



Ethnic Studies Conference

The four day Ethnic Studies conference which attracted more than any other Interim Program (over 100 groups put together displays, exhibits, speakers, etc. which cost the UH \$70,000 over the two week period) consisted of local and mainland speakers, discussion groups, and slide shows. Making its debut was Jon Olsen's "Radical Arts and Literature" van.

Systematic harassment and institutional injustice was the message of Ysidro Masias, a magazine editor and La Raza organizer from the Bay Area. One example is the gerrymandering in Los Angeles which has fractionalized the barrio, which has one million chicanos, so that no electoral district has over 51 percent Mexican-Americans.

It was during the 1964 Delano Huelga that "Chicanismo" evolved. Out of this self-awareness came five area action programs: 1) Street organizing through the Brown Berets and the recent Los Siete de la Raza which led to medical/dental clinics, a halfway house, and junior/senior high school organizing. 2) Delano Huelga led by Cesar Chavez which acted on two principles - aggressive non-violence and manipulating the establishment into actions that revealed its hypocrisy. 3) Freeing Reies Tijerina of northern Mexico who attempted to get back land that gringos got through illegal land deals or outright takeovers. An armed invasion in 1967 of the courthouse resulted in the largest manhunt in the state's history. Tijerina evaded the hundreds of posse and national guardsmen and its two tanks for two weeks. At present he is in jail and is scheduled to undergo a surgical operation that will "correct" his "messianic" complex. Tijerina's act in '67 led to greater militancy in 4) ME-ChA a college political action group which in the last year has co-sponsored the Chicano Moratorium. Last August the group's rally in LA resulted in three killed by the police, among them Ruben Salazar, the barrio's most eloquent spokesman. 5) The most influential movement is led by Corky Gonzales whose base is Denver and whose aim is a new Chicano nation, Aztlan (Aztec for Lands to the North). The Move started three years ago in Texas and has evolved into a loose coalition.

Other areas of concern are school texts, welfare, and police. Last March the Chicano Youth Liberation Conference had its second meeting around the Aztlan Nation concept.

Masias went on to comment on the sensitive area of ideologies. He felt that the capitalists are on the same trip, i.e., patriotism; the nationalists are running the movement now. Those on the reactionary end see nationalism as the goal and those on the revolutionary end see changes coming from within the system. On the other hand, the socialists, see the nation as a means. Masias advocated cultural nationalism as it gave

one confidence "not to accept the gringo's criteria for anything," but he added, "nationalism isn't really opposed to internationalism."

The Chicano militant newspaper is called "El Grito del Norte."

Juan Gonzales of the Young Lords started out by saying that "Puerto Ricans, know we're a colony and you don't." A brief history followed which revealed the classical systematic exploitation of poor non-whites.

For instance, in 1917 the Jones Act made them (the Puerto Ricans) citizens just in time to be drafted into WWI. Hawaii's history is remarkably parallel to Puerto Rico's.

Gonzales then rapped about his group, the Young Lords. Their dynamic leader, Cha Cha Jimenez, was jailed last year with sentences totaling over a 100 years. But before he was imprisoned, he had laid the foundations for cooperation between all the Chicago street gangs in their common fight against the system that oppresses them. Previously the system had encouraged them to slit each other's throats. Their first political act was to occupy a Presbyterian seminary for five days in 1960 until its National Board which was meeting at the same time agreed to their demands: \$600,000 for low-income housing, making public their financial records, cooperation with community groups, public opposition to the racist policies of Urban Renewal, and that it open its facilities for the use of the community.

Just over a year ago 105 Young Lords and supporters seized a church in New York City and likened it to Jesus overturning the money tables. Several months later they again occupied a church while attending the funeral of a leader who police claim had "hung himself" in jail. This time they were armed and asked the Mayor to open the prisons to inspection by clerics, but were refused (most of the jails are filled with Puerto Ricans who refuse to cooperate with a system they feel to be inferior).

Some statistics relevant to Hawaii are: 14 percent of Puerto Rico is controlled by the military. Viejca Island is the equivalent of Kahoolawe. Another island, Culebra, is also a target range, but there are 900 people living there (see Ethos chronology, July 25, Aug. 4), and 25,000 U.S. troops are situated there. "Palante" is the newspaper of the YL.

