

BARRIOS, UNITE!



Si Se Puede

Chicano youth fighting
national oppression

Selected articles from UNITY newspaper

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Barrio youth and Chicano oppression themes at South Bay conferences	p. 2
Chicanos work to end gang warfare	p. 3
Defend the Perez family!	p. 5
Chicana mother experiences racist court system	p. 6
Free the Moody Park community defendants!	p. 7
Carlos Montes case exposes police infiltration	p. 9
Militant rallies mark Chicano Moratorium	p. 11
Time, Newsweek "discover" Chicanos and Latinos	p. 13
Hollywood slanders Chicanos	p. 14

All over the U.S., Chicano youth are fighting against discrimination at school and on the job, against police brutality and racism, in sum, against national oppression. Along with young people from other nationalities, Chicano youth are among the most oppressed groups in the country and also one of the most active.

In the last year, young Chicanos have launched strong organizing efforts to put an end to violence among barrio youth. This year a conference took place in Oxnard, California, which attracted over 3,000 youths. A peace treaty was signed among the different barrios and a pledge was made to continue organizing to end barrio warfare. This summer other conferences will take place in San Jose and Mountain View, California.

UNITY/LA UNIDAD has carried articles to help pass the word about these positive efforts. The following articles are re-prints from UNITY, which show the different ways that young Chicanos are organizing against national oppression.

Barrio youth and Chicano oppression themes at South Bay conferences

San Jose, CA — “We can’t be fighting each other. We’ve got to join forces to work for our Raza. That’s why we need barrio unity.” With these words, members of Barrio Horseshoe (in West San Jose) and Barrio Vicky’s Town (in South San Jose) shook hands and called a truce to the fighting that had existed between them.

This first step to stop barrio warfare in the San Jose area came in April when Youth Getting Together and the South Bay MEChA Central held a joint meeting to initiate two barrio youth conferences this summer. The first will be held June 30 at Lincoln High School in San Jose. A second is planned for August 8 in the Mountain View area to help build unity between Chicano youth from Sunnyvale, Mountain View and Redwood City.

Since April, many groups and individuals have joined efforts to

plan the San Jose conference. They formed a group called Barrios Unidos de San Jo, for this purpose. Gustavo Arias, a member of Barrios Unidos, explained, “We don’t want to just put on a conference. Conferences won’t stop the fighting between barrios. We want to *organize* Chicano youth to work together to fight their oppression.”

One of the main issues the conference will address is how to organize against police harassment of Chicano youth. A special guest speaker at the conference will be Carlos Montes, a founder of the Brown Berets in East Los Angeles who is presently facing trial in a police frame-up case.

For more information, contact Barrios Unidos de San Jo at P.O. Box 2382, San Jose, CA 95109.

JUNE 15, 1979

Chicanos work to end gang warfare



Young Chicanas display signs calling for an end to barrio warfare. (UNITY photo)

Ventura, CA — Over 3,000 Chicano youths are expected to attend a Barrio Youth Conference on May 8 here. The largest event of its kind ever organized in this area, the conference will be held at the county fairgrounds.

The conference is organized by Barrios Unidos, a county-wide Chicano youth organization working to help end gang violence in the community. The theme of the conference is “Barrio Unity.” According to Barrios

Unidos, the conference is planned as an “educational, cultural and social experience.” It aims to combat barrio warfare by promoting self-esteem and alternatives for youths, including education and jobs.

Speakers, workshops and cultural presentations are scheduled for the program. A major feature of the conference will be the signing of a “peace treaty” by representatives of various Ventura County barrios. This will be an important step toward ending

gang violence in the community.

Barrios Unidos

Barrios Unidos was formed last August following an End Barrio Warfare Conference held in San Fernando and attended by 2,000 Chicano youths. Xavier Flores, chairman of Barrios Unidos, said the conference made them realize that Chicanos from different barrios can get together in peace. Barrios Unidos was formed to try to end gang warfare and expose the real reasons it exists.

