LEADERSHIP IN THE SPANISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY OF LANSING, MICHIGAN

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ABSTRACT

LEADERSHIP IN THE SPANISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY OF LANSING, MICHIGAN

by John F. Nugent

This study had for its purpose an analysis of the formal leadership of the Spanish-speaking community of Lansing, Michigan, and its vicinity. Predominantly, the Spanish-speaking people of this area were found to be Mexican-Americans who had come to Lansing from Mexico and Southern Texas and had established residence after dropping out of Michigan's migrant stream of agricultural workers. Most of these people were in a low socio-economic stratum, handicapped by a lack of education and by cultural barriers of language, religion, customs, and ethos.

The leaders selected for analysis were drawn from a crude sample made up of the names of putative ethnic leaders obtained from a group of knowledgeable persons which included, among others, various church pastors, merchants, school administrators, newspaper reporters, the Director for Migrant Labor, Michigan Employment Service, the Mexican Consul at Detroit, and the Mayor of the City of Lansing. The refinement which resulted in a list of thirty names was effected by retaining only those persons who held at least two elective offices in separate organizations, with committee memberships included, but not required; or those who held at least one elective office and at least one committee membership in separate organizations. A crude sample of organizations was refined by

eliminating those which did not serve as vehicles for at least minimal community development and whose membership did not embrace an appreciable portion of the total community. In this way, and by condensing some into a logical unit, a nucleus of six organization headings was established. This nucleus, with the thirty members of the leadership elite, formed a matrix for the application of a typology for leader and organization analysis.

The typology considered leader and organization in functional roles based upon either a direct, socio-political action philosophy for community development; or upon a traditional, religio-ethnic centered philosophy for maintenance of socio-cultural stasis. The former, progressive type was designated pragmatist; the latter, traditional type was termed perennialist. Leaders were designated pragmatist, perennialist, or moderate according to the extent of their activity in each of these types of leadership. A little over half of the leaders were moderates; one-fifth were pragmatists; and slightly more than one-fourth were perennialists.

Factors which mitigated against cooperation between the Spanish-speaking and the rest of the Lansing community were a mutual distrust and the cultural characteristics of the two groups.

Asked to define the major concerns of their ethnic community, varying percentages of the leaders presented their assessments of six major problem areas. All leaders made education a prime concern; almost all named employment; and a little over three-fourths viewed youth problems as critical. Fewer leaders were concerned with housing, political action, or discrimination.

The prognostication based upon this study was for continued growth of the pragmatist or direct-action leadership of the

Spanish-speaking community in Lansing. An optimistic tone was justified by evidence of closer rapport between the Spanish-speaking people and those of the rest of the Lansing community. The importance of an upturn in ethnic achievement was postulated upon the theses of Edwards, Pettee, and Williams. The consensus of these writers was that continued movements for salutary social change among minority groups could be expected, not at the nadir of their oppression, but as soon as they began to improve their status. This thesis noted the beginning of social and political gains for the Spanish-speaking community of Lansing through the emergence of a new spirit of leadership and of total community cooperation.

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By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The minority group whose leadership was the focus of this study is made up largely of American citizens of Mexican descent who form a Spanish-speaking sub-community in and around the city of Lansing, Michigan. These are the migrants and the descendants of migrants who have settled in Michigan within the last four decades. Coming originally as agricultural workers, these people began dropping out of the migrant stream to establish residences in the larger cities of the Lower Peninsula, especially since the end of the Second World War. While some of Michigan's Mexican-Americans come directly from Mexico, the vast majority are from Southern Texas.[1] Including the above and some relatively small groups recently from Cuba and Puerto Rico, the total Spanish-speaking population in the Lansing area is estimated to be between 3500 and 4000.

Lansing's Spanish-speaking residents have been the subjects of several sociological studies within the last few years, the latest having been initiated about three years ago as a doctoral dissertation.[2] Although a considerable amount of the data compiled in that study remain substantially unchanged, there have been within this relatively

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[1]Edgar G. Johnston and John F. Thaden, Migrants in Michigan, The Governor's Study Commission on Migratory Labor (Lansing, Michigan, September, 1954), pp. 10-15.

[2]Victor Goldkind, Factors in the Differential Acculturation of Mexicans in a Michigan City (Unpublished Doctor's Dissertation, Michigan State University, 1963).

short time a number of community developments which made the present study opportune.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. This study had for its purpose (1) as a preface to the analysis of its leadership, a description of salient social and cultural characteristics of the Lansing Spanish-speaking community; (2) the identification of the most active formal leaders and of the more prominent organizations through which they served their community; (3) the construction of a typology suggested by the characteristics of the leaders and organizations; (4) an analysis of the leaders and organizations in terms of the typology suggested; and (5) a synthesis of the leaders' expressions of opinion regarding what they defined as major problems of their community.

Importance of the study. Recent social, economic, and political changes of significance to the Spanish-speaking community of the Greater Lansing area emphasize the importance of a leadership study at this time. Shifts in areas of population concentration, depletions of densities through construction of vast highway interchanges,[3] increased blight in "Northtown,"[4] movements of the Spanish-speaking in steadily increasing numbers to the Towar Gardens and to the Maple Grove section of the Greater Lansing area, the establishment of a

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[3]Construction of the inter-change from the Lansing-East Lansing boundaries to Inter-State Highway 96 has resulted in demolition of scores of dwellings in Mexican "Urbandale."

[4]Cf. infra, Ch. 4, North Lansing Citizens' Improvement Committee.

Roman Catholic parish especially for the Spanish-speaking,[5] and the formation of an organization for Latin-American political action[6]--these are all major developments which have come about since compilation of data for the Goldkind study of Lansing's Mexican Community cited above.[7]

Increased Protestant missionary activity, greater participation by the Spanish-speaking in such civic affairs as neighborhood improvement and Parent-Teacher Associations, and the germination of closer Anglo-Latin political cooperation are further developments of recent origin which are indicative of rapid social and cultural change in the Spanish-speaking community and the need for a study of the leadership coping with these changes. An example of the growing importance of the leadership studied here is the key advisory role recently assigned LAUPA--Latin Americans United for Political Action--by the present governor of Michigan in forming a migratory labor commission.

Almost ten years ago, in September, 1954, a commission similar to that now being planned reported to the Michigan governor of that time regarding living and working conditions of migrant agricultural workers in Michigan.[8] At this writing, the present governor of Michigan had taken preliminary steps toward the formation of another study commission on migrant labor. It was significant that officers of

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[5]The Roman Catholic Church of Cristo Rey, 111 East Main St., Lansing, Michigan.

[6]Latin Americans United for Political Action. A state-wide Michigan association known to the Spanish-speaking as LAUPA, it designates itself as non-partisan and dedicated to community improvement through economic development and social justice.

[7]Goldkind, op. cit.

[8]Johnston and Thaden, op. cit.

LAUPA were among those being consulted by the governor's office for general suggestions and specific statements of the needs of Michigan's migrant workers, so many of whom are Mexicans and Mexican-Americans. Since the bulk of the present Spanish-speaking residents of Lansing were migrant agricultural workers themselves or are descendants of such workers from Mexico and the American Southwest, there are cultural and often consanguineal ties between resident and migrant with constant drift from the migrant stream to Michigan residency. The maintenance and reinforcement of these ties are matters of concern to the leadership of Lansing's Spanish-speaking community.

The existence of an organized, effective leadership among Lansing's Spanish-speaking people grows increasingly important as their numbers continue to swell, not only by migration from Mexico and the American Southwest, but by an influx from Puerto Rico and Cuba as well. In view of communist terrorism in Cuba, the numbers of Cuban refugees finding homes in the United States grow steadily, and Lansing's Cuban-Americans now join the Mexicans in what is doubtless the largest movement of non-English-speaking peoples in this country since the latter part of the last century and the beginning of this century.

It is probable that, although the number of non-Mexicans among Lansing's Spanish-speaking is low, the influence of these segments--mostly Cubans and Puerto Ricans--upon the timbre of community development will be a factor of growing dimension. Relatively aggressive and lacking the apathy almost universally ascribed to the Mexican, these smaller groups of Spanish-speaking residents are already making themselves a part of the total Lansing community and finding an acceptance from the non-Latins never accorded the Mexican-American. One may hypothesize that there are numerous factors which facilitate

the entrance of the non-Mexican Spanish-speaking newcomer into Lansing's society, but such hypotheses are not within the scope of the present study. Within the next decade, perhaps within the next few years, various sub-cultural differences within the Spanish-speaking community of Greater Lansing will inevitably suggest interesting possibilities for further sociological research.

The problem to which this thesis is addressed is that of the status of leadership among the de facto Spanish-speaking community of the Lansing area: an overwhelmingly Mexican-American population. It is not necessary to belabor the point that effective leadership is indispensable for any community; but the importance of this particular inquiry can be perceived more readily and in true perspective if attention is centered upon essentials which distinguish this sub-community's problems from those of other ethnic sub-communities. Other students of leadership in ethnic sub-communities have made penetrating, scholarly analyses. McKee's study of Negro leadership in Grand Rapids, Michigan,[9] the mechanics of which are to some extent parallel to those of the present study, has greatly enriched the literature of this area of sociological research. Substantial and pertinent reference to McKee's study will be made later in this study; suffice to note here that his was the only study that resembled in any way the rationale of the present investigation of ethnic leadership.

One of the essentials which distinguish accretions to the sub-community of this study from population increases of other ethnic sub-communities has already been suggested: the Mexican immigrants are sharply differentiated culturally from the society in which they

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[9]James B. McKee, Negro Leadership in Grand Rapids (Institute for Community Development, East Lansing, Michigan, Michigan State University, May, 1962).

seek a new life. Leadership problems in the host society, in this case the Lansing community, are acute enough: even the long-term Mexican-American resident has not in most cases mastered the English language, nor has he relinquished the cultural trappings which may bar his effective participation in the social and economic life of the total community. With the exception of the relatively few Cuban and Puerto Rican migrants, the Spanish-speaking who come to the Lansing area are drop-outs from a migrant stream of agricultural workers. Their's is a problem, not only of adjustment to another language and to other customs: they must in most cases make a transition from rural to urban living. The types of leadership for the Lansing Spanish-speaking must be analyzed not in terms of their efficacy for a static society--if indeed there could be such an entity--but in terms of one whose accretions engender a constant social and cultural imbalance with respect to the total community. Ideally, the leadership of the Spanish-speaking sub-community of Lansing must not only hold whatever gains they have made for the established ethnic group: they must also face the constant problem of orientation of new residents to the larger non-Latin society--the total community of Greater Lansing.

The leadership of the ethnic sub-community studied here is beset with a further problem which poses a challenge to its efficiency and viability. As the present study was being completed, much agitation was engendered by a militant minority group who felt that a recently created Human Relations Commission lacked enforcement powers necessary for adjustment of civil rights controversies. This militant minority--the Negroes--were seeking the support of other minority groups in protesting the alleged weaknesses of the Lansing Human Relations Commission. Although invited to join the protest, the Spanish-speaking community's leaders took no overt action in

support of the other minority's protest movement. The wisdom of this particular decision is not at issue; but the prevalence of similar situations requiring a judicious leadership now and in the unpredictable future of minority problems points up the need for high-level efficiency for all ethnic leaders.

Oscar Handlin, in his classic on the great migrations that made the American People, tells of the charges of politicians in American cities that poor government was the fault of immigrant residents:

> The immigrant (one of them complained) lacks the faculty of abstraction. He thinks not of the welfare of the community but only of himself. It never occurred to this critic (Handlin rejoins) that precious little thought was given by others to the welfare of the newcomers. If they did not consider their own interests, no one else would.[10]

The importance of the present study is enhanced by its quest for an understanding of the type of leadership available to Lansing's Spanish-speaking community of migrants and children of recent migrants. Do these people think only of themselves? Do they think of themselves and the larger community of which they are a vital segment? In its analysis of leadership in the Spanish-speaking community, this study will seek to provide answers to these and other relevant questions in an effort to gain better and fruitful understandings of an ethnic group often neglected and misunderstood.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

The Spanish-speaking community of Lansing, Michigan. Although the majority of the Spanish-speaking people of the Lansing area are Mexican in origin, it has been deemed preferable in this study to employ the term "Spanish-speaking" in referring to a sub-community made up

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[10]Oscar Handlin, The Uprooted (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1951), p. 219.

of persons from such divergent countries as Cuba, Puerto Rico, The Dominican Republic, and Mexico. As already noted, most of Lansing's Spanish-speaking are American citizens who were born in Texas. Some, however, are directly from Mexico. These latter are very proud of their birth in Mexico. They often refer to the "Texas Mexicans" as "Pochos," a derogatory term which they follow up with the remark that the "Pochos" are "ni chichas ni limonadas": roughly, neither one type of beverage or the other, or the equivalent of "neither fish nor fowl."

