

Viva La Causa!  
The Rising Expectations of the Mexican-American 1966

Mexican – Americans on the move

An important minority group, spirited and hopeful, seeks its rightful acceptance

By Ralph Guzman

Today the turbulent game of American politics includes a new group of aggressive players. They call themselves Mexican-Americans – sometimes simply Mexicans. Most of them live in the Southwest. They are more than five million strong.

Their sudden appearance upon the field of politics has surprised politicians, government officials, labor leaders, and the general populace. For, until recently, few people outside of the state of Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, and California knew the Mexicans. To most Americans, “minority” meant Negroes and, occasionally, Puerto Ricans.

Mexicans have burst upon the national scene with dramatic force. They were seen last spring on national television marching with their Virgin of Guadalupe on a 300-mile hike from Delano, California, to Sacramento, the state capital.

In Albuquerque, New Mexico, fifty or so Mexican-American leaders walked out of a federally sponsored conference on equal employment that excluded Mexicans from the planning.

More recently, the power structure in the state of Arizona was startled to see Mexicans kneeling beneath the Phoenix sun praying for God’s intercession with the White House.

And this month, a group of Mexican-American farm workers started a 380-mile, 2-month march from San Juan to Austin, the State Capital. The march, scheduled to end on Labor Day, is in protest of the miserably low wages paid Texas farm workers.

Mexican-Americans are well known in the Southwest. These they have long been the silent occupants of the back rows of society. But they are hardly known on the East Coast, and they are only slightly mentioned in Washington, D.C.

Like the Negroes, the Mexican people have been a principal source of docile menial labor, and like their colored brethren, Mexican-Americans have been thought incapable of militant social action.

Apathy, defeat, and social alienation are some of the more common terms that have been used to describe the Mexican. The political behavior of these Spanish-speaking Americans has been labeled bizarre, irrational and unpredictable.

Whatever the balance of society’s judgment the fact is that – *today* Mexican-Americans are no longer sitting in the ante-rooms waiting to be judged. Their struggle for full membership in American society has begun.

This struggle has a young spirit. It seems to reflect the ex-GI’s of World War II and Korea and the education hat was acquired under the GI Bill of Rights. It reflects the labor union movement; the Roman Catholic Church and Fred Ross, a modest, little-known

community organizer. Ross introduced Alinsky-type mass-action techniques to the Southwest in the late 1940's, and had considerable influence on young Mexican-Americans who today have risen to leadership in the Mexican-American community, organized labor and other areas.

Present, too, in this Mexican spirit are the unmistakable influences of poverty and social deprivation. For while the spokesmen for this minority group are mostly young and middle-class, few appear to have forgotten the urban and rural slums where they were born.

True, the social context of America has changed. Because of this change the emergence of the Mexican minority has been more rapid. There is, indeed, a growing national concern for equality and opportunity for all citizens.

Gone are the lynchings in the Southwest of the late 19th century in which Mexicans were invariably the principal victims. Gone, too, are the more blatant examples of *de jure* school segregation and other discriminatory practices.

Today, there are a few federal programs designed to help the poor. Also present are limited local programs, some sponsored by government and others by private groups, created to remove the pressure of poverty and racial discrimination. These programs were forged by many forces, not the least of which was the Negro civil rights movement. They are part of the yeast of social change affecting Mexican-Americans.

Negro militancy has been an un-escapable lesson of life to the Mexican people. The pilgrimage from Delano to Sacramento in the State of California reflects this lesson. And so do the Albuquerque walkout, the street prayers in Phoenix and the long, hot summer march in Texas.

Mexican-Americans have drawn from the dramatic struggle of the Negro people. But they have added artistry of their own.

The '*Corridos*' (ballads) composed to celebrate great happenings, the *Teatro Campesino* (farm workers theater), the *Peregrinacion* (pilgrimage) to Sacramento, the vivid symbols and declarations which have enlivened the long Delano *Huelga* (strike) are all colorfully Mexican.

What is new about the Mexican 'revolt' within the United States is its dual character. It is, at once, Mexican and American. As recently as one generation ago the "twain" did not meet. The differences were clear and well defined.

Today, both worlds have blended. In the urban areas and in the rural sector the symbols of action are, indeed, Mexican-American. But they include something that remains Mexican.

For example, Mexicans march with the Virgin of Guadalupe and with their parish priests. This, alone, is reminiscent of the Mexican revolution when local priests led the uprisings. The front line participation of women is also related to the revolutionary role that Mexican women had in past epochs.

