to be seriously questioned whether this type of offensive can justifiably give rise to the unilateral intervention of the United States under the sanctifying label of collective self-defense. It is reasonably to be inferred that a charter which grants such broad powers to the United Nations Security Council should allow such an exception as is contained in Article 51 only in cases of immediate large scale armed invasion. No such exigency appears to have existed here. The action pursued by the United States in Vietnam was based on the rather questionable discretion of the United States to define for itself the breath and scope of the concept of armed attack. Such action resulted only in an intensification of the hostilities and the threat of further expansion of the area of conflict.

CONCLUSION

The action pursued unilaterally by the United States certainly sets grave precedents. It invites any nation, with sufficient power, to define for itself the scope of any conflict, and to intervene unilaterally if it is at all possible to construct, however tenuously, a legal basis for that action. The nation invoking this precedent acts in derogation of the broad powers ascribed to the appropriate international institution, in this case, the Security Council of the United Nations.

This circumnavigation of the institutions in which have been vested the authority to determine proper courses of action in international conflicts merely sets a precedent which other nations may invoke against us in some future conflict. We cannot survey and judge solely from our perspective and assume we act in the interest of the American people. It is not in the interest of the people, *any people*, to deny the imperatives which mandate the containment of violence.

/ / /

1. Question No. 7, "Questions and Answers on Vietnam", Department of State publication No. 7724, August, 1964, page 8.

2. Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Mandate for Change: The White House Years, 1953-1956", London, 1963, page 372.

PHILIP J. JIMENEZ, 31 years old, was born in Richmond, California. He received his B.A. at the University of Utah where he graduated *cum laude*. He is currently a student of Law at the University of California at Berkeley.

Poetry

REFLECTIONS OF AN INARTICULATE CHILDHOOD

the caves were lit
by faces drawn
in a hazy pose
of urined dreams,
through the summer air
my drumbeat rang
like carousels of sound,
i heard and danced
a savage dance
knife-gleams at my feet,
you saw me run
over naked glass
eyes biting in the sun
a wolf-child speed
of rocks and bricks
as windows shattered gleaming sticks
gaping mouths exploding water,
gushed my skin, aware almost
of what it felt.
i bathed the flesh
of my animal self
alive to the instinct
of closing death,
white in law
and in fact
the old woman who bore me
came to terms
and a kind of peace,
but i ran to touch and seek
what must be there
ebon skin woman
she rattled the eyes
on loose summer days
when children clank
with shoes of tin
and sweepers push
against the noonday tar.
whoring games of youthful play
were sweated august days,
the first surprising touch
and mystery thereof grew
moistened by her warmth

and swelling visions
on summer beds
played flaming walls
of rounded flesh
across the bricklike
prison of your mind,
you felt the need
to taste her flesh
and swim your head afire
across her chest
and pause reflect
upon the rising bone
and curve of shoulder warmth,
to reach her nervous thighs
engulfed in vaginal smiles
knowing her blackness
and your fantasy,
bitch of sensua
mother of our passion
distant crystal memory

REFLECTIONS OF AN INARTICULATE CHILDHOOD

curious how skies
infect the mind,
a faulted pearl
dogs your footsteps
the mind's eye
perceiving the closeness
despairs of hearing a song,
fairy castles
in the soot
gingerbread baking
on the tar
curious how the
phantom child
weaves his tale
among the young,

curious too
the broken kite
ripped by the wind
useless on a rainswept roof

REFLECTIONS OF AN INARTICULATE CHILDHOOD

snowflake afternoon,
crystal winds sharp
upon my face,
pastoral silence
of abandoned streets,
my boots intrude
I crush the virgin white
unconscious of an art.
lifeless cat upon a snowbank
stiffened fur soon to disappear,
wine huddled in a doorway
a feeble gesture,
impassively I stride
self importance
written on my tracks

22 MILES . . .

From 22 I see my first 8 weren't.

Around the 9th, I was called "meskin".