"There have been people that say violence is inherent to (Chicano) culture," Flores told *UNITY*. "I'm saying, hell, no." Barrios Unidos points out that in La Colonia, Ventura County's largest barrio, 16,000 people live in a one square mile area; 60% have less than an eighth grade education; 50% live below the poverty level; and 43% are unemployed. These are the underlying causes of gang-related violence.

Community activities

Barrios Unidos has been very active since it was formed. It has held panel discussions and workshops on the gang warfare issue and established chapters in several barrios in Oxnard, Ventura, Santa Paula and other areas.

Barrios Unidos also organized a boycott of the movie *Boulevard Nights* and set up picket lines at one of the main theaters showing the film. The group uses the film *The Home Boys* in many of their educa-

tional programs in the community. Contrasted to *Boulevard Nights* this film shows more of the actual conditions of national oppression that Chicanos face in the barrio.

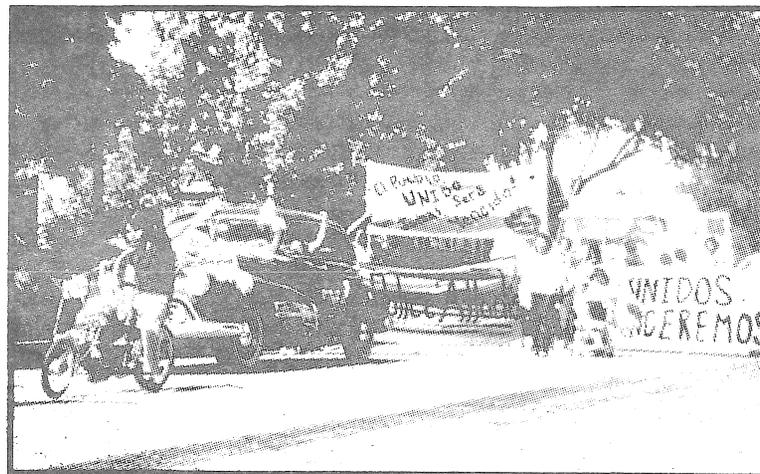
When Barrios Unidos tried to show the film and make a presentation at some Oxnard high schools, they were refused permission by the Oxnard School District. The authorities said the oral presentation would turn into a "political discussion" that "would be offensive to a broad section of the community." What they really fear is the youth realizing that their enemy is not each other, but the capitalist system of national oppression.

In contrast to the school authorities' position, Barrios Unidos' work has been endorsed by the Association of Mexican American Educators, the Raza Faculty, and other community organizations.

In spite of the stand by the Oxnard School District, Barrios Unidos is still reaching Chicano youth, establishing new chapters, and building for the May 8 conference.

MAY 4, 1979

Defend the Perez family!



Demonstrations against police brutality grow in San Jose (UNITY photo)

San Jose, CA. — Youth Getting Together, a Chicano youth group, is building support for the January hearings of four members of the Perez family, who were arrested in October 1978 when San Jose police terrorized their home. Charges against the family range from assault on a police officer to interfering with arrests. Some of the Perez family received up to five counts.

What did the Perez family do to wind up with these unjust charges? On October 17, 1978, the San Jose Police Department came to arrest a member of the

Perez family who had supposedly vandalized one of the neighbor's homes. When Mrs. Perez questioned the police as to why they were arresting her 16-year-old son, the police brutally manhandled her. When several family members demanded Mrs. Perez's release, the police pulled shotguns, threw the daughter to the ground, and assaulted Mr. Perez with the front of a shotgun.

Youth Getting Together is mobilizing to defend the Perez family. Youth Getting Together formed out of the youth monitors for last year's commemora-

tion of the 1970 Chicano Moratorium which focused on police brutality in the barrios. The group believes that it is important to organize Chicano youth to fight the many forms of national oppression they face, including police brutality.