The American character of the Mexican struggle is its growing sense of organization and emerging pragmatic priorities about what to do. It is this aspect of Mexican militancy

that the young men seem to emphasize. For here is found the language of issues, strategy and goals.

It is useful to examine these demands and to raise the questions. What are the Mexican-Americans trying to communicate to American society? What is the Mexican-American agenda for social action?

The social hurts are deep and they have often been rubbed with the salt of official neglect. These hurts make up the Mexican-American agenda for social action. Among the more salient are:

*Education.* The median school year completed by Mexican-American youngsters in 1960 was 8.5. On the other hand, Negro children completed 10.3, while the rest of the population finished 12 years. Generally speaking, school systems have failed the Mexican-American people. "Drop-outs" is an American, middle class conclusion. Among Mexican-Americans a better word is "forced-outs."

*Housing.* Life destroying diseases are conspicuous among these people. Tuberculosis, for example, which has almost been eradicated in other parts of the country, is still a killer of the Mexican poor.

*Employment.* Mexican-Americans are, in large part, an unskilled pool of industrial labor. With few skills, little formal education and limited ability to speak English, many are doomed to live unemployed and disillusioned lives unless massive job-creating and training programs are specifically designed to meet these critical needs.

*Politics.* It is extremely difficult for Spanish-surnamed individuals to run for public office and win—even in heavily Mexican-American neighborhoods. Gerrymandering, an age-old American political technique, has been successfully employed against these American citizens. Other tactics of divide and rule continue to be effective. Attempts at political organization and political action by Mexican-Americans, themselves, have in the past been fragmented by the built-in resistances of an alienated and proud people.

*Voting.* Mexican-Americans are still not fully enfranchised. The protective clauses of the federal voting law have not yet been fully tested. A Mexican-American who votes in the State of California may not necessarily have the same privilege in the State of New Mexico. Literacy tests, often casually administered, have frustrated potential Mexican-American voters.

*Old-Age.* The problem of the aged is severe. Housing and medical care for Mexican-American senior citizens is not always obtainable. And, when care is available many are not aware of its existence. Others, born in Mexico, do not qualify.

*Youth.* Mexican-American youngsters are predominantly city-dwellers. Mexican-American youth suffers from the impersonal nature of the metropolitan environment. The Mexican-American population is essentially young—median age is almost 28 years. Traditionally, poverty has been most devastating among the young. Social rebellion is always high when the fulfillment of youthful dreams is low. Riots are seldom started by senior citizens.

*Civil Rights.* The protective power of the American Constitution is not generally realized. When justice is withheld, Mexicans rarely complain—because they do not know, and because they often live in fear of constituted authority.

*Government.* The gap between the Mexican people and most agencies of government is enormous. The resources of government are unknown. Those that have been identified are not often understood. Conversely, governmental agencies appear to be uninformed about the Mexican-American population. Mexican-Americans are conspicuous by their absence in policy-making and policy-implementing areas.

*Farm workers.* Although relatively small in number, Mexican-American farm workers still represent a sizable economic problem. These are the people who live in the 'Appalachias' of the Southwest and who, in spite of the generous Great Society, continue to pick the grapes of wrath. Largely unorganized, poorly educated and frequently exploited these migrant farm workers represent an unconscionable anomaly for Americans everywhere—and a heartbreaking task for organized labor. The meaning of labor organization is not yet fully understood by farm workers and their unionization lags seriously behind that of urban-industrial workers.

These are social wounds and weaknesses for which a new breed of Mexican-American leaders is demanding attention.

Vigorous, issue-oriented men, creating broad, strong constituencies, are emerging. They are young. They are labor leaders, educators, lawyers, social workers, artists, government workers. They are creating new organizations and experimenting with new techniques. They are challenging "established" ethnic leaders and demanding political unity in place of scattered, weak organizations mired in isolation, jealous and narrow. They are dedicated. Political patronage or special appointments will not buy them. They demand effective action on basic social problems.

How well they succeed will be determined by their own ability to reach and shift five million Mexican-Americans in the Southwest into the main stream of our society.

This is a new era and Mexican-Americans are activated Americans. They are telling America that they, too, are entering the game; that they, too, belong.

How well they succeed will be directly related to their own abilities to replace fragmented, weak organizations by effective political unity, to utilize ethnic identity as a root-force for progress within the larger society and to develop leadership dedicated to the fulfillment of the rising expectations of all Mexican-Americans.

