

X: PC

March 8, 1978

Dear Olga,

This is a report on my recent trip to Texas.

First I met with Armando Gutierrez and Bobbi Maggiani over lunch. Several other people were there including Remeo and June and Bobbi's wife (he got married two weeks ago) Rosa. They were friendly as ever but seemed down - atleast they had no perspectives and did not speak positively about anything going on. On the way to lunch Bobbi jokingly said to me that he hoped I didn't have a new proposal since it was exactly about one year ago when I had proposed to them to have the Chicano/Latino conference on immigration.

Bobbi is looking for a job. He has been the main editor and writer for Para La Gente which is now a monthly but he may be leaving the paper. He is considering applying for a job in Crystal.

Both seemed interested in my description of the plenum and what we have decided to do but neither had much comprehension of what it means.

Gloria Najjar who was present at the meeting pointed out to me afterwards that they act totally different when I am present. She said they normally joke around and talk a lot but that whenever I'm around they get very serious and quiet. Also she over heard Armando at a social event mention that the SWP does good work but then they leave.

Next Mark S. and I went down to Crystal to talk to Jose Angel. We were met by both Angel and Luz. They were very friendly and were in a jovial mood. We all went out for lunch and Angel and Luz told us about the recent developments in Crystal.

The Barrio club leaders have become open Democrats. One of them is going to run as a Democrat against Gutierrez for Judge. Two of the factions which had previously lined up with the Barrio club were now willing to line up with the Gutierristas. They are the Liberales and the Opportunists - - these are Angel's terms, I still do not understand exactly what they represent although Angel explained it some what - - who are now in an electoral bloc. Angel and Luz predicted this would give them a majority for sure and that they will win the elections of April 1.

Both felt that the events around the Lo Vaca Gas out off had helped their faction. This aspect was attributed primarily to their united front approach to the Barrio Club against the gas out off. They did not use the term "united front." Instead they explained that instead of denouncing the Barrio Club they offered to back them

in a united effort against Lo Vaca. The work of the Gutierristas around this issue won them supporters from the Barrio club periphery. Angel explained that they offered to build ~~many~~ demonstrations etc. if the official city leadership would call it.

What seems clear and most important is that the Barrio club evolution has now come out openly as pro-Democratic and it would be good to run an article with some information on this development. Before leaving Texas I arranged to have a comrade (Ruth) from San Antonio go to Crystal to do a story on the campaign but told the comrades to hold off until I checked with Harry. It turns out Harry was preparing an article on the elections and will follow up on his ~~xxx~~ story. What we will do is have Ruth go down at the time of the elections to get a follow up story on the results. Harry agreed with me that it would be good for the comrades in San Antonio to follow up and get to know the people in Crystal City. For instance, it was advantageous to have Mark come down with me.

I explained to Angel and Luz our plenum decisions and how we saw the Miners strike. Angel told me he doesn't trust workers. That there experience has been quite negative with the whole labor movement. He referred to some of the Chicano caucus leaders in the trade union movements as real sell outs etc. He told me he hoped we weren't going to end up wasting out time. We discussed this for a while. This reaction was a gut reaction on his part and not a thought out position.

He agreed things were very slow in the Chicano movement but said when he goes out speaking he finds that ~~xx~~ people are trying to understand and ~~xxx~~ show real interest.

Armando, Angel, Rosie (San Antonio) and one other RUPer have all applied to speak at the hearings in Washington on the Carter bill. Armando has been approved for the 24th of March.

After lunch we returned to his office and sat around and talked for about an hour. Luz had to leave. In the middle of his office is a huge bust of Lopez Portillo. We talked about his discussions with Portillo. He was impressed with Portillo. He got some 2 million in scholarships which he said Portillo specifically wanted RUP to handle. Angle explained that in Mexico he insisted that the scholarships not be including in the foreigners category, either as Latin Americans or North Americans but as Mexicanos. We did not delve into this topic. He seemed to feel he got something without giving anything in return.

We left Crystal with an understanding that we would make sure the Militant covered the new development in the Barrio clubs evolution.

I should also mention that again in our discussions he tried to defend Mario Compean saying he was stopping the red-baiting and getting away from factionalism. I told him that we wished that were true but that recently Compean had even stopped a Hector Marroquin leaflet from being leafleted.

The next day back in Austin Angel spoke to Armando's class

as part of a week on Chicano culture and history. Amparo Aguilar and Esteban Flores were there and attacked Gutierrez personally. Aguilar said that Crystal under Gutierrez was the same as Chicago under Daly. She interrupted Gutierrez from the floor and Esteban Flores also tried to discredit him. Flores chose the question of relations with Mexico's president which was firmer ground. ~~Angel~~ Angel answered him by saying he went down to get some scholarships and he got them and that's all that's involved.

Angel told us (in Crystal) that he is still getting a lot of red-baiting. I told him about some of our positive experiences in working on Hector Marroquin's defense and that I expected it would die down. Luz confirmed that she was still getting red-baiting pressure. Both referred to the red-baiting in derogatory terms especially Luz.

A few general comments about San Antonio. Mark feels we should make Houston the center for Texas more than San Antonio. He is working out having the State campaign transferred to Houston which would include at least Miguel Pendas and possibly others transferring there. He is considering going into industry and having Ruth become the organizer.

They have not recruited since the conference except two comrades who were already close contacts - Carol Calderon and Debbie Lazar. They have lost I believe three Holly, Mike Ortega, and Lupe (SAC). Also Nicolas has gone back to Mexico and I think Allen dropped out before going to Mexico.

I got the impression that they feel they are isolated. Mark states so. Their kick off rally for the campaign had a good turnout with a scattering of independents primarily Chicanos and full turnout of the branch. Jorge Zaragoza spoke rather well. He was the only independent on the speakers list. Miguel Pendas' speech was excellent. Raul chaired, Agnes, Ruth and Sara also spoke. Agnes' parents came and were impressed with Agnes and the campaign. Bruce gave the collection speech which raised about 800.

Comradely,

Peter
Peter

cc Harry