The kind of treatment the Perez family received is nothing new to the barrios. For example, in 1976, a young Chicano — Danny Trevino — was shot and killed by an off-duty policeman, when Danny was just sitting in his car. Youth Getting Together does not intend to let the Perez

case go undefended.

Youth Getting Together and other supporters like the Anti-Bakke Decision Coalition are now organizing a dance to raise money for the lawyer's fees, which are already estimated at \$1,500-2,000. Call (408) 294-3705 to give donations, or for more information. Through concrete mass support, the Perez family will win!

JAN. 12, 1979

Chicana mother experiences racist court system

Dear *UNITY*,

I didn't think it could happen to me. I was very embarrassed when I was arrested and stayed overnight in jail. My experience with the court system will always stay with me.

The court and judge stated that I am innocent until proven guilty. But the way they did it from the beginning until the end of the trial was that I am guilty and have to prove my innocence. Especially when the DA was attacking me for needing a Spanish translator. But normally, Spanish is my first language and English is the second. His attack appealed to the all-white jury's prejudice who don't know how it is to live in the barrio. Of course they believed the police story instead of mine. How could the jury decide

if they weren't there to see it?

I was not surprised with the jury's decision. I feel that it is an injustice that I have a record. My experience with the court system tells me that there is something more underneath it.

Mrs. Perez

Ed. note: Mrs. Perez is another victim of police brutality. Last October, she was arrested after protesting the harassment of her family when San Jose, CA, police came to arrest her son. (See *UNITY*, No. 1, Jan. 12, 1979).

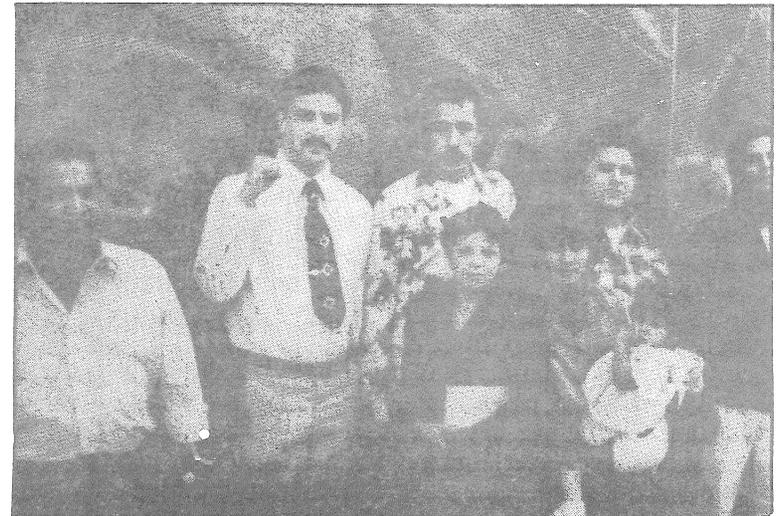
MAY 4, 1979

Free the Moody Park community defendants!

Houston — Pretrial hearings are taking place for eight Chicanos and one white person arrested in the wake of the Moody Park rebellion here last May. The most recent series of hearings began October 30, to hear various defense motions. The defendants face felony charges of inciting to riot and assaulting a police officer. They are standing firmly together and are stronger than ever,

insisting that *all* charges be dropped.

The trial is the latest chapter in the continuing struggle against police repression here in Houston, which has raged unabated since Joe Torres was murdered by the police 18 months ago. This struggle has been a focal point for the Chicano movement throughout the Southwest. The brutal nature of the



Some of the Moody Park community defendants outside Houston courthouse October 30, showing determination to fight police brutality against the Chicano people. (*UNITY* photo)

capitalists and the people's militant resistance have both stood out in bold relief.

Joe Torres and the Moody Park rebellion

Like most of the defendants on trial today, Joe Torres was a young Chicano from the barrio. On May 7, 1977, two police beat Torres and threw him handcuffed into the Buffalo Bayou to drown. Torres' murder sparked a fire which has been burning ever since.

