

CHAPTER SIX

—“TO DEMAND THAT THE UNIVERSITY WORK FOR OUR PEOPLE”—

The students are on campus making new demands that may seem strident and impulsive to some but that have a core of profound significance for the future of the ethnic groups and for American society as a whole.

—Dr. Julian Samora and Dr. Ernesto Galarza (1971)

IN APRIL OF 1969 ORGANIZERS at the University of California, Santa Barbara mailed invitations to progressive educators across the state. A conference on the status of Chicano/as in higher education was to be convened by the local chapter of the United Mexican American Students (UMAS) and the Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education (CCHE) in conjunction with other interested parties, among them members of the Educational Clearinghouse in Los Angeles such as Gloria López and René Nuñez. Following close on the heels of the historic Youth Liberation Conference in Denver hosted by the Crusade for Justice, the Santa Barbara meeting would be described years later as the founding moment of the Chicano/a student movement.¹

By the beginning of the next academic year, activists had prepared a list of “25 Resolutions on Chicano Studies.” Calling for the creation of Chicano Studies programs at every University of California campus, the document insisted that such programs be “staffed and controlled by Chicanos” and demanded that within five years Chicano faculty and student numbers “be proportionate to the Chicano population statewide or in the region the campus serves, whichever is the higher.” Resolution 9 added that “direct experience in the Chicano community be required of all professional training in the University system.”²

The historic meeting of April 1969 in Santa Barbara that produced the Plan de Santa Bárbara also led to the establishment of the Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA), an umbrella organization designed to unify and replace other student organizations first in California and then across the Southwest. Participants at the conference selected the name MEChA over another proposed name—Chicano Alliance for United Student Action (CAUSA)—in order to

emphasize the symbolic power of the idea of Aztlán and to capture the Spanish meaning of *mecha* (spark).³ At numerous campuses, there was local resistance to the proposed name change. At the University of California, San Diego, the campus that is the focus of this chapter, a debate lasted for almost two months before the existing organization, the Mexican American Youth Association (MAYA) changed its name to MAYA/MEChA and eventually to MEChA.⁴

In an attempt to negotiate between reformist, narrow nationalist, and revolutionary positions within the Movement, the participants at the Santa Barbara conference argued forcefully for the Chicano community's right to determine the nature of public universities. According to the framers of the Plan de Santa Bárbara, any attempt to dismiss university reform as a “white” activity, a stance adopted by some regressive nationalists, would alienate the student sector and nullify a significant aspect of the Movement's strength. It would also allow universities and colleges to continue their business as usual with regard to the Chicano/a community:

Not all Chicanos in the movement are in agreement as to the strategic importance of the university to the liberation of the Chicano people. A leading argument against involvement with the university holds that the participation will only result in cooptation of scarce Chicano time, manpower, and resources; and that it will only serve to legitimize basically racist relationships between the Chicano community and gabacho society. According to this view, the university and other major institutions are essentially irrelevant to the process of Chicano liberation . . .

The inescapable fact is that Chicanos must come to grips with the reality of the university in modern society. . . . How can the university contribute to the liberation of the Chicano community? In the long term probably the most fundamental contribution it will make will be by producing knowledge applicable by the Chicano movement. . . . The role of knowledge in producing powerful social change, indeed revolution, cannot be underestimated.⁵

The college campus, then, was to become one more site of struggle in the Chicano/a assault against marginalization and the unfulfilled promises of liberal democracy. The university as a site for the production and

dissemination of knowledge would make it a key battleground for the future of ethnic Mexican people in the United States.

In this chapter, I will focus on Chicana/o participation in a broad-based coalition that implemented Movement strategies and objectives at one specific location in the Southwest. Two weeks before the historic meeting at Denver and a month before the Santa Barbara conference, Chicano/a and African American students at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), campus had submitted their demands for a radical educational experiment they called Lumumba-Zapata College.

It is my contention that the UC San Diego experience embodied one of the most radical attempts by students and faculty of color to transform the elitist and Eurocentric university into an inclusionary and democratic space that reflected the concerns of traditionally excluded communities. I believe the archival evidence confirms that the Lumumba-Zapata activists were exceptional because they presented their demands during the earliest moments of the Chicano/a student movement and, perhaps more important, because they struggled to maintain a multiethnic coalition even as they negotiated the oftentimes glaring conflicts between sectarian nationalism and a more far-reaching internationalist agenda.

In the late 1960s opportunities in higher education for young people of Mexican descent were minimal. Spanish-surnamed enrollments in colleges and universities nationwide made up only 1.6 percent in 1968; in 1972 numbers had risen slightly to 2.3 percent with a majority in two-year community colleges. In the University of California (UC) system in 1968, "Mexican or Spanish American" students made up only 1.8 percent of the total number of undergraduates and 1.1 percent of all graduate students.⁶ As Chicano/a activism increased across the Southwest, numbers slowly began to increase so that in the UC system by 1973 the percentage of Chicano/a undergraduates was 5.0 percent. Aggressive outreach programs and innovative curricular reforms initiated by Chicano/Mexicano faculty and students made significant inroads into the most exclusionary campuses. By 1974 and the waning of the Movement's intensity, however, numbers became stagnant and in some cases began a slow reversal downward to such an extent that a 1976 report prepared for the National Chicano Commission on Higher Education declared: "The future of Chicanos in higher education is . . . less bright today than it was at the beginning of this decade."⁷

The late 1960s and early 1970s were marked by a series of radical projects that challenged the traditional educational system in California. In March 1968, Chicana/o high school students throughout Los Angeles organized and participated in "blowouts" demanding major reforms. Similar events took place in Texas and elsewhere in the Southwest.⁸ Later that same year, students at UC Santa Cruz demanded the creation of a Malcolm X college (administrators rejected their proposal), and the first Mexican American Studies program in California was founded at Los Angeles State College. In the San Francisco Bay Area, an autonomous Third World college was established in late 1969 after the strike at San Francisco State College and in solidarity with Los Siete de la Raza (see Chapter Five). On the UC Berkeley campus, the Third World Liberation Front strike was called on January 22, 1969, after negotiations with the administration for a Third World College and other reforms (including a Center for Mexican American Studies) broke down.⁹ Composed of the Mexican American Student Confederation (MASC), the African American Student Union (AASU), and the Asian American Political Alliance (AAPA), as well as a White Student Strike Support Committee, the Berkeley coalition and its demands shared a number of characteristics with the UC San Diego effort.

More specifically, both groups demanded fundamental changes in the governance practices of the university, changes that would challenge the elite composition of the academic hierarchy in terms of decision making, curriculum, faculty hiring, and student admissions. In addition to the creation of autonomous ethnic-specific departments, the Berkeley strikers demanded: "That Third World people be in positions of power. Recruitment of more Third World faculty in every department and discipline and proportionate employment of Third World people at all levels . . . throughout the university system."¹⁰ It was precisely the attempt by students of color to intervene in the governance structures of the academy that would frighten liberal and conservative administrators alike.

Outside of the elite UC system, activists battled for Chicano Studies programs on a number of campuses in the California State College and community college systems. At the same time, radical reformers developed alternative educational projects. Bob Hoover and Aaron Manganiello founded Nairobi College in East Palo Alto and Venceremos College in Redwood City. Both colleges eventually received accreditation from the Western College Association.¹¹ At Venceremos

College, radical Chicana women established a day-care center, and promoted a sophisticated feminist and internationalist agenda: "Venceremos supports no separatist movements on any level. . . . We, as the women of La Raza, must dare to carry on the revolutionary tradition of Las Adelitas, who fought so courageously during the Mexican Revolution."¹² In Fresno, activist educators from the local Cal State campus founded La Universidad de Aztlán (UA), "a learning institution for us, who think of ourselves as Raza." Inspired by the pedagogical theory of Brazilian Paulo Freire, UA organizers argued: "Our people possess tremendous intellectual potential that must be fully developed, and which can only be developed in the case of a bilingual-bicultural context."¹³

Farther north, near Sacramento, Native Americans and Chicano/as created Deganawidah-Quetzalcoatl University (DQU) in 1971. According to DQU's mission statement, Chicano/as and indigenous people shared a common lineage ("*raza o parentesco*") as well as similar positions in a racialized educational system: "*Por esta y otras razones gran número de chicanos e indios han considerado la buena idea de comenzar programas de educación elevada designados a conocer las necesidades de su gente*" ("For this and other reasons, a great number of Chicanos and Indians believe it is a good idea to initiate programs of higher education designed to respond to the needs of the people").¹⁴

A key player at DQU was UC Davis professor Jack Forbes who had been one of the first scholars to promote the idea of Aztlán as the Chicano homeland (according to Forbes himself, he had introduced the term as early as 1962). In his explanation of why DQU was necessary, Forbes touched upon many of the issues driving Chicano/a demands for educational reform across the Southwest: "Experience has shown that no white-run, white-oriented college can adequately meet the needs of the Indian and Chicano peoples. . . . If one of the white colleges of the United States were to fully integrate its faculty, revise its curriculum, do away with meaningless requirements, and share its governing authority, then perhaps there would be little (or less) need for DQU. But such a thing is not happening."¹⁵ Relying heavily on notions of race and nation, Forbes made the case that "every people needs its university." Native and Chicano peoples were no different.