Pat Sumi was the third speaker. Active with the MDM (Movement for a Democratic Military) in California, she had just returned from China, Korea, and Hanoi as a member of the Cleaver delegation.

Carmen Chow, a god daughter of Chiang Kai-shek, a graduate of Sarah Lawrence, and presently organizer for New York Chinatown's I Wor Kuen was the fourth speaker. Again the patterns of cultural genocide emerged for the Chinese in New York. In the 40's, Newark's Chinatown which was one mile long was burned.

In New York 500 families were evicted for a Bell Telephone switching station. Anti-poverty programs, she says, are attempts to co-opt leaders into band-aid remedies.

The I Wor Kuen has been offering various services such as rat eradication, TB tests, and child care through a free clinic.

The following weekend another four speakers and two slide shows were on the program. Veteran organizer for Filipino and Chicano workers in the Bay Area, Emil De Guzman, rapped on how young radicals had to learn to be humble and patient in reaching the older community through supplemental food and manpower/job programs.

In San Francisco, according to De Guzman, ghetto residents who are concentrated at the International Hotel (Kearney St.) were reached through movies, a clinic and an Asian Community Center. De Guzman told of an attempt to knock down the Hotel and how this action was tied in with San Francisco's role as the "Wall Street of the West."

De Guzman concluded by saying that "there is no way we can fit into the mainstream. We don't want to anyway. What we have to do is build a new lifestyle."

The greater majority of the Indian Brotherhood never went to school and neither did Victor Allen who has

been organizing Eskimos for the past five years. His slight Canadian (Scottish) accent belies the dominant culture of central and west Canada. It was when developers bulldozed his traplines that he first realized what was happening to his people. Present problems have deep historical roots. Treaties did not consider nomadism and regionalism. The Eskimos kept to the coasts and the Indians to the forests. Nomads take seven years to go from the west coast to Greenland along a northern route which the Indian Brotherhood says should belong to the Indians.

Psychological damage inflicted upon colonized or "assimilated" minds was the point made by Herb Takahashi. Presently an ethnic studies in-

structor and lawyer in Honolulu, he claims first-hand experiences in his hometown of Pepeekeo (classic plantation mentality and mores still exist in many small towns and even in Wahiawa) and while studying in Wisconsin and Boston. Takahashi contends that the harm from the deep trauma that results from an oriental (or black or whatever) trying to become something he can never be, is seen in schizophrenic cases. Japanese have the highest incidence.

There were two last-minute cancellations - the Alcatraz and Black Panther organizers couldn't make it.

Towards an Hawaiian Ethos

When that coast Haole was gunned down in cold blood by the young Hawaiian last week on the Big Island, the fundamental clash between local people and the newly arrived mainlander burst into the public eye. But the clash has always been there. It is only in recent years, however, that the flood of mainlanders to Hawaii has reached the point where serious population control measures have to be taken to avert more serious outbreaks. We no longer can assimilate them without sacrificing our identity: our Hawaiian Ethos.

We are faced with the same problems many Third World nations face: The problem of identity, so essential for self-respect and dignity; the problem of economic viability in an increasingly competitive world; the encroaching environmental chaos associated with modernity; the loss of indigenous culture and art; the effects of future shock. These appear to be major issues facing Third World nations, most minority groups in the United States today, and the majority of Hawaii's people. The head-on clash between mainland cultural patterns and our Hawaiian Ethos is a manifestation of the foregoing problems.

We need to define this Ethos because our survival as a unique people is dependent upon it. It is so easy to be swallowed up by the dominant mainland cultural pattern.

But the fact remains: Islanders attending mainland colleges generally feel different from their mainland contemporaries. This feeling of difference is not confined to non-whites. Hawaiian raised Haoles who go to the mainland express the same feeling.

Most of us are already second, third, and fourth generation Islanders and our earlier ethnic conflicts are not as divisive. The growing ethnically mixed segment of our population is living proof of our commonality. We know that the Hawaiian Ethos is there, but we have yet to define it rigorously. Many of us feel that it is worth preserving. Let us move towards a definition in these pages. Before it is too late.

(Anson Chong, March 9, 1971)

Editors' Note: Send your observations on the Hawaiian Ethos to: P.O. Box 10591, Honolulu, Hawaii 96816.