The community demanded justice, and mass protests continued throughout the cops' trial last year. Last October, the cops were fined one dollar for their crime! The people hit the streets again, and mass outrage was so great that the federal government had to grant a new trial on civil rights charges. But again, the cops were let off the hook.

On May 7 this year, the anniversary of Torres' murder, the Chicano community came out for the annual Cinco de Mayo celebration in Moody Park. The police began harassing some youths on the pretext of "breaking up a fight." When the people objected, the cops beat everyone they could get their hands on. Enraged by this brutality, the Chicanos fought back with rocks, bottles and fists. A number of police cars were burned. The cry of "Remember Joe Torres!" rang throughout the park.

The next day, police swept through the barrio and arrested

people indiscriminately. People ran into stores, apartments and just anywhere to get away. It was in one apartment, in the Irvington Village apartments, that 13 people ran for safety. Most were strangers to each other, and many had not even been in the park the day before. The SWAT busted in and took everyone at gunpoint. A number of additional sporadic arrests were also made elsewhere in the community.

The 13 people were later indicted by the Grand Jury made up of 99% white people from the \$30,000 a year and above income bracket. The judge who is hearing the pre-trial motions is also clearly biased, since he is the same judge who issued the warrant that resulted in the arrest of the thirteen.

Even since the arrests, there have been more instances of blatant national oppression in this case. Of the 13 people originally arrested, two have since been deported to Mexico. Another, Adam Garcia, was shot and killed by the police on September 30, in Corpus Christi. A fourth defendant pleaded guilty, hoping to avoid possible imprisonment, and was placed on *ten years* probation!

Support for the defendants

There has been widespread support in the barrios. A rally in Moody Park raised \$600 for their defense costs. The Brown Berets from the Magnolia barrio have helped in the support marches and rallies for the

defendants. Support has also come from El Concilio, the Centro de Aztlan, and the MAYO student organization.

As one defendant told *UNITY*, "There has been a lot of unity among the barrios since the death of Joe Torres. Everyone from all the barrios came to the trial of the police who killed him. Now it's all the barrios against the police, not against each other." Statewide, throughout the Southwest, and in other parts of the country, support is growing as word of the frame-up spreads.

Support is growing in spite of efforts by the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) to wreck and split the Moody Park defendants' struggle. The RCP refuses to support *all* the defendants, but instead is trying to

build a national campaign around only three.

The RCP's chauvinism and sectarianism has made their name scum throughout the Southwest. One Chicano in Moody Park told *UNITY*, "If you're going to write an article, tell them what the RCP has done and that we want them out of our barrios!"

The Moody Park defendants are determined to fight their case to the end. They are uniting to fight the national oppression carried out by the capitalists and their army — the Houston Police Department.

NOV. 3, 1978

Carlos Montes case exposes police infiltration

Los Angeles — In the course of the struggle to free Carlos Montes, police infiltration of progressive and revolutionary organizations has been further exposed. Montes is a former leader of the Brown Berets, a revolutionary Chicano organiza-

tion formed in the late 1960's. He is currently being charged with arson, and faces up to 20 years in prison. The struggle against this frame-up has won broad support from the Chicano movement.

At Montes' next court ap-



Carlos Montes (UNITY photo)

pearance on December 1, the Justice for Carlos Montes Committee plans to demand that the court dismiss charges against Montes on the grounds that the state is covering up information gained through infiltration of the Berets. When the police infiltration became exposed, the police destroyed the files.

Montes' defense also plans to call four police spies to the witness stand to testify on their spying activities on the Brown Berets during the 1960's. This is just one example of how the state has historically tried to destroy the Chicano movement.