By the 10th, I knew and believed I was.

I found out what it meant to know, to believe . . before my 13th.

Through brown eyes, seeing only brown colors and feeling only brown feelings . . . I saw . . . I felt . . . I hated . . . I cried . . . I tried . . . I didn't understand during these 4.

I rested by just giving up.

While, on the side . . . I realized I BELIEVED in
white as pretty,

my being governor,

blond blue eyed baby Jesus,

coke and hamburgers,

equality for all regardless of race, creed, or color,

Mr. Williams, our banker.

I had to!

That was all I had.

Beans and Communism were bad.

Past the weeds, atop the hill, I looked back.

Pretty people, combed and squeaky clean, on arrowlike roads.
Pregnant girls, ragged brats, swarthy machos, rosary beads,
and friends waddle clumsily over and across hills, each other,
mud, cold, and woods on caliche ruts.

At the 19th mile, I fought blindly at everything and anything.

Not knowing, Not caring about WHY, WHEN, or FOR WHAT.

I fought. And fought.

By the 21st, I was tired and tried.

But now. . . .

I've been told that I am dangerous.

That is because I am good at not being a Mexican.

That is because I know now that I have been cheated.

That is because I hate circumstances and love choices.

You know . . . chorizo tacos y tortillas ARE good, even at school.

Speaking Spanish is a talent.

Being Mexican IS as good as Rainbo bread.

And without looking back, I know that there are still too many . . .

brown babies,

pregnant girls,

old 25 year-old women,

drunks,

who should have lived but didn't,

on those caliche ruts.

It is tragic that my problems during these past 21 miles
were/are/might be . . .

looking into blue eyes,

wanting to touch a gringita,

ashamed of being Mexican,

believing I could not make it at college,

pretending that I liked my side of town,

remembering the Alamo,

speaking Spanish in school bathrooms only,

and knowing that Mexico's prostitutes like Americans better.

At 22, my problems are still the same but now I know I am your problem.

That farm boys, Mexicans and Negro boys are in Vietnam is but one thing I think about:

Crystal City, Texas 78839

The migrant worker;

The good gringo:

Staying Mexican enough;

Helping;

Looking at the world from the back of a truck.

The stoop labor with high school rings on their fingers;

The Anglo cemetery,

Joe the different Mexican,

Damn.

Damn.

Damn.

DEAN'S LIST

Bible Chair! Bible Chair! Bible Chair!
a lonely road amid arid hills,
dusty riverbeds and sickly-green valleys
of ivy-smearred walls

a nagging thirst
for a quixotic drink that quenches—
completey, serenely . . .

without the bitter taste
of non-caloric soda pop

a man kneels,
engorging his putrid pancreas
with the nauseating sweetness
of life's birthday party

searching . . .

on all fours

needing an infinitesimal and omnipotent
ape to suck the juices
from his Isles of Langerhans

I am afraid this is a terminal case, unless

The man will die!

good heart, pink lungs,
digestive system good;

good grades, pink future,
digesting pre-masticated wisdom
to stuff the sausages of his brain

but . . .

the man is dead.
Malheuresment
he did not find
an insulin
for the mind

REFLECTIONS OF AN INARTICULATE CHILDHOOD

"MY NAME IS ORLANDO ORTIZ. I am a Puerto Rican. I am twenty-two years old. I was born in New York City, raised in "barrios" all over the city, and I've spent most of my life running. I quit school in the tenth grade and shipped out on Swedish freighters. Since then I have worked as a grocery clerk, housepainter, anti-poverty worker, and folksinger. Presently I am working as a Resistance organizer and as News Editor-Coordinator for the Student Communications Network."

22 MILES

by JOSE ANGEL GUTIERREZ

JOSE GUTIERREZ is twenty-three years old and was born in Crystal City, Texas. He attended Southwest Texas Junior College and received his B.A. from the Texas College of Arts and Industry at the University of Houston. Presently he is working toward his Master's Degree at St. Mary's University at San Antonio. Since 1962, Mr. Gutiérrez has been an organizer in Crystal City, Texas, and he has founded two P.A.S.O. chapters and three M.A.Y.O. groups. He is a member of the Mexican-American Youth Organization and the *Alianza Federal de Tejas*.