This disparagement is purely on the surface, however, and there is a close cultural bond between these two segments of the community, as there is among all of the Spanish-speaking, joke as they may about their real differences in speech, mannerisms, and temperaments. But the increasing numbers of Cubans and Puerto Ricans in Lansing has added to an awareness of true sub-cultural differences among the total Spanish-speaking community.

Geographically, Lansing's Spanish-speaking community is divided into four principal sections as shown in Figure 1. The oldest and largest in population and area is known to the community as "Northtown," designated Number One in Figure 1. The real test of belonging to the Spanish-speaking community, in addition to the obvious criterion of having the Spanish language as the mother tongue, is ultimately one of ethnic consciousness. This consciousness becomes intensified through contact with the dominant non-Latin portion of the total community which uses the catch-phrase "Mexican" to embrace all members of the Spanish-speaking groups. Mixing languages a bit, one observes that the bete noir of all those of the Latin culture is the "Anglo" who calls them all "Mexicans" and considers them all, ipso facto, inferior because they are not "Anglos." Basically, then, it is the identification of the self with the group, or the "we" feeling that defines the boundaries of the ethnic community.

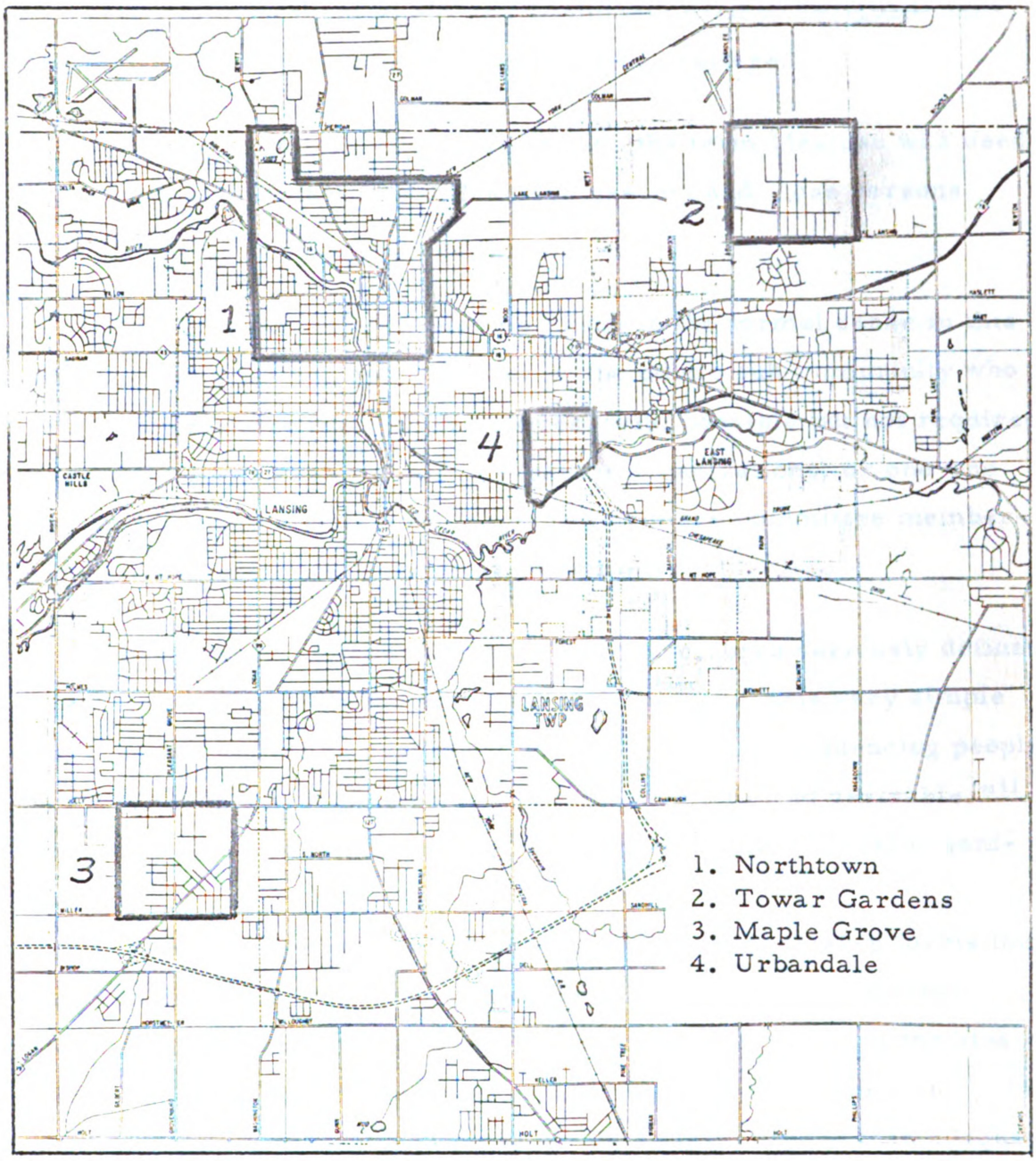

Figure 1. Population concentrations of the Lansing Spanish-speaking community.

Anglo. The term Anglo was commonly used to designate non-Mexican members of the dominant American culture.

Mexican. Unless otherwise stated, the term Mexican was used to indicate both Americans of Mexican descent and those persons directly from Mexico.

Leader. The term leader was used in the formal sense in this study. It was defined as a member of the ethnic sub-community who held a minimum of two elective offices, with possible but not required committee memberships, all in separate organizations; or one who held at least one elective office and one or more committee memberships, all in separate, formal organizations.

Leadership. Leadership has, of course, been variously defined in terms ranging from the simple to the complex. One very simple but adequate definition regards it as "the activity of influencing people to cooperate toward some goal which they come to find desirable."[11] This study embraced only formal, active leadership in local organizations.

To understand the ethnic population whose leadership forms the basis of this study, one may profitably turn to the works of Oscar Lewis, the cultural anthropologist whose narrative study of the Mexican culture of poverty provides such a plethora of ethnic revelations in his autobiography of a Mexican family.[12] This classic more than adequately sums up the economic, social, and psychological characteristics of the masses of the Mexican people. Brief reference to this study by

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[11]Ordway Tead, The Art of Leadership (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1935), p. 20.

[12]Oscar Lewis, The Children of Sanchez (New York: Random House, 1961).

Lewis is indicated in view of the predominantly Mexican origin of the Lansing Spanish-speaking community. This reference reveals particularly the problems which the leadership of such a group must face. After itemizing the discouraging economic, social, and psychological traits of the people, Lewis states that

> Other traits include a present time orientation with relatively little ability to defer gratification and plan for the future, a sense of resignation and fatalism based upon the realities of their difficult life station, a belief in male superiority which reaches its crystallization in machismo, or the cult of masculinity, a corresponding martyr complex among women, a high tolerance for psychological pathology of all sorts.[13]

The Ethnic leader's social group. It is against a background similar to that described above that Lansing's Spanish-speaking leadership must operate. Such a social situation assumes formidable dimension when it is realized that leaders are made quite as much by conditions, organizations, and followers as by any qualities and propensities which they themselves have. These conditions prompt some attention to the social role of the leadership in the present study.

Examining Znaniecki's analysis of the social group, it will be noted that he established the following components: (1) a social circle of which the performing person is the center; (2) the person's social self; (3) the person's status; and (4) the person's function.[14] Within this framework it is possible to equate these components with counterparts as revealed within the community presently studied.

The social circle in this case was the Lansing Spanish-speaking community; the social selves were the leaders of this community;

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[13]Ibid., Introduction, xxvi-xxvii.

[14]Florian Znaniecki, "Social Groups as Products of Participating Individuals," The American Journal of Sociology, XLIV (May, 1939), p. 806.

the social status was that of these particular ethnic leaders; and the function was that performed by the leaders for their social circle--the Lansing Spanish-speaking community. Although all of Znaniecki's components were important, of particular relevance in this study was the function of the ethnic leader within the community which he served.

The perennialist leader. The formal leader whose function within the Lansing Spanish-speaking community embraced the continuance of the ethnic life pattern was termed a perennialist. Within the social group which he served, the perennialist leader indicated through his particular organizational activities his preference for maintenance of the status quo: close ties with the traditional church and the mother country with a corresponding avoidance of activity in the affairs and organizations of the total community. In this study only those leaders whose organizational activities were exclusively within the fold of traditional, Spanish-speaking patterns were considered perennialists. These favored religio-ethnic group action.

The pragmatist leader. The formal leader whose function within the Lansing Spanish-speaking community was identified with direct, practical group action for community development was considered to be a pragmatist leader. In counter-distinction to the perennialist, the pragmatist leader's conspicuous organizational activities were with groups working for the betterment of the total community, not solely for the Spanish-speaking. While the pragmatist leader might belong to typically ethnic organizations, his most active membership was with non-traditional movements: his noteworthy endeavors were not for the maintenance of fixed religio-ethnic boundaries. In this study only those leaders were considered pragmatist whose major efforts were directed exclusively toward social, political, and economic goals.

The moderate leader. For the purposes of this study, those leaders who had both perennialist and pragmatist characteristics were considered moderates. There was no attempt to find a complete balance: a leader might be more active in either a perennialist or a pragmatist fashion, but, as long as his activities were mixed at all--perennialist and pragmatist--he was typed a moderate.

Perennialist and pragmatist organizations. The same criteria for determining leadership typology were applied in the case of the organizations in which the leaders functioned for the attainment of the varying goals of the Spanish-speaking community. Organizations included in this study were only those associations and societies with formally stated goals or objectives, perennialist or pragmatist.

III. METHOD OF PROCEDURE

Following the sequence employed in this study, the first problem was an understanding of the salient social and cultural characteristics of the Lansing Spanish-speaking community. In addition to the available literature appropriate for this understanding, full use was made of the gracious assistance, in varying degrees, proffered by local church pastors, school administrators, business proprietors, government functionaries, and many others. As was acknowledged by Goldkind in his study,[15] the Roman Catholic clergymen assigned to the Spanish-speaking pastorates proved most knowledgeable of the local socio-cultural milieu.

The chief research tool throughout the study was the personal interview. Since a major problem was the collection of the names of persons who might be considered formal, active leaders in the

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[15]Goldkind, op. cit., p. 24.

Spanish-speaking community, the initial step required the elicitation of names in the manner adopted by Goldkind[16] and, more recently, by McKee.[17] Through this first draft of names secured from knowledgeable persons, a list of seventy-five persons was secured. Next, in order to produce a nucleus of persons with relatively refined leadership characteristics--formal, active, high-level organizational membership--the first draft was submitted to a device which reduced it to thirty names. Only those persons were retained as higher-level leaders who held more than one elected office or one office and one or more committee memberships in the formal organizations which served the Lansing Spanish-speaking community.

The rationale here was the creation of an elite group of formal leaders who might reasonably be expected to make a fair assessment of their community problems and whose characteristics would help to construct a matrix for the distribution of leaders by the chosen typology. But the construction of this matrix required investigation of the more important formal organizations through which the leaders functioned. Again, contacts were made with knowledgable persons including, besides those mentioned above, the mayor of the city of Lansing, the Mexican Consul at Detroit, officers of the Michigan Employment Service Migrant Labor Division, labor union officials, and the informed members of the Spanish-speaking community themselves. The first draft of suggested organizations included three societies designed purely for entertainment--dancing and dining; five church and charitable organizations; one large patriotic society sponsored in part by the Mexican government; one large political action association for Latin Americans; the various labor union local

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[16]Goldkind, op. cit.

[17]McKee, op. cit.

organizations; an association for urban redevelopment, neighborhood improvement societies, and units of the Parent-Teacher Association. By eliminating the dancing and dining activities and retaining the two major church and charitable societies, and by combining the last three named above--PTA, urban development, and neighborhood improvement--under the heading of "civic societies," a list of six major areas of formal organizational activity was produced. The characteristics of these basic organizational activities were next examined for the construction of a typology indicated by their essential goals, constitutions, or formal rules of organization.

In selecting the typology of "perennialist" and "pragmatist" for leaders and their organizations, due attention was given to the literature concerning typology. Of the many statements on typology construction for sociological research, one by McKinney and Kerckhoff was most cogent. These writers concluded that

> . . . the (sociological) literature abounds in types and yet whatever standardization exists in their construction is largely implicit. Despite the almost universal use of types within the discipline, the problem of standardizing the procedures for their construction remains largely untouched. Despite (the above) it is possible . . . to define the constructed type as a purposive, planned selection, abstraction, combination and (sometimes) accentuation of a set of criteria that have empirical referents and that serves as a basis for comparison of empirical cases.[18]

Three of the six major areas of formal organizational effort within the Lansing Spanish-speaking community were considered essentially perennialist; three of the six were considered essentially pragmatist. Through the use of a simple checklist of these organizations, the writer was able to ascertain the organizations in which the respective leaders held offices or committee memberships.