Police spies

Between 1968 and 1970, at

least four police spies were sent to infiltrate the Los Angeles chapter of the Brown Berets, which had been active ever since the famous high school "blow-outs" (walkouts) in East Los Angeles. The agents were Frank Martinez, Fernando Sumaya, Roberto Avila, and Robert Acosta. They were sent into the Berets in an attempt to destroy the organization by trying to cause internal dissension, by trying to provoke terrorist activities, and by trying to frame up leaders such as Carlos Montes.

The four agents were members of the Public Disorder Intelligence Division (PDID) of the Los Angeles Police Department. The PDID also spied on at least 27 other Chicano organizations in the Los Angeles area, including the United Farmworkers Union, the MEChA's, La Raza Unida Party, and others. The PDID also spied on 175 other oppressed nationality and progressive organizations.

The capitalists live in mortal fear of the fury and power of the national movements. They will do everything they can to try to smash them and to silence their revolutionary leaders. Besides the PDID activities, the state also developed a Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTEL-PRO) to attack and smash revolutionary organizations like the Black Panther Party. To a large extent, the state succeeded in disrupting some organizations, through provocation, jailing, and even killing many revolu-

tionary leaders.

But the Justice for Carlos Montes Committee is uncovering a chapter of repression against the oppressed nationalities which the state prefers to keep hidden. The Committee is showing that the charges against Montes are truly a political frame-up designed to intimidate

the masses from struggling. The more the police and the capitalist state are exposed, the more mass support has grown to free Carlos Montes as his case moves closer to trial.

DEC. 1, 1978

Militant rallies mark Chicano Moratorium



Hundreds march through East Los Angeles on September 2, 1978 to the site of the 1970 Chicano Moratorium. (UNITY photo)

"The people united will never be defeated!" "Que viva el Moratorio Chicano!" (Long live the Chicano Moratorium!) These and other militant chants echoed through the barrios of Los

Angeles and San Jose, California last month as hundreds marched to commemorate the historic August 29th Chicano Moratorium. On that day in 1970, over 20,000 people took to the streets to pro-

test the Viet Nam War and the national oppression of Chicano people.

This year, the marches and rallies were sponsored by the Anti-Bakke Decision Coalition (ABDC) in Los Angeles and by the Committee to Commemorate the August 29th Chicano Moratorium in San Jose. Speakers at both rallies firmly linked the struggles of the Chicanos in the 1960's to the current struggles against the Bakke Decision and California's Proposition 13 cutbacks in jobs and services.

In San Jose, the Chicano Moratorium was commemorated this year for the first time in a spirited march and rally on August 27. About 225 people joined the rally, which included participants and speakers from the ABDC and the Coalition to Protect Jobs and Services, an anti-Proposition 13 cutbacks group. Centro Cultural de la Gente and others performed spirited songs and poetry.

In Los Angeles, over 300 people marched through the heart of the East Los Angeles barrio on September 2, down Whittier Boulevard to Salazar Park, site of the 1970 demonstration. Despite attempts by police to intimidate the community, the sidewalks were packed with people. They came out of stores and garment shops to join in the chanting, and some marched alongside for blocks. As the march wound under a freeway, the chants of "Chicano Power" and "Que Viva la Raza" rang out.

An ABDC speaker declared, "Let us once again build a mighty

movement to unite our community and all communities against this system which has not changed, which is still killing our youth, damning our families to dead-end futures, working for slave wages in garment shops and smothering in hot foundries... Across the nation, let us spread the lesson of the Chicano Moratorium as we take up the struggle against national oppression."

Both the San Jose and Los Angeles events represented a wide range of Chicano groups, organizations of other oppressed nationalities and progressive people. In San Jose, Chicano community groups, cultural groups, students and working people were joined by ABDC chapters from northern California, and many others. In Los Angeles, contingents marched from ABDC chapters, local La Raza Unida chapters, Chicano and Asian student groups, East Los Angeles high school students, the American Indian Movement, and *Getting Together* newspaper.

At both rallies, a speaker from *Getting Together* newspaper spoke, saying, "The Chicano Moratorium was an extremely significant event in the history of the Chicano people because it clearly targeted imperialism as the cause of the misery of the Chicano people and called for unity with all oppressed people in the U.S. and throughout the world to defeat the common enemy."

