

El Plan de Santa Barbara:

For all peoples, as with individual, the time comes when they must reckon with their history. For the Chicano the present is a time of renaissance, of renacimiento. Our people and our community, el barrio and la colonia, are expressing a new consciousness and a new resolve. Recognizing the historical tasks confronting our people and fully aware of the cost of human progress, we pledge our will to move. We will move forward toward our destiny as a people. We will move against those forces which has denied us freedom of expression and human dignity. Throughout history the quest for cultural expression and freedom has taken the form of a struggle. Our struggle tempered by the lessons of the American past, is an historical reality. For decades Mexican people in the United States struggle to realize the "American Dream".

And some, a few, have. But the cost, the ultimate cost of assimilation, required turning away from el barrio and la colonia. In the meantime, due to the racist structure of this society, to our essentially different life style, and to the socio-economic functions assigned to our community by Anglo-American society - as suppliers of cheap labor and dumping ground for the small-time capitalist entrepreneur- the barrio and colonia remained exploited, impoverished, and marginal. As a result, the self-determination of our community is now the only acceptable mandate for social and political action; it is the essence of Chicano commitment.

Culturally, the word Chicano, in the past a pejorative and class-bound adjective, has now become the root idea of a new cultural identity for our people. It also reveals a growing solidarity and the development of a common social praxis. The widespread use of the term Chicano today signals a rebirth of pride and confidence. Chicanismo simply embodies an ancient truth: that a person is never closer to his/her true self as when he/she is close to his/her community. Chicanismo draws its faith and strength from two main sources: from the just struggle of our people and from an objective analysis of our community's strategic needs. We recognize that without a strategic use of education, an education that places value on what we value, we will not realize our destiny.

Chicanos recognize the central importance of institutions of higher learning to modern progress, in this case, to the development of our community. But we go further: we believe that higher education must contribute to the information of a complete person who truly values life and freedom. The destiny of our people will be fulfilled. to that end, we pledge our efforts and take as our credo what Jose Vasconcelos once said at a time of crisis and hope: "At this moment we do not come to work for the university, but to demand that the university work for our people." Political Action Introduction For the Movement, political action essentially means influencing the decision-making process of those institutions

which affect Chicanos, the university, community organizations, and non-community institutions.

Political action encompasses the elements which function in a progression: political consciousness, political mobilization, and tactics. Each part breaks down into further subdivisions. Before continuing with specific discussions of these three categories, a brief historical analysis must be formulated. Historical Perspective The political activity of the Chicano Movement at colleges and universities to date has been specifically directed toward establishing Chicano student organizations (**UMAS, MAYA, MASC, M.E.Ch.A., etc.**) and institutionalizing Chicano Studies programs. A variety of organizational forms and tactics have characterize these student organizations. One of the major factors which led to political awareness in the 60's was the clash between Anglo-American educational institutions and Chicanos who maintained their cultural identity. Another factor was the increasing number of Chicano students who became aware of the extent to which colonial conditions characterized their communities. The result of this domestic colonialism is that the barrios and colonias are dependent communities with no institutional power base and significantly influencing decision-making.

Within the last decade, a limited degree of progress has taken place in securing a base of power within educational institutions. Other factors which affected the political awareness of the Chicano youth were: the heritage of the Chicano youth movements of the 30's and 40's; the failure of the Chicano political efforts of the 40's and 50's; the bankruptcy of the Mexican- American pseudo-political associations; and the disillusionment of Chicano participants in the Kennedy campaigns. Among the strongest influences of Chicano youth today have been the National Farm Workers Association, the Crusades for Justice, and the Alianza Federal de Pueblos Libres, The Civil Rights, the Black Power, and the Anti-war movements were other influences. As political consciousness increased, there occurred a simultaneously a renewed cultural awareness which, along with social and economical factors, led to the proliferation of Chicano youth organizations. By the mid 1960's, MASC, MAYA, UMAS, La Vida Nueva, and M.E.Ch.A. appeared on campus, while the Brown Berets, Black Berets, ALMA, and la Junta organized the barrios and colonias.

These groups differed from one another depending on local conditions and their varying state of political development. Despite differences in name and organizational experience, a basic unity evolved. These groups have had a significant impact on the awareness of large numbers of people, both Chicano and non-Chicano. Within the communities, some public agencies have been sensitized, and others have been exposed. On campuses, articulation of demands and related political efforts have dramatized NUESTRA CAUSA. Concrete results are visible in the establishment of corresponding supportive services. The institutionalization of Chicano Studies marks the present stage of

activity; the next stage will involve the strategic application of university and college resources to the community.

One immediate result will be the elimination of the artificial distinction which exist between the students and the community. Rather than being its victims, the community will benefit from the resources of the institutions of higher learning. Political Consciousness Commitment to the struggle for Chicano liberation is the operative definition of the ideology used here. Chicanismo involves a crucial distinction in political consciousness between a Mexican American (or Hispanic) and a Chicano mentality. The Mexican American or Hispanic is a person who lacks self-respect and pride in one's ethnic and cultural background. Thus, the Chicano acts with confidence and with a range of alternatives in the political world. He is capable of developing and effective ideology through action. Mexican Americans (or Hispanics) must be viewed as potential Chicanos. Chicanismo is flexible enough to relate to the varying levels of consciousness within La Raza. Regional variations must always be kept in mind as well as the different levels of development, composition, maturity, achievement, and experience in political action.

Cultural nationalism is a means of total Chicano liberation. There are definite advantages to cultural nationalism, but no inherent limitations. A Chicano ideology, especially as it involves cultural nationalism, should be positively phrased in the form of propositions to the Movement. Chicanismo is a concept that integrates self-awareness with cultural identity, a necessary step in developing political consciousness. As such, it serves as a basis for political action, flexible enough to include the possibility of coalitions. The related concept of La Raza provides an internationalist scope of Chicanismo, and La Raza Cosmica furnishes a philosophical precedent. Within this framework, the Third World concept merits consideration.

Political Mobilization Political mobilization is directly dependent on political consciousness. As political consciousness develops, the potential for political action increases. The Chicano student organization in institutions of higher learning is central to all effective political mobilization. Effective mobilization presupposes precise definition of political goals and of the tactical interrelationships of roles. Political goals in any given situations must encompass the totality of Chicano interests in higher education. The differentiations of roles required by a given situation must be defined on the basis of mutual accountability and equal sharing of responsibility. Furthermore, the mobilization of community support not only legitimizes the activities of Chicano student solidarity in axiomatic in all aspects of political action. Since the movements is definitely of national significance and scope, all student organizations should adopt one identical name throughout the state and eventually the nation to characterize the common struggle of La Raza de Aztlan.

The net gain is a step toward greater national unity which enhances the power in mobilizing local campus organizations. When advantageous, political coalitions and alliances with non-Chicano groups may be considered. A careful analysis must precede the decision to enter into a coalition. One significant factor is the community's attitude toward coalitions. Another factor is the formulation of a mechanism for the distribution of power that ensures maximum participation in decision making: i.e., formulation of demands and planning of tactics. When no longer politically advantageous, Chicano participation in the coalition ends.

Campus Organizing: Notes on M.E.Ch.A. Introduction M.E.Ch.A. is a first step to tying the students groups throughout the Southwest into a vibrant and responsive network of activists who will respond as a unit to oppression and racism and will work in harmony when initiating and carrying put campaigns of liberation for our people.