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[18]John C. McKinney and Alan Kerckhoff, "Toward a Codification of Typological Procedure," Sociological Inquiry, XXXII, (Winter, 1962), p. 128.

With the matrix now constructed, it was then possible, in terms of the typology selected, to discern and to analyze the various patterns of leadership present within the Lansing Spanish-speaking community.

With this portion of the study completed, an attempt was made to develop a body of information constituting a synthesis of leader opinion regarding the principal concerns of the ethnic community. In this portion of the study there was no checklist, no a prioristic conception of community problems. Here, on the contrary, was a procedure which permitted a free flow of opinion from a synoptic examination by the leaders of their total situation.

Within a frame of reference suggested by the writings of W. I. Thomas and his concept of the "definition of the situation,"[19] the leaders were encouraged to define the concerns of their community as they saw them. In this manner a list of leader-defined major community problems was evolved which lent itself to analysis and graphic presentation in the latter portion of the study.

The interviews throughout this study were conducted entirely at the convenience of the leaders concerned and in a manner as informal as circumstances permitted. To insure maximum rapport, the writer attended at least one meeting of each of the six major organizations and in some cases accepted invitations to address the group members. Individual interviews varied in time from one to two hours. In all but one case, the interviewees spoke at least comprehensible English; many spoke English with fair fluency. All interviews were conducted by the writer, who was fluent in Spanish; communication, therefore, was not a problem. On several occasions, for mutual convenience, the interviews were bi-lingually conducted.

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[19]Edmund H. Volkart (ed.) Social Behavior and Personality: Contributions of W. I. Thomas to Theory and Social Research (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1951).

The leisurely tempo of the interviews (many were serialized for the convenience of the interviewee); the interviewer's attendance at the various organization meetings; and the relative lack of any serious communication barrier contributed in large measure to the appreciable degree of rapport experienced throughout the study.

IV. ORGANIZATION OF REMAINDER OF THE STUDY

The remainder of the study is organized in this manner:

In Chapter Two the essential social and cultural characteristics of the Lansing Spanish-speaking community are reviewed. As a brief preface to this review, some attention is given to the history of the segments of the Spanish-speaking population in the state of Michigan with particular emphasis upon the predominant Mexican-American people and their growth in the Greater Lansing area.

Chapter Three concerns the identification of the most active formal leaders and organizations in the Spanish-speaking community and their assignment to the typology suggested by the respective essential characteristics of leaders and organizations. Close attention is given to an analysis of the characteristics of the various leaders and organizations. Liberal reference is made to incidents witnessed by the writer at meetings of the organizations studied and to the rationale of the various groups, stated and implied.

A consideration of the solidarity of the ethnic leadership is made in Chapter Four. While every effort is exercised to avoid a purely narrative or essayist tone, some allowance is made in this and in all of the chapters for the efficacy of the direct or at least paraphased statements of the Spanish-speaking leadership as the ramifications of their organizational details are explored.

Chapter Five undertakes an analysis of the major concerns of the ethnic community as seen by its leaders themselves. The major problems as defined by the leaders themselves are examined in the light of the emphasis placed upon them by the leaders. Here as in all of the chapters, appropriate use is made of pertinent graphic material for the optimum elucidation of the conclusions reached in the study.

Chapter Six terminates the study with a set of conclusions based upon the total body of research and with a prognostication regarding the leadership of Spanish-speaking people of the Greater Lansing area. This final chapter refers briefly to the pertinent literature on minority groups and their respective harbingers of social change. An optimistic note is sounded, based upon the present study, for the steady amelioration of community conditions for the Spanish-speaking in Lansing. Through effective leadership, these citizens are seen as beneficiaries of participation in an integrated development of the total community.

CHAPTER II

IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS OF LANSING'S SPANISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY

The number of Spanish-speaking families residing in the Lansing area has more than tripled since the end of World War II. At that time it is estimated that scarcely more than two hundred families were living in this area. These initial settlers had dropped from the migrant stream which had begun to flow through Michigan in appreciable numbers as early as the late 1920's and had gained momentum just before the last war.[1] At that time as many as 10,000 Mexicans were coming North to the sugar beet fields each season, and it was from these heavy migrations that great numbers settled in various parts of Michigan. The Spanish-speaking population in the Greater Lansing Area is now estimated to be between 3500 and 4000 men, women, and children constituting 700 families.

I. FUNDAMENTAL VALUES

Latin groups distinguished. A common method of describing the characteristics of an ethnic group is, unfortunately, the utilization of the stereotype, a group accepted image, or a simplified conception of a personality or group of persons. For the purposes of this study, it must be understood that, although the rubric "Spanish-speaking" was most useful, really being discussed was a population predominantly of Mexican origin, whether from Texas or directly from Mexico.

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[1]John F. Thaden, Migratory Beet Workers in Michigan, Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station, Special Bulletin 319, (East Lansing, Michigan State College, 1942), p. 23.

Whatever generalizations were made here have particular reference to Mexicans and not to the smaller segments of Cubans and Puerto Ricans, although leaders from the latter were included in the interviewee group. Those from the latter countries were quick to distinguish themselves from the Mexicans as far as social class, group objectives, and cultural characteristics were concerned. It may be significant that the usual Puerto Rican is Caucasian, Negro, or a blend of these races and has an orientation differing in many respects from that of the Mexican. An examination of these differences would entail an interesting study in itself. Suffice to say that the Spanish-speaking of Lansing are mostly Mexican.

The Mexican heritage. Since an understanding of the culturally induced characteristics of the group should be a factor if we are to understand the problems faced by group leaders, some attention was given to what Thompson has called "The Mexican Mind."[2] There are certain features having a bearing on leadership which are acknowledged by Mexicans themselves and by unprejudiced outsiders. Work as an end in itself, for example, is apparently not a value for the ordinary Mexican. Time, on the other hand, is a value to be used as one pleases. Thus the cultural pattern of modern Mexicans can be traced back to their ancestors.

The Spanish Conquistadores, sons of a feudal nobility, enslaved the Indians and made them work. But the Aztec nobility had also been proud: their warriors, not their workers, had had status. Like the Spaniards, the Indian leaders had no concept of the dignity of work: it was something to be avoided. In the centuries following the conquest, victors and vanquished alike lost the spirit of their ancestors.

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[2]Wallace Thompson. The Mexican Mind: A Study of National Psychology (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1922).

The war-like Aztecs had their power broken by the Spaniards; the Indian masses settled down to the humble life of peonage. Soon the Spaniards, too, lost their zest for adventure, grew content to spend their lives in leisure. The Indians, as quaintly put by two observers, "wished only to be left in peace to cultivate his little field, go to church, dance, sing, and make love."[3] Satisfaction with the status quo by both groups became a blend passed down to succeeding generations. Only in the last century did the growing mestizo group significantly change this apathy.

There is still a heavy residual of apathy to be found among the Spanish-speaking people in the Lansing area, such an apathy being by no means unique to this area. The Mexicans are noted for their acquiesence and contentment, a tendency which demands exceptionally stimulating leadership if group action is to be undertaken.

II. OBSTACLES TO PROGRESS

Extreme submissiveness. Anticipating a little the fuller discussion later on in this paper on leader opinion, the writer was reminded of one prominent leader in Lansing's Spanish-speaking community who was asked to identify the basic needs of his group.

"I am convinced," he replied, "that we ask too much of our Heavenly Father. Look at the miseries of those in the migrant camps. But how happy and patient they are! We should be like them. . . ." And he could have added, "we must not be in a hurry for community development" Fortunately, this represents an extreme view among the leaders identified in this study.

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[3]Ruth Benedict and Grace Weltfish, The Races of Mankind (Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 85; New York: Public Affairs Committee, 1943), pp. 20-21.

In this patriarchal society, the man is recognized as "lord and master" and his authority is unquestioned. The wives must do as they are told, and they pride themselves on their submissiveness and subjection. To even an unsophisticated Anglo, this marital tone seems archaic and almost incredible. One Lansing religious leader acknowledged respect for this cultural phenomenon by making it a point to consult with the various husbands regarding church society assignments before the wives could ask their husbands' permission. Invariably it was reported that the men were flattered and gave their consent to the leader and then to the wives. One might imagine that this dependence could be regarded as an asset where leadership is concerned. On the contrary, this attitude seems, at the level of the Lansing group, to have developed an uncritical submission rather than an intelligent rapport. To this docility and humility can there be attributed much of the intense "inferiority complex" which is so great an obstacle to effective leadership among these people.

Inordinate politeness. Among other values, the courtesy and sense of propriety of the Conquistadores is evident in their posterity. As Thompson puts it,

> The Mexican code of honor puts the highest valuation upon grace and understanding rather than upon truth. To a Mexican, truth is very likely to be disagreeable and therefore objectionable, while grace and charm of manner and kindness of thought and action are the social virtues which are worth while.[4]

It is not too difficult to realize what barriers these can become for effective leadership. One Lansing leader said, "they will just plain lie to spare your feelings when they know you are wrong!" It is easy to contemplate the obstacles these cultural phenomena present to the

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[4]Thompson, op. cit., p. 164.

smooth flow of bureaucratic control necessary for any large-scale efforts in the community. Because of the value placed upon courtesy, the Mexican leader will make promises he never intends to fulfill, usually because he is unable, knows it, but wishes to spare the feelings of his followers. This may often cause the followers to question his sincerity and hesitate in following his suggestions.

"Cortesia de la boca mucho vale y poco cuesta--" "Kindness in speech is worth a great deal, yet costs very little--" is to the Spanish-speaking more than a proverb: it is a way of life.

Latins' distrust of their own people. Leadership is further complicated by the apparent distrust of the Spanish-speaking of their own people, particularly in professional matters. The one medical doctor in the Lansing area who was Spanish-speaking was a South American by birth. Rather wistfully he reported to the interviewer that he did not have many Spanish-speaking patients. This physician had done post-graduate medical study in Michigan after receiving his medical degree from an outstanding Latin-American university. "After several years in the Lansing area," he said, "they are just beginning to come to my office."

Inter-cultural misunderstandings. All of the foregoing characteristics and many others not only qualify the nature of the Lansing Spanish-speaking which is predominantly of Mexican temper, but, because they differ from the cultural characteristics of the Anglos, create much of the inter-cultural misunderstandings. Most Anglos, with their almost antithetical culture, invariably view the Latin amenities as unnecessary and superficial.

To the Spanish-speaking, especially to those of Mexican descent, the Anglo is cold, calculating, lacking in emotional warmth, greedy and grasping, rude and ill-mannered. In a word: "Gringo."

The Mexican, in particular, and this represents the bulk of the ethnic group studied here, feels that his culture is a much higher one than that of the materialistic North American. Even the uneducated majority, who may not verbalize this conviction, feel this very keenly. These differences, coupled with those earlier mentioned, create a real challenge to the ethnic leadership.

Within this complex blending of characteristics, Lansing's leaders of the Spanish-speaking have been working for the development of their community. The next section will discuss the leaders and the organizations dedicated to this goal.

CHAPTER III

LEADERS AND ORGANIZATIONS

I. A MATRIX FOR LEADERSHIP ANALYSIS

A new spirit in leadership. A major problem in this study was the selection of a representative sample of leaders of the Spanish-speaking community of the Lansing area and the identification of the organizations through which important ethnic leadership was exercised. A vital consideration was the fact that here was an ethnic group whose leadership, until very recently, had been limited to the arrangement of periodic religious and patriotic festivals and little more. As indicated in the previous chapter, what amounts to a veritable cultural impasse generally mitigates against the Latin-Americans' organizational efforts. In complete agreement with a recent survey which heralded an "awakening" of major proportions for Latin leadership,[1] the present study posits a surge of dynamic, multi-faceted leadership in all Spanish-speaking communities. The study just cited suggested that

> When a substantial economic interest emerges in a society which is in the process of industrialization, it will find a means of organized expression despite the presence of unfavorable variables in the traditional culture.[2]

It is the contention of the present thesis that leadership among the Spanish-speaking in Lansing is following a universal trend and

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[1]Merle Kling, A Mexican Interest Group in Action (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1961).

[2]Ibid., p. 64.

is experiencing an élan vital which has lifted group activity beyond the narrow confines of ghetto-like ethnic restriction. This study has found leaders who were more than entertainment committeemen for annual saint's day fiestas or celebrations of the anniversaries of battles for the independence of a republic. The latter have an important role; but they alone cannot face the broad problems of an ethnic sub-community in modern urban society. An analysis of all types of leaders and organizations facing these problems was a prime objective of this study.

