

Mexican-Americans Stage Protest March in Texas

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DEL RIO, Tex., March 30—
“Ya basta,” yelled thousands of Mexican-Americans today as they marched through the streets of this border city in a rare demonstration of brown power.

“Ya basta,” which means “enough already,” meant that the throng, especially the young brown power militants of the Mexican-American Youth Organization, had had enough of alleged Anglo injustices, including police brutality, and with alleged discrimination in jobs, education and housing.

After adopting a manifesto demanding “self-determination” for the 5.5-million Mexican-Americans who live north of the border, the demonstrators paraded their strength through this town of 26,000 and pasted the manifesto on the door of the Val Verde County Courthouse.

Then they trooped peacefully to a park where an outdoor mass was celebrated.

This Palm Sunday demonstration was planned specifically to protest a decision by Gov. Preston Smith to support Val Verde County commissioners in asking the Federal Office of Economic Opportunity to terminate two antipoverty agencies in Del Rio.

Those agencies were the Volunteers in Service to America, familiarly known as the domestic Peace Corps, and Minorities Mobilization, which involved the training of Mexican-Americans to take over some of the VISTA functions of community organizing.

They had been accused by the county commissioners of dis-

seminating “anti-gringo hate literature” and of associating with the militant youth organization.

Governor Smith warned: “The abdication of respect for law and order, disruption of the democratic process and provocation of disunity among our citizens shall not be tolerated.”

The antipoverty programs were defended by Dr. Fermin Calderon, president of the community action agency.

He and other Mexican-American leaders denied a charge by Representative Henry B. Gonzales, Democrat of San Antonio, that the organizations were infiltrated by “flaming radicals”

of Mexican descent who had just returned from Cuba and were heavily indoctrinated with “racial hatred of the ‘gringo imperialist.’”

Speakers at a rally this morning ridiculed Mr. Gonzales and the Governor and said that the action of the county commission was illegal because three of the four commissioners were “Anglos” and did not represent the Mexican-Americans who constitute about half the county’s population.

But today’s outpouring of Mexican-Americans was also motivated by wider grievances.

The usually docile chicanos,

a term of affection that Mexican-Americans apply to one another, were demanding equality, an end of “racist suppression by the Anglos” and the right of their children to speak Spanish in corridors and playgrounds of Texas schools without being spanked or otherwise humiliated by Anglo teachers.

The marchers, numbering between 2,000 and 3,000, included several priests, members of the State Legislature, union organizations and leaders of moderate Mexican-American organizations such as the American G. I. Forum and the League of United Latin American Citizens.