

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
May 8, 1976

TO ORGANIZERS AND NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS 1

Dear Comrades,

A "National Chicano Forum" has been called by a number of Chicano professors and students in the Chicano Studies Department at the University of Utah, as well as community activists in Salt Lake City. The conference is scheduled to take place at the Salt Palace in Salt Lake City from May 27-30.

The organizers of the National Chicano Forum describe the purpose of the conference as "to assess the current status of the Chicano movement and to collectively decide upon a new course of action."

Comrades in California, Texas, and Colorado say that the National Chicano Forum is being built throughout the Southwest. Conference organizers say they expect between 700-1,500 Chicanos to attend. Because there has not been a national Chicano gathering since 1972 and no major Chicano organization or leader has projected anything of this kind, the Salt Lake City conference has the potential of drawing large numbers of activists. The only limit on attendance could be the site of the National Chicano Forum--Salt Lake City--which is quite a distance geographically from most centers of the Chicano struggle.

The conference agenda consists of two major workshops: "Ideology - the Chicano Movement: Where is it going?" and "Organizations and Action: How do we get there?" There will also be about six other workshops which the organizers view as complementary to the two major ones. These include: "The Role of the Chicana in the Struggle," "Chicanos and the Education System," and "The Farm Workers and the Undocumented Workers."

We are encouraging as many of our Chicano comrades as possible to attend the conference in order to assure a good participation on our part. Our participation will consist of taking part in the workshop discussions, distribution of campaign literature and winning supporters to the campaign; sales of our press, especially sales of Militant subscriptions; Pathfinder sales; and Militant and Young Socialist coverage of the conference. The issue of the Militant we will be selling at the conference will contain an interview with Peter Camejo on Chicanos and the '76 elections. In general, the National Chicano Forum provides an opportunity to talk to Chicano activists throughout Atzlán about our ideas, and to exchange information about various Chicano struggles going on around the country. We want to make every effort to take full advantage of this opportunity.

There is a \$5.00 registration fee for the conference, which can be prepaid or paid on arrival there. The hosts of the conference have made arrangements for mass housing, as well as hotel and motel rooms. Comrades planning to use mass housing should be sure to bring a sleeping bag. The least expensive hotel rooms available are at the Temple Square Motel, 75 W. Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah. Rooms at four persons to a room will cost \$5.50 per person per night.

Comrades planning to attend the conference may want to write the National Chicano Forum Steering Committee for further housing information and hotel reservations. Write: National Chicano Forum Steering Committee, Building 463, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah 84112; or call (801) 581-5206.

Those comrades attending the conference will be informed later about the site of the fraction meeting in Salt Lake. All comrades planning to attend should try to arrive in Salt Lake City as early as possible on Thursday, May 27, as registration begins on that day.

Further questions and information on our participation should be directed to Mike Zárate in the YSA National Office, (212) 989-7570.

Comradely,

Olga Rodríguez

Olga Rodríguez
SWP National Office

Mike Zárate

Mike Zárate
YSA National Office

Copy of Press Release Announcing National Chicano
Forum, March, 1976

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

What is the current status of the Chicano Movement? Who and where are the leaders? What are the concerns of Chicanos today? As the Chicano Movement matures, what directions will it take?

In an effort to answer these questions, Chicanos in Utah are presently organizing a National Chicano Forum, which will involve representation from community people, students, professionals, and community and national leaders. The Forum will be held at the Salt Palace in Salt Lake City, Utah, May 27, 28, 29 and 30, 1976. The Utah location is seen as especially suitable for encouraging dialogue among Chicanos in that it is not dominated by any particular ideology, organization, or leader.

The idea to hold a national forum developed as a result of "Chicano Awareness Week" held at the University of Utah in March of 1975. The manifold activities included participation from such well-known movement leaders as Rodolfo Acuña, Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, José Angel Gutiérrez, and Raúl Ruiz. Moreover, as a result of a successful State Youth Leadership Conference -- which drew over 600 university and high school students -- and a Chicano Law Student Association Conference -- which also attracted scores of Chicano law students from throughout the nation it was concluded that the Chicano Movement, as a whole, was fragmented and plagued by a multiplicity of problems which were hindering its progress. It was concluded that a conference or forum on the status and direction of the Chicano Movement should be held sometime in 1976.

During the subsequent summer months, Dr. Armando Navarro, Assistant Director to the Hinckley Institute of Politics at the University of Utah, and several Chicano interns, visited parts of Aztlán and met with various leaders and organization representatives on the proposed forum idea. The response was overwhelmingly positive.

In November of 1975 the National Chicano Forum Steering Committee was organized. Comprised of community people, students and professionals, it has assumed the responsibility for organizing the forum. The committee is co-chaired by Dr. Armando Navarro and Abelardo Delgado, eminent Chicano poet and writer.

Dr. Navarro has stated that it was decided to hold the Forum in Utah because the state is "politically virgin territory," without any dominant Chicano group or national leader.

Organizers called a news conference to announce the National Chicano Forum and said they anticipated 700-1,500 people would attend.

"The basis of this forum lies in the need to assess the current status of the Chicano movement and to collectively decide upon new courses of action," Navarro said.

"With the problems that continue to plague American society, it becomes imperative for us, as a people, to reconsolidate our energies and resources in continuing our struggle for self-determination."

He said Mexican Americans are a growing political force in the United States, particularly in the Southwest. Navarro said the country now has 12 million Chicanos and said the number is expected to rise to 20 million by 1980.

"The power relationships in the Southwest are going to be changing," he said, adding that California already has four million Mexican Americans and Texas, more than three million.

According to Mr. Delgado, "The Chicano Forum Steering Committee's primary task is that of ensuring that the agenda and program will be truly representative of the collective concerns and interests of those participating in the Forum. Our main function is one of facilitators. We recognize the need to assess the status of the Chicano community."

Program and Research Chairperson, Lorenzo Archuleta Q., says a survey sponsored by the University of Utah Chicano Studies has been initiated in advance of the Forum to collect the views of Chicano political and community leaders and scholars. Specifically the survey will accomplish the following:

A. It will measure the level of consensus on given attitudes, concerns, and issues as they relate to the question of direction.

B. Results of the study will yield valuable information in determining the Forum's program and workshops.

C. It will allow input from other Chicanos from throughout the nation in formulating the Forum's program.

D. It will identify Forum participants and allow them to actively take part in the actual implementation of the Forum.

The survey will allow input from other Chicanos from throughout the nation in formulating the Forum's program. Moreover, histories of other past forums and conferences are being re-searched and studied with the intent of increasing the Forum's probability of success.

According to Public Relations Chairperson Bob Cruz, over three hundred questionnaires have been sent out, and the response has been tremendous. From the growing list of endorsers and participants, the following noted Chicano activists are included: Narciso Alemán, José Angel Gutiérrez, Bishop Patricio Flores, Dr. Ernesto Galarza, Bert Corona, Raúl Ruiz, Dr. Carlos Muñoz Jr., Rodolfo "Corky" González, Dr. Daniel Valdez, Dr. Jaime Sena Rivera, and Julián Zamora. Many more are expected to endorse and attend the Forum.

He further added that there will be observers from other

ethnic communities, as well as representatives from Mexico and other parts of Latin America.

For additional information concerning the Forum, please feel free to call either Dr. Armando Navarro at (801) 581-6455 or Abelardo Delgado at (801) 581-5206.

Address written inquiries to National Chicano Forum, Building 463, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah 84112.