Selecting the leadership sample. A sample could not be selected in the usual way since there was no group designated in advance as the total set of leaders from which a sample could be drawn. Reference was made to knowledgeable sources for the establishment of a first draft or reservoir of the names of persons in the Lansing area's Spanish-speaking community whose organizational activities suggested formal, active leadership. This initial elicitation in the manner followed by Goldkind[3] and more recently by McKee[4] provided a list of the names of seventy-five putative leaders.

After contacting these persons, eighteen were not interviewed because they were neither officers nor committee members; another twenty-seven were not utilized because they met only a portion of the minimal requirement in this study. Thirty persons--three women and twenty-seven men--made up the elite group of leaders, each of whom held more than one elective office in different organizations; or one office and one or more committee memberships, each in a different organization.

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[3]Goldkind, op. cit.

[4]McKee, op. cit.

While suggesting names of possible leaders, the various knowledgeable persons--church pastors, school principals, neighborhood merchants, and some members of the ethnic community--frequently linked organization names with those of individuals.

Identifying the organizations. To ensure as complete a coverage of organizations as possible, not only the leaders named, but additional knowledgeable persons were contacted to verify and, if possible, to augment the list of organizations through which the Spanish-speaking served their community. The mayor of the city of Lansing, the Mexican Consul at Detroit, Lansing newspaper personnel, and officers of the Michigan State Employment Service were some of those contacted. From a total of fifteen organizations to which members of the Spanish-speaking community and their leaders belonged, a nucleus of six organizations or organizational genera was determined in the manner described in the introductory chapter. Through this refinement, there were now six organizational rubrics under which the respective members of the elite leadership group were to be distributed to form a matrix for leadership analysis. For simplicity of presentation, the six headings were shown as LAUPA (Political); Labor Union; Civic Societies; Caballeros (including Ladies' Auxiliary members); Patriótico (Comité Patriótico Mejicano); and Cursillo (Cursillo de Christiandad).

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF TYPOLOGY

Basic types of organizational effort by leaders of Lansing's Spanish-speaking community. An examination of the organizational activities of the leaders of the Lansing Spanish-speaking community revealed that, basically, these people were supporting either an older, ultra-conservative, religio-ethnic centered type of group action; or an entirely recent, socio-political centered type of group action which

minimized the status-quo and sought by direct action to achieve social and economic gains. Those leaders of the first persuasion were designated as perennialists; those advocating direct action for community development were termed pragmatists. The organizations which served as the vehicles for the leaders's expressions of their respective philosophies of group action were correspondingly dichotomized in the manner set forth in Figure 1, which is the matrix for the analysis of leaders and organizations. The core of thirty leaders was represented anonymously by use of a roster of Arabic numbers. Designation of the organizations or organizational genera in which each of the leaders held offices or committee memberships was made by placing an "x" across from the respective leaders' name symbols and in the proper column.

Leaders' characteristics. For inclusion in the leadership elite shown in Table I, the minimum requirement or criterion was the holding of at least two offices in different organizations or a combination of one office and one committee, each membership in a different organization. Overwhelmingly, those leaders who were conspicuously identified with either the pragmatist or perennialist type of leadership--two or three allocations on one side or the other of the typological demarcation--were not found under the opposing leadership heading. These were typologically clear-cut cases of pragmatist and perennialist leadership.

Leaders whose allocations fell on both sides of the matrix were called moderates. Table II shows the distribution of leaders by typology. Table III gives the frequencies and percentages of combinations of leadership formed by moderate leaders.

An analysis of Table II indicates that one-fifth of the leaders were pragmatists; a little over one-half were moderates; and

Table I. Distribution of Spanish-Speaking Leadership by Offices and Committee Memberships Held in Pragmatist and Perennialist Organizations

	Organizations					
	Pragmatist			Perennialist		
Leaders	LAUPA	Labor Unions	Civic Societies*	Caba-lleros**	Patrió-tico	Cur-sillo
1	x	x	x			
2			x	x		
3	x	x	x		x	
4				x	x	x
5	x				x	
6	x	x	x			
7			x	x		
8				x	x	x
9				x	x	x
10	x		x			
11			x	x		
12	x				x	
13			x	x		
14				x	x	x
15				x	x	x
16			x			
17	x				x	
18	x				x	
19	x	x	x			
20				x	x	x
21			x	x		
22			x		x	
23	x	x	x			
24			x	x		
25			x			x
26	x				x	
27				x	x	x
28			x	x	x	x
29				x	x	x
30	x				x	
Totals	12	5	16	15	16	11

*Includes several similar organizations.
**Includes women's auxiliary organization.

Table II. Distribution of Spanish-Speaking Leadership by Allocation to Pragmatist, Moderate, and Perennialist Types: Numbers and Percentages in Each Type

Types of Leadership	Number of Leaders	Percentage of Leaders
Pragmatist	6	20
Moderate	16	53.3
Perennialist	8	26.7
Total	30	100.0

Table III. Frequencies and Percentages of Combinations of Organization Leadership Formed by Moderate Leaders

Types of Organization Leadership Combined		Frequencies of Combinations	Percentages of Combinations
Pragmatist	Perennialist		
Civic Societies	Caballeros	7	43.7
LAUPA	Patriótico	6	37.5
Civic Societies	Cursillo	2	12.5
Civic Societies	All Perennialist Groups	1	6.3
Total		16	100.0

slightly more than one-fourth were perennialists. While 73.3 per cent were not clear-cut perennialists, eighty per cent were not clear-cut pragmatists.

Table III reveals that almost two-thirds of the combinations of pragmatist and perennialist leadership formed by moderates was composed of leadership in civic and church societies. The moderate combination of LAUPA and the Mexican patriotic society accounted for 37.5 per cent of the moderate leadership. Reference to Table I shows that there were twelve high-level LAUPA leaders in the total group. Of this number, half were also members of the other pragmatist organizations, which made them pragmatist leaders. Reference to Table III reveals that the other half of the LAUPA leaders who combined with a perennialist organization to become moderate leaders did so with the patriotic society--not with either of the two church organizations. No high-level LAUPA leader combined his leadership with church leadership; no high-level church organization leaders combined their leadership with LAUPA leadership. With a consistency suggesting a high degree of significance, leaders who were strong participants in the patriotic society were also zealous workers in the various religious societies which play such a dominant role in the lives of the Spanish-speaking. Religion is generally conceded to be an important solidifying factor where ethnic groups are concerned. In the words of Warner and Srole, "the church subsystem is the repository of the sacred values as well as of the national attitudes of the original society."[5]

There were the moderates, of course, who, as already indicated, partook to some extent of the qualities of group action we have

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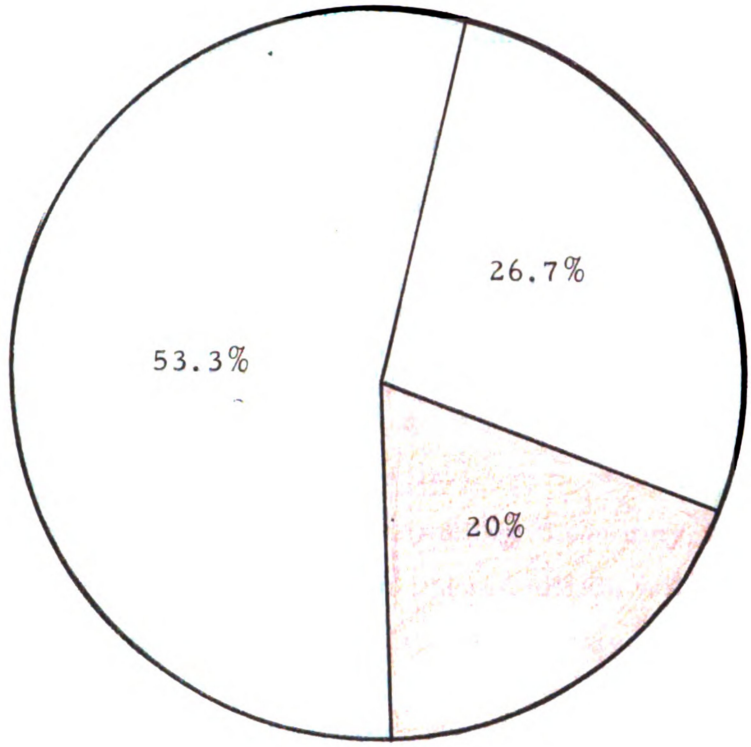
[5]W. Lloyd Warner and Leo Srole, The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups ("Yankee City Series," Vol. 3; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945), p. 161.

designated as perennialist and pragmatist. There were, for example, many leaders who were active in the ethnic affairs, the patriotic society Comité Patriótico Mejicano; there were those who were leaders of the outstanding church society Los Caballeros de Santa Maria; and there were those who affiliated with the political action society, LAUPA. The moderates mixed their leadership in these societies.

On the basis of the interviews, there was a clearly discernible demarcation between the most avid, direct political-actionists who sought quick, short-term goals for the Lansing Spanish-speaking community, and those who bespoke a faith in the efficacy of reliance upon religio-ethnic solidarity to carry them through life's problems within the community. Within the latter segment of leadership, slightly more than one-fourth of the total number of leaders interviewed, there was an appreciably high degree of religious and ethnic fervor measured in terms of the amount and zealousness--quantitatively and qualitatively--of church activity and emphasis upon ethnic interest.

This background, or philosophy of action through organizational effort--perennialist or pragmatist--is essential for maximizing an understanding of the characteristics of the group leaders and the problems they define as most important. It is recognized, of course, that there is a fluidity of ethos and organizational affiliation, an ebb and flow characteristic of any group and especially so within one of "Latin temperament." This essential dichotomy of action philosophy into perennialists and pragmatists afforded a convenient conceptualization for analysis of the Spanish-speaking leadership and organizations. While the moderates were represented in Figure 2, it should be understood that this was a device simply to sharpen the visual representation and not to suggest that they were a forceful, goal-oriented segment of leadership within the community.



26.7% Perennialist leadership

53.3% Moderate leadership

20% Pragmatist leadership

Figure 2. Division of Lansing's Spanish-speaking leadership by activity emphasis.

A very vital element of the Spanish-speaking community life is made up of participation in dancing clubs, or associations purely for entertainment through singing and playing of musical instruments, or combinations of any or all of these aspects. Although these media of interaction have their places in the community's social life, they do not represent a separate force by any means. The Spanish-speaking everywhere traditionally make these group expressions a part of all of their organizational agenda. All leaders and their groups in this culture keep alive the spirit of the fiesta.

To avoid misrepresentation concerning "harmony," it must be noted that fairly frequent outbursts of individualism within this ethnic group could be seen as serious threats to solidarity which leaders seemed anxious to dispel.

This writer witnessed an unfortunate example of this type of "individualism" at a social-political dance and banquet in Detroit. The state chairman of LAUPA (Latin American United for Political Action), who had called a gathering which included a United States Congressman representing the governor, the mayor of Detroit, and other dignitaries, was deprived of his right to address the meeting. In this instance, a Detroit attorney, himself a Spanish-speaking LAUPA member from that area, adopted the ruse of retaining the microphone and assuming the role of master of ceremonies which had originally been assigned to the state chairman who had planned the whole affair.

III. MAJOR ORGANIZATIONS

Relevance of leaders' social class. Brief reference is indicated to class stratification of Lansing's Spanish-speaking in order to clarify the relatively low prevalence of some types of organizations coupled with a relatively high incidence in the formation and maintenance of others. In some of the larger cities in the United States with heavy Spanish-speaking populations such as San Antonio, Texas, and Los Angeles, California, the ethnic groups are only roughly comparable to that of Lansing. In those larger cities, the Spanish-speaking have been established for many generations. In numerous cases they were the pioneers and the aristocracy of the region. Not only is there a strong middle class in those cities: there is a respected upper class. They, too, have their masses of uneducated, unskilled, and underprivileged. Most important to this discussion, they do have a wide range of social class stratification; Lansing's Spanish-speaking do not.

Derived from relatively recent "drop-outs" from the stream of migrant agricultural workers, very few in the entire community could be placed within the upper-middle class. None of the leaders interviewed could be classified as more than lower-middle class; and very few of these ranked that highly. Unlike their "cousins" in the cities just cited, Lansing's Spanish-speaking are predominantly in the lowest socio-economic stratum.

Applying the commonly accepted criteria of type of occupation, level of educational attainment, street address, leisure time pursuits, annual income, net worth, home ownership, affiliation with the larger community's civic-social activity complex, the writer found nothing to alter his working hypothesis, substantiated by recent related studies,[2] that this particular ethnic group in Lansing falls almost entirely in the lowest stratum. There was no appreciable middle class;

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[2]Goldkind, op. cit., pp. 28-40.

workers were mostly unskilled and semi-skilled; education, income, and net worth were correspondingly low; home ownership and civic activity were almost negligible. Only in nominal communality of church membership with the Anglo-Christian was there a real bond; and this was apparently tenuous, even within the Roman Catholic denomination, which recently established a separate church for the Spanish-speaking.[3]

In view of the foregoing, there was an understandable paucity of joint effort with the larger community for neighborhood improvement, Parent Teachers Association activity, United Fund drives and the like which are generally indicative of the stronger "middle class" coordinated activity in the non-Latin community.