From 1971 to 1973, the community organization Casa de la Raza operated as a K-12 school in Berkeley, California, before being shut down by the local school district (after the Office of Civil Rights applied pressure)

because of charges of exclusionary admissions policies. The stated guiding principle of the Casa de la Raza curriculum was "carnalismo," although the term was never defined in a way that translated into practical curricular initiatives. The objective of the school's founders was to create an alternate system of education in opposition to what they called "the gabacho system" of individualized competition.¹⁶ Another alternative school was created in Palo Alto—the Free University. Among its founders was Jamaican literature professor Keith Lowe, who will figure in the events in San Diego described in this chapter.

Calls for drastic educational reform came not only from the grassroots but also from the handful of Mexican Americans who struggled within the ranks of public school systems, university administrations, and the federal bureaucracy. The spring of 1969 was an especially active period in California. In addition to the Santa Barbara conference, there was a meeting of Association of Mexican American Educators (AMAE) in San Diego in March, the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA) sponsored the Third Annual Mexican American Issues Conference at Sacramento City College in April, and activists such as Anna Nieto Gomez and Monte Perez met at Cal State Long Beach to discuss recruitment and retention issues in May. At the San Diego conference, educators passed the following resolution: "That AMAE support the actions of the Chicano student movement of pursuing better education . . . encourage educator support of student movements in their individual chapters . . . denounce the use of unreasonable police force in educational institutions."¹⁷

The following year, Philip Montez, director of the Western Field Office of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, wrote:

A study was recently completed at UCLA, the main focus of which was the low aspiration level of the Mexican American. And they proved that it was so. . . . The universities which produce our scholars in the Southwest have failed in attempting to know the Mexican American. They continue to place the cart before the horse. They look at motivation and aspiration before they know what society has done to us. By providing superficial programs, the society will never have to acknowledge what it has done to a people/s culture in a supposedly democratic society. This indicates to me that in all the things we are trying to

do for Mexican Americans nobody has accepted the fact that the system has done a poor job.¹⁸

Earlier in 1970, some of the most prestigious educators in the University of California system addressed a letter to UC president Charles Hitch as members of the president's Chicano Steering Committee in which they spoke openly of the "great dismay and anger among Chicanos inside and outside the University" because of "the deep gulf that separates your understanding of and sensitivity to Chicano needs from that of the UC Chicano community." Taking key terms from the Movement discursive repertoire, chairman Eugene Cota-Robles concluded: "What Chicanos are asking of the University is that it be responsible to us as a people seeking self-determination. The University cannot and will not continue being the exclusive domain of the dominant sectors of our society; it belongs to all the people, it must serve us. . . . The University has the means to meet its responsibility to the Chicano people of California; what it lacks is the will. We are confident that history will compel the University to honor its obligations to our people."¹⁹ Picking up the mantle of José Vasconcelos, who as Minister of Education in Mexico in the 1930s had insisted that the university "work for the people," Chicano/a reformers were arguing for nothing less than a restructuring of the racialized and class-based system of higher education in California.

The Chicano educational-reform movement held that students and faculty would not only reform the university from within but also move off campus in order to make resources and skills available to surrounding communities. As Ysidro Macias, one of the key participants at the Santa Barbara event, argued: "Chicano Studies institutionalization seems to mark the present stage of activity and the future involves the concept of 'moving into the community' to provide services, such as breakfast programs, medical clinics, etc., but [it is] just as important to politicize the community as to the economic and political nature, with its inherent oppression, of the capitalist system in this country."²⁰ That the idea of Chicano/a university students teaching "against capital" in working-class Mexican barrios was at best utopian was not lost on Macias and others activists. Nevertheless, the revolutionary tenor of the times reinforced the notion that U.S. imperialism was under attack around the world and that radical Chicana/os could implement their critique of liberalism and contribute to the creation of a more democratic society.

THE "WHITE SCHOOL ON THE HILL"

There appears to be a general community impression that UCSD has cloistered itself away from the community and is not interested in serving all the community, and that entrance requirements for higher education in general are too restrictive.

—"Concept of an Urban College in San Diego" (1969)

How does a school like UCSD, all white, elitist and with both feet on the moon, so to speak—how does it get one foot into the ghetto areas of the Inner City?

—UCSD Chancellor William McGill
to *San Diego Magazine* (1969)

The history of the UC San Diego campus might best be thought of as a perpetual struggle between an elitist conservative philosophy and a more benign form of liberal, yet no less elitist, pluralism. These two sides of the educational and policymaking equation were never mutually exclusive. In fact, those administrators most closely identified with Kennedy-style liberalism were often themselves the supporters and beneficiaries of a deeply antidemocratic elitism. It is the elitism of an institution like UCSD that even today continues to produce racialized outcomes in terms of student enrollments, curriculum, staff promotions, and faculty hiring. Elitism or "class racism" leads inexorably to institutional racism.²¹

In her history of UCSD, Nancy Scott Anderson describes the early debates about where to locate what she calls "the cathedral on a bluff."²² Proposals to build the new university in closer proximity to downtown San Diego near Balboa Park were rejected, and the potential for an urban college accessible to working-class communities was lost. In 1958, when the La Jolla site was finally approved, the local culture in the seaside community some twelve miles north of the city was typical of many wealthy neighborhoods across the country. Casual racism directed at Latinos and Blacks was everywhere present in advertising and other forms of media while deeper forms of structural racism and anti-Semitism ensured that resources be kept out of the hands of "any person whose blood is not entirely that of the Caucasian race" (La Jolla property deed, 1959).²³

Campus founder Roger Revelle had never envisioned anything quite like the political battles that would engulf the university in the late

1960s. Revelle's Cold War-inspired vision was that of the university as a detached and pastoral training ground for engineers and scientists, and he imagined a campus where only a small and select group of students would be shaped as leaders. In his view, this elite group would guide a much larger but less talented group into the future. The larger group would not be educated at UCSD but at the local state college.

According to Revelle: "In any region of large population there may be need for several institutions of higher education, some to handle large numbers of students, the others to concentrate on relatively small numbers of highly selected young people who will be seed beds for the future. . . . There is the need to give undergraduate instruction to a relatively small number of potential leaders, including especially scientific and technical leaders."²⁴ Revelle proposed that officials in the San Diego school system begin to identify local children with "IQs above 140" for admission to the new campus. In the context of the late 1950s, this meant that disenfranchised working-class people and people of color without access to decent schools were locked out from the very beginning. In effect, UCSD's history of "selecting" the privileged few, through artificially stringent and biased admissions criteria rather than educating in a democratic fashion, had begun.

The founding fathers of the La Jolla campus were intimately tied to the military-industrial complex. In fact, if local tycoon John Jay Hopkins, the head of General Dynamics, had not offered one million dollars to the UC system in 1953 for the establishment of a campus UCSD might never have been built. The earliest names suggested for the campus provide some insight into the original vision—Institute of Technology and Engineering, School of Science and Engineering. Many of the first faculty members shared the class-based biases of the surrounding community, yet key faculty, including the early chancellors, were liberals never completely at ease in the Republican stronghold of San Diego, where military culture combined with conservative politics to produce one of the most segregated and economically stratified cities in the Southwest.

It surprised no one among the city's elite, for example, that a retired general was editor of the opinion page of the local newspaper. What successive UCSD chancellors faced, therefore, especially in the turbulent Viet Nam war years, was a constant struggle to defend their concept of academic freedom against the intrusion of what they perceived to be

the irrational forces of both the right and the left. As Chicano/a and Black students became increasingly radicalized, new challenges perplexed even the most well-intentioned administrators. For the most part, the legitimate issues of racism and the demands of Black, Asian, and Chicano/a students were simply beyond their comprehension.