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## Their Heritage—Poverty

The American Dream' proves a low-low income reality for the Mexican-Americans

By Manuel Aragon

It was election time again and the old politician was making his rounds. He came to the *barrio* and made his usual speech. As he left, he saw a little boy selling newborn puppies for a dollar each. "What fine puppies," he told the boy, "I'll be back soon to buy one from you."

Two years later, the politician returned and found the boy still in business. "Those puppies have grown into beautiful dogs," he said. "Here is your dollar for one of them."

"Not a chance," said the boy. "They are worth a lot more now that their eyes are open."

Alfredo Sanchez often makes his Bryn Mawr, California, neighbors laugh over a good *cuento*. His stories always have a lesson and they respect him. After all, he earns almost \$4,000 a year and drives a '63 Chevy.

In Bryn Mawr, a Mexican-American community 60 miles east of Los Angeles, Alfredo is considered a success.

One-third of his neighbors live on less than \$40 a week earned in the packing sheds. Some drive old cars fifty miles through the desert to Coachella for their jobs. Another third is on welfare.

Unlike Bryn Mawr across the country in Pennsylvania, this California town is not a pleasant place to live in. Cool, orderly orange groves surround it, but there are no paved streets, rain gutters, sewers, street lights or recreational areas. Two-thirds of its homes are dilapidated. Cracked plaster, leaky roofs, sagging porches, and bad plumbing are the rule. Alfredo and his neighbors are poor, and now they, too, have opened their eyes.

The people of Bryn Mawr, like Mexican-Americans throughout the Southwest, are beginning to see and grudgingly admit the widespread poverty of their group. They have long felt it . . . privately. Now, their poverty is also publicly recorded in cold, hard statistics.

A special report published by the UCLA Mexican-American Study Project spells out the dismal details of poverty among the five million Spanish surname people who live in Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas. The report, titled *The Burden of Poverty*, reads like a handicap sheet for young Mexican-Americans.

By having Spanish surnames, they are more likely than other whites to be poor and less likely to finish high school than any other group including Negroes. Very few Mexican-Americans get to college.

The study reveals that almost two-thirds of the Mexican-Americans who live in rural areas like Bryn Mawr are poor. One million Mexican-Americans live in rural towns or villages. This means that over six hundred thousand are poor. Almost as many rural Mexican-Americans live in poverty as there are persons in the total population of San Francisco.

The UCLA report also shows that rural Mexican-Americans cannot escape their poverty by moving to the cities where eighty percent of all Mexican-Americans live. In the cities, one out of every three Mexican-Americans lives in abject poverty . . . in gross figures, 1,500,000 people—a population equal to the entire state of Arkansas or Nebraska.

Compared with Negroes, another group far down on the economic scale, Mexican-Americans appear to have a slightly higher family income. But in fact, because Mexican-

American families are usually larger, the amount of money per person is less for Mexican-Americans than for any other group.

In California, for example, Mexican-Americans have an average income of \$1,380 per person per year as against \$1,437 for the Negro, a difference of \$57. The white majority population of California has a per capita average annual income of over \$2,100 about \$700 more than either Mexican-Americans or Negroes.

Larger families and lower per capita income result in worse housing for Mexican-Americans than for anybody else. The UCLA Mexican-Americans Study Project proves that substandard housing and overcrowding are by far most prevalent among Mexican-Americans.

Extremely poor housing puts the individual under unbearable stress and frustration and destroys his self-confidence and initiative. More than 1,700,000 Mexican-Americans live in such housing.

Graciela Olivarez, an outstanding Mexican-American and member of the National Advisory Council for the War on Poverty, has pointed out that the poverty of the Mexican-Americans' parents is inherited by their children. Of more than 2,000,000 poor Mexican-Americans, over half are children. According to Mrs. Olivarez, it looks like the poor children of today will live in poverty as adults tomorrow.

In Tucson, Arizona, last year, participants in a national poverty conference heard one account from Diana Perez, a 19-year-old Mexican-American girl from Colorado:

Six years before the conference she had taken an overdose of sleeping pills because she was "tired of working and depressed" at the age of 13.

*"I got a car, the car broke down. I couldn't pay for it and they wanted to sue me, so I forged a check."* Married at 15, she was left to support her child alone since her husband was sent to jail.