Religious organizations. It is difficult to verbalize concerning the importance of the church to the Spanish-speaking. It is all-pervading; it is culturally imbedded in "La Alma de la Raza"--"The Soul of the Race"; it is powerful; it is paternalistic; it is a force of such dimension that whatever is employed as descriptive falls short of exact analysis. As one prominent leader commented, "the Spanish-speaking priest is much more of a leader among the Mexicans than is the average pastor among his parishioners. 'El padrecito dijo . . .'--'Father said that . . .' will usually end a discussion."

Perhaps because of their special need for solidarity and a means for ethnic expression within a group so far removed geographically from their homelands, the church memberships in the Lansing area seemed to deviate appreciably from the indifferent participation typical of Latins in dioceses and parishes closer to Mexico and the American Southwest. Among the Roman Catholics--the largest Christian denomination among the Spanish-speaking--it was estimated

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[3]Roman Catholic Church of Cristo Rey.

by Lansing pastors that about two-thirds of their people maintained at least minimal ties with the church. There were several strong church societies among the Roman Catholics which were held in high esteem by lay leaders and clergy. These included the men's group--the Knights of St. Mary, the women's auxiliary society--the Circle of Guadalupe, and the various choir, altar, and charitable societies found in all Catholic churches. Drawing participants mostly from the more active parishioners is the Cursillo, a unique spiritual exercise society. Designation of participants is relatively selective, and participation makes one a "Cursillista," a badge of distinction for the Spanish-speaking. This distinction is a key to recognition in all ethnic organizations, since their memberships are almost entirely Catholic.

The Protestant denominations contacted in the Lansing area included the Free Methodist Church for the Spanish-speaking, The Spanish-American First Baptist Church, The Assembly of God, The Pentecostal Church, and an interdenominational group called the Hispano-American Mission. Whereas the clergy of the Catholic churches were Spanish-speaking Anglos, the majority of those in the Protestant groups were Mexicans, Cubans, or Puerto Ricans.

The leader of the Hispano-American Mission, a Puerto Rican, made it clear that that group was not to be confused in attitude, cultural characteristics, or ethnic origin with the predominantly Mexican population in Lansing. The Protestant clergy made it clear that they were dedicated to "La Palabra"--"The Word" (of the Gospels) for their complete guidance. In their visits to the migrant camps throughout Michigan during the summer season, the Protestants distributed the Gospel tracts printed in Spanish with their gifts of food, soap, and clothing; meanwhile, the Catholics distributed rosaries with their gifts.

The zeal of parish workers of all denominations was especially impressive in view of the raw poverty of so many of the families whose

needs they sought to assuage. The abject poverty of families in the Protestant congregations was markedly worse than that of the Catholic families. Not in any way to minimize the zeal of Protestant missionary effort, the interviewer would nevertheless hypothesize a quality of marginality to those of the Protestant congregations.

In attending several Protestant services, one was struck with the people's severe lack of adequate clothing, their relative absence of grooming, and their ability to speak only barely intelligible English. All of the foregoing, of course, in no way affected the zeal and sincerity of the parishioners. The "social welfare" tone of the meetings and the stress upon practical, bodily needs seemed to exceed that of the Catholic group, perhaps because of the comparatively poorer status of the Protestants. The spiritual emphasis with the Protestants was largely confined to "La Palabra"--"The Word," with the expected minimization of the Christian mystique so prominent in the Catholics services.

To posit a shade more of ecclesiastical dynamism within the Protestant leadership might constitute a value-judgment in the absence of more exact evaluative media; nevertheless, even Catholic church workers conceded the Protestants' zest and determination in their different approaches to Christian goals. Perhaps the dynamism is a function of a sense of desperation which the infinitely more powerful Catholic hierarchy does not experience; perhaps it is a function of the Cuban-Puerto Rican dominance, at least in Lansing, of the Protestant missionary activity at variance with the missionary philosophy of the Mexican Catholics. This splintering along denominational differences within Lansing's Spanish-speaking Christians poses many hypotheses which are not within the province of this study but invite further attention in other research.

The patriotic organization. In Lansing, as in most American cities with substantial Spanish-speaking sub-communities, there is a well-supported patriotic society with strong ties to the mother country. Lansing's patriotic society--Comité Patriótico Mejicano--in collaboration with the Mexican National Government perpetuates the customs and beliefs of La Madre Patria through annual celebrations commemorating the two principal battles for Mexican Independence on May 5th and September 16th.

Fiestas on the latter dates are heavily attended by men, women, and children of the ethnic community. The Consul General at Detroit rotates his appearances from year to year among Michigan's larger cities; but there is always some dignitary from Mexico itself, such as an army general, in attendance in all cities' celebrations. In all but one instance Lansing's officers in this society were perennialist leaders. As borne out by reference to Table I, there was a close relationship between high-level leadership in church organizations and in the patriotic society. A significant relationship was also suggested by the incidence of moderate leadership patterns formed by the political action group and the patriotic society.

Persons might be found embracing high-level leadership in church and patriotic activities; and some were leaders in political action and in patriotic affairs. As shown in Table III, there were no instances of combinations of high-level political action leadership with high-level leadership in either of the two major church societies considered in this study. When the pragmatist politicial actionists crossed the typological boundary into perennialism, it was to undertake patriotic activity, not high-level efforts in church organizations.

Civic societies. There were three principal areas of civic activity in which leaders of Lansing's Spanish-speaking community

participated: urban renewal, neighborhood improvement, and parent-teachers associations. For simplicity and clarity without loss of tenor, these activities were placed under the one pragmatist rubric of "civic societies." With political action and labor union leadership, this activity was characteristic of those leaders whose efforts were directed toward forthright, immediate attack on community problems. Within the group of leaders examined in this study, leadership in civic societies combined in a great majority of the cases with church organizations in the formation of moderate leadership. Table III shows that almost two-thirds of the group designated moderates was composed of leaders of high-level activity in church and civic societies.

Labor union activity. Estimates of Spanish-speaking membership in the labor unions of Lansing were placed as high as ninety per cent. None had attained official positions in any of the locals higher than the minor positions of steward or shop committeeman. Meagre as these are in the realm of union officialdom, they were viewed by the Spanish-speaking as a proving ground for leadership training in other areas of community life.

Interviews with these union members revealed divided opinion as to whether there was real discrimination against their efforts to gain elective positions. At least one of the leaders who had become a shop committeeman by election asserted that he had won with great difficulty because of Anglo antagonism. The Anglos, he related bitterly, said that "Spics" should be kept out of responsible positions. Only a few other leaders mentioned discrimination, and not in such strong terms. These allegations of discrimination were minimized by other union members interviewed.

Queried as to the reason so few union positions were held by the Spanish-speaking, most leaders said: "It's the same old thing, most

of us are too scared to talk up. Besides most of us can't read or write Spanish, what can we do in English?" Here the union members were strong in their statements that more "education" was urgent for their people. Advised of means of overcoming educational deficiencies, union members doubted the willingness of union people, themselves included, to make sacrifices for education.

The leadership of organized labor seemed to have stimulated involvement of the Lansing Spanish-speaking in Democratic Party politics. The tie between labor and the Democratic Party and their influence over ethnic groups throughout America seemed to enjoy high expression in Michigan. In the Lansing area, as elsewhere in the state, the Democratic Party has encouraged the Spanish-speaking to become active in the party machine. Many of the leaders who were union members asserted that, while they wished to be considered non-partisan, they felt that the Democratic Party and the labor unions have attracted their attention. This is, of course, not to say that the Republican Party has been inactive with this ethnic group. Simple expressions of favor for one party or the other were taken with caution, since the ultimate expression lies with voter registration and the ballot. These elements will be considered in the next section.

Political action. Until very recently, the Spanish-speaking community in the Lansing area has not had the numbers of registered voters to make up a major block nor the efficient political leadership needed for effective bargaining power. Within the past year, however, there has come into being what this study has found to be the most active organization in the entire state for the purpose of seeking social and economic gains in Spanish-speaking communities.

Latin Americans United for Political Action, as indicated earlier, is a dynamic, democratically structured state association made up of

citizens dedicated to development of Spanish-speaking communities. Avowedly non-partisan, the group leaves no illusions as to its immediate objective: building the largest possible block of registered Spanish-speaking voters.

One leader related that while the Democratic Party had traditionally held the trust of his people as purportedly the best friend of labor and all ethnic groups, LAUPA was definitely committed to winning the favor of the Republican party as well. It was alleged that appreciable gains had already been made toward this goal.

This latter achievement, if only an inroad to recognition by both parties, seemed to mark a huge gain by LAUPA, since the Spanish-speaking community is overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, is largely supported by employment with labor union membership, and falls as an ethnic group squarely into the pattern of benevolent paternalism held out as an image by the National Democratic Party. This image makes rational consideration extremely difficult for this political action group. Just as most Negro voters have accepted the Democratic representations as protectors of the minority working classes, many of the Lansing Spanish-speaking and their leaders have asserted that it is the Democratic Party, not the Republican, that seems to be more interested in their problems. Much of this mistrust of reputed Republican attitudes was alleged to arise from the adamancy of many affluent farm-owners who were said to be indifferent to problems of the Mexicans in general and the Mexican migrants in particular. This allegation, coupled with the fact that many of Michigan's rural employers of Mexican migrants are also staunch Republicans, has created another image which some LAUPA leaders considered unfair to this party as a whole.

Leaders of LAUPA, at this writing, were in contact with members of the executive staff of the present Republican governor in what they

termed an important "breakthrough" as far as relations of their ethnic group and the Republican Party were concerned. Voting registration was alleged by LAUPA officers to be showing constant increase. A sizable block of their registered voters in Lansing would be ready, they reported, for the 1964 state and national elections.

CHAPTER IV

SOLIDARITY OF LEADERSHIP EXAMINED

I. DEGREES OF SOLIDARITY

Conflicting estimates. Leaders of Lansing's Spanish-speaking community do not constitute a monolithic, cohesive structure. Nor do they receive unqualified support from each other or from their followers in the community. Several church leaders, for example, were outspoken in their adverse criticism of organized Mexican leadership. One stated that there "was no real Mexican leadership in the Lansing area." This estimate, however, was not supported by the facts nor by the opinions of leaders in other aspects of community life. It might be postulated as more than coincidence that the same leader who made the above statement also asserted that he knew nothing about LAUPA and therefore could not comment about its efficacy for community development.

Another leader of the same denomination, while not enthusiastic about the likelihood of immediate gains, was more optimistic about ultimate community gains through organizational effort. "The great obstacle to organized leadership among these people," the latter said, "is that they have been traditionally dependent more upon their extended family groups than upon efforts through extra-familial organization." It can be seen, therefore, that even within the same denomination there was some evidence of divided opinion regarding the efficacy of non-ecclesiastical leadership; and, what is more significant, divided opinion on the existence of any leadership.

Comparison with Negro minority. Any hypothesis relative to solidarity in the leadership of this community should be prefaced by some observations which distinguish its ethnic qualities from those of other minorities. In a study of Negro leadership in another Michigan city, James McKee attributed the diversity of leadership in that group to certain specified diversities within their community life.[1] Referring to what he called the illusions of homogeneity within the Negro group, McKee stated that

> . . . Negroes are not homogeneous. Some are educated, some are not; some are of rural origin, some urban; some are workers, some professionals; some are poor, some have comfortable homes; some are church-goers and quite religious, but some are not; some are Democrats, some are Republicans, but many are non-political. In fact, just because Negroes are involved in American life, they reflect the very diversity of our society.[2]

Now, the Spanish-speaking minority group of the Lansing area also demonstrate a certain lack of homogeneity; but this cannot be taken to mean that they exhibit heterogeneity along the lines which are posited quite validly for the Negro minority. There are many parallels observable between the community life patterns of these two minorities; but it is not the purpose of this study to dwell upon these except in passing. In doing this it must be observed that some of the significant aspects of heterogeneity applicable to the Negro do not apply to the largely Mexican, Spanish-speaking community of Lansing.

Among other aspects noted, McKee cited the striking polarities in the realms of education, occupation, and political activity and concluded that Negro involvement in American life had a causal bearing

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[1]James B. McKee, Negro Leadership in Grand Rapids (Institute for Community Development, East Lansing, Michigan State University, May, 1962).