DEAN'S LIST

by JOSUE M. GONZALEZ

JOSUE M. GONZALEZ was born in Rio Grande City, Texas. He grew up in the Rio Grande Valley where he worked as a farm laborer, janitor, in packing sheds, laborer in a factory, and as a house painter. He holds a B.A. and M.A. from Texas A & I University and has taught at the high school and university levels. He now resides in Austin where he is Bilingual Education Specialist in the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. He is working toward his Ph.D. at the University of Texas and has recently been named Director of the San Antonio Bilingual Demonstration and Dissemination Center. He is twenty-six years old.

OPEN LETTER TO: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, La Jolla, California

SUBJECT: Your Conference on Non-Violence: Force or *Failure*, at the University of California at San Diego, March 2, 1968.

In my opinion, you demonstrated more clearly than anyone else that non-violence has failed. It is significant that you, who are supposed to stand for non-violence, should by omission emphasize its failure . . . I am referring to your obvious or deliberate action of not including on your program a spokesman from the Mexican-American community.

The Mexican-American community to date has tried to keep their movement non-violent. They do not make scare headlines or headlines of any sort, except occasionally Cesar Chavez, certainly one of the most prominent advocates of non-violence.

I believe that your most articulate spokesman would *now* find it difficult to convince Mexican-American youth that non-violence is more desirable when you who are the most prominent spokesmen for non-violence do, by your omission, perpetuate the label imposed on the Mexican-American: the invisible minority.

Your action in excluding Mexican-Americans was a personal disappointment for me because I had the highest regard for your organization. Try as I have to find an excuse for your omission, I cannot because I am aware that some of your members are quite well informed on the plight of the Mexican-American. I can only assume that this was a deliberate act and that the findings made

public last week by the President's Commission on Riots in the U.S. is a finding that must be examined carefully not just in the conservative groups and institutions of this country, but also by the liberal and so-called concerned organizations.

It is easy to accuse conservatives of racism and prejudice, and in doing so, to distract from self-directed examination.

The Mexican-American community is well aware that it is being ignored and excluded from many community affairs. But somehow, that you should have excluded them is not understandable. It is not easy to ignore the Mexican-American in California. Mexican culture, historical sites, and many other signs are constantly exploited in California. So when the Mexican-American's physical presence is denied, what do you think can result?

Hopefully, in the future, your organization will recognize a people that is PRACTICING WHAT YOU PREACH.

I leave you to ponder a question because you might find the answer to your conference on non-violence in it:

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT YOUR ORGANIZATION
WOULD HAVE TOTALLY EXCLUDED THE MEXICAN-
AMERICANS HAD THEY ALREADY HAD A SUMMER
OF VIOLENCE?

ESTELLE CHACON
La Jolla, California

1 1 1

EL MALCRIADO
P.O. Box 130
Delano, California 93215

LA RAZA
2808 Altura
Los Angeles, California 90031

INFERNO
321 Frio City Road
San Antonio, Texas 78207

COMPASS
1209 Egypt St.
Houston, Texas 77009

CARTA EDITORIAL
P.O. Box 54624
Terminal Annex
Los Angeles, California 90054

INSIDE EASTSIDE
P.O. Box 63273
Los Angeles, California 90063

EL GALLO
1265 Cherokee St.
Denver, Colorado 80204

EL PAPEL
P.O. Box 7167
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87104