*"I started working the town, I got paid for it—they call it hustling . . . I needed the money . . . to go out and hustle, I had to be under the influence of narcotics."*

A few weeks after the Tucson conference, Diana was found dead of an accidental overdose of narcotics.

Larry Wycoff of the *San Antonio News* reported another poverty victim: little Lucie Aguilar, 8-year old, was barred from the Mackey-Cable Elementary School. Her father, Narciso, could not afford to pay a two-dollar fee for school supplies demanded by the school principal.

Another report shows that even if she gets into school, little Lucie and other young Mexican-Americans in San Antonio will be short-changed. Her school will put up one-third less money per student than other schools in the city. Of her teachers, one in four will have a substandard degree, and the odds are five to one against her going on to college.

Yet, her chances for college may be better than those of Mexican-Americans in California. The Berkeley branch of the University of California, a tuition-free, tax supported state university, says that there are approximately 78 Mexican-Americans among its 25,000 students.

The Los Angeles campus of the same university, UCLA, counts about 70 in over 26,000 students, or about three in every thousand. One million Mexican-Americans live in the Los Angeles area.

By comparison, Negroes, not in any sense a privileged group, are ten times better off with over six hundred enrollees at UCLA.

This great disparity between the ability of Mexican-American and Negroes to get into college reflects what happens in the earlier school years. Negro youngsters stay in school longer than Mexican-Americans though both groups suffer heavy losses through the first nine grades. By and large, the schools have not solved the problems of giving a good education to children whose first language is Spanish.

The unresponsiveness of the schools and the pressures at home for more money result in a devastating number of drop-outs or, more properly, force-outs, since these circumstances tend to push the kids out of school. The lack of schooling among Mexican-Americans will have increasingly severe economic consequences since the educational requirements for employment are climbing and will continue to do so.

The real income of some Mexican-Americans has dropped in the last five years despite the general prosperity of the nation. This was discovered by a special census of East Los Angeles, a Mexican-American stronghold, just released by the Department of Commerce.

A major reason for this drop, one tied directly to education, was a decline from 27% in 1960 to 24% in 1965 of Mexican-Americans holding professional, technical, and managerial positions or jobs as craftsmen and foremen.

In other words, Mexican-Americans are losing their weak hold on the better paying jobs.

It is clear that the grease pencil of poverty will continue to cross off young hopes and adult ambitions; that the poverty of Mexican-Americans will get worse unless the downward trend is reversed by massive corrective programs.

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## The Barrio

In the Southwest they call it 'barrio' . . . that's Spanish for a slum and a ghetto

By Ronald Arias

For many Americans home is still the ghetto.

The Chinatowns, Little Sicilies and Little Polands of the early century have long disappeared or have become tourist attractions. In their place are other "havens" for newcomers to the city. Hardly tourist spots, these pockets of poverty, tin-can alleys and rat nests re today the most serious and explosive fact of urban reality.

One newcomer to ghetto life is Ignacio Gonzalez, a 28-year-old Los Angeles roofer's helper. Three years ago Gonzalez moved from San Antonio, Texas, with his wife and three children.

"When I came here I wanted something better for my kids," Gonzalez said. "But now I don't know what to do."

A small, dark-eyed man, Gonzalez was sitting on the porch of his four-room house in the East Los Angeles ghetto called "Maravilla," or "the paradise." Behind him the windows were broken or cracked, the woodwork unpainted and splitting.

He explained he had only a sixth-grade education, and was now working part-time. Looking out across the littered street to the distant freeway, Gonzalez seemed sadly resigned about his future. "Maybe we'll always live here. Who knows? It costs money to live like a *gabacho* (Anglo white)."

For Gonzalez and thousands of others the ghetto is no longer "just a temporary place" before moving into better areas. It has become a permanent home.

Why do people remain in the ghettos? Broadly speaking, the answer lies in the differences between the dominant "white" society and the minority ghetto world. Jobs, schooling, income, family size, color and cultural values are a few of the obvious differences. In part, they are the causes of boiling frustration.

One attempt towards understanding the problem of housing segregation is now being made by the Mexican-American Study Project at the University of California, Los Angeles. The project is mainly concerned with the least known of the "big" minorities—the Mexican-Americans. Concentrated primarily in five Southwestern states—California, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas and Arizona—today they number close to an estimated five million.

So far, says Project Director Leo Grebler, there has been a vast ignorance prevailing outside the Southwest about the Mexican-Americans. "And while people in the Southwest are more aware of this minority, false stereotypes and indifference to its problems are still widespread."