[2]Ibid., p. 23.

upon their diversity, --reflecting the diversity of our society. A very important distinction must be made here. The Spanish-speaking in Lansing do not reflect the diversities of general American society to any degree comparable to that which McKee has properly ascribed to the Negro. As will be brought out later in the expressions of concern uttered by the Spanish-speaking leaders, the largely Mexican population in Lansing is poorly educated, has no professional class, has only recently become involved in organized political activity, and is largely from the lowest socio-economic levels. To add to the disparities which attend the two minority groups, Negroes do speak the official language of the American Republic and do enjoy the same wide range of religious affiliations as do the Anglos. With few exceptions, most Anglos consider Mexicans (and even other Spanish-speaking) as dark-skinned, Spanish-speaking, Catholic, of little or no education, of poor income, and of poor housing.

Church pastors, LAUPA officers, and other knowledgeable persons have estimated that the majority of household heads have had no more than a few years of elementary education, that fewer than ten percent finished high school. Estimates on income were that the vast majority, probably more than seventy-five percent, made less than five thousand dollars a year, with no more than ten per cent making as much as ten-thousand.

Prospective gain through solidarity. The majority of Lansing's Spanish-speaking live in what they call "Northtown"--what the rest of the community call North Lansing. As appears on the map in Figure 3 and in the news feature reproduced in Figure 4, this section of Lansing, which coincides almost entirely with the heaviest concentration of Spanish-speaking in the Greater Lansing area, is the subject of proposed urban renewal planning sponsored by the Citizens Improvement Committee.

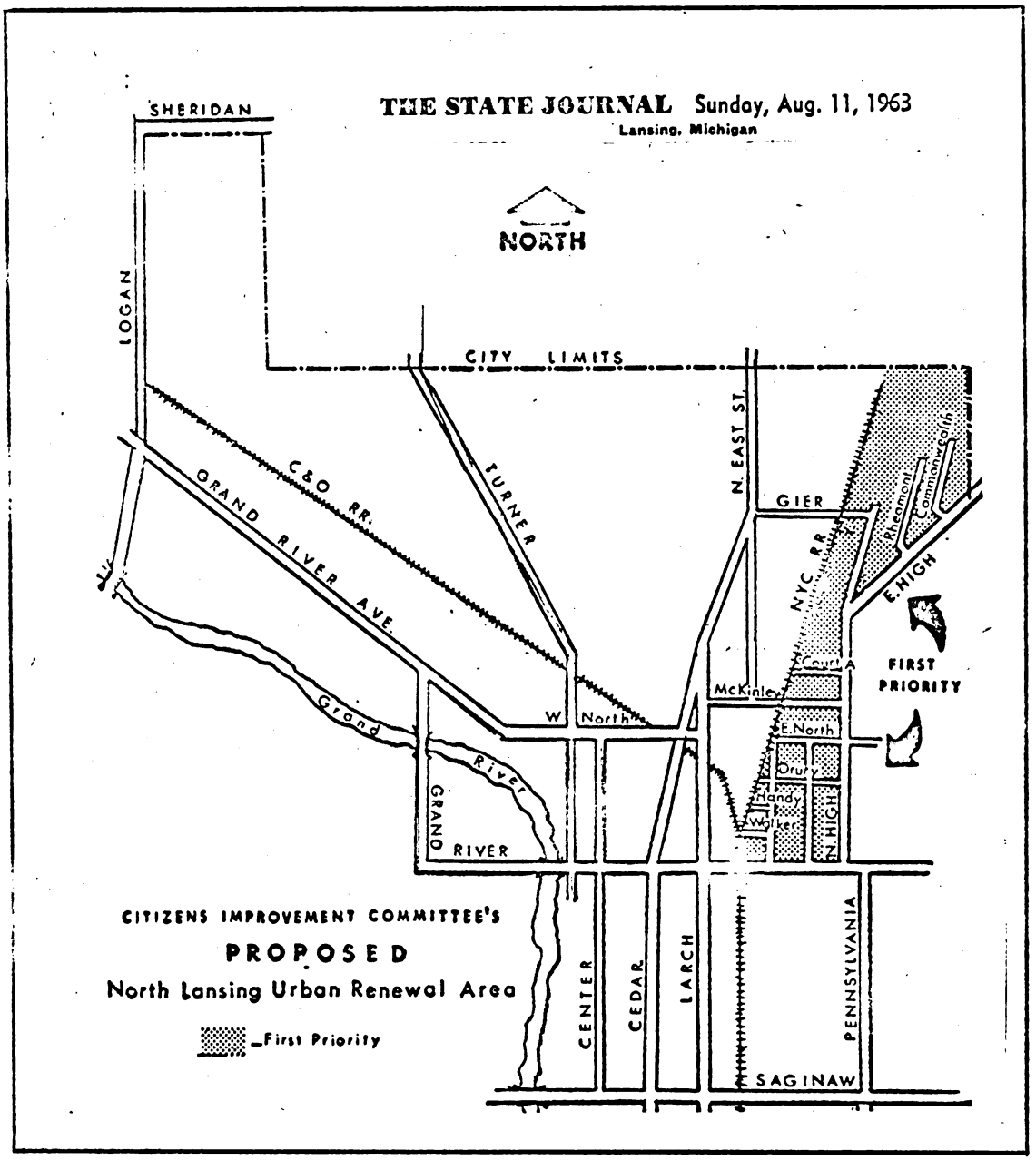
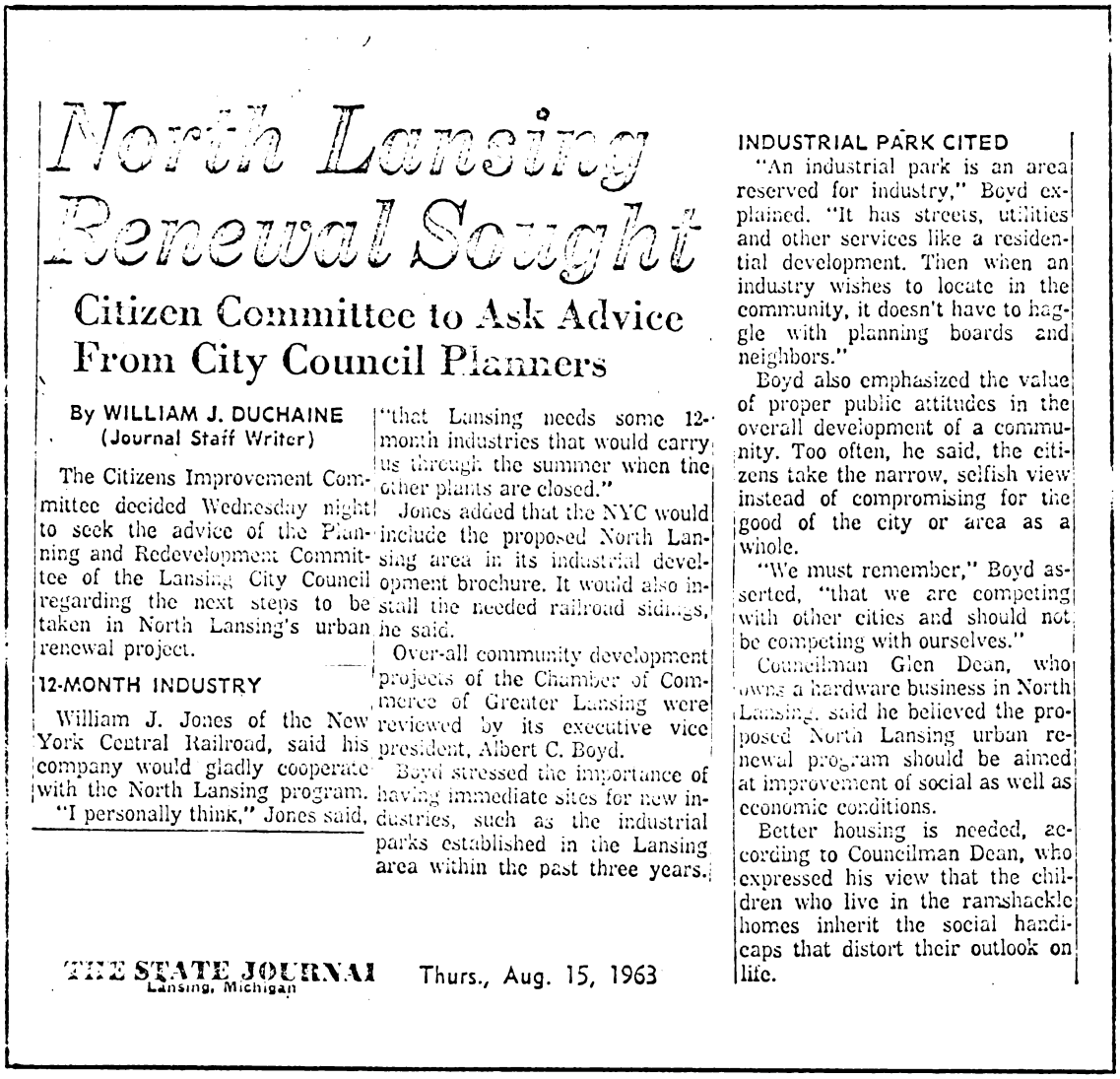


Figure 3. Proposed North Lansing Urban Renewal Area which coincides with "Northtown"--highest concentration of Spanish-speaking population.



North Lansing Renewal Sought

Citizen Committee to Ask Advice From City Council Planners

By WILLIAM J. DUCHAINE
(Journal Staff Writer)

The Citizens Improvement Committee decided Wednesday night to seek the advice of the Planning and Redevelopment Committee of the Lansing City Council regarding the next steps to be taken in North Lansing's urban renewal project.

12-MONTH INDUSTRY

William J. Jones of the New York Central Railroad, said his company would gladly cooperate with the North Lansing program.

"I personally think," Jones said, "that Lansing needs some 12-month industries that would carry us through the summer when the other plants are closed."

Jones added that the NYC would include the proposed North Lansing area in its industrial development brochure. It would also install the needed railroad sidings, he said.

Over-all community development projects of the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Lansing were reviewed by its executive vice president, Albert C. Boyd.

Boyd stressed the importance of having immediate sites for new industries, such as the industrial parks established in the Lansing area within the past three years.

INDUSTRIAL PARK CITED

"An industrial park is an area reserved for industry," Boyd explained. "It has streets, utilities and other services like a residential development. Then when an industry wishes to locate in the community, it doesn't have to haggle with planning boards and neighbors."

Boyd also emphasized the value of proper public attitudes in the overall development of a community. Too often, he said, the citizens take the narrow, selfish view instead of compromising for the good of the city or area as a whole.

"We must remember," Boyd asserted, "that we are competing with other cities and should not be competing with ourselves."

Councilman Glen Dean, who owns a hardware business in North Lansing, said he believed the proposed North Lansing urban renewal program should be aimed at improvement of social as well as economic conditions.

Better housing is needed, according to Councilman Dean, who expressed his view that the children who live in the ramshackle homes inherit the social handicaps that distort their outlook on life.

THE STATE JOURNAL
Lansing, Michigan

Thurs., Aug. 15, 1963

Figure 4. Excerpts from Lansing State Journal feature article on proposed North Lansing Urban Renewal Area which coincides with "Northtown."

The CIC, as it calls itself, is made up of prominent merchants and professional people of North Lansing, which is now becoming blighted, although it was originally the heart of old Lansing. This section was first settled more than one hundred years ago and was once a fashionable residential area. Today its population is made up of highly underprivileged families, many of whom are Mexican. As shown in Figures 3 and 4, excerpts from two issues of the Lansing daily newspaper, The State Journal, indicate[3] CIC had joined forces with North Side Commercial Club in a united effort to achieve total community progress.

Of great importance to the present study was the fact that the state chairman of LAUPA, a Lansing resident, had been made a member of North Side Citizens Improvement Committee. The coincidence of a heavy Spanish-speaking population--the largest in Lansing--with the area of proposed urban renewal, as shown in Figure 1, makes this appointment favorable for the Spanish-speaking community and the CIC. It was expected that the officers of LAUPA would set the groundwork for consolidation of expressions from leaders of the various organizations of the Spanish-speaking community, especially those who are particularly affected by the proposal concerning what is essentially "Northtown." While not a notable accomplishment for some minorities, a meeting of representatives of this ethnic group with those of the greater community--the Anglos--was unprecedented in Lansing for any project as large and as important as that contemplated by the CIC of North Lansing.

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[3]The State Journal (Lansing-East Lansing, Michigan, August 11, 1963, and August 15, 1963).

II. LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING

Incipient participation. The prospects described in the last section were indicative of what McKee referred to as the "social power." They indicate the change that has come over the Spanish-speaking community in a short time. In his Grand Rapids study, McKee said in reference to the lack of this social power in the group he studied:

> This means that the . . . minority leaders participated little if at all, in the community decision-making that affects (their) lives. This consequent inability to be powerful in the (larger) community has a disunifying effect on leadership.[4]

He stated further that

> This means the development of leadership without power, and through some uncertainty about the valid criteria for recognizing leaders. . . . The lack of social power has another consequence: it makes difficult the development of realistic goals for the . . . community to pursue, and, as a consequence, produces the varying interpretations as to how the community might best advance its best interests. If the community has the social power to affect decision making in any significant sense, this would make possible the development of realistic goals, and despite diversity, some degree of unity would be possible. But the lack of significant power is a disunifying factor in the community, and thus among the leaders.[5]

Much of what McKee related about the minority group he studied has application to the one which is the subject of this research. But there is this difference: there is an observable acceleration--creation would be more accurate--of social power among Lansing's Spanish-speaking. Through LAUPA and what has herein been designated as the pragmatist leadership, there has begun to be appear some participation in the affairs of the larger community.

