

# state Democratic raids leave LaRaza politically dead

Even La Raza Unida's chief founder admits it: the predominantly Mexican-American party is dead as a political force in Texas, the victim of a Democratic Party raid on its issues and chief movers and shakers.

In 1978 La Raza Unida's Mario Compean failed to receive enough votes in the governor's election to qualify the party for ballot status or state-funded primaries, and it probably will not field a single candidate — federal, state or local — in the 1980 elections.

"It's in limbo — neither heaven nor hell nor purgatory," concedes Zavala County Judge Jose Angel Gutierrez, who started the party with the epithet, "Kill the gringo" in a tumultuous school squabble at Crystal City a decade ago.

"It's been collapsed for some time," agreed Carlos Guerra, who has changed the fatigues he wore in angry Chicano marches in the early 1970s for a business suit and membership in the Democratic Party.

Gutierrez blames the party's failure on Democrats co-opting the party's issues and its personnel, such as Guerra, who served as campaign manager for La Raza governor's candidate Ramsey Muniz during the party's heyday in 1972 and 1974.

Muniz polled 7 percent of the vote in each of those elections, but now is trying to gain parole on a 10-year federal marijuana smuggling conviction.

Compean, who ran an almost token campaign in 1978, has gone off to do graduate work in Wisconsin and what was left of the state party machinery has come to a halt.

Chuy Ramirez, La Raza Unida's chief leader at San Juan in the Rio Grande Valley, also has switched to the Democratic Party, and Guadalupe Youngblood, who attempted to bring the party to power in Robstown, has become politically inactive.

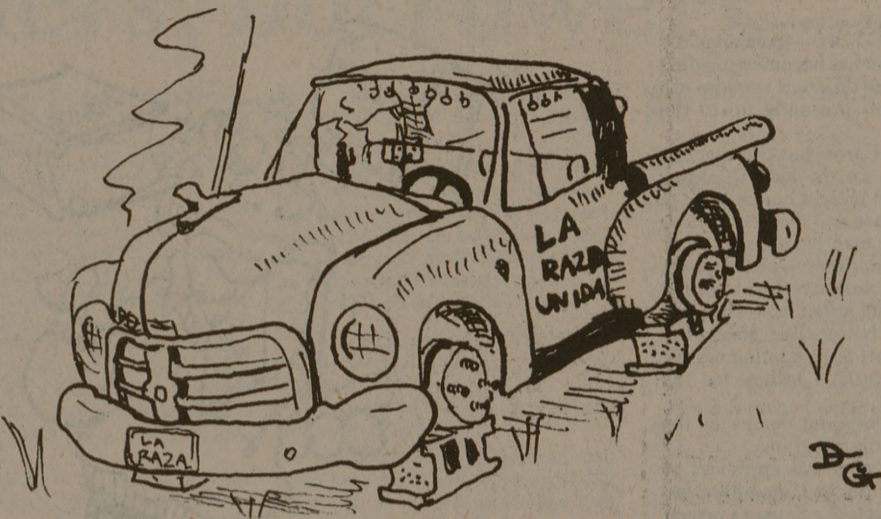
La Raza Unida attempts to win elections at Cotulla and other areas as independents proved unsuccessful, leaving Gutierrez' forces at Crystal City the only remnants of the party still in power.

"Speaking as a pragmatist, I don't think so," Gutierrez said when asked whether the Texas party might make a comeback in 1982, "because you can't hide in your shell and just go away and then come back. If you're a political party, you run for office, you run candidates and you make your stink and make your mark, even if it's a poor one. You hang in there. You just don't wither away and then come back."

Why did the Mexican-American party fail, Gutierrez was asked.

"I think we've gone the route of normal third party trajectories," Gutierrez said. "Our leadership has been co-opted, our issues have been co-opted. We've been harassed almost to death. We've made quite a few mistakes of our own. Combining all that together, you have pretty much exhausted the energy that was there with the numbers that were there."

Gutierrez said he would remain faithful to the party he conceived and might consider running for some statewide office when his current county judge's term expires in 1982.



# Stiff penalties sought for sex abuse cases

DALLAS — A record number of cases involving sexual abuse of children has prompted the Dallas County District Attorney's office to seek stiffer penalties for such crimes.

District Attorney Henry Wade has directed members of his staff to ask Gov. William Clements' support of four proposals increasing penalties in sex-related child abuse, said Assistant District Attorney Kelly Loving.

Last year, a record 55 people went to trial in Dallas County for sexual abuse of children, compared to only 12 in 1970. Also, three children were abducted, sexually assaulted and murdered in 1979 — as many cases as occurred in the eight years before 1979, Loving said.

Assistant District Attorney Jim Burham said sex abuse of children has become almost commonplace,

with five or six cases presented to each session of the grand jury.

"It's really on the upswing, no question about that," Burnham said. "To me the cases are the hardest to handle. In some cases, the children have to come in, and it is hard on them. A lot of it is repulsive testimony."

Specifically, the legislation proposes:

—The penalty for rape of a child, sexual abuse of a child and injury to a child be raised from a second- to a first-degree felony, which would allow imposition of a life sentence and maximum \$10,000 fine. The maximum sentence currently is 20 years and \$10,000.

—The penalty for indecency with a child (generally, indecent exposure) be raised from a third- to a second-degree felony, with a 20-year

maximum sentence and a \$10,000 maximum fine. The current maximum is 10 years and \$5,000.

Loving said he has written Clements urging his support of the proposed legislation.

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# Chairman explains view of welfare sterilizations

United Press International  
RICHMOND — All in all, Texas Welfare Board Chairman Hilmar Moore would rather be ranching or hunting. But lately his time has gone increasingly to explaining his position on sterilizing welfare recipients.

The reason is a comment Moore, 59, made Feb. 26 to a reporter at the conclusion of what he described as another dull Welfare Commission meeting.

"I realize that no legislature is going to pass that, but I have supported, personally, all along the concept of sterilization, birth control and whatever," Moore said in Austin. "I've always felt that when you cannot support yourself or your family, you give up certain rights. One of these is bringing in more children, and if you don't want to give that up, then get a job and get off welfare."

The reaction from activist women, blacks, Hispanics and Catholics was critical. Some demanded an apology, others his resignation. He was called a racist, a bigot and worse. But he rolled with the punches, not apologizing, certainly not resigning and, really, relishing the attention.

Surrounded by trophies from his hunting trips to Colorado and Africa, Moore relaxed in "Papa's Parlor," the den of his spacious home where he likes to entertain his five grandchildren.

"I probably don't have very much diplomacy," he said in his booming voice. "But the greatest sin on earth is hypocrisy. I may be a son of a bitch, but I'm going to be a son of a

bitch right out in the open."

Moore, mayor for 32 years of this quiet town near Houston, admits to habits, characteristics, and whims that combine to defy stereotyping. Moore, an egotist, said he is confident he can persuade anyone with an open mind of the wisdom of his causes while dismissing his critics as people who don't know him.

Although "it was just something I said off the top of my head," Moore

doubts Gov. William P. Clements "will have the guts to reappoint me after being as controversial as I've been" during five years of his six-year appointment.

Mandatory sterilization of some welfare recipients is a personal preference, and Moore is not pushing it as state policy. He sees the aged, blind and disabled, as well as neglected and abused children as deserving of every cent they receive.

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