Despite the elitist origins of the institution and its geographical distance from the urban core of San Diego, La Jolla was from the mid-1960s on among the most politicized campuses in the University of California system. One of the earliest incidents that aroused the ire of San Diego's conservative community was a demonstration protesting the U.S. invasion and occupation of the Dominican Republic that had taken place in late April 1965. A front-page editorial in the *San Diego Union* demanded that the university administration "suppress" all further protests, and the newspaper expressed a "deep concern with the failure of discipline at the University of California local campus."²⁵ The denunciations of UCSD's lack of "discipline" emanating out of the state's most conservative sectors would increase throughout the next decade. Chancellor John Galbraith, writing to fellow chancellor Franklin Murphy of UCLA about the Dominican protest, jokingly referred to UCSD's growing radicalism: "We don't take a back seat to Berkeley in anything."²⁶ Little did he know that the next few years would put his campus on the front lines of a full-scale revolution over the future of higher education.

Accustomed to a relatively docile Mexican and Mexican American community, San Diego city leaders were caught off guard when the Chicano Movement came to town. As local writer Harold Keen put it:

The slumbering brown giant is beginning to stir, to cast off the Tio Taco (Mexican Uncle Tom) sombrero-topped stereotype of subservience and abject acceptance of an inferior destiny. The demeaning image of servility projected by the bracero and the wetback, the busboy and the laborer, the scared immigrant and the passive alien resident is being erased by a new breed that proudly calls itself *Chicano* and spans the generation gap. The young and the middle aged—the passionate, angry students and many of their reserved, deliberate elders—are joined in the Mexican-American revolution of self-awareness, self-respect and self-determination.²⁷

By the time the nation emerged from the bright light of revolutionary desire and the violent reaction against it that was the Viet Nam war era, UCSD had been home to an active Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) chapter; the Independent Left (IL); the Associated Moderate Students (AMS), a conservative student group; the Black Student Council (BSC), later the Black Student Union (BSU); the Women's Liberation Front; the United Native Americans (UNA); the Asian American Student Alliance (AASA); a Chicana activist group (MUJER); the Mexican American Youth Association (MAYA), and later the Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA). But the campus high on the hill in affluent La Jolla first catapulted into the national consciousness (and the crosshairs of local and national law enforcement) when philosophy graduate student Angela Davis followed her mentor Herbert Marcuse from Brandeis University to southern California in the autumn of 1967.²⁸

When she arrived to pursue graduate studies in philosophy at UCSD, Angela Davis was immediately struck by the segregated nature of the campus. She later recalled: "Each day brought on a more profound dejection, for there were still no Black people on campus. . . . I roamed the campus, examined the bulletin boards, read the newspapers, talked to everyone who might know: Where are my people?"²⁹ Because of the extremely low numbers of African American students on campus, Davis realized that any political organization interested in addressing students of color would have to pursue a multiethnic coalition. In this respect, her thinking coincided with that of the original Black Panthers who, far from being sectarian nationalists as some historians have misrepresented them, were eager to establish alliances with other groups.

In his rebuke of Stokely Carmichael's narrowly nationalist agenda, Eldridge Cleaver had written: "One thing they know, and we know, that seems to escape you, is that there is not going to be any revolution or black liberation in the United States as long as revolutionary blacks, whites, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Indians, Chinese and Eskimos are unwilling or unable to unite into some functional machinery that can cope with the situation."³⁰ The original Panthers were particularly opposed to the isolation of Black college students within Black-only organizations or programs. In 1969, David Hilliard told an audience of San Francisco State College students: "The Black Panther Party is not going to support any BSU policy that asks for an autonomous Black

studies program that excludes other individuals. . . . Let's have an organization that we call the Afro-American, Asian, Latin Alliance. Motherfuck the BSU because the BSU is too narrow. We recognize nationalism, because we know that our struggle is one of national salvation. But this doesn't hinder our struggle to make alliances with other people that's moving in a common direction, but rather it strengthens our struggle."³¹

Angela Davis held a similar position on the issue of coalition politics, and she began to act on that philosophy once she was in San Diego. After collaborating on the formation of a small Black Student Council, she made contact with the recently created Chicano/a student organization the Mexican American Youth Association (MAYA).

MAYA had first appeared at nearby San Diego State University in 1967 under the direction of its first chairman, Bert Rivas. According to one of its founding members, Israel Chávez, the UCSD chapter was formed in late spring of 1968 after the death of Martin Luther King, Jr.³² By the end of the year, Chávez and other MAYA members, working with the Black Student Council, had staged a hunger strike to protest Governor Reagan's granting of virtual absolute power to the Regents and placing of limitations on guest lecturers, an official response to the temporary hiring of Eldridge Cleaver at UCLA.³³

The newly formed MAYA/BSC coalition would soon dive directly into the struggle over higher education by intervening in the UCSD administration's plans for a new campus college. Basing the organizational structure of UCSD on the elite British system, the founders had divided the campus into separate "colleges" each with a distinct character. Planning for the third college was well under way when provost-designate Armin Rappaport asked students for input on possible ethnic-studies courses. Much to Rappaport's surprise, BSC/MAYA activists developed an elaborate program that eventually would derail the university administration's existing plans.

A number of BSC undergraduates, Angela Davis, and literature professor Keith Lowe, a native of Jamaica against whom the U.S. government would invoke the McCarran Act in 1969 in order to refuse him reentry into the United States, drafted the BSC's original document in which they called for a college to be named after Congolese revolutionary Patrice Lumumba. The objective of the new college, as Davis put it, would be to provide Black and Brown students with "the knowledge and skills we needed in order to more effectively wage our liberation

struggles.”³⁴ Working collectively, BSC and MAYA activists revised the original document a number of times. The opening line of the final draft presented to the campus administration on March 14, 1969, as the “Lumumba-Zapata College, BSC-MAYA Demands for the Third College, UCSD” read: “Contradictions which sustained America in the past are now threatening to annihilate the entire societal edifice.” Accordingly, the students proposed a complete dismantling of the entrenched class racism of the La Jolla campus:

At the University of California, San Diego, we will no longer ensure the undisturbed existence of a false institution which consistently fails to respond to the needs of our people. Despite the Chicano rebellions in the Southwest and the Black revolts in the cities, the University of California, San Diego, which is part of the oppressive system, has not changed its institutional role. The puny reforms made so far are aimed at pacifying the revolts and sapping our strength. We therefore not only emphatically demand that radical changes be made, we propose to execute these changes ourselves!³⁵

The small core of Chicano/a students at UCSD (numbering only forty-four in 1968) formed a tight-knit group made tighter because they were so few. Most of them would participate in the major activities associated with the Movimiento period—United Farm Workers’s boycotts, the Chicano Moratorium antiwar marches and demonstrations in Los Angeles from 1969 through 1971, the Crusade for Justice’s youth conferences in Denver, and historic meetings on educational reform in the University of California system. As we shall see, some of them were active members of the Brown Berets and even the Young Lords (the Puerto Rican youth group originally formed in Chicago), some eventually joined the Communist Labor Party, and virtually all of them participated in the local actions of the San Diego Chicano/a community such as the establishment of Chicano Park in 1970.³⁶ That same year, the UCSD Defense Fund was established in solidarity with radical causes ranging from Los Siete de la Raza in San Francisco, the incarceration of Angela Davis, and the Soldedad Brothers case. Chicano student Carlos Monge served as the fund’s spokesperson. The journey these activists made from urban neighborhoods, the Imperial Valley, and other working-class and rural areas

would put them on a collision course with the ingrained elitism of the La Jolla campus, with local and national conservative faculty, politicians, and journalists, and ultimately with local and federal law-enforcement agencies.