In its fourth Advance Report the Project has opened another window from which to view the over-all problem of urban segregation.

Most every town and city in the Southwest has its "little Mexico" or *barrio*. They range in size from a cluster of Arizona desert shacks to the sprawling Boyle Heights area in the heart of Los Angeles.

Many of these *barrios* began as original settlements around a square, or plaza. Gradually they were encircled by the larger city. Other *barrios* sprouted from former agricultural labor camps and communities. These were usually located on the fringes of the city.

As the cities grew, occupations in these areas changed. The worker now found his job in a factory instead of a field. Or else he would split his time between city and field.

There are still good reminders of what these farming ghettos used to be. The shack towns on the outskirts of Fresno, California, are examples.

But in many areas, especially in Texas, the Mexican-Americans have traditionally been the majority—in numbers if not in political power. Laredo and Rio Grande City are such places.



In other words, there is an enormous variety in the “kinds” of Mexican-American ghettos. Some form entire towns, some are seedlings of a few houses, just beginning, and still others can trace their origins back to 16th century Spanish colonization.

And yet together—through a common language and cultural background—they are distinct. Largely because of their heritage, they continue shut off from the mainstream of American society. In this sense, they face similar problems of any disadvantaged minority.

The UCLA project for the first time shows statistically just how heavy these lines of segregation have been drawn in the Southwest. Based on census figures from 35 Southwestern cities, it examined housing segregation among the three largest population groups—Anglo whites, Negroes and Mexican-Americans.

Results showed without exception that Negroes were much more segregated than Mexican-Americans. But in such cities as Dallas, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, Phoenix and San Antonio the degree of separation for both groups has remained high.

Segregation between Negroes and Mexican-Americans was also seen to be severe.

The least amount of segregation was found between Anglos and Mexican-Americans. This was especially so in Laredo, Texas; Colorado Springs, Colorado; and Galveston, Texas. Of all 35 cities, Sacramento was found to have the least separation between Anglos and Mexican-Americans.

Among the Mexican-Americans there is also some segregation between native born and foreign born.

Surprisingly enough, in the California cities of Riverside and San Bernardino, Anglos were highly separated from the two minorities.

A major effort of the study focuses on an “exploratory” analysis of the causes of residential segregation. It is exploratory because the reasons why segregation exists are complex and difficult to measure. As the researchers explain, some facts of life are hard to analyze through mere statistics.

Perhaps the most important factor—discrimination—is the one that so far has gone unexplained. Though discriminatory practices are documented against both minorities, authors of the study, Joan W. Moore and Frank G. Mittelbach, conclude they are handicapped and cannot statistically account for discrimination.

This is probably because it often goes under other names such as prejudice, dislike or hate. Perhaps it is just snobbishness or lack of sympathy for the minority person. Whatever the reasons, discrimination exists.

Without hazarding imperfect guesses, the study found four important factors in accounting for segregation:

- *The larger the city, the greater is the separation between Negroes and Anglos, Mexican-Americans and Anglos, and Mexican-Americans and Negroes.*

- *The greater the number of large family households among the two minorities, the more severe is the segregation.*

- *Income does little to explain the segregation between Mexican-Americans and Negroes.*
- *Separation of either minority from the dominant groups is greater in cities with a larger nonwhite population than their Mexican-American population.*

Whatever the causes may be, the *barrios* remain. They are places few people point to with pride—even though there are hundreds of examples existing in the midst of American affluence.

## II

### *Children of the Barrio*

#### We're Supposed To Believe We're Inferior

Take a language barrier, add some  
social problems . . . and you get  
drop-outs and bitterness

Why did he cut your hair?

“He said it was too long.”

Shamefaced and almost in tears, Mexico-born John Garcia took his seat in class. His head was bald in spots. He tried to hide the black tufts of hair that stuck out all over. There was an awkward silence. Garcia's humiliation was to serve as a warning to the other boys.

“Haircutting never works,” Miss Maria Talavera, Garcia's English teacher, complained later. “All this does is force them out of school. They've had this kind of treatment since the first grade. Why should they want to stay in?” she added.

Miss Talavera teaches ninth grade in a largely Mexican-American Junior High School in East Los Angeles.

She pointed out that Anglo youngsters are never given such treatment as the one Garcia received from the vice-principal.

“There's one blond and freckled kid in my class with longer hair than any of the Mexican kids. Nobody will ever tough him, though,” Miss Talavera said.

