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December 12, 1973

TO POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dear Comrades,

Below is a letter from Harry Ring to Sharon Cabaniss in the business office. Harry, who just completed a tour of the Southwest, relates some of his observations on the role of The Militant in the Chicano movement.

Comradely,

Lew

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Dec. 6, 1973

Dear Sharon:

Driving over 2,000 miles in the state of Texas in a broken-down jalopy sometimes got tiring. But in addition to the value of the trip for the paper and party, the biggest lift was just to see how much of a political role the paper plays in the Chicano movement and how greatly respected it is. All of the key activists and leaders read it regularly. Some like its ideas and some don't but they all take it very seriously. They look to it as a source of information on the Chicano movement and for its general political coverage.

Mario Compean, state chairman of the RUP, who is closely associated with Gutierrez and well understands our political attitude, was concerned that the mailman was not delivering their bundle regularly. He said he disagrees with some of what we have to say, but considers it important to read. He said he found the Watergate coverage particularly valuable.

Gutierrez, who also knows we're critical of him, was very glad to give us a statement about the charges of Republican money. (When I called, he didn't have at hand a copy of the statement he had issued on it and said, "I'll give it to you roughly. You fix it up.")

He was also concerned that we hadn't contacted him for a story about the certification of Obreros Unidos at Del Monte. He obviously considered it important that The Militant carry the story. (There really is no better way to get a story out to the entire Chicano movement.)

At Colegio Jacinto Trevino, the movement school in the Rio Grande Valley, the new head of the school got out of Leavenworth a year ago. He began reading The Militant there along with Pathfinder books and pamphlets and has clearly been significantly influenced by our ideas. We had a good political discussion and he was anxious for us to interview their local candidates. The one who is a Harvard grad became acquainted with the paper there. I thought it was a good example of how the paper gets around, talking with two readers, one who first got the paper at Harvard Square, the other in Leavenworth.

Ramon, the Leavenworth grad, said that in addition to problems with the authorities, another problem in getting the paper is that some of the mail clerks like it too and sometimes rip it off.

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He also asked if we could make someone available to teach a class in Marxiam economics at the Colegio.

The two biggest bilingual papers in Texas regularly carry material from The Militant, often with credit. We talked to the editor of The Chicano Times. He recently reprinted a full page directly from The Militant on Chile. He said The Militant is far and away the best radical paper published. The Daily World and People's World, he said, just aren't in the same class. He too was very helpful and friendly, providing us with news leads, names, phone numbers, etc.

In San Antonio, we called the Amalgamated Clothing Workers manager to say we were planning to go to El Paso to do a strike story. He knew the paper and was pleased we were going. He gave us the name of principal officials there and phoned ahead to tell him we were coming. In El Paso, the union head also knew the paper and was very cooperative in helping us get the story.

Mario Cantu, an influential figure in San Antonio, was generally regarded as associated with the CP. He's moving politically, was much interested in talking with us and seemed really pleased and gratified at the idea of being interviewed by The Militant (which he too follows regularly).

You've probably heard from Peter S. about the people in Colorado now selling the paper. (When Miguel was there he visited their movement center and bookstore and, first thing, someone tried to sell him a Militant. Jose Calderon, RUP state chairman, says it's easier to sell in the community than their own paper.)

Here in L.A. we are finding people we didn't know who follow the paper carefully. One just wrote a serious book on La Raza Unida Party and he used The Militant as a major source of info. (It's properly credited.) Tomorrow night he and his companion are having a group over for discussion and dinner.

We are now developing important contact within the Chicano movement. And almost all of it has been the work of the paper. That, not individuals, has been our major form of intervention within the movement.

The trip made me realize we don't fully grasp how much the paper does get around and the good it does.

s/Harry