Throughout the Lumumba-Zapata episode, the Chicano/a campus community was divided along sectarian nationalist, internationalist, and socialist lines. Differences were often put aside in order to present a united front against the administration, but ideological divisions typical of Movement organizations of the period were real. Years later student leader Vince C. de Baca recalled: “The Lumumba-Zapata demands represented a consolidation of the internationalist perspective. There were Black nationalists and there were Chicano nationalists who wanted a Black or Chicano college, who didn’t want to work with other ethnic groups. But there was a larger faction which was internationalist in perspective, which held the view that the best way to get anything through . . . was to work together, to submit one joint Black-Chicano proposal.”³⁷ In their struggle to balance the agendas of the African American community with their own even as they were forced to negotiate with narrow nationalists within their own cohort, Chicano/a internationalists like de Baca, Monge, Martha Salinas, Maria Blanco, Israel Chávez, Milan Lalic Molina, Theresa Meléndez, Maria Elena Salazar, Alda Blanco, Yolanda Catzalco, Marta Lomelí, Barbie Reyes, and others walked a precarious political tightrope. According to de Baca: “We were considered *mayateros* [nigger lovers], internationalists . . . whereas these other people considered themselves Mexicans. They didn’t even really want to consider themselves Chicanos.”³⁸

In a series of developments that took place during the 1971–1972 academic year, divisions had grown within UCSD’s Chicano/a community. One group that had developed a “Third World Studies” major called for an internationalist framework within which students might pursue Chicano, African American, and other concentrations. These students met opposition from peers with a more narrow nationalist perspective who demanded control over any future program. Not unlike the suspicious appearance of “Black nationalists” at UCSD one year earlier, the presence of recently arrived militants promoting regressive nationalist positions raised considerable suspicion. Many of the original Lumumba-Zapata organizers noted that one of the leaders of the “nationalist” faction had developed a reputation as an “internationalist” who had clashed with nationalist students at other local colleges. Given the recent history of

infiltration and provocation on campus, the aggressive style and actions of such figures contributed to the students' sense of being under attack.³⁹

In the end, supporters of the Third World position succeeded in convincing at least some students to agree to their basic principles. As they wrote in the local MEChA constitution: "The ideology of MEChA is loosely one of Revolutionary Nationalism which will unite Chicanos and build a consciousness of the existence of an oppressive system, a system whose perpetrators victimize not only Chicanos, but the majority of the people of this country and the rest of the world."⁴⁰ The development of a more narrowly focused Chicano Studies program moved forward although not without its critics, who claimed that such a program would weaken ties of solidarity with other communities.⁴¹

At the heart of the internationalist contingent was Marxist literary critic Carlos Blanco Aguinaga (fig. 16). The son of a Spanish Republican family, Blanco had been raised in Mexico City and educated at Harvard. Arriving at UCSD in 1964, Blanco would become instrumental in guiding emergent Chicano radicalism on campus in his role as faculty advisor to MAYA and intellectual mentor to student leaders. Early in the Lumumba-Zapata episode, Blanco explained: "Lumumba-Zapata was not conceived as a 'coalition' to train Black and Chicano aspirants to their own bourgeoisies." But for some Chicano/a activists winning access to middle-class privileges was precisely their goal. Given the disjuncture between revolutionary and sectarian nationalisms that existed on the UCSD campus, Blanco would spend a great deal of time attempting to hold MEChA together. In February of 1970, he spoke to *mechistas* about the tensions between them and African American students as well as the divisions between "Third World types" and "chicanismo," urging them to put aside petty differences in order to ask the fundamental questions of "Who owns the wealth?, Who distributed the pie?, and From whom was it stolen?"⁴²

Despite divisions within the Chicano/a campus community, the primary antagonist to the Lumumba-Zapata coalition was psychology professor and UCSD chancellor William McGill. Following the assassination of Dr. King, the BSC had approached McGill (then chair of the Academic Senate) with demands for an ethnic-studies curriculum. His response was to solicit faculty donations for a BSC library and establish a committee to study the viability of an African American studies program. After assuming the chancellorship in late 1968, McGill took liberal stances on a number of issues including the key issue of



16. Carlos Blanco Aguinaga, September 26, 1970. UCSD Mandeville Special Collections, Marshall College Provost.

academic freedom in his defense of Marcuse. But McGill's preparation for the radical change taking place on California campuses was insufficient. When asked by a student reporter why there were no curricular offerings that dealt with issues of race, he replied: "Don't you see that when you start talking about racism you are dealing with advocacy rather than the field of objective analysis."⁴³

A prolific writer, McGill at one point drafted a document titled "Some Considerations on Black Student Demands for Education," in which he applied his training as a psychologist to the social movement developing around him. According to the chancellor: "the causes of unrest and character of the demands of the black students may be seen in a parallelism between the growth of persons and the emergence of cultures."⁴⁴ In other words, the students were acting like immature children or, to put it another way, they were still in the process of passing from a lesser stage of civilization to a higher one.

Not unlike most liberals of his generation, McGill could defend academic freedom against conservative attacks but simply could not understand a student movement whose agenda for educational reform was based in large part on a radical critique of institutional racism and racialized

elitism.⁴⁵ Trapped in his academic disciplinary blinders, McGill cast himself as the understanding but stern parent who would defend the integrity of his “home” (i.e., the university) against attacks by partisan forces:

At the same time, the “establishment” must be true to what it considers its true character, and not allow itself to be brow-beaten into invalid submission, which some teenagers are able to accomplish with their parents. It is apparent to this writer that the university has a valid challenge to alter its curriculum so as to include ethnic and cultural history which is a crucial part of the identity, not only of the black and brown communities, but of the white community as well. However, insofar as the black community wishes the university to be involved in the political activity resulting from the emergence of identity, it appears that this would be denial of the character of the university as being free from political control or of taking a partisan position in politics.⁴⁶

The long-standing traditions of liberal pluralism and the university as a space free of the corruption of politics reassert themselves in McGill’s meditation. The flaw at the very core of his thinking, however, was the notion that the Chicano/a and African American students who had decided to challenge the university’s deep structures were children.

Soon after the assassination of Dr. King, the BSC had submitted a proposal calling for the restructuring of the Revelle College humanities sequence because of its “extreme ethnocentricity” and the establishment of an Institute of Afro-American Studies. Writing to the administration, the students asserted: “The course offering of the University of California, San Diego by its restriction to the study of European culture is an excellent example of the racist attitude—if it isn’t white, it isn’t worthwhile—that infects virtually every aspect of American culture.”⁴⁷ Working through more traditional campus channels, biology professor Dan Lindsley proposed that the new third college be named for Dr. King and that the college focus its curriculum on race relations, enrolling high numbers of underrepresented students. By this time, however, planning for the college had been going on in official faculty committees for over three years. Nothing came of the Lindsley proposal.

Literature professor Andrew Wright chaired the original planning committee for the new college.⁴⁸ After historian Armin Rappaport was

named college provost (and before radical students made their demands), he charged Wright with the establishment of programs that might bring university resources to disenfranchised communities in San Diego. Rappaport hoped to establish a “social-issues” major that would carry students directly to African American sections of the city. In 1968, he told an interviewer: “There have always been those who think that the University should be insulated from the outside and be an institution dedicated to pure reason and thinking. This is impossible today; we must bring our intelligence to bear upon the problems that face mankind.”⁴⁹

Rappaport began to seek advice on the future of the college from student leaders such as MAYA’s Robert Carrillo, but Chicano/a and Black activists did not see much promise in what they perceived to be the administration’s limited reform agenda. Carrillo told a local reporter: “UCSD is an ivory tower separated geographically and socially from the community. It is not in touch with reality, with the problems of poverty, the ghettos, or lack of opportunity.”⁵⁰ Just a few weeks later, BSC and MAYA decided to intervene directly in the planning of the new college.

In a 1989 interview, MAYA member Joe Martinez, who in 1966 was one of the first Chicanos to enter UCSD, recalled that initially students had circulated two separate proposals—the African American plan for a “Patrice Lumumba College” and a less-developed Chicano/a plan for general curricular reform. One of the key Chicano activists, Vince de Baca, remembered that through a collective process the two proposals were merged and the name of Mexican revolutionary Emiliano Zapata added. According to de Baca: “In developing our plan we looked at many other colleges. We thought we would change not only UCSD but we saw ourselves as being in the forefront of progressive university education.”⁵¹ Central to the thinking of many student participants was the idea of self-determination or what in the 1990s would come to be called “empowerment,” that is, the ability of formerly disempowered groups to determine their own futures by gaining access to resources and decision-making apparatuses.

One of the fundamental areas in which self-determination would play a key role was the definition of the group’s collective identity. As BSC member Sam Jordan wrote just three months after the issuing of the students’s demands: “Primary among the responsibilities of Lumumba-Zapata College will be the rejection of all white definitions concerning Blackness, Brownness, justice, rationality, beauty, etc. In their stead will be concepts and terminology embracing our overdue unification and

collective interests . . . made intelligible in the language of our people.”⁵² Jordan’s final point stressed the importance of avoiding overly abstract and technical languages typical of university settings in order to maintain close relationships with off-campus working-class communities.

According to one unfriendly account that described the proposal as “a highly literate evocation of Marxist dogma,” the students received encouragement and direct help from a number of sources which included local chapters of the Black Panthers, Ron Karenga’s US organization, the Urban League, the NAACP, CORE, and the Citizens’ Interracial Committee.⁵³ But the demands, while decidedly antiracist and anti-imperialist in nature, were not particularly Marxist, and there is no reason to believe that the students and faculty were not completely equipped to draft the document on their own. As we have seen, Professor Keith Lowe, Angela Davis, and other students had written the original BSC proposal for a Patrice Lumumba College while the final draft of the Lumumba-Zapata demands was the product of a broad student coalition that included MAYA representatives.