When questioned about the incident, a downcast Garcia said he hated most of his teachers. “If they're out to get me, why should I like them? Why should I like the math teacher who called me a dirty Mexican?”

Miss Talavera, 23 and also a Mexican-American, explained that most classes were overcrowded—about 40 pupils to a teacher. Attention is consequently poor or harsh.

“Most of the teachers take an unsympathetic attitude towards these kids and their cultural background,” she said. “Poor students in this atmosphere become worse and eventually drop out. Of course, nearly all are poor to begin with.”

John Garcia will probably drop out. Or else he will transfer to another school “for disciplinary reasons.” His situation is typical in the crowded *barrios* (ghettoes).

In the city’s two predominantly Mexican-American high schools the average drop-out rate is above 20 percent. And average transfer rates are far above 50 percent of the student body. This means that a teacher will face essentially a different class at the end of the school year than he faced at its beginning.

In predominantly Anglo schools these averages are generally reduced by half or more.

“Forced-out” is another term often applied to the *barrio* school drop-out. Usually beginning school with little more than a pidgin-grasp of English, he works slowly in class and rarely catches up to the “Anglo norm.” All textbooks, exams and I.Q. tests are geared for the Anglo student, which presents other stumbling blocks. After failing several grades and accepting the image of inferiority, the Mexican-American youth will long to be free of school

“They don’t respect me at school,” one student complained. “Why should I stay in a place that calls me dumb?”

Miss Talavera emphasized the tendency of many teachers to stereotype the Mexican-American child. “Right off, he’s considered stupid. And the only remedy is to keep him busy in manual arts or shop classes,” she explained. “All this, because he can’t speak English well and maybe comes from a broken home.”

It is hardly a surprise that a high drop-out rate exists throughout the Southwest among Mexican-Americans. This has a telling effect on their earning capacities.

Results of the Mexican-Americans Study Project at UCLA show a startling pattern concerning education and income.

The study found that on the average, Spanish-surnamed persons (88% Mexican-Americans) had much less schooling and income than white Anglos.

In California, for example, those of Spanish surnames receive a median education of 8.5 years and go on to receive an average yearly income of \$4,381. The corresponding figures for the Anglo group are 12.1 and \$5,806.

In Texas, Spanish-surnamed persons finish an average of 4.8 years of school and receive an income of \$2,400. For the Anglo population the figures are 10.8 years and \$4,768.

The severest cases of low income and education are found among rural migrant workers. In the Southwest and Pacific states alone, these workers total over 75,000—almost entirely of Mexican descent. Their average annual income drops below \$1,000 and their schooling is generally from one to four years.

Admittedly, the plight of the migrant’s child is the worst. He rejoices with little more than some shade and a handful of strawberries. School is still something he knows during summers only. In most cases he remains illiterate.

Theodore W. Parsons, in a 1966 Stanford doctoral dissertation, gives some distressing examples of discrimination in an agricultural town. After 40 days of personal observation in a 58% Mexican-American elementary school in central California, Parsons cites:

- *A teacher, asked why she had called on “Johnny” to lead five Mexicans in orderly file out of the schoolroom, explained: “His father owns one of the big farms in the area and . . . one day he will have to know how to handle the Mexicans.”*

- *Another teacher, following the general practice of calling on the Anglos to help Mexican pupils recite in class, said in praise of the system: “it draws them (Anglos) out and gives them a feeling of importance.”*

- *The president of the Chamber of Commerce declared in praise of the school principal: “He runs a good school. We never have any trouble in our school. Every kid knows his place . . . we believe that every kid has to learn to respect authority and his betters.”*

- *The principal stated: “Once we let a Mexican girl give a little talk of some kind and all she did was mumble around. She had quite an accent too. Afterwards we had several complaints from parents, so we haven’t done anything like that since. . . . That was about 12 years ago.”*

Discrimination goes beyond the schools. Especially in cities, this unwritten rule of the majority envelops entire communities. Housing segregation is often the direct cause for ghetto school zoning. The harsh truth of this system is that the most up-to-date facilities are designed for middle and upper class Anglo districts.

Can the quality of a school, then, be disregarded? Can a new approach to teaching the Mexican-American youth be taken? Can a curriculum—perhaps bilingual in part—be scaled for him and not just the Anglo student?

If the children of the *barrio* are ever to be released from the poverty traps of the ghetto, they must first be given full opportunity for education of good quality.

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