SEPT. 1978

Time, Newsweek "discover" Chicanos and Latinos

Just as in the 1960's, the bourgeois media is again having to deal with Chicanos and Latinos, as another massive upsurge against national oppression takes shape. Suddenly, Chicanos and Latinos are being featured in national magazines, newspapers, and TV documentaries. Why? The capitalists are doing everything possible to diffuse the struggle against national oppression and keep it from winning the support of white workers and other oppressed nationalities. They hope to do this by:

- discrediting Chicanos and Latinos with racist slurs and lies, blaming them for their own oppression;
- promoting reformist illusions among Chicanos and Latinos;
- making thinly-veiled threats of retaliation against Chicanos and Latinos who demand their rights.

Racist attacks

Reviving the image of the "sleeping Mexican" (who's waking up, of course!), the January 1, 1979 *Newsweek* says that Chicanos "have been invisible to most of their countrymen, shrouded by their own language and culture." One reason for Chicano "passivity," says *Newsweek*, is "the legacy of a race that has never quite shaken off the stigma of a conquered people."

Time says that many "northern peoples find (Chicanos and Latinos) tantalizing or mysterious — and sometimes

irritating or threatening." According to *New West* (January 29, 1979), Chicano culture is an "adolescent culture — full of petty jealousies, paranoia and macho bravado. It's a defeated culture"



No matter what Time and Newsweek say, Chicanos and Latinos have a proud history of struggle. Top left: Chicanos in Texas protest police murders. Bottom left: Dominican students in New York fighting to save Hostos College. Right: Puerto Rican people march for Puerto Rican independence.

The cultural backwardness painted by the press, and the language "handicap" (*Time*), keep Chicanos and Latinos from "really learn(ing) to compete in American society as a whole." In other words, *Time* is blaming them for their own oppression and slandering their culture.

Reformist promises and veiled threats

All the "in-depth analysis" of

Chicanos and Latinos in the media leaves out any mention of the history of resistance against national oppression, except for a few brief mentions of the farmworkers movement.

Instead of the path of struggle and revolution, the capitalists dangle before Chicanos and Latinos promises of economic and political freedom if they would only play by the rules of bourgeois reformism. *Newsweek* tells them that they cannot solve their problems because they have "remarkably little political clout and few political leaders." They suggest more "political activism," which they define as electing Chicano and Latino politicians. *Time* says the real hopes for liberation lie in the emergence of a "Spanish-speaking Bobby Kennedy."

And if Chicanos and Latinos won't go for these dead-end politics, the capitalists make it clear that they'll use force to keep them in line. *Time* warns that "growing num-

bers and assertiveness often produces growing hostility," especially when "Hispanics become not only visible but also insistent on their rights."

Already this year many Chicanos have been murdered by police across the country. The capitalist state harasses and persecutes Chicanos and Latino revolutionaries, such as Carlos Montes, Nicaraguans in the anti-Somoza movement, or Puerto Ricans who refuse to have their land named "Puerto Rico, U.S.A."

But this carrot and stick policy is failing, Chicanos and Latinos have never believed the racist garbage in *Time* and *Newsweek*. They refuse to forget their proud history of resistance to national oppression. And every day, more and more Chicanos and Latinos are seeing that only socialist revolution will put a final end to national oppression.

JAN. 26, 1979

Hollywood slanders Chicanos

In the last year, *Time*, *Newsweek* and other magazines have run long feature articles on the Chicano "phenomenon." The widely-watched *60 Minutes* aired a segment on "Gang life in the Chicano barrio." Now, Hollywood has released another media slander: *Boulevard Nights*, a "gang film" which purports to show the "reality" of life among

Chicano youth.

Is this how Chicanos really live?