Like most political and educational reform movements of the period, the Lumumba-Zapata experiment had little to say about issues of gender and sexuality. Given that the long and arduous process in which feminists struggled to reeducate their male *compañeros* in the Movement had only begun, it is unfortunate but not surprising that men continued to disregard women’s issues. As the editors of *Encuentro Femenil* put it: “In 1969, there was a great eagerness to experience the first Chicano studies classes. The women were very excited to learn about their heritage both as Chicanos and as mujeres. However, the women were very disappointed to discover that neither Chicano history, Mexican history, nor Chicano literature included any measurable material on the mujer.”⁵⁴

In an important corrective to this fundamental omission in Movement thought, Chicana activists pointed out that the Plan de Santa Bárbara itself, which by 1971 was referred to as “the Bible” of the Chicano/a educational-reform movement, did not address issues of vital interest to women. A conference held at Cal State San Diego in March of 1971 sought to rectify the problem by suggesting revisions to the Plan that included “adequate representation” for women on all governing bodies, recruitment of Chicana faculty, and curricular changes that developed courses on “la Mujer.”⁵⁵

On the issue of admissions, Lumumba/Zapata activists called for a 35 percent African American, 35 percent Chicano, and 35 percent “Other” ethnic breakdown, a demand that sent opponents of “racial quotas” into cardiac arrest and one that even MAYA faculty advisor Carlos Blanco called “utopian.” For the students, however, this demand was necessary in order to “compensate for past and present injustices and to serve those most affected by institutional racism and economic exploitation.”⁵⁶ In a like manner, the proposed curriculum emphasized a focus on the relationship between economically developed and underdeveloped nations. The suggested areas of study captured the concerns of students around the world during the Viet Nam war period:

1. Revolutions
2. Analysis of Economic Systems
3. Science and Technology
4. Health Sciences and Public Health
5. Urban and Rural Development
6. Communication Arts
7. Foreign Languages
8. Cultural Heritage
9. White Studies

In his role as chair of the Lumumba-Zapata curriculum subcommittee, Carlos Blanco proposed a course of study that was “humanistic” and designed to “offer the possibility for minority students to apply the critical and analytical tools of modern learning to the problems they face in their environment and to provide for White students an understanding of the problems involved in present-day society.”⁵⁷ By the end of 1969, Chicano/as at UCSD were attempting to bring together an organization with community ties, called United Chicanos at San Diego, whose first objective would be the establishment of a high-ranking advisor to the chancellor on Chicano issues. Chancellor McGill rejected the idea in a January 21, 1970, letter, calling the demand for what he called a “super-Chicano” a step toward producing “professional Chicanos or career blacks.” With a curious choice of words, he added: “I cannot bring myself, at this point in time, to relegate either community to this ‘stoop-labor,’ ‘back-of-the-bus’ role.”⁵⁸

By 1970 the San Diego campus “enjoyed” a national reputation for the most part due to the Lumumba-Zapata experiment. That same year, the

Los Angeles Times published a five-part series on the proposed third college and syndicated columnists on the right stirred the flames of conservative fear and outrage. On the UCSD campus, sociology professor Jack Douglas became the most persistent critic of the new college and a prolific writer to editorial pages, warning in an August missive: "They intend to kill the soul of the university."⁵⁹ When radical students heckled cartoonist Al Capp, creator of "Lil Abner" and a political raconteur in the 1960s, during his talk at UCSD in October, 1970, Capp added to the campus's notoriety: "I predict that there will be dynamite set off on that campus before the year is out. The 2 percent of the student body, which are animals, are the foulest bunch I have seen in the 288 campuses I have visited."⁶⁰ In an increasingly hostile environment, the survival of the new college was by no means assured.

But the point at which the Lumumba/Zapata activists struck deepest at the core values of academic hierarchy and elitism was the demand to democratize the day-to-day governing of the college on every issue affecting college life including the most jealously guarded domains of academic departments—admissions and faculty hiring. In a proposal that anticipated by some thirty years the reforms instituted after the elimination of affirmative-action programs in the late 1990s, the Lumumba-Zapata activists argued for automatic admission for the top 12 percent of all high school students and the rejection of economically and culturally biased entrance exams like the SAT. The objective in the final analysis was to "attack the race and class bias of the admission requirements of the University of California, to ensure a sizable enrollment of minority working-class students to give Lumumba-Zapata College its maximum effectiveness in the community."⁶¹ In an even more quixotic move, they emphasized the antiassimilationist ethos of the Chicano and Black liberation movements, stating that they were not interested in recruiting students who "had come to terms with the system and thereby lost their identities with their communities."⁶²

By the time the revised Third College plan was made public, even the previously hostile student newspaper, the *Triton Times*, heralded the college as a major innovation in higher education. Calling it "the most exciting educational experiment in America today," the paper's editorial board opined:

Why is Third College unique? Because for probably the first time an entire college is being constructed to serve the specific needs of



17. UC San Diego students Percy Myers and Tony Valenzuela, September 26, 1970. UCSD Mandeville Special Collections, Marshall College Provost.



18. Carlos Blanco Aguinaga, Joe Watson, Acting Chancellor Herb York, student Carlos Monge, September 26, 1970. UCSD Mandeville Special Collections, Marshall College Provost.

a particular community—the Black and Brown. It is not a college that will serve Blacks and Browns by molding them into the established white society. Nor is it a college that will pacify students with doses of Black and Brown studies. It is instead the beginning of the commitment on the part of the University to correct its oversights of the past. The Black and Brown students cannot be given too much credit in what they have succeeded in doing. However rash their initial actions and words may have seemed to members of the academic community, they made an entire institution stop to re-examine its basic goals for the first time.⁶⁵

The writer's transformation of "Black and Brown" into a single "community" is in and of itself an indication of what was taking place on the ground.

Although it would flourish for only a short time, the BSC/MAYA coalition was a significant episode in the genealogy of African American and Chicano/a alliances in the Southwest. Vince de Baca described the deeper significance of the coalition as "a continuing on-going process to say 'let's rid ourselves of racism towards each other.'"⁶⁴ African American activist Percy Myers remembered the project engendering "a great deal of camaraderie, a great deal of love and support because we all knew that we were in a battle. And that crossed racial lines."⁶⁵ For a brief period of time between 1970 and 1972, the new college was indeed a bold experiment in multiracial organizing and the democratic reform of higher education. The first Dean of Students, Pascual Martinez, explained: "The essence of Third College, I feel, is the creation of a learning community that is concerned with the process of continual growth—where there is an effort to probe and to search for better ways of living for all human beings, particularly those formerly left out altogether."⁶⁶ As we shall see, however, internal pressures and external forces would ensure that the coalition that had created the college could not survive.

CO-OPTATION AND ELITISM TRIUMPHANT

Chicano student groups share an orientation similar to that of black students, and on occasion they cooperate and support each other on similar demands. . . . The alliance between black and brown students, however, has not been close, harmonious, or continuous.⁶⁷

Historian Carlos Muñoz, Jr., points out that as the intensity of the Chicana/o student movement diminished, rivalries with Black students and administrators increased. With greater numbers of Chicano students on campus (although still relatively small compared to other groups) and hostile administrations and law-enforcement agencies on the offensive, the potential for a widespread democratization movement could not be realized. Muñoz writes: "MEChA engaged in power struggles with white liberal and Black administrators, whose overriding emphasis on the recruitment of Black students was perceived as slighting Mexican Americans. . . . Chicano influence contributed to bitter and intense conflicts between Mexican Americans and Blacks on several campuses, making viable coalition politics difficult, if not altogether impossible."⁶⁸ The dynamic on the UC San Diego campus would lead to a local version of the conflict described by Muñoz in which an African American faculty member played a key role in co-opting the demands of the most militant students. At the same time, COINTELPRO-type projects increased after 1970, even as clever administrators and law-enforcement agencies devoted their efforts to creating splits between what they perceived as "radical" and "moderate" students in order to destroy the reform movement.⁶⁹

I have suggested the ways in which the posture adopted by Chancellor William McGill was an extreme form of liberal paternalism. I quote McGill again at length because his position captures the basic strategies used by university officials in order to eliminate the possibility of student empowerment and radical institutional reform:

The students see management as proceeding from their Board of Directors. I see it as flowing down a chain of responsibility from the Chancellor's office to the Provost. Thus, we're going to have a struggle over the appointment of the Provost. I can't endanger the basic values of the academic community by appointing a man whose primary identity is with the struggle of minorities for liberation. His primary allegiance must be to the values of the academic community. Otherwise, Third College may be used as a base to attack the rest of the academic community. This could produce severe convulsions here. We've seen that problem at Cornell and Antioch, and to a certain extent at San Francisco State. I didn't spend last year in a fierce struggle with the community over appointment of a Marxist

professor [Marcuse] in order to give away management of the Third College to another element of the community.⁷⁰

The fear that Lumumba-Zapata would become the site of a revolutionary critique of the entire institution was real enough from McGill's perspective. Rather than appointing a provost who would accommodate student-led reforms, he selected someone whose "primary allegiance," as he put it, would be to the existing academic hierarchy and thus to the status quo. That man had been the first African American professor at UCSD and in 1970 was one of only three Black professors on campus—the thirty-year old chemist Joseph W. Watson.