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[4]McKee, op. cit., p. 25.

[5]Ibid.

Other evidence of participation. Further indication of the new leadership among the Spanish-speaking and a consequence of their inclusion on the North Side citizen's committee was a planned co-ordination of efforts with Lansing public school officials who formed the educational sub-committee of CIC. This school committee was planning a full-scale attack on high-school drop-outs with emphasis upon a work-study program.

As in the rest of the nation, the drop-out problem is one of great concern to the total Lansing community. Referring to the incidence of the problem in those neighborhoods that are culturally and economically depressed, the city newspaper's article related: "They are neighborhoods that do not stimulate or encourage our young people to achieve. Our city has several areas like this and some of them are in North Lansing."[6] Pertinent here, of course, is the fact that North Lansing is essentially the Mexican's "Northtown," containing at least half their Lansing area population. Lansing's public school officials estimate that at least one-third of the school enrollments in this area are from Spanish-speaking families. LAUPA and other representatives of the pragmatist leadership were establishing preliminary contacts with the CIC educational committee in what the latter called

> . . . a program to bring drop-outs back to the schools, since it is felt that every youngster who is employable is an asset to the community (and) to encourage students to finish school so that they will become self-sufficient and not a burden on the community.[7]

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[6]The State Journal (Lansing, Michigan), August 11, 1963, p. C-7.

[7]Ibid.

III. PHILOSOPHIES OF COMMUNITY ACTION

Major persuasions reiterated. A principal objective of this study has been a delineation of the types of leadership in Lansing's Spanish-speaking community with special attention to their action philosophy exemplified in their approaches to community problems. To this end two major persuasions were identified which were designated perennialist and pragmatist. Those leaders whose perspectives were intermediate were termed moderate. The moderate group, representing a slight majority of the leadership, was viewed as fluid--a mass from which the two major action groups could be seen as siphoning support for their respective philosophies of community action.

Social philosophies offer quite different interpretations, as a rule, of the conditions affecting the community and of their action plans defined by these interpretations or "definitions of the situation." To review very quickly the philosophies of the two major segments of leadership within the ethnic group here studied, the perennialists were largely of religious apostolicity and dedicated ethnicity at highest levels; the pragmatists shared little or none of the mystique of the former: while they were by no means irreligious or unpatriotic, they were dedicated to direct plans of action for community development and, like another far more militant minority, saw little advantages in programs based upon "gradualism."

Unlike hyper-militant organizations of some of the other minorities, however, "the direct-actionists" or pragmatists of Lansing's Spanish-speaking leadership sought to center their agenda upon cooperation for the solution of problems common to the total community--in this case, common to Anglo and Latin alike. The prime example of this rationale is, of course, the proposed development of North Lansing

by the CIC which will perforce result in social and economic gains for "Northtown."

Robin Williams enunciated a central factor in the improvement of social power for ethnic groups when he asserted that

> Personal association of members of different groups is most effective in reducing hostility and increasing understanding when the focus of interaction is upon a common interest, goal, or task, rather than upon intergroup association as such.[8]

To the pragmatist leadership of Lansing's Spanish-speaking, the cooperation of their group with group leaders of the Greater Lansing area was not an ethnic triumph: it was rather a mutual accomplishment of Lansing citizens in moving toward solution of problems in the development of the community.

Action patterns summarized. To summarize this section on solidarity of leadership, it must be observed that there is no sharp conflict between the two major perspectives identified to any degree approaching the division of action philosophy found in the leadership of the minority group studied by McKee. There is, nevertheless, a relatively recent yet clearly increasing impatience on the part of the pragmatist leadership with the heretofore venerated cultural trait of acceptance which has typified Mexican life patterns for centuries. Left to the perennialists with their dogged emphasis upon religio-ethnic expressions, the course of development within the Spanish-speaking community of Lansing might well lie dormant. But as Oscar Lewis declared in summing up the contributions of his classic on Mexican life:

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[8]Robin M. Williams, Jr., The Reduction of Inter-Group Tensions: A Survey of Research on Problems of Ethnic, Racial, and Religious Group Relations (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1947), p. 71.

> It highlights the social, economic, and psychological complexities which have to be faced in any effort to transform and eliminate the culture of poverty from the world. It suggests that basic changes in the attitudes and value systems of the poor must go hand in hand with improvements in the material conditions of living.[9] (Italics mine.)

Pragmatist action in the larger Spanish-speaking communities within the great metropolitan centers in the United States is well-known; but for the smaller city, like Lansing, political and civic activity within the total community, such as described above, is new. This may well be the first reverberations of substantial social change.

CHAPTER V

MAJOR CONCERNS OF THE LEADERS OF LANSING'S SPANISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY

A further objective of this study was an attempt to discover what elements were of most concern to Lansing's leaders in the Spanish-speaking community in connection with community development. The leaders selected for this study were asked what they conceived to be the most important problems facing the city's Spanish-speaking population. "Problems of Greater Concern," the first section of this chapter, included those areas which were emphasized by more than half of the leaders. In the second section, those areas which were mentioned by less than half of the leaders were designated "Problems of Lesser Concern." Figure 5 shows the percentage of leaders expressing concern on each of the major problems identified.

I. PROBLEMS OF GREATER CONCERN

Education. As is so often the case with many minority group spokesmen, the matter of the need for more education for the people comes quickly to the fore within the first few minutes of discussion. Quite understandably, the concept of "education" is an amorphous, vaguely comprehended entity to many under privileged sub-cultures. This group was no exception: to most it had become hardly more than a shibboleth, a broadly and wistfully stated desire for betterment. In this connection, however, it would be inaccurate to suggest that there was anything to be found within this group of leaders which

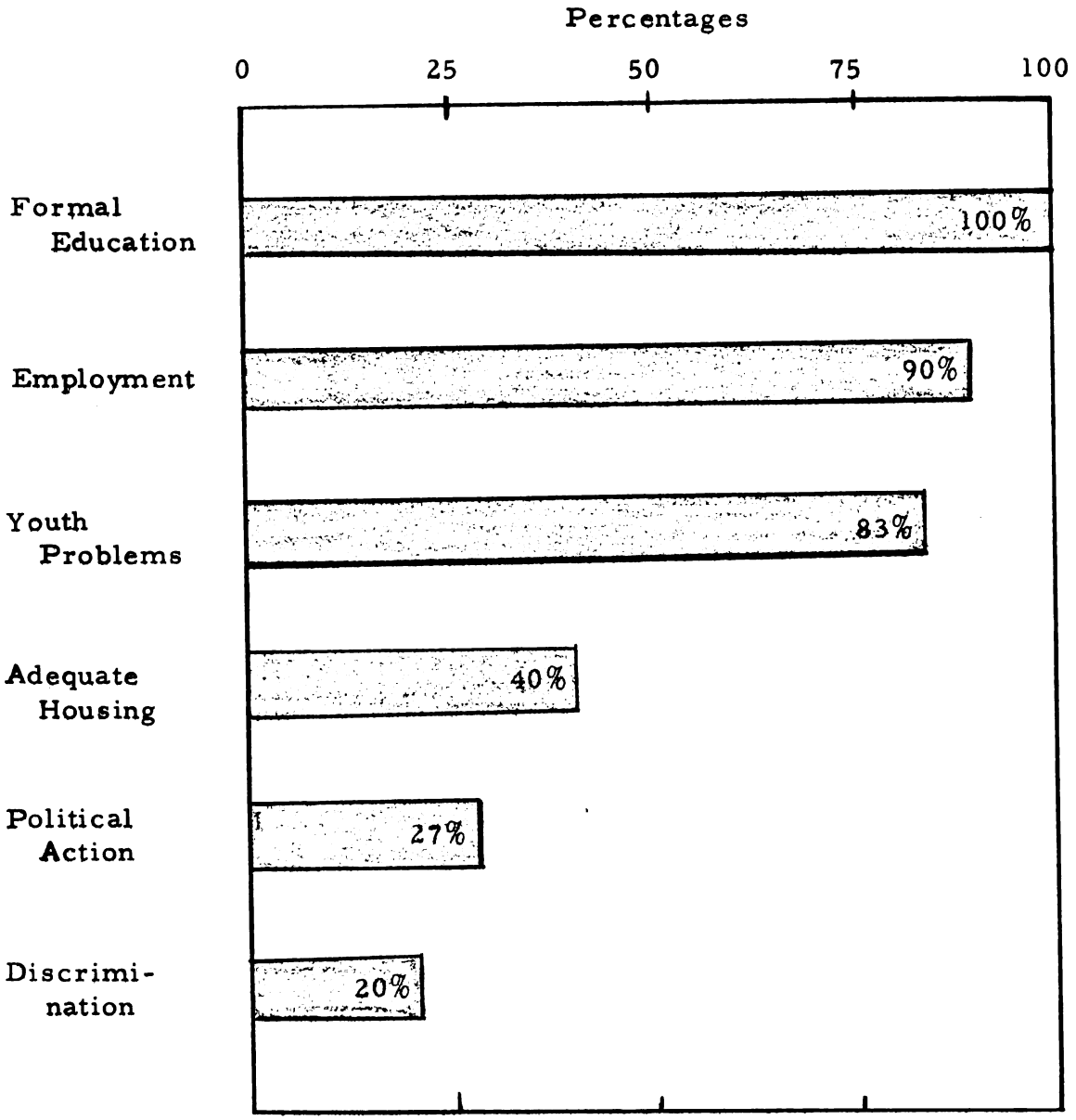

Figure 5. Spanish-speaking leaders' expressions of concern, by percentages, on major problems of the community.

approached the intensity of the leaders of other American minorities. Nevertheless, every one of the leaders interviewed mentioned this element as one in great need of community attention.

At least some of the leaders volunteered their sense of satisfaction about the news of the Citizen's Improvement Committee's sub-committee on education. Most had not heard of this large-scale attack on drop-outs planned by the Lansing public school system; but all expressed concern about the need for having their children get "as much education as possible."

Employment. With sizes of families approaching almost incredible numbers by Anglo standards, the problem of adequate and permanent employment was one of the major concerns of the community leaders. Almost all of these interviewed regarded the matter as critical. A few were not concerned: this might be hypothesized as a function of the total social-psychological milieu with which this study is concerned. Some seemed to have inherent trust that there was some kind of a job somewhere for whoever wanted to work. The acceptance spirit might play a large role here. Then, too, many of the leaders were not old enough to have more than a vague recollection of the Great Depression of the Thirties, if indeed they had any. The all pervading spirit, labor union paternalism, is still another probable factor in this connection: skillful projection of an image of a benevolent labor party protector.

Families with well over a dozen children were not exceptional. The young wife of one of the leaders was one of her mother's twenty-two children. The median grade of education attained by heads of households was the fifth; the vast majority of jobs were unskilled or semi- skilled and in low-salaried strata. These data are formidable, yet in the opinions of the leaders, the move from agricultural migrant worker to urban laborer was to be regarded as a notable accomplishment.

To all leaders this transition represented vertical mobility in noblest form. Leaders expressed pride that they were working in "industry," which in many instances simply meant that they were part of the tremendous janitorial or maintenance corps in Lansing's giant plants. While simple union membership was not regarded by the majority as a mark of distinction, some leaders were unlimited in their praise of organized labor in general and what they regarded as the unparalleled benefits flowing from union membership.

Very few leaders interviewed had risen to any positions of importance in the hierarchy of union officialdom. A few of those who had attained minor posts spoke despairingly of the reticence of their group members in seeking union offices. One complained that he had managed to get one of his fellow Spanish-speaking union members nominated for a minor post in his local, but his friend would not campaign and, consequently, did not win. "He was too shy," he said.

Questioned as to how they might get better-paying jobs, most leaders had very little to offer. Many used the shibboleth already cited: "more education for better jobs." How much education, how to get it, what kind of "better" jobs--these vital aspects did not seem clear to any but a few of the leaders interviewed. Most leaders did not feel there was much discrimination in the employment circles. Only one felt that he had won his minor union post against Anglo discrimination, but this was discounted as a loose statement by most of the other leaders.