Thousands of Chicano youths have gone to see *Boulevard Nights*, lured by the hope that the movie will show their life as it really is. This is the first time that Hollywood has made a film about the Chicano barrio. The movie is set in East Los

Angeles, the largest Chicano barrio in the U.S., and uses a number of Chicano actors. It also superficially portrays some aspects of Chicano life, showing the youth with their low riders and gang life.

But *Boulevard Nights* is a bad movie. In a very slick way it portrays the most negative stereotypes of Chicanos.

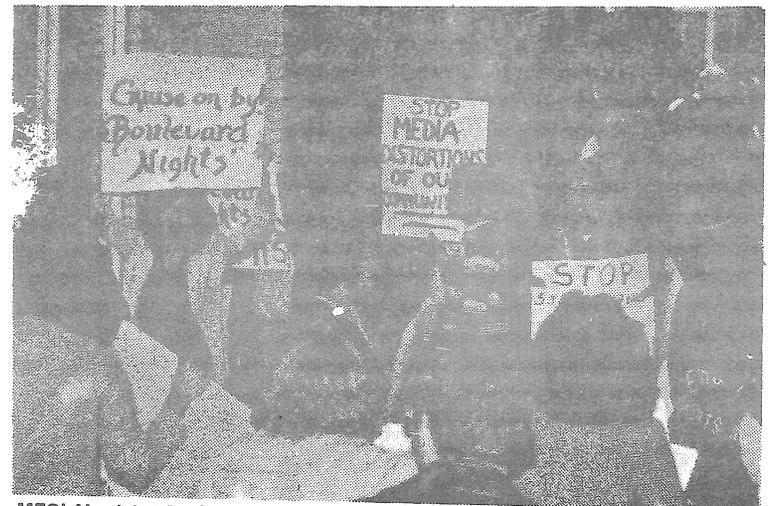
The characters are Tony, a car clubber who thinks about nothing but clothes and cars, and his brother Chuco, a slow-talking *vato loco* (crazy dude). They cruise Whittier Boulevard and get into gang fights. In the end, Chuco is shot in the neck and dies. Tony tries to climb out of the barrio with his girlfriend, who "makes it" by getting rid of her accent, acting "white," and working in an all-white office as a secretary.

From this movie, no one would know that any such

thing as national oppression or a Chicano movement exists. If *Boulevard Nights* is to be believed, Chicano youth face no oppression, but spend all their time hanging out, getting high, picking up women, or shooting and stabbing each other. Chicanas are portrayed as a bunch of whores.

Gang warfare is indeed a problem in the barrio, and it is due to national oppression. This is never mentioned in the movie.

The message of *Boulevard Nights* is clear: Chicano culture consists of gangs, drugs and violence. There is no sense of a community which works and struggles together. Chicano pride in their culture and their struggle is reduced to pride in one's clothes or car. The revolutionary Chicano struggle is reduced to a primitive battle for turf or gang vengeance. *Boulevard Nights'* solution to



MEChA's picket Boulevard Nights.

gang warfare is bourgeois assimilation.

Growing boycott of movie

Many Chicanos are protesting *Boulevard Nights* because it exploits the gang problem for profit and degrades Chicano culture. Fifty-seven MEChA organizations in California are conducting a boycott of the movie, and have set up picket lines at a number of theaters throughout the state. In Ventura County, California, Barrios Unidos, a large Chicano youth organization, has also called a boycott

and is picketing theaters. A recent Chicano student conference in Denver, Colorado, voted unanimously to boycott the film.

The movement to expose *Boulevard Nights* and other films like it is also a struggle to end the decades of racism Chicanos have faced from the capitalist media. This struggle will continue until films like *Boulevard Nights* are driven out of the theaters and the true and beautiful story of the Chicano people is told.

MAY 4, 1979

UNITY is the newspaper of the League of Revolutionary Struggle (Marxist-Leninist). It is published bi-weekly in English, Spanish and Chinese, with up to date coverage and analysis of national and international news.



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