Among the BSC's choices for college provost had been Professor James Turner of Northwestern University in Chicago. In a letter to his predecessor John Galbraith, UCSD's Chancellor McGill described Turner as a "young black militant," and admitted that he had consciously delayed the appointment of the new provost with the hope that Turner would accept a job offer elsewhere.⁷¹ Another candidate—Harland Randolph—had impressed everyone involved in the search including McGill, but Randolph opted to assume the presidency of a Washington, D.C., college. A small group of Chicano candidates had been mentioned but never seriously considered, including historians Jesus Chavarría (UC Santa Barbara) and Juan Gómez Quiñones (UCLA) as well as the "minority advisor" to the president of Stanford, Calexico-born attorney Luis Nogales.

As the search process dragged on, McGill made it clear that he preferred a provost drawn from the ranks of the UCSD faculty. According to Watson's recollection, Black students and colleagues pressured him into accepting the position, but in fact it was McGill and the administration that had the most to gain from Watson's appointment.⁷² As McGill described Watson to UC president Hitch: "I have found him to be the kingpin in the administration's efforts to take Third College away from the militants and to put it under the cool direction of mature academic leaders."⁷³ Given the charged context in which the UC system was under attack from a variety of quarters, McGill felt confident that the Regents would approve Watson's appointment: "The timing of the June Regents meeting could not be better for me in view of the upcoming fiasco involving Angela Davis. They will be feeling guilty and seeking to seize on ways to demonstrate commitments to minorities. I intend to present them with an obvious and easy way to do it."⁷⁴

Once Watson agreed to serve, the majority of the search committee members threw their support to him, yet even after the committee had agreed to back Watson MEChA activists, whose representative on the search committee had refused to sign off on Watson, made a last ditch effort to present several Chicano scholars as candidates for provost, among them Julian Nava, Rudy Acuña, and Eugene Cota-Robles.⁷⁵ The committee, however, did not act upon these nominations because they felt that they were already committed to Watson who officially became provost in July 1970.

The son of immigrants from the British West Indies, Watson was a firm believer in a bootstraps ideology of hard work and tenacity. Born in Harlem and educated at the prestigious De Witt Clinton high school in the Bronx and the City College of New York, he received his Ph.D. in organic chemistry at UCLA.⁷⁶ By all accounts including his own, Watson was a political moderate, yet during the turbulent Viet Nam war period he was quite capable of deploying a fiery rhetoric more closely associated with Black militants.⁷⁷ In May of 1970 on the heels of the shooting of two students in Mississippi and the killing of several unarmed African American men in Georgia, Watson contrasted the university community's reaction to these events to its response to the actions of the Ohio National Guard at Kent State: "This outpouring of outrage and protest over the killing of four White Students stands in stark, glaring contrast to the lack of reaction to the murder of three Black students in Orangeburg, South Carolina in 1968. It stands in contrast to the lack of outrage and protest against the killing of six unarmed Black men (all shot in the back) in Augusta, Georgia and two Black college students in Jackson, Mississippi by cowardly White police this week. Given the racist nature of America, it would be irrational to expect this country or the campus to break its routine to protest the murder of Black people."⁷⁸

In response to sociology professor Jack Douglas's consistent criticisms of Third College, Watson told a reporter: "This campus has not had and does not now have a militant minority. . . . If some professor gets nervous when he sees more than one or two black males or Mexican American males together, that's another matter."⁷⁹ Watson's antiracist stance was clear enough but his political allegiance to radical student demands was inconsistent and not deeply rooted. His accommodation with existing power structures would contribute to the

demise of the BSC/MAYA coalition and ultimately of the entire Lumumba-Zapata experiment.

What provided much of the fodder for the breakdown of the coalition were Watson's early decisions as provost of the new college. As we have seen, events could at times transform Watson's essentially conservative nature into more militant rhetorical displays, yet as the institutionalization of the college proceeded Watson's role became one of defusing the radical potential inherent in the original vision imagined by Black and Chicano/a students. The recruitment activities that had yielded higher numbers of underrepresented students would be the first casualty of Watson's retrenchment.⁸⁰ The number of so-called special action students, that is, students who lacked one or two minor requirements for admissions but who were admissible nonetheless, was cut back. Faculty hiring for the college was another sore point. As a line of candidates came to campus, Chicano/a students began to suspect that Chicano interests were not being served. Years later, Percy Myers recalled: "Chicano students did not think enough progress was being made in terms of attracting Hispanic faculty members. Some felt that Third College was going to be predominantly black in terms of the student body and faculty because of Dr. Watson's thrust."⁸¹

Finally, and perhaps most important, was the issue of student participation in the governing of the college. Throughout the fall term of 1971, it became clear to the Chicano/a activists that Watson considered the board to be little more than advisory to the provost. In a meeting of the college faculty and staff, Carlos Blanco suggested that everyone concerned "read the Lumumba-Zapata plan and the Santa Barbara plan as a basis for continuing discussion."⁸² But the far-ranging democratic structures proposed in those documents included a level of student empowerment anathema to the founding principles of the La Jolla campus and to the traditional structures of the University of California system.

Increasingly dissatisfied with Watson's decisions, Chicano/a activists called for his resignation and began to stage demonstrations and pickets on campus. MEChA chairman Francisco Estrada demanded increased student representation on the college governing board and argued that the provost should not be allowed to hold veto power over the board's decisions. In a letter to the new chancellor, William McElroy (who replaced McGill in January of 1972), Estrada wrote: "We have lost all confidence in his [Watson's] ability to unite the

community and to direct Third College in a progressive manner."⁸³ A "Chicano Position Paper on Third College" was disseminated explaining the various "policy failures" made by Watson: "We find that Chicano student admissions are falling behind, and that programs of special interest to Chicanos are not being developed. We find that the College is following an educational philosophy with which we do not agree."⁸⁴

Among the faculty who signed the letter requesting Watson's removal were Latino/a professors Carlos Blanco, Arturo Madrid, Mario Barrera, Richard Escobedo, Faustina Solís, Gracia Molina de Pick, and Diego Muñoz.⁸⁵ Carlos Blanco summarized the Chicano position on governance in a tersely written statement: "Third College was created through the joint efforts of Chicanos and Blacks to serve the higher educational needs of Chicanos, Blacks, and other ethnic minorities. As such, College decisions must be made jointly by representation of all groups involved. The College cannot function justly if any one man or group has the absolute authority to make and carry out decisions that will directly or indirectly benefit any group or groups to the detriment of others."⁸⁶ The Chicano/as soon were joined by a broad sector of Third College students and faculty—the Asian American Student Alliance, United Native Americans, the White Caucus, and even some African American students who came under tremendous pressure from their own community to support Watson.

According to Vince de Baca: "There were Blacks who supported Watson's resignation and they were intimidated by Black nationalists. Some of them were personally visited and threatened."⁸⁷ The strict Black nationalist position was articulated in an article that portrayed Watson as a hero in the battle against "neo-colonialism" and denounced Chicano/a activists for working with whites: "Get the white man's approval before you start the revolution, is that the idea? Wasn't Third College built to throw off the chains and to wash out the brainwashing inflicted on Black and Brown people everywhere? Hey, take a look around and into yourselves Chicanos."⁸⁸ The BSU took a somewhat more moderate position supporting Watson against his adversaries: "We hold the belief that these charges brought against the Provost were begun and perpetuated by a bunch of incompetent, insensitive, and irresponsible faculty members. The faculty members have proven to care nothing about minority education. They are simply seeking an opportunity to use Third College as a soapbox for people to rhetorize [*sic*] and learn nothing that benefits the communities from which we come. These faculty members are advocates

of student participation. We say that the ghettos, barrios, and reservations in this country cannot utilize people with degrees in participation.⁸⁹ For all intents and purposes, the Lumumba-Zapata coalition was finished.