Chicano Press Association

The newspapers listed here are all members of the *CHICANO PRESS ASSOCIATION*, a mutually cooperating group of papers that publish in various parts of the nation. They are dedicated to the dissemination and exchange of information, stories, cartoons, and photos that are very relevant to Mexican-Americans, Spanish-Americans, Chicanos, Hispanos, Spanish-Speaking Latin Americans, Mexican-Latin Spanish Speakers, greasers, spics, and bandits. These newspapers "tell it the way it is" and they are a refreshing change from the established newspapers of the land that "tell it the way it isn't" whenever they condescend to admit that there are Chicanos in the land, which is very, very seldom indeed.



chicano
power



PROTEST



POBRE
DEL
POBRE

JOHN SCARS
CPA FROM LA RAZA



DISCRIMINATION

LA RAZA UNIDA
CONTRA
SALES TAX

No

Vote NO!
City Sales TAX

USE
YOUR
**VOTE
POWER**
REGISTER AND VOTE

WORKING PEOPLE

INSIDE EASTSIDE



**POLICE MALPRACTICE
COMPLAINT CENTER
ACLU**
AN. 9-7018
KNOW YOUR CIVIL RIGHTS! HAVE YOU BEEN A
VICTIM OF POLICE ABUSE?
MON. TO FRI. 2222 E. 1st ST. 1 TO 9 P.M.
DISCRIMINATION



**CHICANO
STUDENT NEWS**

**BLOW
OUT!**

STUDENT DEMANDS
WALKOUTS

COPS

UMAS

COPS

La Raza Needs You

To SERVE...OBSERVE
AND PROTECT
JOIN THE
BROWN BERETS
NOW
SEE YOUR LOCAL
RECRUITER
GIRLS TOO...

Power

The Voice of the Farm Worker

El Malcriado

Boycott

EBJ calls for more
Grower Power

VIVA LA CAUSA,

¡LA RAZA UNIDA!



Why

The boycott hurts **we struggle**

BASTA!



Chicano Power...LaRaza



CIVIL RIGHTS-

Chicano

CHAVEZ COMES TO DENVER!

THE UGLY ANGLO



'I Am Joaquin'

AN EPIC POEM
(in English and Spanish)

By
RODOLFO 'CORKY' GONZALES



POVERTY
 QUINTERO
 LA ESPERANZA
 del campesino
 POR JUSTICIA

FREEDOM
 EL DERECHO de
 — ORIGEN —

"LOS TOROS" ESPINOZA
 MEXICAN RESTAURANT



Carta
 EDITORIAL
 FOR THE INFORMED—INTERESTED IN MEXICAN-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

EL PAPEL

VIVA
 LA CAUSA
 CARNAL

*Harrassment of
 Tijerina Continues*

LAS ESCUELAS

SOY LIBRE! —

ESTOY AMARRADO

THE TEXAS RANGERS AND THE
 MEXICAN AMERICANS

AN INDEPENDENT
 ALTERNATIVE POSITION
 ON AFFAIRS CONCERNING
 MEXICAN-AMERICANS

Cesar Chavez

Text of wire sent to Mrs. Martin Luther King from Cesar Chavez, April 5, 1968:

We are deeply saddened to learn of the death of your husband. Our prayers are for you and your children in your sorrow. It is my belief that much of the courage which we have found in our struggle for justice in the fields has had its roots in the example set by your husband and by those multitudes who followed his non-violent leadership. We owe so much to Dr. Martin Luther King that words alone cannot express our gratefulness. Despite the tragic violence which took your husband, there is much that is good about our nation. It was to that goodness that your husband appealed. It was that compassion in all of us that he reached out to touch. His non-violence was that of action — not that of one contemplating action. Because of that, he will always be to us more than a philosopher of non-violence. Rather, he will be remembered by us as a man of peace.





If *EL GRITO* is truly to function as a forum for contemporary Mexican-American thought, it must have the active participation of its Mexican-American readers. We invite contributions in both written and graphic form—academic papers, book reviews, short stories, poetry, satire, drawings, photographs, and cartoons. Relevance of topic and quality of work are the only editorial standards.

To insure return, manuscripts and materials must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Address all contributions to:

EL GRITO
P. O. Box 9275
Berkeley, California 94719

