

claimed to head, fell apart. There were also causes that were particular to its situation. The reticence of Mexicanos, both the leadership and the rank and file, to abandon the Democratic Party was one. Democrats continued to get about three-quarters of the Mexicano vote. Chávez, in particular, was wedded to the Democrats; and in California, his power base, he was constantly at odds with LRUP. Older middle-class organizations, like the G.I. Forum, LULAC, and even MAPA, kept their allegiance to the Democrats, despite their professed nonpartisan stances. Moreover, using confrontational tactics, LRUP leaders managed to alienate many potential allies. Regionalism also played a role. The Tejanos, who controlled the party, found that other Chicanos in the Southwest were anxious to maintain their freedom of action. Finally, there was the inability of leaders to work together. As would be true in virtually all Chicano and Mexican American organizations, personality clashes were grave impediments to effective teamwork. Increasingly alienated by Gutiérrez, Gonzales left LRUP in 1974, taking his followers with him. Shortly thereafter, the Tejano was challenged for control of the party even in the Winter Garden, his old stronghold. By the mid-1970s, the party was in shambles.

THE CHICANO STUDENT MOVEMENT

To a large extent, the Raza Unida party, notably through the agency of MAYO, mirrored the power of Chicano students. By 1970, the Chicano movement, it appeared, was increasingly dominated by young people, students in high schools and universities concerned especially with the multitude of problems they experienced in these institutions. Among the issues were *de facto* segregation, racist instructors, the tracking system, and, in institutions of higher learning, inadequate recruitment and funding.³⁴

Student activism among Mexicanos was not altogether a recent phenomenon. As with other aspects of the Chicano movement, there were significant historical roots. According to Carlos Muñoz Jr., the author of one of the most insightful studies of the Chicano movement, the origins of Mexican student activism "can be traced to 1929 when Ernesto Galarza, then a twenty-four-year-old graduate student in history at Stanford University, spoke out in defense of Mexican immigrant workers."³⁵ More significantly, in 1942 the Mexican-American Movement, Inc. (MAM), a student association that grew out of YMCA-sponsored Mexican Youth Conferences in Southern California, was created. Led by Paul Coronel and Félix Gutiérrez, the group was dedicated to the promotion of educational opportunities for the Mexicano community. The main precursor of the Chicano student movement was undoubtedly MAM.

By the midsixties, the ferment of the youth movement had impacted Chicanos, who eagerly embraced militant forms of protest. The intellectual sources of student