The more knowledgeable seemed anxious to have Spanish-speaking citizens given more respectable jobs than those held typically in the industrial plants. These few leaders expressed the hope that the state or city administrations might place a "Mexican in a good job." The consensus was that most of the members of this sub-community did not desire or expect any immediate gains in raising the prestige level of

employment for the Spanish-speaking. Comments concerning the hardships imposed by the nature of factory employment, the tedium, night-shifts, and job hazards were negligible. The rigors of life in the migrant camps seemed to loom monstrously large in the memories of these workers. A job in the city with modest creature comforts--this seemed to fulfill the aspirations of the majority.

Youth problems. Although most leaders were persons who had married at an early age, many of these same persons deplored the unpreparedness of teen-age boys and girls for the serious roles of married life. More than three-fourths of the leaders expressed concern for the problems of young people. Some leaders seemed anxious to make the point that hasty, early marriage was not a phenomenon restricted to the Spanish-speaking. The vast majority adopted a pessimistic view and could think of nothing that would deter what most recognized as a social hazard.

At least one leader was emphatic in his plans for his own children as soon as they should reach marriageable age. "When they come to me about this, I will say O.K., but I have no money for you, and if you don't finish high school, you won't have enough to marry." A firm statement like the latter was the exception: most confined their remarks to regrets about the situation--unskilled, uneducated children bringing babies back into the same poor homes. A few expressed hope that the city's work-study program might encourage some children to stay in school longer. Only a few of the more knowledgeable leaders had heard of this latter program. The lack of "holding power" in the various schools was not assigned the first place as cause of drop-outs. The acute need in many families for more income was cited as at least equally, if not more, responsible for the failure of the community's youth to finish school--meaning high school, for the majority.

Perhaps as many as one-fourth spoke of college plans of their children.

In connection with delinquency, leaders did not feel that the community's children were any more delinquent than those of other ethnic areas. But they did seem to believe that their boys and girls had too much time on their hands and no approved place to mingle socially. Many spoke of need for adequate recreational facilities.

Those who were religious workers--church related--were concerned with what they believed to be moral apathy. Others viewed unconventional youth behavior as typical of all society--not just Mexican. The latter took the position that what some termed moral transgressions were really reflections of the failures of social institutions to provide alternate patterns of behavior. The less sophisticated summed it all up very simply: "all kids act like that now." There were reports of some instances of inter-racial rivalry, with what the leaders felt to be only isolated cases of serious violence. Most leaders believed police action in Lansing to be relatively impartial and adequate.

II. PROBLEMS OF LESSER CONCERN

Housing. Only in connection with the physical adequacy of the buildings was housing mentioned, and this by less than half of those interviewed. There was no reference to particular desirability of certain neighborhoods; to the relative presence of racial or ethnic populations; or to any evidence of discrimination in selection of dwellings. As in the case of the expressions concerning jobs, the leaders expressed the belief that while their dwellings might be sub-normal by Anglo standards, they were so much better than the migrant shacks that they should not complain.

At the time of this study, only a few leaders had any knowledge of the proposed urban renewal plan which, if effected, would concern the lives of about half the members of the Spanish-speaking community, that is, those living in what they call "Northtown."

Political action. Those who felt strongest about the need for political cohesion and the establishment of a block of registered Spanish-speaking voters in the Lansing area were those who have been designated throughout this study as the pragmatist segment of leadership. Less than one-third of those interviewed could be properly assigned to this progressive arm of the total leadership. The leaders of this group stated that they desired to remain nominally non-partisan so as to have the attention of both major political parties and thereby to obtain the optimum assistance toward economic gains and social justice for their people.

In addition to the culture-connected apathy of the community toward immediate planning for political action--the patient "long-term gain" leaders still constitute a majority--the pragmatist group still have to content with another cultural barrier in the unwillingness to accord women equal social and political participation. For the present the bulk of those who have been induced to register are men, but the leaders are hopeful that more women can be persuaded--with their husbands' permission--to become registered voters. Various subtleties and face-saving devices are being used to the utmost to assuage the dignities of male household heads so that their women can vote and become part of the desired block of Spanish-speaking voters.

Evidence of the efficacy of LAUPA has already been noted in connection with its inclusion in the North Lansing Citizens' Improvement Committee. While the less politically active leaders showed no hostility to the pragmatist approach, there was a heavy residual of

the traditional patience and reliance upon religio-ethnic solidarity for the solution of all problems. This passivity presents an appreciable obstacle to the pragmatist group who see political solidarity as the most effective medium for social, political, and economic gains for the community.

Discrimination. With few exceptions, the leaders asserted that they saw no serious discrimination against the Spanish-speaking community of Lansing. Only one-fifth did not share this optimism of the majority about discrimination. The latter were not sure that the Spanish-speaking in the Lansing area would never face overt discrimination in the basic areas of jobs and housing. Essentially, these leaders were attributing the lack of overt discrimination to the lack, to date, of any appreciable attempt at vertical mobility. As one leader put it, "we just aren't faced with the problem yet. Not many of us have the money even to try to get into an exclusive neighborhood." Those who did move into "rich" neighborhoods, this leader related, were usually persons who had "integrated" with the Anglos through inter-marriage and, to all practical purposes, no longer considered themselves Mexicans, Cubans, or Puerto Ricans.

It was observable, too, that most of the leaders seemed unaware of the particular areas in which discrimination might be encountered. Most leaders acknowledged that there had never been mutuality of particpation with Lansing's Anglos in other than religious activities. Since the establishment of a Roman Catholic church and parish expressly for the Spanish-speaking, even this area of contact with the rest of the Lansing community had been substantially diminished.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND PROGNOSTICATION

This study of leadership patterns and opinions among the Spanish-speaking in the Greater Lansing area made it possible to draw a number of conclusions which may serve to clarify the results of the research and may prove helpful to other workers in community development. As a final word which may help to re-establish the background against which the study was conducted and to delineate some highly pertinent theoretical conceptualizations, a prognostication was included at the end of this chapter.

I. CONCLUSIONS

1. There is a nucleus of definable leadership within the Spanish-speaking American citizenry who form a sub-community within the Greater Lansing Area.

2. This leadership is drawn from a lower socio-economic stratum which, a fortiori, embraced a largely uneducated, unskilled, and underprivileged population.

3. There are two major patterns of leadership: one is dedicated to religio-ethnic emphasis; the other stresses direct, political action for community development.

4. Church leadership among the Spanish-speaking is traditional, deep-rooted, and efficacious. Nominally, Christian affiliations are eighty-five per cent Roman Catholic, fifteen per cent Protestant.

5. Catholic leaders admit considerable "defection" to the Protestant denominations of which there are about a half-dozen.

Reasons assigned for losses from the traditional church are varied. But those given by Catholic workers themselves are: a relative dormancy within the total hierarchy; and an unwarranted assumption of continued allegiance on religious and ethnic bases, in the face of accelerated Protestant missionary zeal.

6. An appreciable amount of welfare work is done by Catholic and Protestant leaders, but there is slightly more emphasis by the latter upon the material needs of the community. Possibly the relative simplicity of the latter group's services permit more time for material needs. In any case, Protestant workers include more social entertainment in combination with their spiritual services and more attention to creature comforts.

7. There is little or no communication between Catholic and Protestant religious workers. A definite hostility was observed between the leaders. The usual clichés and disparagements regarding the sincerity and efficacy of the "other" group were frequently heard.

8. Both Catholic and Protestant church workers are mostly from the lower social classes, but Catholics are generally bi-lingual and better educated.

9. There seems to be a high correlation between dedication to high-level activity in church-related societies and devotion to the ethnic or patriotic associations.

10. Although many political action leaders were also devoted to religious and ethnic expression, they were markedly less devout than the leaders of the religio-ethnic societies.

11. Compared to the perennialists, leaders of the pragmatist, political action group speak better English, are better educated, and are more seriously interested in closer cooperation with the rest of the community.

12. One-fifth of the leadership was very active in the political action association.

13. Approximately one-fifth of the leaders was well informed of the activities and developments of the total Lansing community.

14. In spite of the community's enthusiasm for social gatherings such as independence day celebrations and special fiestas, there seems to be weakness of interaction throughout the community between such occasions.

15. Principal concerns of leaders include education, youth guidance, physically adequate housing, political action, and discrimination in the order named. This is the exact antithesis of the order of concern for the Negro leadership in a recent study in another Michigan city.

16. The political action group is dedicated to establishing a block of Spanish-speaking registered voters.

17. Not one of the leaders is a professional person, nor are there any professional persons in the native American Spanish-speaking community. One physician and two dentists are natives of South-America recently moved to the states.

18. Perennialist leaders fear a breaking down of ethnic solidarity through inter-marriage with Anglos; pragmatists feel that this is inevitable, that it would not interfere with total community well-being.

19. Retention of children in schools is considered important by most leaders. Pragmatist leadership is taking an active part in cooperating in the program to prevent school drop-outs.

20. A new leadership is evident in the Spanish-speaking community of the Lansing area. It is small; but it is dynamic. Its leaders are, for the most part, faithful to religious and ethnic ties, but they adhere to an aggressive, political action philosophy in working for community development.

II. A PROGNOSTICATION

A final word on the future of the Spanish-speaking minority in the Lansing area is indicated. It has been the hope of the writer to show that while there has been no highly dramatic change in the community, there has been a notable incidence of organizational evaluation of the position of the Spanish-speaking in terms of the efficacy of their leadership. There has been an appreciable incidence of organized activity within a dynamic segment of the leadership that may well be what one writer has called "predispositions to participate in change-oriented collective behavior."[1] The same writer contends that social change is the growth of economically based status inconsistency leading to tendencies toward social isolation and generalized individual unrest.[2]

Several theories of social change were cited in this study, but the most pertinent to the present study was that of Lyford Edwards which was presented in opposition to that of Sorokin on the critical point of incipient "revolt" of those underprivileged seeking social change. As one of the preliminary symptoms of change, Edwards had posited a state of mind that he called the "balked disposition," a feeling that legitimate aspirations and ideals are being repressed or perverted.[3]

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[1]James A. Geschwender, Status Consistency, Cognitive Dissonance, and Social Change (East Lansing: Unpublished Ph. D. Dissertation, Michigan State University, 1962), p. 3.

[2]Ibid., Abstract, p. ii.

[3]Lyford P. Edwards, The Natural History of Revolution (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927), p. 20. Quoted in Geschwender, op. cit., p. 17.

A further preliminary disposition to "change-oriented collective behavior" is especially interesting in that it contradicts one of Sorokin's hypotheses. Sorokin postulated that the most repressed portion of society would be most prone toward revolution and the most radical.[4] Edwards proposed the exact opposite:

> Revolutions do not occur when the repressed classes are forced down to the depth of misery . . . but after (they) for a considerable time have been in the enjoyment of increasing prosperity . . . marked increase of power, intelligence and wealth. Just in proportion as the lower classes become better off, they demand more social recognition, more prestige, more control. . . . As they become more intelligent, they become more critical; and when conditions are not remedied, criticism passes into revolt.[5] (Italics mine.)

Edwards has support in his view from Robin Williams who asserts that, "Militancy, . . . is not characteristic of the most deprived and depressed groups, but rather of those who have gained considerable rights. . . ."[6] (Italics mine.)

And Pettee adds his statement that

> The consciousness of repression leads to discontent only when it is felt unnecessary. This is the reason why a rising class, which is consciously becoming better off, generally rebels most readily, and why the most severe repressions so often failed to cause a revolution.[7] (Italics mine.)

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[4]Pitirim A. Sorokin, The Sociology of Revolution (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1925), p. 23. Quoted in Geschwender, op. cit., p. 10.

[5]Edwards, op. cit., p. 36.

[6]Robin Williams, Jr., The Reduction of Inter-Group Tensions (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1947), p. 61.

[7]George S. Pettee, The Process of Revolution, Studies in Systematic Political Science and Comparative Government, Vol. 5 (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1938), p. 3.

Throughout this study it has been observed that patience and long-suffering have been considered a cultural trait of the Mexican lower classes whose descendants form the population for the present study of leadership in the Lansing area. The general tenor of the excerpts taken from the writers on the preceding pages has been that no significant movements for social change can be expected from the perennially oppressed, but "as they become better off," in the words of Edwards[8] and Pettee[9] just cited, they will gain more militancy which, in Williams's conceptualization, " . . . is . . . characteristic of those who have gained considerable rights, so that they are able realistically to hope for more."[10]

Great gains were achieved for the Spanish-speaking communities of several cities in the United States, but only when, through effective leadership, they experienced the beginnings of vertical mobility.

This writer foresees great gains for the Spanish-speaking community of the Lansing area when, possibly through the efforts of LAUPA and similar organizations, the people do "become better off, demand more social recognition, more prestige, more control. . . ,"[11] more participation in community development.

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[8]Cf. Edwards, Supra, p. 67.

[9]Cf. Pettee, Supra, p. 67.

[10]Cf. Williams, Supra, p. 67.

[11]Cf. Edwards, Supra, p. 67.

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