

Huge crowd attends demonstration against University's Chicano hiring practices

by Ron Chew
and Karen Long

Nearly 2,000 people converged on the Administration Building yesterday to learn from a number of speakers about Chicano grievances with the University.

The day's protest began when about 350 people marched from the Ethnic Cultural Center up University Way, through campus, past the Padelford Hall office of George Beckmann, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and into Red Square. Entering the Square, the number of marchers had increased to nearly a thousand.

Students, many wearing black armbands to symbolize the death of the UW Chicano Studies program, sat in Red Square and listened to music and speeches decrying the University's lack of commitment to affirmative action.

MECHA, the Chicano student organization, and the ASUW had called for students to participate in a two-day boycott of classes from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., as a reaction to the events of the past several weeks. Two Chicano administrators were fired last week and 28 Chicano faculty, administrators and staff

members resigned in protest of the University's affirmative action program.

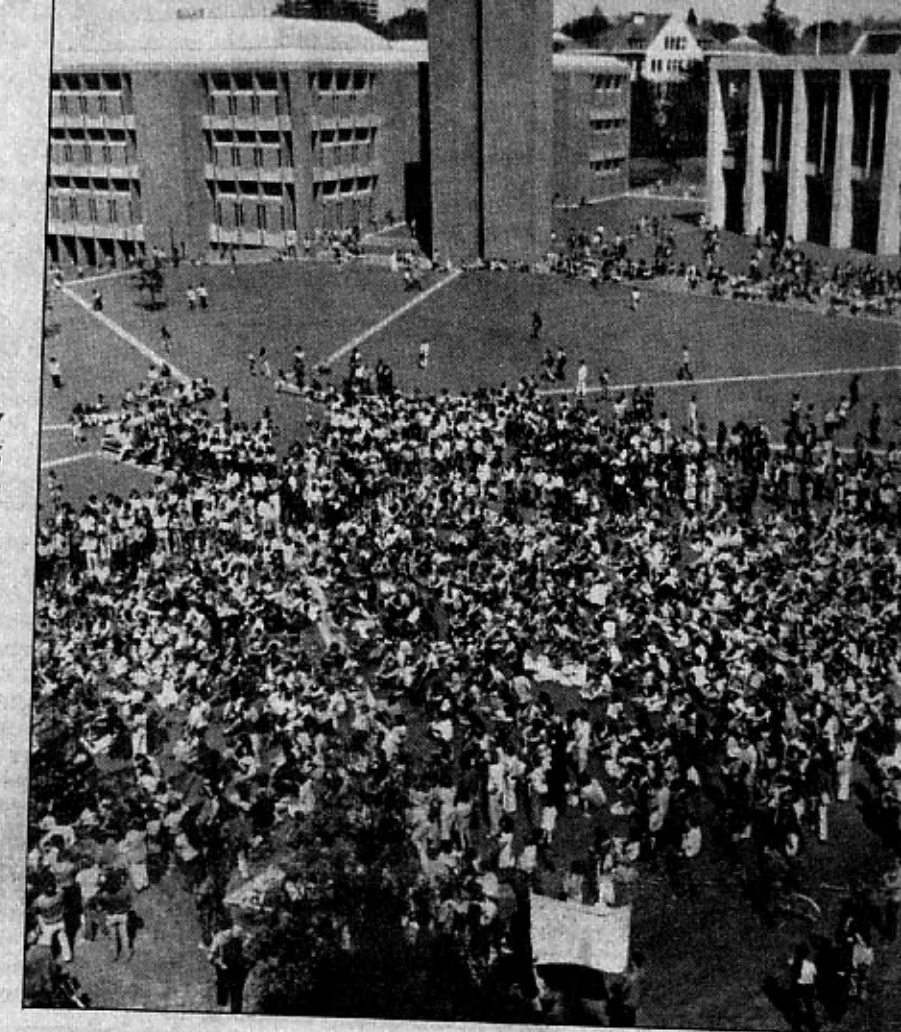
One student, a chemistry major, said he supported the class boycott. He added, however, "I'm worried about my exam. I kind of doubt my professor's in solidarity."

Father Tom Yates, of the Campus Christian Ministry, participated in yesterday's strike. "I'm really supporting the Chicano cause," Yates said, adding that during his seven years at Berkeley he has been involved in many marches. "This is one of the best controlled marches I have ever seen."

Juan Sanchez, fired from his position as director of the Chicano division of the Office of Minority Affairs, was one of numerous speakers addressing the huge crowd.

"When was the last time," he asked the audience, "you saw this many people get together to talk about a particular kind of issue?"

Sanchez said, "There is not one single Chicano" in a position to manage funds going into programs affecting Chicano students. Sanchez said Chicanos were asking for the right to hire and fire and



develop their own program at the University.

He said Chicanos have no direct means of communication with the University administration.

"We're talking about an issue of self-determination," Sanchez said. "Unless the University responds to our needs,

Chicanos ain't going to be around next year."

Tyree Scott, director of the United Construction Worker Association, spoke for Larry Gossett, who recently received the second annual Charles Odegaard award. Scott said Gossett, pres-

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ently in Cuba, would burn his award in front of President John Hognes if he were here now.

Professor Roberto Garfias, unofficial spokesperson for the Chicano faculty, said one of the most important goals is to develop an effective program to benefit new students as well as the Chicano students presently at the UW.

"As Chicano students, we all know that we come from a cultural split," Garfias said. He pointed out that progress in the Chicano program has, thus far, been small.

One of the students supporting the strike said, "Garfias used to be one of my professors so I feel pretty close to the issue.

"I think that it's really an atrocity and I think it's pathetic on the part of the administration to take such an apathetic stand on the demands of the Chicanos."

Several speakers emphasized the issue is not a black-brown one and that the Chicano complaint was directed at the University administration's failure to live up to its affirmative action commitment.

"This is not a racial issue," said Manuel Sandoval, chairperson of MECHA.

He pointed out that the last eight Chicanos considered for positions at the University have been turned down. Three of them, he said, are graduates

of Harvard.

Sandoval said the march and rally in front of the administration building had been peaceful. "If anything happens, the burden is upon Hogness and the police department," he said.

Michael Shanahan, University chief of police, said later, "The march reflected probably the best example of responsible planning and commitment on the part of the MECHA personnel to avoid any problems that I've witnessed during the past five years."

Shanahan said there had been "open communication" between MECHA and police department administrators.

Carlos Gil, assistant professor of history, said "at every step in the process," from primary school to college, Chicanos are faced with obstacles and doors closed in their faces. The same thing is happening to Chicanos, Gil said, whether in California or the Yakima Valley.

One Chicano from the Yakima Valley said 80 per cent of the Chicanos drop out of school there.

Although most of yesterday's speakers were representative of minority groups, the audience included many white students.

"I support MECHA's stand," one White woman student said, "because affirmative action at the University has been basically a hoax. Affirmative action is not the final answer but it's one way to begin to break the status quo."