But the struggle to oust Watson continued. From Watson's point of view, ideological differences were at the heart of the dispute. Describing his opponents to Chancellor McElroy, he wrote: "The other philosophy, while accepting these educational and social goals, believes that they are grossly insufficient without having Third College function as a participatory democracy with a specific sociopolitical philosophy."⁹⁰ Watson threatened to resign and in fact did step down on May 25, 1972, only to withdraw his resignation a short time later. Seven African American faculty asked to be reassigned to other colleges rather than Third if Watson were removed. In a letter to the chancellor, they argued: "Overemphasizing the importance of participation in governance is a disservice to minority students."⁹¹

McElroy had supported Watson in a public statement on May 8, writing: "At this point I find insufficient evidence to support the charges against Provost Watson. He enjoys my full confidence and will remain as Provost."⁹² As the controversy dragged on, McElroy told an *L.A. Times* reporter that there were not enough qualified minority students to attend UCSD and used the local San Diego media to threaten to close the college down.⁹³ Quite ironically, the factors that in effect saved Watson's career as an administrator had been sectarian Black nationalism, FBI provocateurs, and white university officials. In a dramatic final attempt to salvage the original concept of the college, a multiracial coalition of students staged a hunger strike to protest Watson's "dictatorial authority over the rights of the Lumumba-Zapata community."⁹⁴

RADICAL STUDENTS UNDER SIEGE

No useful purpose would be served by setting forth here the sickening recital of incidents of violence, destruction and disruption that has befallen our schools and colleges since the Berkeley rebellion of 1964.

—*California Legislature's Fifteenth Report of the Senate Fact-finding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities* (1970)

The valiant efforts to democratize the university were slowly co-opted as radical student groups struggled against the entrenched practices of

an institution with a superiority complex and an administrative culture that retained some liberal elements but was all too willing to make concessions to San Diego's right-wing politicians. State Assemblyman John Stull, an Iowa-born career navy man, kept up a constant attack against UC student activists whom he called "the barbarians whom we have tolerated too long in our midst." Stull called for the abolition of the tenure system, the firing of UC president Charles Hitch, and the disciplining of professors Richard Popkin and Herbert Marcuse for being "hard-line revolutionaries, eager to overthrow the system."⁹⁵

On the UCSD campus, sociology professor Jack Douglas joined forces with like-minded colleagues to create a "Save the University" committee that argued that the Academic Senate, having approved the Third College compromise plan, no longer represented the views of the faculty. Claiming to have seventy members at the height of its short-lived existence, the committee sent a seven-person delegation to meet with Governor Reagan on July 8, 1970, to demand that he "reverse the trend toward political activism" in the university system.⁹⁶ Conservative students on campus formed the Associated Moderate Students (AMS) and began to publish a newspaper titled *Dimension: A Journal of Moderate Opinion* in the fall of 1969. Openly parodying the Lumumba-Zapata activists, AMS members issued mock demands for a Joe McCarthy-Franco College in which "25 percent of the student body would be Polish, 25 percent Italian, and 25 percent Viking."⁹⁷

Taking their cue from local informants such as Douglas, nationally syndicated columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak wrote in alarm about the "threat" of Third College that in their opinion was a "Frankenstein monster that may devour the seven-year old campus." Conservative writer Jeffrey Hart, who taught English at Dartmouth and had worked for both Governor Reagan and President Nixon, compared the college to a shark about to consume the university. According to Hart, "one terrorized scholar" had described Third College as "the most radical academic institution yet established within the United States." In a subsequent column, Hart referred to the college as "a staggering academic scandal" and "a mini-revolutionary enclave" that had been established "for minority-group students, such as Negroes, Mexicans, Orientals, Indians and so on [and whose] curriculum provides them with a diet of modern revolutionary and anti-Western works, apparently calculated to produce hatred for this country, for whites, and for Western civilization generally."⁹⁸

But Lumumba-Zapata students, staff, and faculty struggling to create the new college faced obstacles more serious than the attacks launched by conservative politicians and media. Much closer to home, academic departments successfully resisted attempts to hire faculty of color for the college despite their impeccable qualifications. At a May 2, 1969, meeting of the Third College provisional faculty and BSC/MAYA representatives, which now included students Israel Chavez, Milan Lalic Molina, Joe Martinez, Vince de Baca, Angela Davis, and Ed Spriggs as well as faculty members Carlos Blanco, Joe Watson, and Fredric Jameson, the most pressing issue was understood to be breaking the departmental stranglehold on faculty hiring.⁹⁹

Despite the low number of minority faculty in the professional pipeline, Lumumba-Zapata supporters actively sought out qualified Chicano/Latino and African American candidates. Their activities brought charges of “compensatory racism” and “underqualified faculty” from conservative adversaries.¹⁰⁰ According to the original student demands, the college Board of Directors was to “dispense and fill all FTEs [full-time faculty positions] and approve all administrative appointments.”¹⁰¹ But from the earliest days of the college’s existence the intransigence of academic departments, the product of class racism, would prove too powerful to overcome. In March of 1970, Provost Watson wrote “in confidence” to Chancellor McGill about the problem: “I hear from mutual friends that you are worried about the fact that Third College is not being very successful in its recruiting of faculty. Your worry is more than justified: we are not being very successful and we too are getting desperate. . . . It would seem (objectively speaking) that there are people and departments on this campus who are trying to make Third College a failure. Institutionalized racism? It is all very sad and very depressing and it may be too late for our joint efforts to be productive.”¹⁰² Specifically, Watson described the process by which the Department of Mathematics had blocked the hiring of a talented Chicano mathematician, Richard Griego.

In addition to facing the hostile reaction to Third College by conservative faculty, politicians, and organizations such as the American Legion (in many cities a front for FBI covert operations), the Lumumba-Zapata organizers, like other Viet Nam war era militants, would have to cope with insidious interventions by law-enforcement agencies. The Nixon administration in particular viewed the universities as a primary site for

counterintelligence operations, and within a month after Nixon’s inauguration the director of the CIA informed National Security assistant to the president, Henry Kissinger, of the intelligence agency’s domestic program on student unrest: “In an effort to round-out our discussion of this subject, we have included a section on American students. This is an area not within the charter of this Agency, so I need not emphasize how extremely sensitive this makes the paper.”¹⁰³

In a memo delivered to White House assistant H. R. Haldeman in July 1970, it was stated unequivocally that “the campus is the battleground of the revolutionary protest movement. It is impossible to gather effective intelligence about the movement unless we have campus sources.”¹⁰⁴ By late 1970, African American student organizations had become a primary target even in cities where there had been no previous disturbances. Haldeman approved the following recommendation: “In view of the vast increase in violence on college campuses, it is felt that every Black Student Union and similar groups, regardless of their past or present involvement in disorders, should be the subject of a discreet preliminary inquiry through established sources and informants.” On November 4, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover instructed the Bureau: “Effective immediately, all BSUs and similar organizations organized to project the demands of black students, which are not presently under investigation, are to be subjects of discreet, preliminary inquiries.”¹⁰⁵ In the same directive, Hoover referred to a specific section of the FBI Manual of Instructions, Section 87D, that described procedures for establishing intelligence-gathering operations in “institutions of learning.”

The repertoire of FBI provocation on college campuses relied upon the fabrication of false rumors and the discrediting of key activists through charges of moral misconduct.¹⁰⁶ In March of 1972, an anonymous document appeared on the La Jolla campus accusing students and faculty associated with Third College of a variety of behaviors involving drugs, interracial sex, and homosexuality. Ostensibly written by African American nationalist students, the broad sheet charged Chicanos, “Brothers,” and “Honkies” with committing various crimes against Black interests: “Already these white, mexican faculty are giving low grades to students who don’t see things the way they are told. Black students who don’t go along with the politics are afraid to do anything because Black females are involved with the white faculty.” In short, “the mexicans, orientals and whites have banned together in an effort to get

rid of all righteous Brothers on the campus."¹⁰⁷ The authors go on to urge readers (presumably all males, given the document's title—"If you have a pair of balls"): "Do what you can to stop this mess."

In retrospect, the document displays all of the characteristics associated with FBI provocation designed to destroy radical organizations and multiethnic alliances. Many of the students at the time understood the letter in this way. Writing in the Lumumba/Zapata newsletter, one activist called it "nefarious," "mysterious," and perhaps an "April Fool's Joke." On a more serious note, the writer reported: "Some found the poison pen letter a reflection of the nature of conditions which makes a krank [sic] feel that Third College is ripe for this type of provocation."¹⁰⁸ In fact, Governor Ronald Reagan's covert campaign against radical student groups had begun early in his first term. By the summer of 1969, his office was in touch with J. Edgar Hoover and local FBI agents in order to obtain support for his efforts. Herbert Ellingwood, Reagan's Legal Affairs secretary, reported to Hoover's assistants that "Governor Reagan is dedicated to the destruction of disruptive elements on California college campuses" by "hounding the groups as much as possible," using the Internal Revenue Service to harass activists, and mounting "a psychological warfare campaign" against them with the assistance of the Department of Defense.¹⁰⁹ On March 20, 1970, Reagan's office requested that each UC campus submit the names of faculty, staff, and students who were involved in campus political activities.¹¹⁰

Most of the students and faculty involved with the Lumumba-Zapata project took for granted the presence of undercover agents on the San Diego campus. Milan Lalic Molina recalled in a 1990 interview that a certain Paul Simms "was there only for the purpose of agitating the nationalist Blacks against the Chicanos so that things would fall apart."¹¹¹ In a January 10, 1972, meeting of the Third College staff, Dean Pascual Martinez confirmed the existence of campus police dossiers on activists that presumably were shared with local and federal law enforcement agencies.¹¹² Although in his memoirs former Chancellor William McGill denied sharing information with outside agencies, he had written to California state senator H. L. Richardson in July of 1969: "I have good liaison with local and federal authorities."¹¹³

The end result of local and federal covert operations directed against the students was the demise of the coalition. Vince de Baca recalled that by late 1972 "the college was divided, it was being torn

apart. Violence was going on in the dorms. At one point there was a 'Mexican stand-off' in the dorms involving about 20 blacks and 20 Mexicans and whites, five to ten feet apart with weapons drawn."¹¹⁴ By the end of 1973 the "success" enjoyed by law-enforcement agencies in the breakup of other Chicano Movement organizations, ranging from the Brown Berets to Tijerina's Alianza to the antiwar National Chicano Moratorium Committee, had been duplicated on the UCSD campus.

Despite the demise of the Lumumba-Zapata experiment, the ideals of the original multiracial and internationalist coalition continued to inform the actions of specific students and faculty. One Chicano student addressed the community in a two-page document entitled "Third World Unity": "If you think that you can achieve black liberation without achieving Chicano liberation or vice-versa or if you think that Africa will achieve complete liberation from imperialist oppression without Asia and Latin America achieving it also, then you have some learning to do because no one will ever be free from this white racist oppressive society unless every one of us is free."¹¹⁵ As director of the Third World Studies program, Carlos Blanco summarized what he considered to be the necessary focus of the curriculum and the core ideal of the Lumumba-Zapata activists: "I take it that our emphasis is and must be that of the relationships between Third World peoples, in and out of the USA, and the highly developed Western societies . . . the major theme is underdevelopment and the complex relationship between indisputable economic underdevelopment, political freedom, and the intrinsic cultural validity of non-Western life."¹¹⁶

"MANIFEST IGNORANCE ABOUT CHICANOS"

In a 1972 study of the status of Chicanos in the university and college system prepared for the California Legislature's Joint Committee on the Master Plan for Higher Education, authors Ronald Lopez and Darryl Enos reported on their fact-finding visit to the UC San Diego campus:

The attitude of the several students spoken to was one of profound pessimism. Their initial response was one of grim distrust. They felt no one had listened to them and the people with whom they had dealt, had dealt with them with duplicity. After a period of discussion, they began to openly express their

views that the university had reneged on its commitment or promise that the governance of the school involved their participation. They were disillusioned and bitter people who asserted that they were being treated with contempt and disdain. They also felt that their experience was a classical [*sic*] example of the extremes that the institution was willing to go to minimize the relevance of the institution to Chicanos.¹¹⁷

Although the report tends at times to pathologize the Chicano/a students at UCSD (“disillusioned and bitter people”), it is clear that the students had been trapped in an institutional power play they could not win. Lopez and Enos went on to describe the administration’s understanding of the Lumumba/Zapata episode as weak and uninformed: “Their apparent ignorance of the profundity of the dejection among the students was disheartening. This is not to suggest that people were not aware of many of the problems but rather to represent their view that most of the students’ problems could be solved if the students would concentrate on their studies and worry less about the operation of the institution.”¹¹⁸ In their summary statement addressing the UC, Cal State, and community college systems, Lopez and Enos concluded: “Certainly the most consistent and the most disappointing thing about the visits was the manifest ignorance about Chicanos.”¹¹⁹

By the mid-1970s, UCSD’s basic institutional character had reasserted itself. Provost Watson essentially had gutted the democratic reforms put forward in the Lumumba-Zapata proposal and had turned Third College into a traditional academic unit governed by faculty committees engaged in proceedings that rarely if ever are conducted in public.¹²⁰ Although a small Chicano Studies program was established in 1973 with Carlos Blanco as its first director, in subsequent years the minor gains made in that period were either frozen or rolled back, and the gap between the campus and San Diego’s underserved communities widened as successive administrations catered to corporate and military elites. One anonymous writer complained: “The new programs and policy changes especially are against relevant education that was the initial purpose of Third College. The new program changes are just a current example of appeasement to the white academic establishment by administrators who work hand in glove with them in serving their interests and not those of Black or other ethnic students.”¹²¹

By the time the freshman class of 1976 arrived on campus, some 60 percent of the student body at Third College was white. The proposed departments of Communication, Third World Studies, and Urban and Rural Studies yielded only one academic department—Communication—with the other two entities becoming programs without budgetary and hiring autonomy. The Communication Department itself operated for years under the threat of defunding despite large numbers of students wishing to major in the program. Faculty founders such as Herbert I. Schiller gave the department a decidedly progressive orientation, but administrators were determined to keep him and the program in check. By 1978, the kind of meaningful political struggles that had marked the campus earlier in the decade had turned into academic squabbles. Literature department faculty, for example, split into opposed camps over methodological differences with one camp sounding the alarm that the department was in danger of being taken over by “Marxists.”¹²²

Throughout the 1980s, the number of Chicano/a and African American faculty at UCSD steadily decreased. Some saw the establishment of a Department of Ethnic Studies in 1989 as a positive step away from previous exclusionary and elitist practices with regard to Latino communities, yet a decade later in 1999 the department counted only one tenured Hispanic professor on its faculty. As part of a national trend to depoliticize academic disciplines created during the post-Viet Nam war period, the state of UCSD’s Ethnic Studies program was not unusual. One astute observer put it bluntly: “Today, Ethnic and Feminist Studies programs across the country are, for the most part, full members of the academy (while still experiencing discrimination), but as such have been required to abandon their radical agendas.”¹²³ The reactionary backlash in California during the 1990s—UC Regents’ actions SP1 and SP2 and Proposition 209 abolishing affirmative action in admissions—created a climate in which UCSD’s antidemocratic tendencies were allowed to flourish.

The percentage of Chicano/a and African American undergraduate students at UCSD in 1992 stood at 8 percent and 3 percent, respectively.¹²⁴ In 1993, Third College was officially renamed Thurgood Marshall College.¹²⁵ At the end of Chancellor Richard Atkinson’s administration in 1995, a coalition of students, staff, and faculty fought to create a Cross-Cultural Center after decades of administration opposition.

The founding of the Cross Cultural Center was a small but symbolic victory against the forces of class racism.

In campus doctoral and medical programs between 2001 and 2002, Mexican Americans made up only 4.3 percent of all Ph.D.s conferred and only 1.6 percent of all M.D.s.¹²⁶ In 2001, a group of Chicano/a faculty working with community activists in San Diego proposed a Chicano/a and Latino/a program. Although a faculty committee rejected the original proposal, a revised version was approved in 2002. Funding for the program was kept at a minimum and there appeared to be little chance that it would be able to alter significantly UCSD's long-standing institutional character.

For many of those involved in these activities, history seemed to be repeating itself. The core issues that motivated the Lumumba-Zapata militants thirty years earlier played themselves out again in a dramatically changed and much more conservative context. What remained constant were the elitist and exclusionary character of the UC San Diego campus and its close ties to Department of Defense or "Homeland Security" funding. UCSD's engineering and wireless communications departments, for example, enjoyed enormous endowments from Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), a local company with major responsibility for the "reconstruction" of Iraq after the 2003 U.S. invasion and occupation.¹²⁷

Another constant was the abiding influence of reactionary politicians in San Diego. On October 26, 2001, former mayor and right-wing radio host Roger Hedgecock substituted for conservative pundit Rush Limbaugh on his nationally syndicated program. A little more than a month after the atrocities of September 11 and a few days after the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan had begun, Hedgecock advised his national audience that he would be leading a prowar rally at the UC San Diego campus because "Angela Davis taught there" and because "the Marxist professors there had to be exposed." First time, history; second time, farce.